

# Women Mobilizing Memory

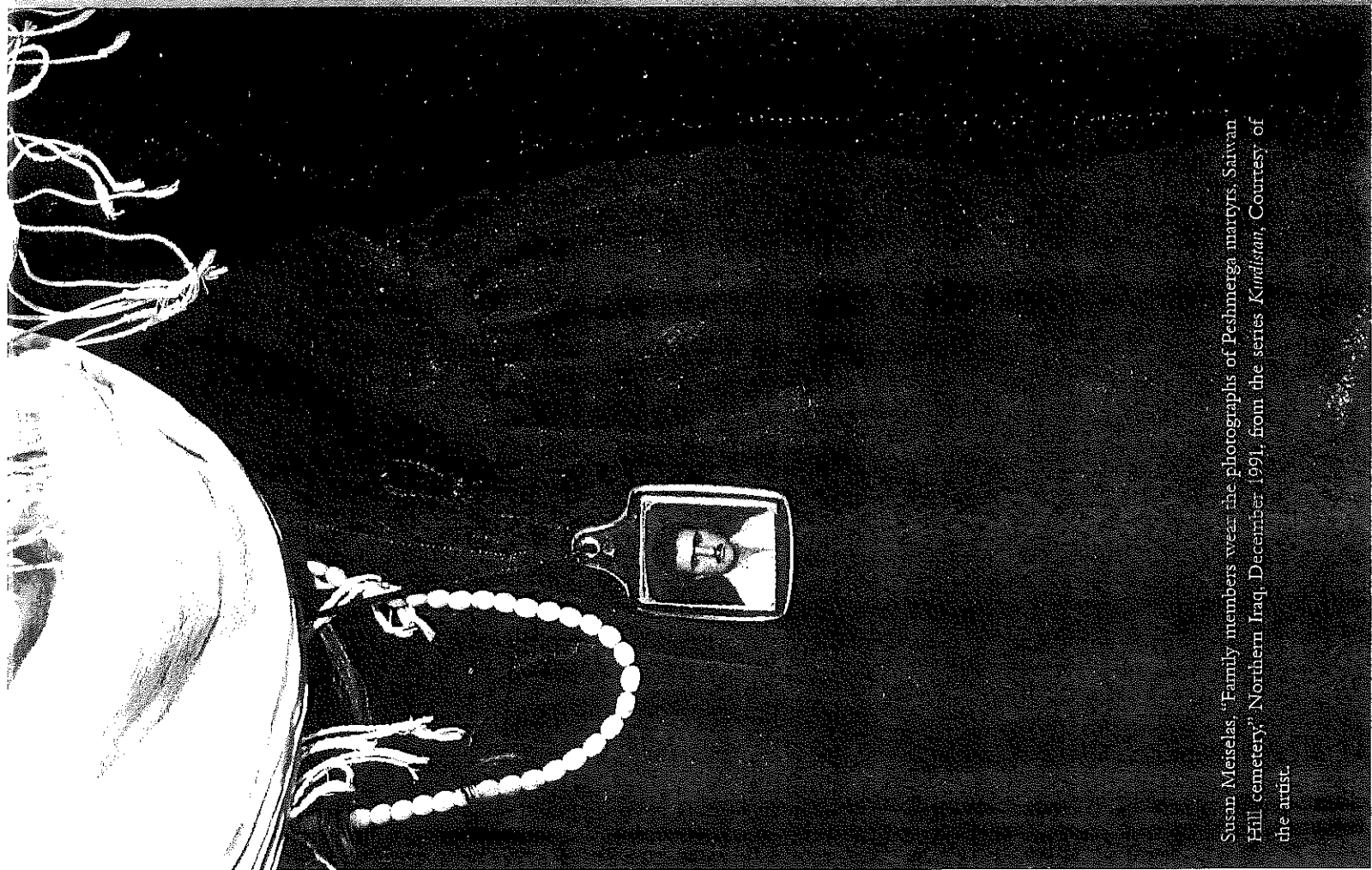
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Susan Meiselas, "Family members wear the photographs of Peshmerga martyrs, Saivan Hill cemetery, Northern Iraq, December 1991, from the series *Kurdistan*, Courtesy of the artist.

## CHAPTER I

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### Stadium Memories

#### *The Estadio Nacional de Chile and the Reshaping of Space through Women's Memory*

KATHERINE HITE AND MARITA STURKEN

In the stands of the Estadio Nacional in Santiago, Chile, the site of the largest sports and entertainment events of the country as well as a national voting station, there is a small cordoned-off area. Amid the plastic orange seats of the large arena, this area next to the field consists of several rows of empty wooden benches. Above the aged and splintered benches, a sign reads "*Un pueblo sin memoria es un pueblo sin futuro*" (A people without memory is a people without a future). As part of a series of memorial projects at the stadium to commemorate those who were detained, tortured, and killed there from September to November 1973, the empty wooden seats form a kind of time capsule, an entreaty to remember through the material preservation of the original benches. The seats sit as a silent ruin, an eyesore in the larger stadium environment, and a reminder that the stadium was once the site of brutal repression. The Estadio Nacional has become, more than forty years after the coup, a site of memorialization.

In this essay, we aim to situate the memorialization processes of the Estadio Nacional in relation to radical women's activism through memory. The reclamation of the stadium as a space of memory can be seen in the context of feminist tactics of solidarity and resisting political violence, among both older generations of women who were revolutionaries and former political prisoners and younger generations of progressive activists, as well as the history of feminist women's activism through the tactic of intervention into public space. The stadium's use as a site of detention and torture and its

partial repurposing as a space of memory raise issues related to visibility and invisibility, gendered spatial relations, and activist women's mobilization of memory in relation to architectural forms and violent histories.<sup>1</sup>

Like those of memorialization projects throughout the world, the Estadio Nacional efforts have not been smooth. The process in Chile reflects local dynamics of power and struggle from the margins as well as the ways the conflictual and repressive past, and the pain and silences it produced, continues to weigh on the present. While we can situate the Estadio Nacional within a long history of stadiums being repurposed as places of violent repression, its transformation into a site of memorialization while still functioning as an active venue for sports and entertainment makes it a unique space of intersecting and contrasting social realms. The empty seats of the stadium memorial sit there not only as memories of the stadium's violent past but are also actively intervening into the present as a spatial form of protest. In its contradictions and paradoxical uses, the Estadio Nacional opens up a space for the mobilization of memory for social change, deploying the memory of the stadium's past to engage issues of social justice in the present. The stadium's memorial projects reveal a unique intersection of spatial practices, mobilizations of memory, and women's memory as a site of activism and renewal.

