

chapter five

**d e s i g n c r i t i q u e  
& i n t e r p r e t a t i o n**

## 5.1 INTRODUCTION

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The practice of design interpretation is the process by which a view or perspective – an understanding of design - is reached. Juan Pablo Bonta (1979) suggested that we have three types of sources in gathering information about people’s interpretation of architecture, and within the chapter that follows, the methodology for gathering this information, specifically investigating Euro-Western interpretation of the post genocide memorial sites in Cambodia and Rwanda, is undertaken through the development and application of Bonta’s three stages. Setting up a series of on and off site investigations, the method of ‘introspection’ is applied by a development to David Seamon’s theory of ‘first person’ phenomenology, the method of ‘field studies’ is applied by Rolf von Ekartsberg’s theory of ‘existential’ phenomenology, and finally Bonta’s third stage in gathering information about people’s interpretation of design is undertaken as a ‘hermeneutic analysis’. A design critique based thesis, this study enlists the case study method to provide a basis from which a detailed analysis of contextual and site relationships will be analysed. This chapter will outline the theory and practical application of the three-step phenomenological mode of enquiry adopted within this study.

As has been established in previous chapters, memorial design and the process of memorialisation are highly influenced social practices, entwined in the demands of political, social and economic agenda. Returning to the core assumption outlined in Chapter one, that the practice of genocide memorialisation has today moved beyond merely being a ritual for the victim population, to today gaining greater significance and interest for the international context, this chapter will outline the methods by which an understanding into how post genocide memorial sites in Cambodia and Rwanda are designed, experienced and interpreted by Euro-Western visitors, is gained. Specifically this chapter will,

- establish the method used to gain insight into the *design* of memorial sites in Cambodia and Rwanda, specifically with regards to designing for Euro-Western ‘connection’,
- establish the method used to gain insight into Euro-Western *experience* of site; and lastly this chapter will,
- establish the method used to gain insight into Euro-Western *interpretation* of the post genocide memoryscapes of Cambodia and Rwanda.

## 5.2 THE CASE STUDY METHOD

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Becoming increasingly common in studies of Landscape Architecture, the case study method is widely used in many professions today, from law and medicine to planning and architecture (Francis, 2001, p. 15). In his 2001 article 'A Case Study Method for Landscape Architecture', Mark Francis, professor of Landscape Architecture at the University of California, Davis, suggests that "*Case study analysis is a particularly useful research method in professions such as landscape architecture, architecture, and planning where real world contexts make more controlled empirical study difficult*" (Francis, 2001, pp. 2-3). One of several modes of undertaking research within the design profession, Robert Yin, suggests that the case study method, in general, is "*the preferred strategy when "how" or "why" questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context*" (Yin, 2003, p. 1). The case study method allows the development of a deep understanding of complex issues, adding strength and rigour to research. It emphasises detailed contextual analysis and is used today in many disciplines as a viable and preferred research method, making use of its qualitative qualities to examine complex situations and provide the basis for an extension of ideas and analysis of relationships, particularly when there is a desire to understand complex social phenomena (Yin, 2003, p. 2). For research in landscape architectural studies therefore, the case study method has, in recent years, become a common and preferred approach to carrying out research.

There are however critics of the method believing that case study methodology, and its dependence on a single case, renders it incapable of providing a generalised conclusion: "*Critics of the case study method believe that the study of a small number of cases can offer no grounds for establishing reliability or generality of findings*" (Soy, 1997). Case methodology is also sometimes considered microscopic, because of the often small number of cases it undertakes. Others also believe that the intense exposure to study of the case can bias the findings, while others dismiss case study research as useful only as an exploratory tool (Soy, 1997). Yin, along with other proponents of the method however, argue today that the relative size of a case study sample does not transform a multiple case into a macroscopic study. The goal of the case study method should establish the parameters, and then should be applied to all research. In this way, even a single case could be considered acceptable, provided it met the established objective. Susan Soy, states "*[t]he advantages of the case study method are its applicability to real-life, contemporary, human situations and its public accessibility through written reports. Case study results relate directly to the common reader's everyday experience and facilitate an understanding of complex real-life situations*" (Soy, 1997).

For use in landscape architectural studies, the case study method is also valuable in terms of theory building and critique. For theory, Francis suggests that "*While not always used this way, case studies can be instrumental in developing new theories related to landscape architecture. They not only describe projects or places but can also explain and predict future action*" (Francis, 2001, p. 3). For critique, the process essential for any profession to develop and

advance, “*Case studies can . . . inform ongoing intellectual debates and critical discussions*” (Francis, 2001, p. 3).

Within the context of this research, a comparative case study critique, using the mode of phenomenology, is adopted between the post genocide memoryscapes of Cambodia, Rwanda and Germany, in relation specifically to national memorial sites in Phnom Penh, Kigali and Berlin. The comparative case studies approach is particularly useful in this situation, due to the opportunity it provides for comparison across projects.

### 5.3 DESIGN CRITIQUE & INTERPRETATION

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It has long been accepted that architecture and landscapes possess meaning: to be more than mere structure or space (Whyte, 2006, p. 154). The practise of design critique is introduced here primarily as a mode for understanding the meanings of design through man's lived experience. Under-pinned by the process of interpretation, design critique, in the context of this study, is best understood as a vehicle for conveying connection and of marking significance in the landscape. As Bonta puts it, "*Interpretations – like forms themselves – fulfil a cultural, historically conditioned role. We interpret buildings in certain ways because in so doing we can throw some light upon aspects of the world in which we live*" (Bonta, 1974, p. 72). In practice however, design critique has many functions and many modes – it is not a simple matter of declaring a work 'good' or 'bad', although the exercise of judgement does have its place within design critique. Nor does it simply reiterate what the architect thought she or he was doing (Clark, 2004, p. 18). Design critique allows for the creative process that brings varied types of knowledge and experience to bear on a work, it opens a project to the wider world, to a wider community, changing and relating to cultural and societal difference throughout time (Clark, 2004, p. 18). The creation of meaning therefore, is not just about the intended meaning stated by the designer at conception. The meaning of design is created and recreated with every individual experience, with every different reading that brings to the design a different set of pre-understanding, cultural background, and generational time. "*As a building is planned, built, inhabited, and interpreted, so its meaning changes*" (Whyte, 2006, p. 153).

