

Memory, Time, Public Life, and the Holocaust (An Introduction)

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As time increases the distance between ourselves, our worlds, and the actual events of the Holocaust (Shoah), and survivors, bystanders, and perpetrators, are no longer alive, only memory remains. The intensified pursuit of memory, in its many possible forms, appears to be the ultimate way of relating to the Holocaust.

The Holocaust presents only questions. Questions regarding moral and ethical dilemmas of human kind, and of architecture. It seems interesting and important to unravel what kind of connections, if any, could be made between "representations of modernity" being taught or repressed within architectural education and events such as the Holocaust.

Adorno suggests that "Enlightenment about what happened in the past must work, above all, against a forgetfulness that too easy goes along with and justifies what is forgotten." For Adorno, "democratic pedagogy" comprises a potential lesson to be learned from those times in which "darkness was visible." A concept that suggests that acts of remembering (or forgetting), as both personal and collective, may construct the relation between public and private realms.

This paper, while discussing the construction of memorials, examines relationships between memory, time, public life and space vis-a-vis the Holocaust and its representations. It presents as an introductory conceptual framework, notions of memory, space, time, uniqueness, power, strategy, tactics, transference, transparency, abstraction and figuration, and other ideas related to architecture as well as to Jewish thought and tradition.

The Holocaust in its extension and its vastness, appears to be ungraspable. No form of representation seems capable of addressing it completely or adequately. It threatens to remain as a rift, a breach in modern thinking. Healing must be deferred for future generations. There remains only memory. Or better, re-collected and textured memories. Memories, and their registration, interpretation, construction and production, through storytelling, architectures, cities, landscapes, public art, and memorials, echo the distant sound of horror.

MEMORY, TIME, PUBLIC LIFE, AND THE HOLOCAUST

On Memory

Remembering, as a vital activity, shapes our relation with the past, defining our present. Both personal and societal memories are always subject to be constructed, repressed, denied. They present imperfections, impermanences, textures. They are slippery, unstable, and subject to distortions. Memory is selective. It is built upon a dialectic relation between remembering and forgetting. So, as time operates as a distancing shade between the memorized events and ourselves, the way memory is constructed in the present implies the shaping of the future. Society's collective memory is negotiated in social body's beliefs and values, rituals and institutions, and in modern societies it is shaped by public sites of memory such as museums, monuments, and memorials.

Modernity and Memory

"As an old social order came to disintegrate under the pressures of war, revolution and economical catastrophe, the modern – set against the crescendo of twentieth century disaster – began to acquire an irrefutable significance."² Thus, to be radically modern, according to some avant-gardist expressions from early century, meant severing all links with the past. Fascinated with progress, machines, speed and war, "enlightened modern spirits" in tune with their time, "liberated from tradition and superstition," became free to create the world, man, society, and why not architecture anew.³ It is in recent decades, that ideologies of progress came to be seen as the dark side of modernity, and in most accounts of the darkness, the Holocaust, representing a paradoxical paradigm of progress, plays a central role in the crisis of modernity and memory.

If Modernity freed the West from the constraints of memory, during Postmodernity, it seems to be struggling between amnesia and obsession with the past.⁴ The fascination with the past could, perhaps, be seen as a compensatory form in the fast process towards oblivion, and museums may be functioning as a key paradigm of contemporary postmodern culture. The

"boom" of the creation and construction of Holocaust memorials and museums, dotting Israeli, European and US landscapes seems to be embedded in a similar cultural trend and memory process.

For new generations, distanced from the events, to whom Holocaust memory is becoming mythical or cliché, and constructed primarily through the activation of Image-Memory, "the new-found strength of the museum and the monument in the public sphere may have something to do with the fact that they both offer something that the television screen denies: the material quality of the object,"⁵ as Andreas Huyssen proposes. These tangible encounters with objects should be measured, *contra* the larger connections they may establish with the several memory discourses, both in the public sphere and in the electronic media.

However, even though the construction of these museums and memorials might, hopefully, be founded on public participation and debate, there is no guarantee for them not to become objects of forgetting, within a process and subject-matter that presents intractable problems for any project of memorial representation.