### Containment and the Chilean Coup

Chile's September 11, 1973 military coup d'état resulted in the death of the democratically elected leftist President Salvador Allende and the beginning of the seventeen-year dictatorship of General Augusto Pinochet. The regime's early and intense focus on systematically eliminating the Chilean left produced a pervasive state terror, including the murder and forced disappearance of an estimated 3,200 citizens, the torture of tens of thousands of Chileans, massive numbers of exiles, and the enduring neoliberalization of the economy and politics. For much of the world familiar with the coup and the 1973–1990 Chilean dictatorship, the black-and-white photographs of the detentions at the Estadio Nacional, which circulated in the international press, remain iconic, even though the stadium only functioned that way for three months.

This iconicity derives from the fact that from September to November 1973, the stadium was the dictatorship's largest detention center, with as

many as 20,000 prisoners from Chile and thirty-eight other countries.<sup>2</sup> The stadium was also the focus of periodic global attention. On September 22, 1973, in a move to assure both Chileans and the international community that those being held were being treated humanely, the junta conducted an official press "tour" of the conditions there. Yet, the military's strategy backfired, as reporters and photographers observed first-hand the soldiers' cruel treatment and the poor state of the detainees. The stadium was emptied of prisoners in November 1973 in order for the World Cup qualifying matches to take place there (a match in which the Soviet Union refused to participate, resulting in a default). The regime's reopening of the stadium after several months was an attempt to cleanse its sordid history and to normalize it as a nationalistic space of the Pinochet regime going forward.

According to the 1991 *Report of the National Commission on Truth and Reconciliation*, officially at least forty-one people lost their lives inside the stadium. Because of the numbers of those who were detained there, tortured, killed, and then dumped in Santiago streets, ditches, and in the Mapocho River during the regime's early months, journalists and human rights advocates assume there were many more.<sup>3</sup> Among the stadium prisoners were approximately 1,400 women, who were held in separate spaces on the stadium grounds, including in locker rooms adjacent to the main coliseum.<sup>4</sup> Since women constituted a small number of the approximately 3,200 people who were killed and disappeared, women's experiences as subjects and victims of the dictatorship were rendered all the more invisible during the detention and in its aftermath. The women do not appear in the iconic black-and-white photos. When the military emptied the stadium in November, many of the women were released (often only to be re-arrested shortly thereafter), while others were moved to clandestine detention centers and a women's prison, where they experienced further abuse. Some remained prisoners for several months, others for a year or more, and others had their sentences commuted to forced exile.

In March 1990, after seventeen years of military rule, a national referendum forced Pinochet to step down from his position as dictator; he then became the commander in chief of the army. In 1998, Pinochet was named a "senator for life," as specified in the military-orchestrated 1980 constitution. Nevertheless, the former general was arrested in London in October 1998 on the order of the Spanish judge Baltasar Garzón. This surprise arrest and his subsequent eighteen-month detention seemed to produce a moment of public release in Chile. It opened a new space for Chilean

survivor testimonies, which began to appear in major media reports as well as through memoirs and documentaries.<sup>5</sup> This also became a period in which Chilean memorialization efforts like those surrounding the Estadio Nacional began to proliferate, primarily as small, fragmented, but determined struggles to mark sites of loss and to reclaim former sites of clandestine detention and disappearance.<sup>6</sup> Through the fitful yet persistent work of former political prisoners and their families, human rights advocates, architects, journalists, filmmakers, political organizers, and more recently, a robust group of younger volunteers, the Estadio Nacional has been reclaimed as a site of memory, education, and activism.

### Stadium Architecture, Visuality, and the Gendering of Space

While the Estadio Nacional is unique in being partially remade as a site of memory, there is a long history of stadiums being repurposed as sites of detention. From recent examples of Syrian refugees being held at the Stadium of Kos, Greece, in August 2015; to the SuperDome as a site of neglect, brutality, and death during Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans in 2005; back in history to the detainment of Jewish prisoners at the Vélodrome d'Hiver (Vel' d'Hiv) in Paris in 1942 before they were deported to extermination camps, stadiums have served as sites of containment, detention, and torture.<sup>7</sup> This kind of repurposing of space demonstrates in many ways the long history of crowd control in modernity. A stadium is a site of spectacle by design. Yet, precisely because they are built to accommodate large numbers of people, stadiums are also governed by the design of crowd containment, with restrictive venues of access and egress to prevent unpaid entry, and large hidden spaces underneath, used under normal circumstances for celebrities, entertainers, and sports teams. The scale of stadium spectacle has long aligned its meaning with nationalism (as sites of national sports teams, with the direct alignment of sports with patriotism, in particular in relation to football and world sports events such as the World Cup), with masculinist aesthetics, and with fascism with its deployment of massive rallies as events of spectacular affirmation.<sup>8</sup>

Architect Benjamin Flowers has outlined the different modes through which stadiums can be understood, such as nationalism and transnational capital flows, and among these he defines "death and destruction"

(as epitomized by the use of stadiums for detention and the building of stadiums on sites that have been destroyed) and "war incubator" (as sites where sport contests and nationalist events become incitements to war) as two central typologies.<sup>9</sup> The built environment can become a space of oppression precisely because it is designed to restrain the energy of the crowd, which has resulted in many incidents of individuals in crowds being crushed to death as they surged up against the barriers at stadiums.<sup>10</sup> These disasters are largely attributed to a conflict between spaces and crowds; as Camiel van Winkel writes, "There is, in the history of the modern sports stadium, an ominous undercurrent of mutual provocation between crowd and architecture. The architecture attempts to impose discipline on the crowd, but time and again it transpires that deciders and managers have miscalculated its blind force."<sup>11</sup> Architectural design of discipline can turn quickly to architecture as death.