Understanding the creation of meaning in our landscape today, is about understanding the relationship between man and the environment. "*Places and people are inseparable. Places exist only with reference to people, and the meaning of place can be revealed in terms of human responses to the particular environment*" (Violich, 1985, p. 113). Likewise, understanding the process of critique is about understanding the process of interpretation. Creating meaning and connection that is unbounded by language, culture, religion or class, design interpretation is an immensely creative process, that has the ability to create connection and meaning to design through time, and across traditional boundaries. Juan Pablo Bonta states, "*Architectural history as we know it has been written tacitly adhering to the crudest version of the paradigm of communication: all the attention has been focused on the design of new forms, none on their interpretation. It is high time to realize that, even within the limits of the paradigm of communication, there should be a history of meanings, not only a history of forms*" (Bonta, 1979, p. 232). It could be said therefore that the practice of design interpretation becomes semiotically more relevant than the design or creation of the form itself. "*Designers may have definite intentions about meaning, but they cannot assume that form will be interpreted with the same code as the one operating at the time of designing*" (Bonta, 1974, p. 75). Introducing Bonta's interpretive analysis of Mies van der Rohe's Barcelona Pavilion to illustrate this concept, nine stages of interpretation were recognised from 'blindness' and 'pre-canonic responses' through to the 'official interpretation', 'dissemination' and finally 're-interpretation'. Acknowledging the process and importance of design interpretation in its

ability to ‘connect’ man with meaning through time and culture, the method of enquiry outlined in Sections 5.6, 5.7 and 5.8 below, is about establishing an opportunity to gain better insight into Euro-Western interpretation of the post genocide memoryscapes of Cambodia and Rwanda.

### **5.3.1 BONTA’S ANATOMY OF ARCHITECTURAL INTERPRETATION**

In undertaking an investigation into the ‘historic’ interpretation of Mies van der Rohe’s Barcelona Pavilion, Bonta sought to understand how meaning and significance was ascribed to the work over time, by reviewing the available reactions recorded (Bonta, 1974, p. 57). Finding that much had been written in response to the Pavilion, Bonta found that the judgements only partially coincided and made sense only if one classified them into a number of categories. Identifying nine categories of architectural interpretation, each characterised by a certain consistency in the way the authors and critics had interpreted the building, it became apparent to Bonta, that categories of interpretation follow each other according to a certain internal logic. *“They may occasionally overlap in time, and some texts may have to be considered as belonging to more than one stage. However, each of them seems to typify a certain stage in people’s interpretation of, or response to, a new architectural form”* (Bonta, 1974, p. 57).

Outlined below is a brief introduction to each stage of architectural interpretation described by Bonta in his seminal work titled, *‘An Anatomy of Architectural Critique’* (1974).

5.3.1.1

BLINDNESS

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Today, Mies van der Rohe’s Pavilion is considered one of the major modern architectural achievements of the modern movement. Not always the recognised international style that we see and now readily understand, the Barcelona Pavilion was in the 1920’s a new and unfamiliar style in architecture. Departing from the architectural norms of the time, understanding the Pavilion meant moving away from the culturally established patterns in which it sat at that time: *“When a work of architecture or art departs from culturally established patterns, it is not enough to see it in order to understand it. A process of collective clarification must take place, meaning has to be verbalized, and new interpretive canons are to be set up. This takes time”* (Bonta, 1974, p. 58). In 1929 however, only but a handful of the million visitors to the Expo noticed the Pavilion. *“Failure to perceive the building’s value should not be attributed simply to lack of enlightenment of the crowds as opposed to the finer discrimination of scholars. Reputable critics who visited the exhibition, representing the most distinguished architectural magazines of the time, were just as insensitive”* (Bonta, 1974, p. 57). In the case of the Barcelona Pavilion, initial interpretation of the building took a few weeks. Establishing the new patterns and getting them accepted however took decades. While this work was being

done by some, the perception of those who did not participate in the process is described by Bonta as 'blindness' (Bonta, 1974, p. 58).

### 5.3.1.2

#### PRE-CANONIC RESPONSE

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Although response to architecture and design need not be positive, in the case of the Barcelona Pavilion many writers took a positive position from the first moment. *“Because of sensitivity, similar artistic affiliation, or perhaps simply because of friendship with the architect, many writers took positions in favour of the Pavilion”* (Bonta, 1974, p. 58). In terms of a negative reaction however, a pre-canonic response can also reflect disapproval (Bonta, 1974, p. 60).

Bonta suggests that in principle, pre-canonic interpretations are the most creative ones. *“Facing a new form for the first time (or facing an old form from a new angle, as if it were new) the interpreter is left on his own to find its meaning”* (Bonta, 1974, p. 66). Before being constrained by the definition of a canon, there is a phase of openness, during which a range of interpretations occur. Bonta explains, *“In principle, a pre-canonic response cannot be communicated; each person must re-create it in direct intercourse with the form.”* (Bonta, 1974, p. 66).

### 5.3.1.3

#### OFFICIAL INTERPRETATION

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Official interpretation is based on a single source's authority rather than on consensus. *“It seems to be half-way between pre-canonic and canonic: constructed individually like the pre-canonic, yet accepted by the community, like the canonic”* (Bonta, 1974, p. 66). Put forward by a person, organisation or institution that has special authority or qualification, the official interpretation stage, is based on the recognition of the authority of the 'official interpreter' (Bonta, 1974, p. 61). In his speech at the opening ceremony of the Pavilion, Bonta states that Dr Von Schnitzler explained his country's purpose in presenting the Pavilion; *“We have wanted to show here what we can do, what we are and how we feel today. We do not want anything more than clarity, simplicity and integrity”* (Von Schnitzler; cited in Bonta, 1974, p. 60). Thus, the building, at this stage, was proclaimed to symbolise Germany's post-war appeasement – an important message at that stage in European history (Bonta, 1974, p. 60).

Mies, as the architect, also had a voice in constructing the official interpretation. In 1928 he wrote in 'Die Form', *“We are right in the middle of a transformation, a transformation that will change the world. To demonstrate and to promote this transformation will be the task of future exhibitions. They will have a productive effect only if we can succeed in casting a clear light on this transition. They will acquire meaning and justification only if the central problem of our time – the intensification of life – becomes the content of the exhibitions”* (Meis, 1928; cited in, Bonta, 1974, p. 60). The designer's ability to influence people's view through their 'official interpretation', just as that of another authoritative source within a population of

people, is often an important factor in establishing the canonic interpretation. As will be seen, in my research the official interpretation of a genocide memorial has an enduring dominant effect on the process of design interpretation, and therefore on the long-term movement of design meaning through time.

#### 5.3.1.4

### CANONIC UNDERSTANDING

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A canonic interpretation develops when a particular interpretation crystallises, when an interpretation is collectively developed and a social consensus is met (Bonta, 1974, pp. 62-66). *“The reiteration of the pre-canonic response leads to the establishment of a canon. Individuals learn the meaning, rather than construct or reconstruct it themselves”* (Bonta, 1974, p. 66). Canonic interpretations are said to be shared by a whole community, or at least by an identified group (Bonta, 1974, p. 62). When Reyner Banham, Arthur Drexler, Peter Blake, Leonardo Benevolo and Vincent Scully published their critiques of the Pavilion during 1960-61, for example, a certain interpretation crystallised. Traits of interpretation from the previous years at this point acquired a cohesion they had not previously had, and were received with a consensus: *“So strong was the impact of the interpretation that for more than a decade nothing else could be said about the Pavilion”* (Bonta, 1974, p. 61).