The Holocaust – Uniqueness⁶ and Universality

"Nazism is more than a religion, it will create mankind anew," Hitler wrote. It is the unmediated, intended, complete physical eradication of every Jewish man, woman and child that defines the particular, singular nature of this event that we call the Holocaust. Though during the events, many other groups and minorities such as Gypsies, communists, homosexuals and others suffered the Nazi enormity, the radical circumstance is that the Holocaust was intended as and received its enormous power from, the fact that it aimed at nothing less than restructuring the Cosmos Anew, now without the Jews. "If the Jew is victorious ... His crown will be the funeral wreath of humanity, and this planet will... move through the ether devoid of men," Hitler wrote.⁸ This recognized "ontological" truth, eliminating Jews, annihilating all Jews and their memory, thus creating Judenrein – a world without Jews – becomes a sacred obligation.

Steven Katz writes, in *The Holocaust in Historical Context*:

The Holocaust, was not, first and foremost, the consequence of traditional Anti-Semitism, or of modern technology, or of modern bureaucracy, though all three were essential to its actuality and implementation. . . rather, the Shoah must be historically deciphered, most essentially, by recourse to its determinative ideology... And this is so because neither technocratic rationality nor bureaucratic modalities *per se* create Auschwitzes; ideas do.⁹

The universality of the Holocaust is that of human catastrophe and destruction, and it is recorded in the flesh and memories of survivors. There, (in Auschwitz) something happened that up to now nobody considered as even possible, an irreversible rupture in human history. The deep layer of

solidarity among all that wears a human face was touched (and torn). As Habermas describes "Auschwitz has changed the basis for the continuity of the conditions of life within history."¹⁰

Holocaust Memory and Representation

We retained memories of our previous lives, but veiled and remote, and thus profoundly sweet and sad, like the recollections everyone cherishes of early childhood and all things that have come to an end: whereas for each one of us the moment of entry into the camp acted as the wellspring of a different sequence of memories, closer and sharper, constantly confirmed by present experience, like wounds daily opened."

What makes unique the experience of a concentration camp, according to accounts of those who underwent that experience, unlike other episodes of captivity and war, is that their pain is unable to find expression. "We realized," Primo Levi writes, "that our language lacks words to express this offense: the demolition of the person."¹¹

It is clear that the Endlösung, the "Final Solution," is exceptionally resistant to a redemptive perspective of humanity or life, and threatens to remain an open wound in modern thinking. An absent meaning, that we tend to reflect under the limits of representation, in a rather theoretical gesture.¹³ Even as bystanders – as non participant observers, either during the events or in the fifty years since – we suffer something like a trauma, a breach in normal thinking about human and civilized nature; and this breach needs more time to heal. Understanding may have to be deferred to a later generation.¹⁴ If the Holocaust could be thought of as an earthquake that has destroyed all measurement instruments, as Lyotard suggested, new methods of representation are necessary, and have not come about. Regarding historic representations, the dimension added by the commentary may allow for an integration of the "mythic memory" and the voices of the victims within the overall representation, without becoming an obstacle for "rational historiography."

As the Third Reich is no longer part of the lived experience it has become an imaginative construct dependent on its intellectual representation, thus remembering has shifted from being an issue of motivation – willingness to remember – to an issue of representation – how to construct the presence of the past. This, in the case of Germany, may correspond to a shift from a question of guilt to one of responsibility,¹⁵ and leads to the concept of democratic pedagogy, proposed by Adorno.¹⁶

The repression of the Holocaust memory during the 1950's and 60's, certainly contrasts with the excess of Holocaust imagery everywhere in the 80's and 90's in our culture. The Holocaust totality, has become fractured in its multiple memories, through multiple accounts while the temporal distance with the events has freed memory to focus on more than the facts alone, therefore modifying representational criteria.

Awe and silence before victims and survivors, contrast with representational forms used before a prime time TV public.

Andreas Huysen proposes for post Holocaust generations an approach through what he calls mimetic approximation, "a mnemonic strategy which recognizes the event in its otherness and beyond identification or therapeutic empathy but which physically relieves some of the horror and pain through the persistent labor of remembrance." "This strategy is based on the sustaining the tension between the numbing totality and the stories of individuals, families and communities. For no matter how fractured by media, geography or subject-positions, the representation of the Holocaust might be, at its core, the Holocaust story still is unimaginable and unspeakable horror, death, pain, destruction, awe, and above all, loss.