The Estadio Nacional embodies in many ways this history of modern stadium architecture and its shadowy history of violence. Built in 1938, and modeled on the fascist aesthetic of Nazi Germany, it was always an incomplete project, with its various stages of construction (including a renovation in 1962 and a later renovation in 2009) almost all incomplete in some way. As Valentina Rozas-Krause has written, the history of the stadium is a narrative of incompleteness, of "interrupted" modernism, which began with an embrace of modernist aesthetics as a symbol of a burgeoning consumerist middle class, distinguished from the landowning oligarchic aristocracy. She defines the structure as evoking the "unfinished promise of modernity," which further deteriorated in an unfinished renovation for the 1962 World Cup, and more fully debased in its transformation into a site of detention and torture in 1973. She writes, "Its potential dungeons, the panopticon-like Press Gallery in the marquee, and the control of the flow of people that the spatial design of the National Stadium facilitated, appear to be the main functional arguments—although they were never declared as such—that led the military to use it as a prisoner camp."<sup>12</sup> These intersections of modern design, fascist and disciplinary architectural modes, and incompleteness signal both the potential of the stadium as a site of state terrorism and its eventual transformation into a site incorporating memorial elements. It is not incidental that this highly masculine space of discipline and state control has been reconfigured in part as a site of memory through the work of many women activists.

During the months of detention and torture at the Estadio, the intersection of spatial organization and visibility (the deployment of power

through the visual) was explicitly gendered. The women were not held in the main arena with the men, but in smaller locker room buildings adjacent to the stadium and Olympic pool. Thus while the men were detained in the bleachers, under the gaze of the military and cameras, the women were held out of sight. The military conducted interrogations of both the women and men inside the indoor racetrack. This meant that the women were sometimes paraded through the main arena to the interrogation area, before the gaze of the men held there, with the men often responding with applause. The women were housed together in the locker room building and, as former prisoner Teresa Anativia López notes, the space itself allowed for the women to interact with each other and support each other. Here, she states, "I learned what solidarity is."<sup>13</sup>

In contrast to other sites of detention in Chile, such as Villa Grimaldi, where prisoners were blindfolded and forbidden to have contact with one another, at the stadium they were housed together. When women returned from being tortured, they were cared for by the other women in the collective space. Anativia López notes that when the UN commission was brought in to observe the conditions and the military was trying to portray the situation in positive terms, the women collectively decided to bring out before the horrified commission members a badly beaten woman they had hidden, an act for which the women were severely punished.

The design of the stadium also restricted views from the outside. Relatives who were seeking news about their missing family members often came to the gate of the stadium where they were unable, by design, to enter or to see into the interior space. Former prisoners and their families recount that there was one area near the locker room where families could make out their loved ones at a distance through the gates, when guards were not vigilant. These spatial arrangements—the crowd containment of the stadium's arena, the space underneath where torture took place hidden from view, the containment yet community of the women in the locker room, the restricted views, and the dynamics of visibility, resistance, and solidarity—created a complex interaction of space, gender, and power.

#### Stigma, Shame, and Testimony

Chile's gradual democratic transition that began in 1990 preserved fundamental features of the dictatorship, including neoliberal social and economic

transformations, the weakening of collective civic life, and the denigration of a leftist imagination. Women have been some of the most visible protagonists of the Chilean human rights struggle for truth and accountability, and yet many women who themselves had survived imprisonment and torture needed years to begin to speak about those experiences. Beyond the pain and even revulsion of giving testimony was the experience of stigma; upon release from detention, women who remained in the country faced a climate of fear and silence. Often the fact that they had been held prisoner made them immediately suspect—perceived as a danger to themselves, their families, and to what was left of their communities. Former prisoners who survived were often labeled terrorist subversives. They also faced suspicion from the revolutionary left, some of whom questioned whether their release meant that the former prisoners had cooperated with interrogators by revealing the names and whereabouts of fellow militants. Many former prisoners suffered survivors' guilt as well as the shame of their sexual violation in a cultural context of silence regarding sex in general.

The torture of many of the women prisoners was brutal and sexually sadistic, targeting women's bodies with electric shock, broken glass, and brute force.<sup>14</sup> For virtually thirty years, Chilean women's experiences of such sadistic practices were largely enveloped in what Veena Das has termed a "zone of silence" in which women evade specificity in testifying to their traumatic experiences. As a "repository of poisonous knowledge," according to Das, women survivors can internalize the violence and violations to spare their families pain.<sup>15</sup> Since the early 2000s, increasing numbers of women former political prisoners have provided their testimonies to journalists, scholars, and to official government commissions; yet to this day, many surviving former prisoners remain silent about their experiences, particularly regarding their torture.<sup>16</sup>

The testimonies that have emerged from women ex-prisoners describe the tremendous solidarity and organizing among the women within the stadium, across class, education, culture, and nationality. For example, they recount the role of Dr. Elena Gálvez, then a forty-four-year-old physician in Santiago's left militant-organized squatter settlements, who became a leader among the prisoners.<sup>17</sup> Along with several other detainees, Gálvez arrived at the stadium on September 21, beaten and bruised in the back of a truck. In spite of her state, she began to provide care to other prisoners and to organize support systems among them. Given Gálvez's medical and organizing skills, the military periodically confined her to a tiny men's bathroom, where

she was held incommunicada for days at a time.<sup>18</sup> In addition to her medical assistance, Gálvez was known for her consistent good humor and insistence that women remain strong, control as much of their immediate surroundings as they could, and resist showing weakness before their captors.<sup>19</sup>

Many women have testified to the ways that their collective imprisonment allowed them to share information and strategies for survival. “We learned incredible things for survival from our Brazilian women comrades,” recounts Verónica Báez, as many Brazilian leftists who were prisoners had experienced detention under the Brazilian military dictatorship in the late 1960s before coming to Chile as political exiles. According to Báez, the Brazilians counseled not to argue or speak with the military, “who are very clear on what they’re doing and whatever thing you tell them can be used to extract information.” The Brazilians also advised fellow women prisoners not to bathe, “because the more greasy dirt we had on our bodies, the better protected we would be from electric shocks, because grease is a bad conductor.”<sup>20</sup>

The women also counseled one another on survival strategies to resist infection and disease and to maintain some strength. “I felt so supported by the other women prisoners there,” said Ruth Vuscovic, “women who became real friends. In that dark place you could find the best of what it means to be human.” Vuscovic, a young Communist militant, was arrested in her home and forced to leave her eight-month-old child. For ten days, Vuscovic had no word of her husband’s whereabouts until she learned that he, too, was being held in the stadium. A guard pointed to him among the men in the stands and arranged a brief embrace between them.<sup>21</sup> Vuscovic and other prisoners managed to pass messages back and forth between the men and women prisoners, and very occasionally, more sympathetic guards allowed married couples who were both prisoners to meet.<sup>22</sup> These small gestures, and the building of solidarity and resistance, would lay the foundation for the memorialization projects that would follow many years later.