It is important to note at this stage, that the commonly stated declaration that Mies’ architecture *“speaks for itself”* is obviously a myth. *“Neither Mies’ architecture nor anyone else’s can speak for itself; it always requires a collective effort of interpretation”* (Bonta, 1974, p. 67). The ultimate incorporation and meaning of architecture and design in culture, is the result of the work of the ‘experiencer’ - the interpreter, no less than of the designer (Bonta, 1974, p. 67).

#### 5.3.1.5

### CLASS IDENTIFICATION

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To understand ‘class identification’, Bonta states that in 1966, Bakema said *“that he did not really understand the Barcelona Pavilion until he visited the Lake Shore Drive apartments in Chicago and perceived the ways in which the inner and outer spaces flowed together”* (Bonta, 1974, p. 67). The interpretation of the Barcelona Pavilion became inseparable from the International Miesian Style, for example analysing the Tugendhat House was an indirect way of understanding the Pavilion (Bonta, 1974, pp. 67-69).

Interpreting a design ultimately amounts to seeing it as a member of a class. *“This occurs when one identifies a set of features which can also appear in other works, and which thus become the definition of the class”* (Bonta, 1974, p. 69). Class identification is essential for architecture and design to have an effect on future events and generations. *“Pieces which are seen as unique, non-repeatable phenomena will become, for that very fact, inconsequential”* (Bonta, 1974, p. 69).

The idea of ‘class identification’ with regards to genocide memorialisation is one which will be discussed in detail during later chapters. As this study will show, the effects of politics and globalisation have resulted in a world-wide phenomena of ‘class identification’ with reference to genocide memorialisation that some might call ‘Holocaust identification’. The internationalising of memorial design to tragedy is an important issue that will be discussed in the chapters that follow.

5.3.1.6

#### DISSEMINATION

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Dissemination occurs when the “*canonic interpretation reaches the wider public*” (Bonta, 1974, p. 69). During the last ten years of Mies’s life, the media was flooded with news, photographs and books about his life and his work. “*If one scans this voluminous material for further insight into the Barcelona Pavilion, one cannot but feel discouraged by the sterile repetition of concepts, over and over again*” (Bonta, 1974, p. 69). Entering this new phase of interpretation, one understands that many writers base their work on other writings, unlike the interpretational stages outlined above, where first-hand experience was favoured (Bonta, 1974, pp. 69-71).

The dissemination of a particular ‘canon’ or ‘class’ with regard to interpretation is an issue in our modern world of mass media, the international language of English and multiple communications, that sees ideas spread throughout the world in a matter of sometimes minutes or seconds. With regard to the focus of this research, the dissemination of memorial interpretation is no different. Guide books, travel shows, the internet and popular press all amount to the easy dissemination of knowledge and interpretation the world over. Again, the phenomenon of the dissemination of interpretation will be discussed in the chapters that follow, with specific regard to the case study locations.

5.3.1.7

#### GRAMMATICALIZATION & OBLIVION

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Once a canonic interpretation becomes established, it is difficult to think of, and see, the design in other ways, but it also becomes tedious to keep repeating the same points (Bonta, 1974, p. 71). “*Interpretations, like forms themselves, are prone to wearing out*” (Bonta, 1974, p. 71). Bonta suggest that judgements too often repeated become subject to what he calls, ‘grammaticalization’ and ultimately the loss of meaning (Bonta, 1974, p. 71). This stage of interpretation leads to the inclusion and notation of the design less frequently, and then even silence. In the case of the Barcelona Pavilion, even the most sensitive critics began to lose interest (Bonta, 1974, p. 71).

Interpretations, like designs and forms themselves are discarded not only because we get bored with them, but because they cease to fulfil their initial role. New interpretations more closely linked to the contemporary society inevitably arise over time as a substitution for the old, less

relevant interpretations (Bonta, 1974, p. 72). This concept of the transposition of design interpretation through time, to relate to the needs and challenges of the present generation, is one that will also be explored in detail during the sections and chapters that follow.

5.3.1.8

#### META-LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS

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Meta-linguistic analysis, as introduced by Bonta defines the very process of interpreting interpretation, precisely the interpretive act that Bonta undertook with the analysis of literature written in response to the Barcelona Pavilion, and described within this section so far. *“The very process of interpretation that was described so far can become subject to analysis. The texts themselves, rather than the building, become at this stage the object of the discourse”* (Bonta, 1974, p. 72).

5.3.1.9

#### RE-INTERPRETATION

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The ninth stage of Bonta’s ‘Anatomy of Architectural Interpretation’ is termed ‘re-interpretation’, and rather than being seen as the final stage of interpretation, Bonta suggests it be seen as the beginning of a new series of stages – a kind of re-birth of the work. *“[I]nterpretations are not atemporal, but are conditioned to a certain cultural role, illuminated by a definite set of values and interests which become predominant at a given point in time. It is thus to be expected, not only that old interpretations should fade when the original interests change, but also that novel interpretations, adjusted to new interests, should arise”* (Bonta, 1974, p. 73).

Often fulfilling a cultural and historical role, design interpretation over time can be as fluid as design itself. What Bonta has shown, by his extensive meta-linguistic analysis of literature and critique written in regard to the Barcelona Pavilion, is that we are always translating design, and transposing interpretations thereof, by reading its message in the present, by exploring its multiple reference to society over time. This study uses the mode of phenomenology to investigate contemporary Euro-Western experience and interpretation of the case study sites in Cambodia and Rwanda. The sections that follow outline and discuss both in terms of theory and practical application, the method considered and ultimately applied to the case study field research carried out within this study.

## 5.4 PHENOMENOLOGY

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Developed in the twentieth century, phenomenology is a relatively new branch of philosophy that understands and describes a world where people and their environment mutually include and define each other (Bognar, 1985, p. 183). Phenomenology is a philosophy in which it is assumed that knowledge does not exist independently of man - that knowledge must be gained through man's lived experience of the world (Relph, 1970, p. 193). In the simplest terms, David Seamon, Professor of Architecture at Kansas State University states that "*phenomenology is the interpretative study of human experience*" (Seamon, 2002b), but is quick to note that this definition, however, is oversimplified and does not capture the fuller meaning or range of phenomenological inquiry. Below is a brief introduction to phenomenology as a philosophical methodology, and its current application as a qualitative methods approach to landscape architecture.