Strategies and tactics (Excursus)

The Third Reich entailed an "obsessive war against memory, negating and falsifying reality," Primo Levi once wrote.¹⁸ The Nazi regime and the notion of "lebensraum" (espace vital), entailed the most extreme and excessive expression of "strategic behavior," a war between Volk-place-power and Time, a war between knowledge and speech, a war against the Other.

In the *Practice of Everyday Life*, Michael de Certeau defines strategy as "the calculation (or manipulation) of power relationships that becomes possible as soon as a subject with will and power (a business, an army, a city, a scientific institution) can be isolated."¹⁹ This isolation needs to configure a place that can be delimited as its own and serve as the base from which an exteriority of targets or threats can be managed (customers, competitors, enemies, etc.). This appropriation of space entails that the "proper" is a triumph of place over time, a mastery of time through the foundation of an autonomous place, a mastery of places through sight. The division of space makes possible a panoptic practices, "to see is to predict." The power of knowledge, following De Certeau, could be defined by the ability to transform the "uncertainties of history into readable spaces," a specific form of knowledge sustained and determined by the power to provide oneself with one's own place.²⁰

A tactic is a calculated action determined by the absence of a proper locus. The space of a tactic is the space of the other. Thus it must play on and with a terrain imposed by the law of a foreign power. It does not have the chance to see, and operates in isolated actions, by taking advantage of opportunities. What it wins it cannot keep. It must vigilantly make use of the cracks that particular conjunctions open in the surveillance of proprietary powers.

In short, strategies are actions which, thanks to the establishment of a place of power (the property of a proper), elaborate theoretical places (systems and totalizing discourses) capable of articulating an ensemble of physical places in which forces are distributed. They privilege spatial relationships, they attempt to reduce temporal relations to spatial ones through the analytical attribution to a proper place to each element or group.?

Before modern Israel, the Jews, while "playing on and with a terrain of a foreign power," had no "proper" place throughout history. The absence of 'proper locus' implied, for Jewish Life in the Diaspora, a particular relation to the land, both culturally and physically, as well as a particular relation to imagination, history and time. The sense of place was located in a book, the Torah. Jerusalem, The Lost City; Israel, The Promise Land; The Temples and their destruction; The Exodus, the wandering in the desert, Mount Sinai, and many others, are examples of mythical imaginary memories and constructions of territories, landscapes, spaces, and places in time present in Jewish consciousness.

Time and Memory – History and Narrative

The notion of the "public," or publicness, in Jewish culture, is related not directly to the construction of public space, but rather based on *time in the form of memory and narrative*.²² In Jewish culture, history and religion, the notion of Time is interwoven with Memory. Time is framed by the Sacred Text, the Torah, in which the location in the year is precisely known by the portion of the book to be read. This cyclical process locate the Jewish people in a timeframe that configures the year as narrative, following a pattern based on the perpetual repetition of the movement along the text. Time is always becoming.

Memory of historical events and the narratives delivering this memory, have been always central to Jewish faith, tradition and identity. For if the Jewish God is known only insofar as he reveals himself historically, then to remember history and to interpret its texts assumes religiously obligatory proportions. "remember the days of old, consider the years of ages past" (Deu.32:7); "remember this day, on which you went free from Egypt, the house of bondage, how the Lord freed you from it with mighty hand" (Ex. 13:3).²³ The traditional "remember events as if they happened to you," embodies the notion and "experiential" dimension of the common past in an ongoing continuity. "Whatever was horrible and frightening should be remembered as horrible and frightening, no matter how much time has elapsed since the event transpired . . . In short, when remembering the past, the Jew relives the event as if it were a present reality."²⁴

The ontical quality of time engendered by ritual remembering transforms the Jewish experience of existence in time. Through such observances, memory distortions of a purely quantitative experience of time are overcome. An exhaustive quantitative time-framework creates "archeological consciousness of periods" that never fully integrates past events into one's own existence. But the qualitative consciousness of time induced by regular ritual remembering at the festivals merges the past, present, and future into a single "historic stream of Jewish Spirit."²⁵

The Holocaust and its unspeakable horror will, probably, enter the realm of mythical memory after several generations. As for now the rift, and the wound are still present.

SHOAH MEMORY

So this story will not finish with some tomb to be visited in pious memoir. For the smoke that rises from crematoria obeys physical laws like any other: the particles come together and disperse according to the wind, which propels them. The only pilgrimage, dear reader, would be to look sadly at a stormy sky now and then.