In their search for meaningful political engagement, younger generations of memory activists have been attracted by these histories of solidarity to become involved at the stadium. One such activist, Andrés Aguirre, states how important listening to and recording former women prisoners’ testimonies is to him, and he is working with other younger volunteers to build a video archive of the testimonies, particularly as the women grow old and pass away.<sup>23</sup> The memorial projects at the stadium are thus actively connecting the current activities there with the political struggles that defined

the prisoners before they were detained and that formed the small acts of resistance and protest that bonded the women during their detention.

The memorialization projects of the Estadio Nacional and throughout Chile emerged in fits and starts many decades after the coup out of the desire to make these memories and histories more visible. The destruction of family lives, shattered political projects, the loss of livelihood, and forced exile all help to explain ongoing tensions and fractionalization within post-dictatorship memorialization efforts as well as the hesitancy to take part in such efforts. Chilean memorialization efforts also take place in a public context that has not embraced such processes. Former human rights violators continue to circulate in Chile; many of their former supporters are in high political office and corporate boardrooms, and the political tensions around memorialization shift constantly. Nevertheless, in 2010, at the end of her first term in office, ex-prisoner President Michelle Bachelet inaugurated Chile’s Museo de la Memoria y los Derechos Humanos. The museum marked an official memorial engagement on a major scale with the 1973–1990 dictatorship. By contrast, the stadium project has been a grassroots memorialization effort. Memorial projects and events at the Estadio Nacional are imbued in part by women’s shared experiences and by memories of resistance and solidarity in the stadium as well as outside the gates.

### The Stadium as a Site of Memory

For many ex-prisoners, the process of memorialization of those affected by the state terrorism of the Pinochet dictatorship began on October 16, 1998, when Chile awoke to the news Pinochet had been arrested in London under a Spanish magistrate’s extradition request. Many Chileans describe that moment as one of utter disbelief; ex-political prisoner and memory activist Wally Kunstmann states that she really thought she was dreaming when she heard the news. Pinochet’s arrest, according to Kunstmann, catalyzed a group of women former political prisoners to mobilize publicly together for the first time. The women sought a meeting with then president Eduardo Frei to demand that the government support Spain’s extradition request, though Frei refused to meet with them.<sup>24</sup> The former prisoners then met each day outside La Moneda, the presidential palace, joining older human rights groups like the *Agrupación de Familiares de los Detenidos-Desaparecidos* and HIJOS (an organization of children of the

murdered and disappeared that began in Argentina and has spread to several Latin American countries, including Chile), to demand that Pinochet be held accountable. Kunstmann describes the protests:

We got hold of sound equipment to read our demands aloud, at night we organized candlelight vigils, we painted signs and banners, we wrote *libretos* denouncing the human rights violations over the 17 years. More than anything, for the first time women and men former political prisoners raised our voices to talk about torture, supporting our denunciations with an exhibit of documents, photographs, testimonies, that brought into the public light the politics of state sponsored terrorism applied by the armed forces, with the support of civilian groups, against the people of Chile.<sup>25</sup>

The group would eventually form its own association of former prisoners, first gathering testimonies to send to the Spanish magistrate to support the Pinochet detention, and later publicly denouncing the violations and outing the military officers and civilians who had tortured them. The ex-prisoners' torture cases would join those already in progress that were focused on the disappearances and deaths.<sup>26</sup> The *Agupación* also began a concerted effort with others to locate and publicize the former clandestine detention centers where they had been imprisoned and tortured. Kunstmann's group would eventually become the nongovernmental *Estadio Nacional, Memoria Nacional* (National Stadium, National Memory) organization.

At the same time that Kunstmann and others began to focus on the stadium as a site to be reclaimed for what had happened there, Chilean filmmaker Carmen Luz Parot released her documentary, *Estadio Nacional* (2003). In the documentary, former prisoners share their accounts of coping and resistance strategies as well as their experiences of torture and despair. They describe inventing and organizing games, and even a choir; celebrating mass with an imprisoned priest; communicating with their families through conscripted soldiers from the provinces in need of a lunch in Santiago on their days off. The documentary conveys the high level of organization and innovation the prisoners achieved in the midst of a great deal of pain and brutality.

On August 21, 2003, in response in part to the years of ex-prisoner activism, the Chilean Government declared the Estadio Nacional a national monument. The stadium thus became a focus for both human rights and

political activists and for professional architects, including Claudia Woywood and Marcelo Rodríguez, the granddaughter and son of the architect Alejandro Rodríguez Urzua, who was detained and who disappeared on July 27, 1976. Woywood and Rodríguez began working on a design to repurpose the stadium grounds as a site of memory. The process regarding who would be authorized to represent the memorial site and design proved rocky, involving struggles and contestation over who could speak for the victims, who and what must be mourned and respected, and how, as well as what audiences and constituencies should be prioritized. Serious tensions and disagreements led to the exit of some activists and the Rodríguez-Woywood architects from the project.

Subsequently, the architects Marcel Coloma and Alexandra Buzhynskaya, a couple working with the ex-political prisoners, became responsible for the master plan, which incorporated some dimensions of the Rodríguez-Woywood design. Paradoxically, the *Estadio Nacional, Memoria Nacional* organization ultimately received significant support from the sports ministry of rightist president Sebastián Piñera (2010–2014). The Piñera administration granted the organization the authority to approve or deny changes to the memorial site. It was in this context that parts of the “incomplete” stadium were repurposed yet again, into a memorial.