The history of phenomenology is both multifaceted and complex. Emerging initially as a philosophical method to challenge quantitative deductive study, phenomenology is the descriptive investigation of conscious phenomena, both subjective and objective (Sanders, 1982, p. 353). The term "phenomena", as used here, "*is derived from the Greek verb, which means to show oneself or to appear*" (Sanders, 1982, p. 354). Herbert Spiegelberg (1982), a leading voice in phenomenological scholarship, describes the historical roots of phenomenology as a movement rather than a discrete period of time, continuing to re-interpret its own meaning (Spiegelberg, 1982, p. 1). Lavery states that this distinction is important as it reflects the view that phenomenology, and our understanding of it, are not stationary, but rather dynamic and evolving, even today (Lavery, 2003, p. 3).

The concept of phenomenology is often referred to as having been initially formulated by Edmund Husserl at the beginning of the 19th century. He "*criticised psychology as a science that had gone wrong by attempting to apply methods of the natural sciences to human issues, and charged that these pursuits ignored the fact that psychology deals with living subjects who are not simply reacting automatically to external stimuli, but rather are responding to their own perception of what these stimuli mean*" (Lavery, 2003, p. 4). Husserl viewed human experience as the source of all true knowledge in the world, and subsequently, values and personal meanings gathered through reflection became valid and acceptable knowledge (Mezga, 1993, p. 67). Husserl termed phenomenology, "*a science of essences*" (Mezga, 1993, p. 67), and with this line of reasoning, "*pursued the true meaning beyond life experiences through reflection, and a return to uniquely human qualities such as value and emotion*" (Mezga, 1993, p. 67).

Husserl did propose however that beneath the changing flux of human experience and awareness, there are certain invariant structures of consciousness which he believed the phenomenological method could identify. As Seamon explains, "*Because Husserl viewed consciousness and its essential structures as a pure "region" separate from the flux of specific experiences and thoughts, his style of phenomenology came to be known as "transcendental"*"

(Seamon, 2002b). Soon, other phenomenological thinkers, such as the German philosopher Martin Heidegger and French philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty, began building on Husserl's initial ideas and began formulating their own thoughts about phenomenology. Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty moved Husserl's theory of pure intellectual consciousness to the realm of history and embodiment, arguing that such transcendental structures were questionable based on speculative cerebral reflection, rather than on actual human experience (Schmidt, 1985; cited in Seamon 2002b). As a philosophical tradition therefore, phenomenology has evolved, and continues to do so today through the work of many scholars in many different areas of study.

Conceived as a study into the nature and grounds of knowledge, phenomenology is primarily concerned with the reorientation of science and knowledge along lines that have meaning and significance for man. Although there is considerable debate about the exact nature of phenomenology, most scholars today seem to agree on at least three basic issues: "*first, the importance of man's "lived-world" of experience; second, an opposition to the "dictatorship and absolutism of scientific thought over other forms of thinking"; and third, an attempt to formulate some alternative method of investigation to that of hypothesis testing and the development of theory*" (Relph, 1970, p. 193). Seeking to make explicit the implicit structure and meaning of human experiences, phenomenological study is the search for 'essences' that cannot be revealed by ordinary observation (Sanders, 1982, p. 354).

Phenomenology has today been cautiously introduced to, and adopted by a number of design and sociological professions. Offering, what Seamon calls a 'useful conceptual language' to reconcile the difficult tensions between feeling and thinking, phenomenology, is today timidly and sporadically adopted by Landscape Architecture, and other design based disciplines, which at their core guide and create the person-environment relationship. The hope is that the phenomenological approach to design critique offers the design disciplines, and in this case, Landscape Architecture, an innovative and new way of looking at the person-landscape relationship, and for identifying and understanding its complex, multidimensional structure. Outlined below is a brief overview of the history, key concepts and authors of phenomenology, relating to the landscape and interpretive issues that this study is focused.

#### **5.4.1 FEATURES OF THE PHENOMENOLOGICAL PARADIGM**

Phenomenological methodology is widely accepted to fall within the wider conceptual and methodological rubric of qualitative inquiry. Phenomenology has been associated with other qualitative methods such as symbolic interactionism, in other words, as Patton states, perspectives assuming "*methods that take the researcher into and close to the real world so that the results and findings are 'grounded' in the empirical world*", with distinction to "*theory generated by logical deduction from a prior assumption*" (Patton, 1990; cited in Wapner, Demick & Yamamoto, 2000, pp. 66-67). Although both phenomenology and

symbolic interactionism examine symbols, objects, experiences and interpretations that give meaning to a particular group, symbolic interactionism typically emphasises the more cognitively derived layers, rather than the phenomenologist's instinctive, intuitive, emotional and interpretive perspective (Seamon, 2002b). Outlined below, are features key to the phenomenological method.

#### 5.4.1.1

### INTENTIONAL ANALYSIS – NOEMA & NOESIS

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Husserl used the term 'intentionality' to refer to the relationship between an object (or experience) and the appearance of the object or experience to consciousness. Using the Greek terms 'noesis' and 'noema', he indicated the intimate relationship between, intentionality as total meaning of what is experienced (noema), and the mode of experiencing (noesis). 'Essences', Husserl believed are derived from an 'intentional' analysis of the correlation between the object or experience as perceived (objective perception) called noema, and the (subjective) reflection of those perceived experiences, known as noesis, (Sanders, 1982, p. 354). *"If noema is described as the what of experience and noesis as the how of experience, then essence may be described as the 'why' of experience"* (Sanders, 1982, p. 357).

#### 5.4.1.2

### PRE UNDERSTANDING

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William Blake once said, *"If the doors of perception were cleansed, Everything would appear as it is. . . ."* (Blake; cited in Howett, 1993, p. 61). Catherine Howett, Professor Emerita in the School of Environmental Design at the University of Georgia, considers these lines from Blake to represent a familiar theme of visionary poetry – *"the poet's sense that our customary ways of looking at the world actually blind us to the reality of what is there, waiting to be known intimately and rapturously"* (Howett, 1993, p. 61). She continues, *"But what is meant by "the doors of perception" that must be "cleansed" if we are to see truly? Is it our eyes only? Do we perceive the world by seeing it, or is our vision just one among many "doors of perception" that can be awakened to a new and more vivid experience of the world?"* (Howett, 1993, p. 61). The concept of 'pre-understanding' is the historicity and meaning in a culture or group that is present before we understand. It is part of our *"historicity of background"* (Lavery, 2003, p. 8). Lavery explains that *"Pre-understanding is not something a person can step outside of or put aside, as it is understood as already being with us in the world"* (Lavery, 2003, p. 8). Heidegger stated that nothing can be encountered without reference to a person's background understanding (Lavery, 2003, p. 8), culture, and therefore an individual's 'pre-understanding' – a historicity of background - significantly determines the nature and character of the 'doors of perception' that an individual will employ as part of the process of experiencing a space, engaging an environment or interpreting a situation.

Claiming that to be human was to interpret, Heidegger stressed that every experience involves interpretation – interpretation that is inevitably influenced by an individual's background.