– Andre Schwarz-Bart²⁶

The first memorials of the Holocaust were books. These Yizkor Bikher (memorial books) remembered the lives and destruction of European Jewry, using the oldest Jewish memorial media: words on paper. These "Bikher" served as symbolic tombstones for the murdered. These books were meant to turn the site of the reading into memorial space, in response to what has been called "the missing gravestone syndrome," by creating interior spaces, imagined graves sites, as the first sites for memory.²⁷ *In the absence of tombstones, Holocaust memorials can function as a mourning site.* As these memorials memorialize suffering, pain and horror, they should not be considered monuments for heroic celebration. Rather, they must be considered as a kind of "countermonument."²⁸

The motifs for these memorials are varied by recalling war dead, resistance and/or mass murder. They are constructed by different nations, groups, communities and represent different understandings and relationships to the process of remembering, or better not forgetting.

Some memorials have the aim to educate future generations and help generate the sense of shared past. Others are conceived as expiation of guilt, and others are to attract tourism according to the state, its institutional forms of remembrance and national imagery, in addition to Jewish memorial iconography. Holocaust memorials in different nations recall and evoke different things.

In Germany, they recall the Jews, in their absence. In Poland, they evoke in the figure of the Jew the destruction of the country. In Israel, They tend to evoke both the martyrs and the heroes, as well as the birth of the modern State of Israel. In US, the notion and values of freedom, and the new homeland. It seems clear that memory is not pure, not clean. Memorials do express the politics of memory.²⁹

Memorial Art – Transparency

Contemporary art is produced as "self- or medium-reflexive" and invites viewers to contemplate their own materiality or relationships to other works. Public Holocaust monuments are produced to be historically referential. They generally avoid referring hermetically to their own making process, to their own presence, but refer to past events "because" they are no longer present. "Their value is not based on the public art work, but in a certain point beyond themselves." Their material presence is meant, somehow, to turn invisible, transparent, bridging between the individual memory-work and the events

they recall. Their responsibility and value as public monuments is based on this capacity to evoke, In their "time-carrier" character, that may bring forth intensified memories. Their evoking potential depends on various factors such as site, artwork, uses in public space, community values, but specially in the way their lives are taken by the public.

Looking to Holocaust memorials from the viewpoint of traditional art inquiry, may ignore the "essentially public dimension of their performance, remaining either formally aestheticist or almost piously historical,"³¹ and may not take on account the public dimension and "dialogic character of memorial space." "Memorials are not just public art, but embodiments of memory through art in the public realm.

Transference – Duration

The massive repetition of memorials, words, and images about the Holocaust, seems to be producing a "liberating" effect. In a sort of therapeutic way, when transferred onto an object or icon Memory is placed outside ourselves, perhaps displaced altogether, thus, relieving the viewer or community, from the burden of the memory-work. This transference to the memory-place could signify divesting ourselves of the responsibility and obligation to remember, thus the operations become self contained and detached from our daily lives.³³ As James Young warns "under the illusion that our memorial edifices will always be there to remind us, we take leave of them and return only at our convenience. To the extent that we encourage our monuments to do our memory-work for us, we become much more forgetful. In effect, the initial impulse to memorialize events like the Holocaust may actually spring from an opposite and equal desire to forget them."³⁴

Museums, such as Yad Vashem (Jerusalem) or Washington, operate with the notion of experiencing their "collected memories" through "narrative time," as a way of projecting the past into the present (Duration). Though they are consumed by tourism, that duration, the vastness and intensity of the experience remains – hopefully – present, and not resolved.

The memorial experience in the sites of concentration camps, as James Young notes requires a deliberate act of memory. For, by themselves, *they lack the will to remember*, that is without the people's intention to remember the ruins remain little more than inert pieces of the landscape.³⁵ Remnants in the camps tend to negate the distinction between themselves and what they evoke. "They invite us to mistaken the debris of history for history itself."³⁶

If the Holocaust entailed the transformation of European landscape into a vast-endless horror, how to represent it?

one

A granite slab. Confront with oblivion. Auschwitz-Birkenau. Slightly elevated. 60 meters wide. 1000 meters long. No one is to walk the soil. Floating effortlessly, through the remains. Holes framing foundations, chimneys. In time, nature will

regain the site . . . Eventually. No monument, no inscription. The pain and the suffering. . . A history not to be excavated. It could never be memory. Only silence, a granite path and a question: What happened here?

two

Thousands of stones. Scattered. Pointing down and above. Simultaneous tombstones and markers on a map. Representation of the places where the Jews who died there once lived. The small ones are for the shtetl, the larger for towns. The vertical space, the space of nature. The space of the dead remains . . . 17000 granite stones, go on forever. A towering rock for Warsaw. The horizontal space, the space of man, obliterated by stones. Tombstones. Treblinka.