The memorial projects at the Estadio Nacional demonstrate how the remaking of the stadium has created new kinds of looking within the designed stadium space.<sup>27</sup> *Escotilla 8*, once a forgotten underground space, now functions quite effectively as a site of performance, with large photographs on display of the stadium in 1973 and those detained and killed there, accommodating crowds on anniversary occasions.<sup>28</sup> Two memorials on the grounds dehand the attention of crowds that are filtering into the stadium, pulling their views away from the central coliseum. The first stands at the central entrance to the stadium grounds and pays homage to the former prisoners. Its positioning also marks the site where families gathered outside for any news of their loved ones inside. The second memorial recognizes the many who were immediately rounded up from their jobs and political postings at the state- and worker-expropriated factories under the Allende government. Inside the stadium arena, the forlorn wooden benches cordoned off among the bright red stadium seats remain. New work on the stadium memorial spaces is underway, including developing a “memory path” between the coliseum and the indoor track arena, as well as a recovery of the writings prisoners had etched into the walls of *Escotillas 7* and *8*.

A permanent photography exhibit with iconic moments inside the stadium from the late 1960s to the present has been installed, where visitors may walk among the photographs spaced across the middle of a room, contemplating the imagery, chronology, and context. The memorial project is thus embodied in the reclaiming of space in ways that integrate the memories of the stadium's past into its present activities and that actively mobilize memories in contemporary Chilean life.

One of the striking features of the stadium's transformation into a site of memory is that many of the spaces where the most brutal activity took place had been virtually untouched for almost forty years, during which time the stadium continued to function somewhat normally. *Escotilla* 8, one of the hatches underneath the bleachers where torture took place, was unused during this time, and the locker room had become a kind of ruin, used occasionally for the swimming pool but never updated. This provided an opportunity for the memorial projects to engage with the way material ruins can evoke the stadium's brief history as a site of detention and torture. In this sense, the multiple uses of the stadium spaces, with contradictory purposes and affective modes, forms a part of its history of incompleteness. The efforts to create sites of memory at the stadium will not result in a kind of completeness so much as a kind of parallel narrative to the ongoing entertainment activities at the stadium.<sup>29</sup> The challenge of the site, and part of what makes it unique as a site of memory, is the dynamic set of spatial and affective contradictions this produces.

The most dramatic of the spatial transformations of the memorialization is the locker room where the women and foreigners were detained, which had formerly been a dark and empty space of peeling paint. To transform the *Camariín de Mujeres* (Women's Locker Room), the architect Claudio Guerra designed a gleaming, transparent glass exterior over the entrance to the building that brings warmth and light to part of its interior. The spatial design reconfigures the brutal modernism of the stadium itself, creating a kind of glass skin over the building, one that enfolds it, yet opens it up through glass and light rather than enclosing it. The space now has photographs of the former women prisoners along with excerpts of their testimonies, and is a place where people participate in guided visits, conduct educational workshops, and gather for cultural activities. Copper plaques with the names of the women prisoners, both Chilean and international, have been placed on the wall of the *Camariín* in an ongoing process to name all the women who were imprisoned there.

The transformation of these spaces into sites of memory has also opened up the stadium as a site for performances, events, and protests. Each March 8, *Estadio Nacional, Memoria Nacional* hosts a celebration of International Women's Day and a commemoration of the women former political prisoners who were held at the stadium decades ago. On March 8, 2016, the events that day and evening took place inside and outside the *Camariín de Mujeres*. The evening ceremony was multigenerational and participatory, reflecting the organization's aims to present performance, theater, and the arts as forums for human rights discourse and commemoration. Performance artist Mila Berríos Palomino paid special tribute to the women former prisoners through a piece evoking memory, the political context, and women's resistance. A knitting collective that met each week in the locker room for several weeks prior to the event presented a large tapestry with individual bordered fabrics for each of the estimated 1,400 women who had been imprisoned there. Surviving former prisoners offered brief testimonies and remembered former fellow prisoners who had recently passed away. Former prisoner Ruth Vusovic sang songs from the Spanish Civil War and from Violeta Parra. The ceremony ended with the harmonious and somber voices of the nine-member professional women's choir *Femme Vocal*. In what can feel like a desolate, haunting space, the locker room was reclaimed and recoded to commemorate what women political prisoners endured, to mourn the passing of several former prisoners in recent years, and to signal the power of women to persevere, create, and to resist injustices then and now.

### Generations of Memory

The experience of returning to the stadium as a memory site has enabled some former prisoners to speak for the first time about their experiences there. Verónica Báez describes the toll the dictatorship took on her family, including imprisonment, torture, and forced internal displacement for her and for several members of her family, as well as the difficult re-insertion into Chilean society after many years in exile. At the time of her imprisonment in the stadium, Báez was pregnant, and she recounts how she willed her body into delaying any contractions until she was released from detention. "When I told my son Marcelo that I had returned to the stadium for the first time to recognize the sites and support memory recovery work . . . he said to me that he, too, should testify, because he was also



there. In my womb, but he was there."<sup>30</sup> Because these memorial projects emerged after a generational delay, the activism generated by them has been multigenerational.

The memory projects at the stadium have attracted younger generations of Chileans to participate as guides, artists, workshop facilitators, event organizers, and more. For some, participation has been a means to gain knowledge about their own family members, a kind of postmemory experience. Twenty-six-year-old Mauricio Jofre, a psychologist, travels to the stadium each week to conduct guided tours for visitors and school groups. After months of his involvement with the stadium, he learned from his own family that he had an uncle who had been a member of the elite Group of Personal Friends (GAP) that served as Salvador Allende's personal bodyguards during his presidency.<sup>31</sup> His participation with the *Estadio Nacional Memoria* Nacional organization thus opened up a once silent familial space in relation to the past.