Phenomenology as methodology assumes that when people ask certain questions, they do so burdened with ‘mental baggage’, pre-determined assumptions that separate the ‘researcher’ or ‘interpreter’ from the ‘truth’ about things. At its core, and in its ‘pure’ form, the phenomenological approach allows the researcher to go beyond the limitations of culturally restricted patterns, structures and thought, and seek out ‘pure’ understanding, through alternative perceptions that otherwise would be blinded from view.

5.4.1.3

#### QUESTIONING

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For Hans-Georg Gadamer, questioning is an essential aspect of the phenomenological method and therefore of the interpretive process, as it helps make new horizons and understanding possible. He states that “*Questioning opens up possibilities of meaning, and thus what is meaningful passes into one’s own thinking on the subject*” (Gadamer, 1997, p. 368).

5.4.1.4

#### EPOCHÉ

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Key to the phenomenological approach, and as a strategy offered as part of the methodological path, epoché, as Husserl termed it, allows “*the temporary suspension of all existing personal biases, beliefs, preconceptions, or assumptions in order to get straight to the pure and unencumbered vision of what a thing “essentially is”*” (Sanders, 1982, p. 355). Often referred to as ‘bracketing’ or ‘bracketing out’, parts of the experience are left constant but out of consideration. “*The bracketed matter does not cease to exist; rather, it is temporarily put out of action*” (Sanders, 1982, p. 355). This phenomenological procedure is used if one wants to bring another part of an observation into focus (Sanders, 1982, p. 355).

Lavery states that Husserl proposed that bracketing out the outer world, as well as individual biases is needed to successfully achieve contact with essence. “*This is a process of suspending one’s judgement or bracketing particular beliefs about the phenomena in order to see it clearly*” (Lavery, 2003, p.6). Hans-Georg Gadamer, a phenomenologist influenced by the work of both Husserl and Heidegger, although not opposed to methods to increase our level of understanding and to overcome limited perspectives, was emphatic in his stand that methods are not totally objective, separate or value free from the user. Unlike Husserl, Gadamer viewed bracketing not only as impossible, but attempts to do so manifestly absurd (Annells, 1996; cited by Lavery, 2003, p. 11). He believed that understanding, and therefore interpretation, are intrinsically based on our historicity of being, and all understanding involves some prejudice.

The final major feature of phenomenology as methodology to be discussed is ‘eidetic reduction’ and is at the heart of phenomenological scholarship. Accomplished through the use of intuition and reflection, eidetic reduction has been likened to extracting the attar of the rose:

*As each petal of the blossom is removed, another is fully revealed. The layers of the petals, blended one with the other into a potpourri, yields the attar – the essence of the rose. Each layer revealed by the eidetic reduction successively yields experience, then reflection of experience, until the invariants of experience yield the essence of meaning, that which is constant* (Brooks, 1980; cited in Sanders, 1982, pp 355-356).

#### 5.4.2 PHENOMENOLOGY AS METHOD

A difficulty inherent in using a phenomenological approach in research is directly related to the fact that phenomenology has not yet developed an agreed methodology. Spiegelberg stated that there are as many styles of phenomenology as there are phenomenologists – a situation that makes it difficult to articulate a thorough and accurate picture of the tradition (Seamon, 2002b). As Mezga observes, “*In terms of methodology, one can best describe the current status of phenomenological research as eclectic and fluid. No single, uniform methodological procedure has received universal acceptance. This has been because of both the infancy of the paradigm and the wide range of backgrounds of the researchers*” (Mezga, 1993, p. 68).

Key to the phenomenological method “*is the notion that objects take on meaning only in terms of a person’s intentions, emotions, and goals*” (Mezga, 1993, p. 68). Therefore traditional design concepts such as space, place, scale, form, line, and colour, cannot be interpreted in established or conventional quantitative terms, and “[i]nstead, they must be seen in a personalised, affective fashion” (Mezga, 1993, p 68). Further, as Mezga explains, “*Distance becomes affective, a type of emotional connectivity. Space becomes a network of concern, and history is seen both as events and as a conscious restructuring of group social memory. Place is viewed not as a collection of objects and events, but as a repository of meaning*” (Mezga, 1993, p. 68). In addition to the inherent lack of methodological direction and the phenomenological encompassing of pre-understanding, the phenomenological method ultimately varies also according to the particular phenomena being researched and the perspective through which the study is approached.

Although an ‘orthodox procedure’ does not exist for phenomenological researchers, the primary aim for the phenomenological method is, as Relph explains, “*to provide a means of investigation through which the “lived-world” of man’s experience can be restored to a place of prominence in our thinking*” (Relph, 1970, p. 194).

In an article written for the 'Canadian Geographer' (1970), Relph proposes a three-step phenomenological procedure. The first step in this method entails the identification and careful description of the objective phenomena under study, without making prior assumptions: "*an attempt is made to recognize and describe the "essences" of the thematic structures of perception associated with the particular phenomena being studied. This involves, first, a careful description of these phenomena without making prior assumptions about them, and the investigation of the "general essences" of these phenomena*" (Relph, 1970, pp. 193-194). Second, the various detailed meanings attached to the objective phenomena and their interrelationships are identified and assessed. "*[H]ere it is recognized that the way an object or fact is perceived depends on the intentions of the perceiver toward the object as well as his experience regarding it, and that to understand an object it is necessary to examine these different perceptions of it*" (Relph, 1970, p. 194). Finally, "*changes in consciousness or attitudes toward the phenomena [over time] are noted and evaluated*" (Mezga, 1993, p. 68).

Patricia Sanders (1982), in an article titled 'Phenomenology: A new way of viewing organizational research' offers an alternative four step approach to Relph's phenomenological procedure. Level one, as she refers to it, is description, where the phenomenon is revealed through experience, identifying and describing the qualities of human experience and consciousness. Level two is the identification of themes or invariants that emerge from the descriptions. "*Themes refer to commonalities present within and between narratives. Themes are identified based on the importance and centrality according to them rather than on the frequency with which they occur*" (Sanders, 1982, p. 357). Level three is the development of noetic/noematic correlates, where the comparison allows for subjective reflections on the emergent themes. "*Noetic/noematic correlates represent the individual's perception of the reality of the phenomena under investigation. Interpretation of these correlations is fundamental to the identification of essences or of what an experience "essentially is"*" (Sanders, 1982, p. 357). The final step in the procedure "*is the abstraction of essences of universals from the noetic/noematic correlates*" (Sanders, 1982, p. 357).

Both offering a significant contribution to the development of phenomenological methodology, Relph's 'phenomenological procedure', and Sanders' 'phenomenological research model' provide a framework from which a phenomenological methodology for landscape architectural critique may evolve. Returning now to Bonta's suggestions on gathering information about people's interpretation of architecture, where he suggests a three step process of introspection, field studies, and analysis of text or documents, the mode of phenomenological enquiry can be seen to fit well within the practice and process of design critique in landscape architectural studies.