One Day Two Minutes – The case of Yom Hashoah.

Perhaps, of all ways to commemorate the destruction of European Jewry, none is more endemic to Jewish tradition – save narrative – than Yom Hashoah, the day of remembrance of the martyrs and the heroes of the Shoah. None of all other forms of commemoration, being monuments, paintings, cinema, fiction, nor testimony, are so rooted in tradition as commemorative days,³⁷ during which remembrance is based on the performance and reenactment of the ritual of remembering.

The multitude of remembering acts that take place during the day, have a common fixed point in public space when all the air in the territory of the state of Israel is filled with the sound of a two minutes siren at 8 am. established by Law: "On the day of remembrance there shall be observed Two Minutes Silence throughout the State of Israel, during which all traffic on the roads shall cease. . ."

Just before the hour, some people begin to hesitate and wait. Then the siren begins, low and deep and rises until it reaches scream pitch, an open-mouthed wail. Depending on where one stands, the siren can be unbearably loud or is muffled by buildings and trees. All in the street stop in their tracks: taxis, buses, trucks, pedestrians. Drivers get out of their cars, some look at the sky, then at their watches, and then to the ground . . .³⁸

This pause, this moment of silence, is a ritual in which a memory text is condensed and rewritten at the same time in all different manners. During those two minutes, people and all moving things are turned into standing monuments; while the siren, as James Young says "encircles us with sound, gathering all into one great space of time, turning the very ground we share into public memorial space."³⁹ *Memorial site becomes*. It becomes in the precise space in which reality happens to find oneself, at those particular two minutes. Everyone performs and remembers their personal Shoah, in a collective ritual of collected memories, meaning a shared time of disparate remembrance.

At this point, it must be distinguished between unified forms of commemoration and the unification of memory itself. The nationalization of many discrete memories, pro-

duces neither a unity of Holocaust experience, nor the unification of memory itself, but rather constitutes a shared ceremony that creates the sense of shared past, unifying the plurality of publics during a brief moment in a common experience.

Perhaps, those two minutes in which movement is suspended by law, could be seen, reading Michel De Certeau, as the juncture of strategy and tactic, The State and the people transforming the territory of the nation into temporal-timeless sound-space memorial. Two minutes. Fixed points in space. Those fixed points mark the trajectories of "Holocaust Memorizers," signifying a hiatus, a breach, a rift in everyday life, occupied by memories and remembrance.

This personal pause when turned into collective could be read also as representing the erasure of time and space, erasure of motion, erasure of life. That. . . what has been lost and it's remembered.

CONCLUSION

The ocean of pain, past and present surrounded us... in every direction, ... all the way to the horizon.⁴⁰

Holocaust memory and memorials are embedded in a complex paradox, on the one hand the impossibility of fully representing the Holocaust, and on the other the extreme necessity of representing it within the public sphere. Perhaps, that paradox may never be resolved, for a complete representation may not even be desirable. So, there is no conclusion. There is no possible conclusion that may imply a veiled form of closure. No representation, no simulation, no possible explanation, that could provide us with an answer to the first and last question to be asked Why did the Holocaust happen?

And questions arise for architecture and education:

In which subtle ways, still, the separation and discreteness of our life and teaching could be linked to those dark times?

Do we acknowledge and present, within our teachings of Modernity, this dark side?

What questions can we ask about power, control, space, territory?

What about patronage, monumentality?

What about the design of concentration camps, gas chambers and crematoria?

And what about memory and memorials?

The Holocaust appears to be the ultimate cross discipline subject, transcending the artificial barriers and discreteness in academic circles as well as in life. Working through might mean, being aware of both the distancing effect of intellectual work, as well as the recurrence of strong emotional impact.

To learn from the Holocaust might mean to be able to regard both public life, public art and architecture from other perspectives. Even to observe modernity, and its mythical constructions with other eyes. If modernity entailed the possibility of creating the world anew, it also involved the possibility for Total Utopias such as Nazism to occur, perhaps embodying the intense contradiction of Modern life, freedom and endless possibilities, on the one hand, and, on the other

hand, totalitarianism and destruction.