Young volunteers organized a weekly film series and invited *Estadio Nacional* filmmaker Carmen Luz Parot to facilitate a discussion session after the film's showing. Parot discussed her surprise at the large numbers of young people in the audience. One young woman thanked Parot and said she had come to see the documentary because her father had been a prisoner in the stadium but never talked about it.<sup>32</sup>

For many others, participation is more explicitly political—a search to retrieve a sense of an inspired and somewhat romanticized previous political generation amid massive discontent with Chile's current political leadership. Stark social inequality, racism against the Mapuches who are labeled terrorists for their campaigns to reclaim land, and the exposure of widespread political and corporate corruption have together created a politics in which younger generations in particular seek new collective political identities and affiliations. From participation in the *Estadio Nacional Memoria Nacional* organized political history workshops to art collectives and major commemorative events, younger postdictatorship generations of Chileans situate the memories of the dictatorship's militants in relation to contemporary political struggles.

The March 8 women's tapestry project, for example, was initiated by a thirty-seven-year-old activist, María José Cox, who explained that her participation was a way to honor her grandmother, who had visited the dictatorship's women political prisoners in jail every Saturday. The intergenerational

women's knitting collective continues to plan projects. Stadium activists and teachers Anjélica Espinoza and Camila Paredes became involved through a 2015 political history workshop at the stadium, and they now work to develop a children's storytelling project there. Espinoza grew up in a leftist political and extremely poor family. Working with the stadium volunteers had brought Espinoza a "feeling of belonging."<sup>33</sup> For lyrical singer Moisés Mendoza and his partner, musician and music teacher Luis Valencia, their work as guides has offered instructive ways to connect past human rights violations and issues with those of the present, including gay rights, immigrant rights, and the rights of the Mapuches. Mendoza and Valencia also arrange musical events at the stadium. In these actions, which might be seen within the more benign framework of guiding tours and running workshops, we can see activism that actively engages questions of memory within the framework and values of human rights. This memory activism thus deploys the past as a means not simply to remember state terrorism and its brutal consequences but also deploy the memories of state terrorism as a means to visualize human rights issues in present-day Chile.

Each year, on the anniversary of September 11, the date of the coup in 1973, performances, events, workshops, and exhibitions are organized at the *Estadio*. Beginning in 2007 and continuing each September 11 through the present, a group of young artists, the *Colectivo Nichoecológico*, creates a unique installation. The installation features variations of a molded, golden central figure, tortured, crouched, surrounded by dozens of pairs of similarly molded shoes, all lit by candles; at night it is stunning and haunting. The shape of the central figure has changed each year, representing prisoners who are older or younger, male or female. In the most recent September 11 commemoration years, young people have constituted the largest presence at the stadium, as volunteers, performers and as political activists. The youth wings of Chile's historic Communist and Socialist parties are joined by new, dynamic political groups, including the *Revolución Democrática* (RD), headed by former 2011 university student leaders-now-congressmen Giorgio Jackson and Gabriel Boric. The RD, the Humanist Party, and others have formed an alliance, the *Frente Amplio*, to combat inequality, express solidarity with the Mapuche movement, and propose radical reforms, primarily in education and pension policies.

An estimated 4,000 people participated in the September 11, 2016 stadium commemoration. Individuals, friends, and families walked through

the *Escotilla 8* to the benches, listening to music and to testimonies, lighting candles, and at particular moments, voicing their disappointment with the center-left generation of political elites who have governed for nearly three decades.

Through all its contradictions and incompleteness, the stadium shows us the deployment of a site of memory not only as a reminder of past abuses but also as a remembrance of past resistances and political struggles. The stadium memory projects also demonstrate the integration of memory into a space of everyday life. Memory events at the stadium are also focused on contemporary injustices, inequality, and a critique of the political status quo. It is perhaps ironic that this unlikely space of sports and entertainment that was so easily repurposed for violent repression has been so effectively repurposed by women survivors and their allies for political renewal. Yet this also shows the power of memory as a force that can activate political engagement as a catalyst for social change. This kind of spatial and social intervention evokes hope, the hope that comes from the ways that even a space of torture can be remade into a space of activism and an embrace of justice.

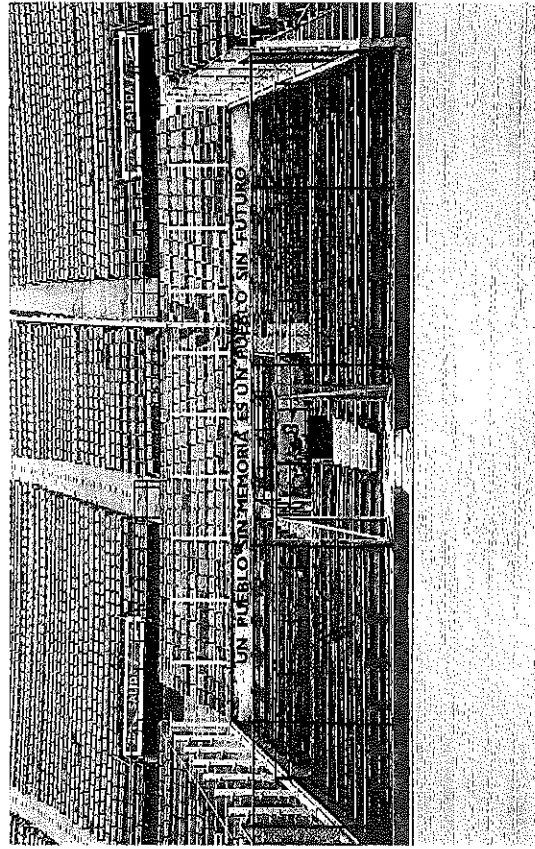


Figure 1.1 Empty seats as part of the memorial at the *Estadio Nacional*, Chile, August 10, 2016.  
Source: Andrés Aguirre, *Corporación Estadio Memoria Nacional Ex-Prisioneros Políticos*.