### 5.4.3 THE PHENOMENOLOGICAL PARADIGM & LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURAL STUDIES

For Duane Mezga, professor of landscape architecture at Michigan State University, phenomenology is a problem-solving approach which focuses on the everyday world of people's immediate experiences, the lifeworld. "*It investigates, describes, and examines individual actions, memories, perceptions and thoughts*" (Mezga, 1993, p. 68). In landscape architecture he suggests, "*this necessitates an exploration of experiences of space and place and related aspects of one's lifeworld, unavailable to the rigours of objective inquiry*" (Mezga, 1993, p. 68). The profession of landscape architecture supports the notion that people are not separate from their world – they are immersed through an invisible net of bodily, emotional, spatial and environmental ties. People are physical beings who must establish and identify themselves spatially and environmentally (Seamon, 2002a). "*Materials in space are used as the connection between body and meaning, between mind and memory. This is the stuff of architecture in its most eloquent*" (Tonkin & Laurence, 2003, p. 49). The potential application of the phenomenological paradigm in landscape architectural studies is extensive. To date however, the degree and nature of those possible applications remain limited (Mezga, 1993, p. 68). "*The scarcity of substantive, integrative studies between involved fields including landscape architecture, humanistic geography, and the social science discipline, has led to phenomenology remaining a questionable commodity to practitioners and researchers in landscape architecture*" (Mezga, 1993, p. 68).

Drawing on the insights of scholars discussed above, this investigation will explore phenomenology as a mode of landscape architectural critique. A three-step phenomenological method is therefore developed and presented here based upon:

- an 'encountered' phenomenological enquiry (based on the 'first-person' approach) to investigate the *design* of site, specifically with regard to designing for Euro-Western connection
- an 'existential' phenomenological enquiry to investigate the *experience* of site for Euro-Western visitors, specifically with regard to site elements identified at the 'encountered' stage of enquiry, and finally,
- a 'hermeneutic' phenomenological enquiry to investigate the *interpretation* of site by Euro-Western visitors.

The method outlined below does not aim to prove or disprove a particular hypothesis. Through adopting a phenomenological methodology, three stages of enquiry were set up to prompt human response to design, to allow for an investigation into the role of design in shaping Euro-Western experience and interpretation of genocide memorial sites in Cambodia and Rwanda.

## 5.5 'ENCOUNTERED' PHENOMENOLOGY - INVESTIGATING THE *DESIGN OF SITE*

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Central to the first-person phenomenological approach, as introduced by David Seamon in his 2002 online article 'Phenomenology, Place, Environment, and Architecture: a review of the literature,' is the researcher using their own firsthand experience of the phenomenon as a basis for examining its specific characteristics and qualities, focusing on the interconnections of human environmental experience, including such qualities as sound, space, texture, light, and movement (Seamon, 2002b). In his 1985 phenomenological study of the contrasting qualities of several Dalmatian towns with varying spatial layouts, Francis Violich adopting a first person approach, and using the techniques of sketching, mapping and journal entries, immersed himself in each place for several days in an attempt to 'read' or reveal the *sense of place*. Undertaking an intuitive reading of each town, Violich aimed to identify the environmental qualities which frame and reference sense of place (Violich, 1985).

First person phenomenology is often used as a starting place from which the researcher can bring to awareness specific qualities and attitudes (sometimes referred to as biases) they have at the outset when interpreting the phenomenon, while gaining an in-depth on-site understanding of the site. In this sense, if the researcher has access to his/her own experience of the phenomenon, first-person research can offer clarity and insight grounded in one's own lifeworld. Central to this approach therefore are the phenomenological features of 'pre-understanding', 'epoché' and 'eidetic reduction', outlined earlier in section 5.4.1, where the researcher works to avoid the preconceived and 'taken-for-grantedness' of the site and experience. Spiegelberg, 1982, cited in Seamon, 2002b suggests that the researcher attempts to meet the phenomenon in as unprejudiced way as possible so that it can present itself and be accurately described and understood. Phenomenological research, and in particular where the reductionist method is used is one of the most demanding operations which requires utter concentration on the object or experience without being absorbed in it to the point of no longer looking critically (Spiegelberg, 1982; cited in Seamon, 2002b). The development of the first-person approach into what I have termed here the 'encountered' approach is a direct result of the nature and context of the case study sites investigated within this research, and will be discussed in detail below.

### 5.5.1 'FIRST-HAND TO 'ENCOUNTERED' PHENOMENOLOGICAL ENQUIRY

Following the conventional reductionist approach commonly utilised in the first-person method, through the removing of physical, cultural and emotive layers, and 'bracketing out' pre-understanding and knowledge, it was quickly acknowledged that this approach was not appropriate for the examination and critique of the case study sites considered within this research. As Stephen Smith of the Aegis Trust states:

*It seems important to me that any response to human tragedy should be made in as human a way as possible. That means thinking about the consequences for those caught up in it. It means putting yourself into their shoes and grappling with the dangers, struggling with the consequences. To respond to such a tragedy as an intellectual exercise with a duly-processed analysis is not enough, and indeed is arguably inappropriate if it is the only response. On the other hand, simply to react emotionally, without facing the inherent challenge it poses, is to escape the consequences in a different way (Smith, 2002, p. 41).*

My attempt to carry out a 'conventional' first-person phenomenological critique, where the mode of 'bracketing out' pre-understanding, and personal bias and belief, to achieve the aim of 'seeing' the 'universal pure essence' as aspired to in the 'eidetic reductionist' theory of phenomenology, proved to test the limits of the 'traditional' approach. It is useful to note here however that not all phenomenologists believe in or adopt the epoché/bracketing elements of first-person phenomenology, returning here to Gadamer who viewed 'bracketing out' as impossible in the practical sense, and absurd in the scholarly sense, believing that interpretation is intrinsically based on our historicity of being. As Smith discusses above, to respond to such a site in an intellectual way with a strict mode of method and analysis is indeed inappropriate if it is the only response. Spending time on site, developing my thoughts and observations, an appropriate variation of the first-person approach, when interpreting memorials to tragedy, was developed, and is presented here as an 'encountered' phenomenological enquiry.

The case study sites in Cambodia and Rwanda were set from the start to test the limits of the first-person approach, due to the very nature of their being as sites of death. The 'encountered' approach to phenomenological enquiry however, does follow the frame of first-person phenomenology in that at its core it seeks to 'see' and understand place. By focussing this enquiry on Euro-Western experience and interpretation of site, the encountered phenomenological enquiry is framed by investigating the concept of site design for Euro-Western 'connection'.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF THE ENCOUNTERED  
PHENOMENOLOGICAL ENQUIRY

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The ‘encountered’ approach to phenomenological site critique adopted and developed for this investigation includes the tasks listed below:

- 1        Offsite (to be worked on throughout study period)
  - The development of a reflective journal consisting of research notes, thoughts and references relating to the process and specific elements of memorialisation to tragedy, particularly with reference to the West.