Without memory, without reading the traces of the past, there can be no recognition of difference, no recognition of the other as *Other*.⁴¹

Holocaust memorials may enter, by evoking something much larger and beyond themselves, the realm of Architecture, as proposed by Loos. The tomb and the monument.

Their final aim would be to keep memory from freezing, and maybe keep our hearts from freezing as well, for at the end all comes back to a painful core: unrepresentable, unimaginable, unspeakable horror.

We prefer to speak and to judge. We wish to be strong and invulnerable. The lesson from the Holocaust- if there is any- is that our strength is only illusory, and in each of us there is a victim who is afraid, who is cold, who is hungry.

– Elie Wiesel. *A Plea for the Dead*.

NOTES

- 1 Theodor Adorno. *What does coming to terms with the past mean?* tr. Geoffrey Hartman; lecture included in Eingriffe (interventions) from *Gesammelte Schriften* vol. 10, pp. 555-72.
- 2 Colin Rowe. *The architecture of good intentions*. (Academy Editions. 1994), p. 12.
- 3 'Architecture, which is the expression of the spirit of an epoch, delivered an ultimatum' Le Corbusier. The radiant city, from Colin Rowe *The architecture of good intentions*. (Academy Editions. 1994), p. 31.
- 4 Historic centers, markets, ports, retro-fashion, antiques and more, added to the obsessive personal memorialization through photography, video, memoirs, biography, are expressions of a museum-like sensibility, Adorno calls it "Museumal."
- 5 Andreas Huyssen, *Monument and Memory in a Postmodern Age* in *The Art of Memory*, ed. James Young (Prestel, New York. 1994), p. 12.
- 6 For a monumental study on the Holocaust and its historical context, focusing on the problem of uniqueness, from ideological, methodological, historical and philosophical points of view see Steven Katz. *The Holocaust in historical context*. vol. 1 (Oxford University press, NY). Also the Historikerstreit (historians controversy in Germany) on the notion of uniqueness.
- 7 Hitler's comments. Hermann Rausching, p. 231, note 19 in Katz. *The Holocaust in Historical Context* vol. 1 (Oxford University press, NY), p. 7.
- 8 From *Mein Kampf* in Katz *The Holocaust in Historical Context* vol. 1 p. 3 – Noncontrovertible antisemitism, the struggle against world Jewry, is not only a personal matter, but essentially a fundamental principle of politics and metapolitics, nature and metanature, history and metahistory.
- 9 Concentration camps, Nuremberg laws, Kristallnacht, the invasion of Poland and the beginning of WW2, Polish ghettos, war with Russia, Einsatzgruppen, the Wannsee Conference, Auschwitz, Treblinka, Sobibor, factories of death and death marches, medical experiments and racial research do not just happen. They are not just the consequence of unthinking phenomena, the outcome of amoral functions. Each was a willed event. The parasitic vileness of the Jew is immutable: only death can overcome it. From this a priori everything else flows. all technocratic, efficient bureaucracy, pseudo-racial distortions, obsequiousness of students, professors; participation of capitalists, and pastors. All were given a chance to occur "only because the Shoah as an idea came into being..." Katz, p. 6.
- 10 Andreas Huyssen, *Monument and Memory in a Postmodern Age*. (The art of memory exhibition catalogue), p. 16.
- 11 Primo Levi, "Survival in Auschwitz and the Reawakening" (Summit Books, New York, 1985) from Giovanni Leoni "The First Blow," in *Holocaust Remembrance*. ed. G. Hartman (Blackwell, Oxford. 1994), p. 208.
- 12 Ibid. p. 208.
- 13 Saul Friedlander questions the representational adequacy of writing history, for "while no recent event has elicited so much documentation and analysis, knowledge has not become understanding." New methods of representation are necessary, and have not come about. In this regard he suggests that both the individual voice of the victims and of the commentator should be introduced, "in a field dominated by political decisions and administrative decrees which neutralize the concreteness of despair and death." See Geoffrey Hartman. *Darkness visible in Holocaust Remembrance*, p. 5.
- 14 See Saul Friedlander. *Trauma, Memory and Transference*. *Holocaust Remembrance*, pp. 252-263.
- 15 In Germany, individual testimonies opened up public places for remembering. Personal memories were transformed into public narratives. The phenomenal success of TV miniseries, documentals, talk shows, Films, are accounts of new ways became private acts of mediated rituals of passive memory consumption. During the 70's a catharsis of remembrance and representations appeared throughout Germany. Confronting with the past, occurred through acts in which the holocaust was the "object" of the memory. If collective memory is related to the existence of the public sphere in which the common values of society were to be represented and expressed, the multitude of private, individual accounts that shape or mold the public memory of the Holocaust, could be also seen as a sign – risky in certain way- of the rise of a new German bourgeois identity and consciousness. See Michael Geyer and Miriam Hansen. *German-Jewish Memory and National Consciousness in Holocaust Remembrance*, p. 177.
- 16 Adorno writes in *What does coming to terms with the past mean?*: we are not mere observers of world history who could romp around more or less untouched in its enormous rooms, nor does world history itself, whose rhythm increasingly simulates that of catastrophe, appear willing to grant its subjects the time in which everything could get better on its own. This leads directly to the question of democratic pedagogy. Enlightenment about what happened in the past must work, above all, against a forgetfulness that too easy goes along with and justifies what is forgotten.
- 17 Huyssen, *The Art of Memory*, ed. James Young (Prestel, New York. 1994). p. 16.
- 18 Primo Levi. *The Drowned and the Saved* (New York: Vintage International, 1989) p. 31.
- 19 Michel de Certeau. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. (Univ. California press, Berkeley) p. 35-6.
- 20 Ibid. p. 36-7.
- 21 Ibid. p. 38.
- 22 When speaking about narrative, Paul Ricoeur argues that the "philosophical understanding of time collapses into aporias which cannot be resolved within the limits of the dichotomy between treatments of time centered on "the time of the cosmos" and those centered on "the time of the soul." The two approaches are complementary and irreducible. Neither can accommodate or absorb the other into a unified account of the natural time. From within a definition which emphasizes physical motion, we cannot understand human time; but nor we can coherently, think the time of the soul constituting the reality of time. Cosmological and phenomenological time cannot be reconciled. There's a kind of poetic resolution found in narrative. Time becomes human in the