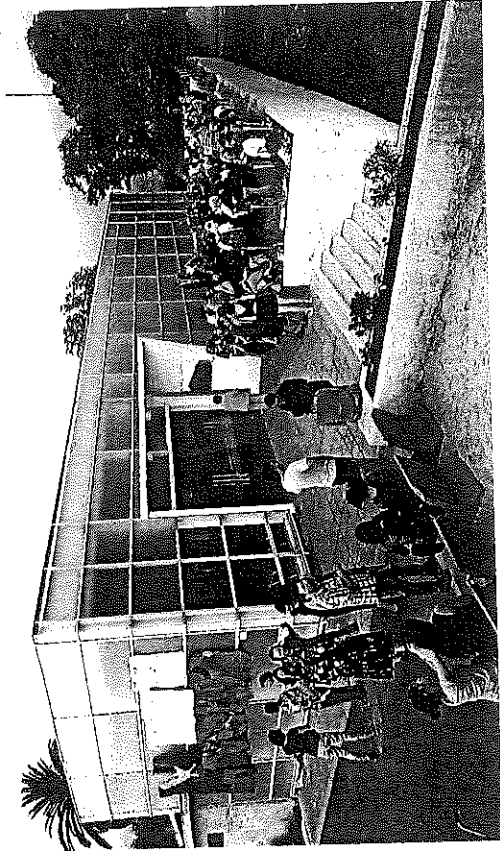


Figure 1.2 The redesigned space of the former women's locker room. Commemoration on International Women's Day, March 8, 2016.  
Source: Andrés Aguirre, *Corporación Estadio Memoria Nacional Ex-Prisioneros Políticos*.

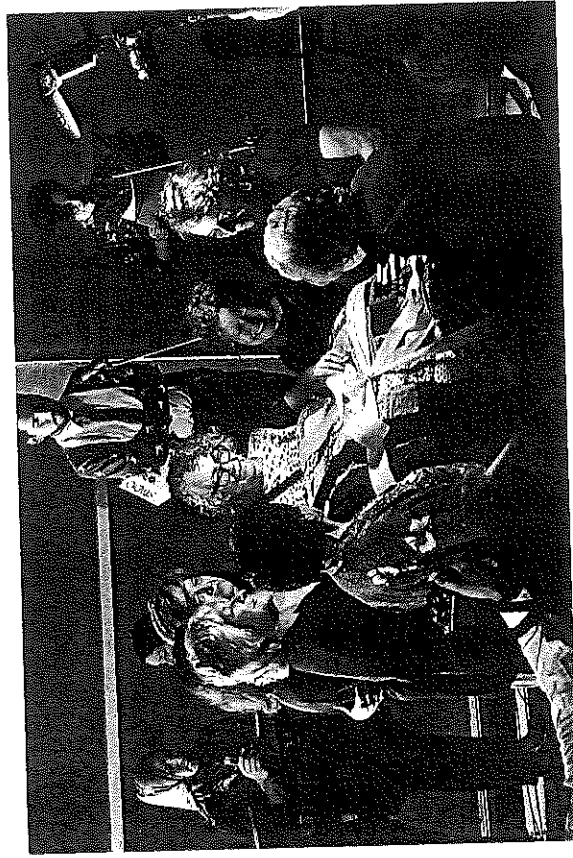


Figure 1.3 Women presenting tapestry to women former political prisoners of the stadium. Commemoration on International Women's Day, March 8, 2016.  
Source: Andrés Aguirre, *Corporación Estadio Memoria Nacional Ex-Prisioneros Políticos*.

## Notes

1. For an analysis of culture and the politics of memory in Chile, see Macarena Gómez-Barris, *Where Memory Dwells: Culture and State Violence in Chile* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008); Katherine Hite, *Politics and the Art of Commemoration: Memorials to Struggle in Latin America and Spain* (New York: Routledge, 2011); Daniela Jara, *Children and the Afterlife of State Violence: Memories of Dictatorship* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2016); Steve J. Stern, *Reckoning with Pinochet: The Memory Question in Democratic Chile, 1989–2006* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010); and Cath Collins, Katherine Hite, and Alfredo Joignant, eds., *The Politics of Memory in Chile from Pinochet to Bachelet* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2013).
2. Estimates range from those provided in the declassified November 15, 1973 CIA “Fact Sheet—Human Rights in Chile,” that placed the number of arrested and detained in the Stadium at 7,000–8,000, to the International Red Cross estimate at between 12,000 and 20,000. The most authoritative account of state terror within the National Stadium is Pascale Bonnefoy Miralles’s in-depth journalistic study *Terrorismo del Estadio: Prisioneros de Guerra en un Campo de Deportes*, now in an expanded second edition (Santiago: Editorial Latinoamericano, 2016).
3. See Bonnefoy Miralles, *Terrorismo del Estadio*, 8–9.
4. The military consistently lied and underreported the numbers of women. The infamous head of military intelligence Manuel Contreras himself kept what he claimed was a meticulous record of the names of the women prisoners, numbering 445 Chileans and 64 foreigners, while Pascale Bonnefoy Miralles estimates that women prisoners numbered over 1,000. See Bonnefoy Miralles, *Terrorismo del Estadio*, 59–60.
5. This included television appearances by former prisoners, Carmen Luz Parot’s documentary *Estadio Nacional* (2001), former prisoner Jorge Montealegre’s memoir *Frazadas del Estadio Nacional* (Santiago: LOM, 2003), and later Bonnefoy Miralles’s *Terrorismo del Estadio*. In addition, in 2000, Felipe Agüero, Chilean political scientist and professor at the University of Miami, outed one of his former torturers in the Estadio Nacional, former air force official Emilio Meneses, who at that time was also a political scientist at Chile’s Catholic University.
6. Cath Collins and Katherine Hite, “Memorials, Silences, and Reawakenings,” in *The Politics of Memory in Chile: From Pinochet to Bachelet*, ed. Cath Collins, Katherine Hite, and Alfredo Joignant (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Press, 2013), 133–63.
7. Léopold Lambert, “The Stadium, An Architecture that Concentrates and Controls Bodies: 2015 Kos, 2005 New Orleans, 1942 Paris,” *The Funambulist*, August 25, 2016, <https://thefunambulist.net/architectural-projects/the-stadium>

-an-architecture-that-concentrates-and-control-bodies-2015-kos-2005-new-orleans-1945-paris.