The aim of this journal is to record the personal journey: to write down thoughts, to analyse and question in a free and unmediated way. Useful through the process of phenomenological research, the journal allows past thoughts and interpretations to be easily accessible.

- 2        Onsite
  - Undertake a pre-interpretive site familiarisation visit
  - Undertake a series of intensive site identification and interpretation visits that include a focus on
    - the detailed documentation of each case study site, and
    - the identification of key site and design strategies

The usefulness of the familiarisation site visit is twofold. On the one hand it decreases any underlying anxiety related to undertaking research in unknown circumstances, and on the other, it allows for an unmediated experience with site where researcher becomes ‘tourist’ in this instance, which is an experience that can be drawn upon later, contributing to the overall understanding of site and experience for Euro-Western visitors.

- 3        Offsite
  - Produce a detailed site description, making particular reference to key site and design strategies, including sketches, photographs and written text.

The documentation of the ‘encountered’ phenomenological critique is best undertaken off-site for several reasons, including the drawing of unwanted attention from site managers that could threaten to bias the interpretation, reaction from other visitors that could make them uncomfortable and self-conscious in their experience of the site, and lastly, allowing the freedom of space and time for reflection and contemplation.

As with first-person phenomenology, encountered phenomenology is primarily an understanding of site derived from, what David Seamon calls ‘a world of one’. However he states, *‘the researcher must find ways to involve the worlds of others’* (Seamon, 2002b), and it

is this point that brings us to the second step in the phenomenological enquiry - the 'existential' mode.

## 5.6 ‘EXISTENTIAL’ PHENOMENOLOGY - INVESTIGATING THE *EXPERIENCE* OF SITE

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The aim of ‘existential’ phenomenological research, as defined here, and introduced by Rolf von Eckartsberg (1998), is to understand and generalise through analysis, the experiences of specific individuals and groups involved in actual situations and places. For von Eckartsberg, the heart of the existential mode of phenomenology is “*the analysis of protocol data provided by research subjects [participants] in response to a question posed by the researcher that pinpoints and guides their recall and reflection*” (von Eckartsberg, 1998, p. 21). Specifically he speaks of four steps that are outlined by David Seamon (2002b):

- identifying the phenomenon [or experience] in which the phenomenologist is interested
- gathering descriptive accounts from respondents regarding their experience of the phenomenon
- carefully studying the respondent’s accounts with the aim of identifying any underlying commonalities, and
- presentation of findings.

### 5.6.1 THE ‘EXISTENTIAL’ PHENOMENOLOGICAL METHOD

The existential phenomenological approach makes one important assumption in its claim for generating generalisation. The approach assumes a certain equivalence of meaning for the participants whose experience the researcher explores. In other words, the claim is “*that people in a shared cultural and linguistic community name and identify their experience in a consistent and shared manner*” (von Eckartsberg, 1998, p. 14). The common aim of existential research therefore is that the individual accounts, when carefully studied and considered collectively, “*reveal their own thematic meaning-organization*” (von Eckartsberg, 1998, p. 29). Tania Shertock, in her article titled ‘Latin American women’s experience of feeling able to move toward and accomplish a meaningful and challenging goal’, in the book ‘Phenomenological Inquiry in Psychology’ (1998) believes that procedurally this claim means that respondents must have already had the experience under investigation, and be able to express themselves clearly and coherently in spoken, written, or graphic fashion, depending on the particular tools used for eliciting experiential accounts. Ideally also, the respondents will also feel a spontaneous interest in the research topic, since personal concern can motivate the respondent to provide the most thorough and accurate lived descriptions (Shertock, 1998, p. 162) – a situation that proved true within this study into Euro-Western experience in Cambodia and Rwanda, as few visitors approached turned down the invitation to participate after the aims of the project had been outlined.

The inquiry therefore, is not carried out on a random sample of subjects representative of the population to which findings will be generalisable, “*Rather, some respondents will be more appropriate than others because of their particular situation in relation to the phenomenon studied*” (Seamon, 2002b). Following this model, a three-step ‘on-site’ exercise, and a two-step ‘follow-up’ exercise was designed, and enlisted the participation of Euro-Western tourists either having already visited in days prior to, or intending to visit the case study sites, and speaking competent English.

5.6.1.1

#### PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF THE EXISTENTIAL PHENOMENOLOGICAL ENQUIRY

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The ‘existential’ approach to phenomenological enquiry as adopted within this study includes the tasks listed below:

- 1 Offsite (before the site visit has taken place)
  - Completion of a Questionnaire to establish an understanding of the respondents background in terms of such things as, country of origin, age, level of education, as well as motivations and expectations of site and experience, giving insight for the researcher into participants ‘pre-understanding’.

The aim of this exercise is for the researcher to gain a basic overall understanding of the participant.

- 2 Onsite
  - Photographs – respondents are asked if they intend to photograph their site visit. If so, they are given a disposable camera and asked to take a second photo with the disposable camera of the same image they take with their own camera. The disposable camera is then returned to the researcher after the site visit.

The purpose of the photo exercise is to give the researcher an understanding of several things relating to the participant’s experience of the site, namely; the direction and sequence in which they discovered the site, the site features that impelled them to take a photo, and to give the researcher an overall impression of the ‘memory image’ of each participant’s experience.

- 3 Offsite (After the site visit has taken place)
  - Mental-map – respondents are asked to complete a hand-drawn ‘re-called’ map of their site experience.

The inclusion of the photo-taking and mental-map exercises is pivotal to the researcher’s understanding and future ability to draw out commonalities and generalisations relating, in this

case, to Euro-Western experience of international genocide sites. Offering a window into another individual's frame of vision and experience, the photo-taking and mental-map exercises allow for an analysis of themes – a 'graphic vision' of experience.

4 Follow-up (3-6 months post site visit)

- Participants who agreed to participate in the follow-up stage were emailed a follow-up questionnaire and discussion exercise.

The follow-up stage of the existential phenomenological research is important to the researcher's better understanding of how participants' ideas relating to site and experience develop after leaving the case study location, having had time and space to reflect independently on their experiences.

Appendices A – D outline the existential phenomenological exercises set up by the research and undertaken by each of the participants. For the purposes of anonymity, participants were each given a code, and are referenced as such in the chapters that follow. Participants at the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum are coded with the letters 'TS' before a number. This system is also used to code participants at the Choeung Ek Genocidal Centre (shown as CE and then a number, such as CE3) and the Kigali Memorial Centre (shown as KMC and then a number, for example KMC12).