form of narrative, which articulates our experience of time and time is brought to language by narrative." See Genevieve Lloyd. Being in *Time*. (London: Routledge, 1993), p. 12-3.

²³ From James E. Young, *The texture of memory*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), pp. 209-210

²⁴ From Lawrence Sullivan, *Memory Distortions* (Harvard, 1997), p. 389.

²⁵ *ibid.* p. 389.

²⁶ Young. *The texture of memory*. p. 1.

²⁷ *Ibid.* p. 7.

²⁸ Huysen *The Art of Memory*, ed. James Young (New York: Prestel, 1994). p. 15.

²⁹ The late German historian Martin Broszat has suggested, that in reference to the fascist era, monuments may not remember events so much as bury them altogether beneath layers of national myth and explanations. *Ibid.* p. 4.

³⁰ Young. *The texture of memory*, p. 12.

³¹ *Ibid.* p. 11.

³² *Ibid.* p. 11.

³³ When memory is transferred to a memorial or icon, we could think that memory is condensed, shrunk to embody an object, to which we relate through the gaze, in a sort of snapshot condition.

This "photographic quality," could generate the illusion of intensity. Thus a distancing effect is created, that could be overcome when the memories they evoke, remain present in the viewer.

³⁴ *Ibid.* p. 5.

³⁵ James Young *The Art of Memory*, ed. James Young (New York: Prestel, 1994), p. 23.

³⁶ *Ibid.* p. 24.

³⁷ The commemoration takes place every year The 27 of Nissan, five days after Passover, around the beginning of April. It is located in the Israeli Calendar- between Passover (remembrance of the Exodus), and the day of celebration of the foundation of the modern State of Israel, bringing together both biblical and modern return to the land of Israel, through symbolizing the passage from Egypt, through the Shoah, to the foundation of the modern state of Israel.

³⁸ Young. *The texture of memory*, p. 275.

³⁹ *Ibid.* p. 277.

⁴⁰ Primo Levi. *Shame. Art from the ashes*. Ed. Lawrence Langer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 117.

⁴¹ For a deep and moving discussion on Judaism and ethics, see Emmanuel Levinas. *Difficult Freedom, Essays on Judaism*. tr. Sean Hand (Baltimore: John Hopkins, 1990).