8. More recent trends have included corporate stadiums with luxury private spaces of spectatorship and the high-profile stadium designs of postmodern starchitecture exemplified by Beijing’s “Bird’s Nest” stadium, designed by Herzog & de Meuron in collaboration with artist Ai Weiwei, for the 2008 Olympics.
9. Benjamin Flowers, “Stadium Architecture, Visual Iconography, and the Shaping of Urban and Sporting Identities,” 2016, [http://www.academia.edu/914771/Stadium\\_Architecture\\_Visual\\_Iconography\\_and\\_the\\_Shaping\\_of\\_Urban\\_and\\_Sporting\\_Identities](http://www.academia.edu/914771/Stadium_Architecture_Visual_Iconography_and_the_Shaping_of_Urban_and_Sporting_Identities). See also Flowers, *Sport and Architecture* (New York: Routledge, 2017).
10. The most notorious of these was the deaths of ninety-six people in 1989 at the Hillsborough Stadium in Sheffield, England.
11. Carriell van Winkel, “Dance, Discipline, Density, and Death: The Crowd in the Stadium,” in *The Stadium: The Architecture of Mass Sport*, ed. Michelle Provoost (Rotterdam: NAI Publishers, 2000), 13.
12. Valentína Rozas-Krause, “Interrupted Stadium: Broken Promises of Modernity in the National Stadium of Chile,” *Shiff* 8 (2015): 70. See also Valentína Rozas-Krause, *Ni tan Eléfgante, ni tan Blanco: Arquitectura, Urbanismo y Política en la Trayectoria del Estadio Nacional* (Santiago: Ril Editores, 2014).
13. Teresa Anativia López, from visit of Women Mobilizing Memory to site in December 19, 2013.
14. Bonnefoy Miralles, *Terrorismo del Estadio*, 66.
15. Veena Das, *Life and Words: Violence and the Descent into the Ordinary* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 55.
16. Interview by Katherine Hite at the stadium with Wally Kunstmann, February 13, 2016. In 2015, as an innovative effort to commemorate women former political prisoners in the stadium, writer and researcher Marco Ensignia created a Twitter site, in which each day between September 11 and November 9, Ensignia tweeted an imagined instance in the lives of the women prisoners held there in 1973. Over the two months that Ensignia posted his tweets (@PresEstadio), the Twitter site garnered 3,359 followers, 1,200,000 hits for the messages themselves, and 15,800 shares of specific tweets. Ensignia reproduced the commemoration in *Presas en el Estadio* (Santiago: Corporación Humanas, 2015).
17. See, for example, the testimony of Verónica Báez Pollier, “La solidaridad de las mujeres prisioneras en el Estadio Nacional,” in *Cien Voces Romper el Silencio: Testimonios de ex Presas y Presos Políticos de la Dictadura Chilena (1973–1990)*, ed. Wally Kunstmann Torres and Victor Torres Ávila (Santiago: DIBAM, 2008), 4. Also the testimony of Ruth Vuscovic, video recording done by Felipe García of the National Stadium National Memory Organization for their archival collection, recorded August 2013. See also Bonnefoy Miralles, *Terrorismo del estadio*, 59–63.

18. Bonnefoy Miralles, *Terrorismo del estadio*, 60.
19. Bonnefoy Miralles, *Terrorismo del estadio*, 58–60.
20. Báez Pollier, *Cien Voces*, 92.

21. From Ruth Vascovic, National Stadium National Memory video archive.
22. From Ruth Vascovic, National Stadium National Memory video archive.
23. Conversation with Katherine Hite, Santiago, February 28, 2016.
24. Wally Kunstmann, "Prólogo," in Torres and Torres Ávila, *Cien Voces*, 19 (our translation).

25. Kunstmann, "Prólogo," 20.

26. The evidence of systematic violations, coupled with a presiding judge who ultimately called for Pinochet's indictment, did mean that the former dictator was removed from the senate and held under house arrest in Chile. He was never convicted and died in a military hospital on December 10, 2006, International Human Rights Day.

27. <http://www.estadionacionalmemorianacional.cl/>.

28. The *Estadio Nacional*, *Memoria Nacional* organization received new government funding to conduct a restoration project of the words, numbers, and symbols etched by former prisoners into the stadium's walls, as well as to restore one of the large arena locker rooms adjoining *Escotilla 8* to create a permanent photography exhibit space.

29. It is not uncommon for famous entertainers to reference the repressive use of the stadium during their performances. Sting, Bono, Mick Jagger, and Bruce Springsteen have all done this during their recent concerts, for example, and when his team won the 2015 Americas Cup. Chilean soccer star Jean Beausejour said, "In a place where there was so much death, today we bring happiness," a statement that was widely broadcast on Chilean news and radio. See "*En un Lugar donde Hubo Muerto, hoy le Dimos una Alegría a Chile*," July 4, 2015, *ADN Radio* 91.7, <http://www.adnradio.cl/noticias/deportes/beausejour-y-la-memoria-en-un-lugar-donde-hubo-muerte-hoy-le-dimos-una-alegria-a-chile/20150704/nota/2836043.aspx>.

30. Báez Pollier, *Cien voces*, 97.

31. Conversation with Katherine Hite during guided visit, February 13, 2016.

32. Observation of Katherine Hite, in attendance, February 23, 2016.

33. Interview by Katherine Hite with stadium memory activists María José Cox, Anjélica Espinoza, Camila Paredes, Moisés Mendoza, Luis Valencia, Mauricio Cofre, and Tasuín Khan, Estadio Nacional, January 17, 2017.

## CHAPTER II

# The Metamorphosis of the Museal

## *From Exhibitionary to Experiential Complex and Beyond*

ANDREAS HUYSSSEN

### 1

I would like to raise a few issues about history, memory, and art in relation to museum culture and memorial sites. My focus is the memory museum, but it must be put in context of a more general transformation of museal culture in recent decades. I am interested in exploring the changing purposes of museal narratives and the double multidirectional-ity in the contemporary museum world, both in terms of expanding geographic horizons of cultural knowledge and in relation to transnational interactions among cultural institutions, media, and urban space. The recent wave of memory studies has been accompanied by a similar explosion in museum studies in different registers: history and conceptualization, empirical description, economics, and curatorial practices. At the same time, it seems that more museums have been built, often by prominent architects, than in any of the preceding decades, comparable perhaps only to the nineteenth century and its dual museal focus on the national and the universal. Many of these new museums are dedicated to specific memories of political violence, ethnic cleansings, and genocide. The popularity of museums today, which still varies greatly among different types of museums, is a sign of the times. The question is whether this popularity of the museal object and the experience it permits point to a revitalized understanding of human pasts, presents, and futures, or whether it functions more like a homeopathic