## 5.7 ‘HERMENEUTIC’ PHENOMENOLOGY - INVESTIGATING THE INTERPRETATION OF SITE

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Put most simply, hermeneutics as Robert Mugerauer states is the “*theory of interpretation*” (Mugerauer, 1994, p. 4). Hermeneutics is particularly used in the interpretation of texts. “*The key point hermeneutically is that the creator of the text is not typically available to comment on its making or significance, thus the hermeneutic researcher must find ways to discover meaning through the text itself*” (Seamon, 2002b). Rolf von Eckartsberg describes the process:

*One embeds oneself in the process of getting involved in the text, one begins to discern configurations of meaning, of parts and wholes and their interrelatedness, one receives certain messages and glimpses of an unfolding development that beckons to be articulated and related to the total fabric of meaning. The hermeneutic approach seems to palpate its object and to make room for that object to reveal itself to our gaze and ears, to speak its own story into our understanding (von Eckartsberg, 1998, p. 50).*

### 5.7.1 THE ‘HERMENEUTIC’ PHENOMENOLOGICAL METHOD

The aim of this ‘hermeneutic’ phenomenological research is to discover meaning through interpreting text (‘text’ may include literature, art, performance, song, design, or space, amongst others). In this case, the hermeneutic enquiry refers to the interpretation of texts and built works, including further analysis of the encountered and existential enquiries, as well as the additional analysis of scholarly publications, written in relation to the case study sites.

#### 5.7.1.1

#### PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF THE HERMENEUTIC PHENOMENOLOGICAL ENQUIRY

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The ‘existential’ approach to phenomenological site critique within this study includes the tasks listed below:

- 1 Offsite (before the site visit has taken place)
  - Study and further analyse the reflective journal, data collected and site description, as part of the ‘encountered’ phenomenological enquiry including an analysis of photographs, sketches and film footage.
  - Study and analyse further the ‘existential’ phenomenological data revisiting the phenomenological feature of ‘intentional analysis’, using the idea of

'noesis' and 'noema' to bring to light the relationship between the mode of experiencing and what is experienced.

- Study and analyse key literature written in relation to the design, experience and interpretation of the case study sites, contextualising the literature, and grounding the narrative with reference to field research data and the key research themes investigated in this study.

## **5.8 LIMITATIONS & RESTRICTIONS**

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Limitations with carrying out phenomenological field research in Cambodia and Rwanda proposed many potential research limitations. Foremost, the opportunity to visit the case study sites before developing the methodology was not possible within the scope of this research. Second, the potential for Euro-Western tourist involvement, particularly in terms of recruiting appropriate numbers, was not known before arriving on-site. Finally, the predictable unpredictability of carrying out research within developing nations was also at the forefront of possible restriction. A detailed analysis of the limitations and restrictions encountered during the field component of this research, particularly with regard to the 'existential' phenomenological enquiry are detailed in Chapter seven.

## 5.9 CONCLUSION

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Building on Bonta's three-step method for acquisition of information regarding people's interpretation of architecture, this study develops a three-step phenomenological enquiry into the experience and interpretation of Euro-Western tourists to the three case study sites in Cambodia and Rwanda.

Presented in Chapter six, the encountered phenomenological enquiry carried out by the researcher aims to situate a close reading of site, with which the existential data will be compared as a basis for discussion. Outlining the *design* of site, Chapter six investigates the politicisation of public memory and memorialisation, using the exemplar of Germany's memoryscape to the Jewish Holocaust, and then considers, in detail the subject of Westernisation of public memory and memorialisation. Describing elements of site and context that engage with Euro-Western visitors, the encountered enquiry establishes site theme and content expressed through the post genocide memoryscapes of Cambodia and Rwanda that engage the Euro-Western visitor.

The existential enquiry, presented in Chapter seven, enlists the participation of Euro-Western tourists, and aims to gather information primarily through graphic accounts, regarding the *experience* of site. Carefully studied by the researcher, the participants' accounts are analysed with the aim of identifying any underlying commonalities or differences with regard to the identified base established during the 'encountered' enquiry.

Lastly, the hermeneutic enquiry will be presented in Chapter eight, and will call upon data collected in the first two stages of the phenomenological enquiry, and will also consider the text and graphic representations already established around the case study sites by scholars and theorists, predominately from Western nations, using the established landscape of Berlin's Holocaust memorials as a base for analysis.

The aim of undertaking a phenomenological enquiry like that detailed above is not to set about identifying or solving a hypothesised issue, but to create a situation in which data collected by way of documented experience can actually speak for itself, showing the researcher what is important, different and interesting. Through undertaking extensive literature based research prior to the field studies, certain issues in terms of memorialisation, memorial design, site experience, and interpretation with regard to Euro-Western visitors to international genocide memorials became apparent, such as what we memorialise, why we memorialise, and how we memorialise, each offering interesting and related discussion. By then constructing a series of 'encountered' and 'existential' phenomenological exercises, as outlined above, a situation was created that would ultimately let the data show itself to the researcher.

Through a series of analytical readings of the data collected, what emerged was a strong statement regarding how the international memoryscapes of Cambodia and Rwanda engage

Euro-Western visitors, and how that design language then informs experience, and ultimately Euro-Western interpretation of site. Chapters six and seven detail the data collected, and this is presented within the frame of what I have termed within this study ‘Euro-Western cues to connect’ – the site features and themes played out and presented on site in Cambodia and Rwanda that speak to the Euro-Western visitor through the established pre-understanding we have with regard to the ‘global memory’ of the Jewish Holocaust. Chapter six firstly describes the issue of politicising memory using the example of the evolving memoryscape of Germany’s public memory of the Jewish Holocaust, specifically looking at the Sachsenhausen Memorial and Museum, and Peter Eisenman’s Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe. It then outlines the political and social situations surrounding the creating and construction of Cambodia and Rwanda’s post genocide memoryscapes. Finally, Chapter six will look at the Westernisation of memorial design in Cambodia and Rwanda, and outlines in detail, through data collected during the ‘encountered’ phenomenological enquiry, the identified Euro-Western ‘cues to connect’ at each of the three case study sites, offering a comparative discussion on site theme and content, drawing upon the representation of design themes, strategies and features common in Western memorialisation.

To reiterate, this study did not set out to test a hypothesis right or wrong, as much as it set out to ascertain issues surrounding aspects of contemporary genocide memorialisation that are important and significant today. This study set out to make explicit the implicit structure of meaning of Euro-Western experience of genocide memorials in Cambodia and Rwanda, revealing by way of encountered and existential phenomenological enquiry, a comprehensive critique of site design and site engagement. Offering what David Seamon calls a ‘useful conceptual language’, the three-step phenomenological mode of enquiry aims to over-come the difficult tensions between feeling and thinking, and the often difficult expression of these human responses through written, graphic and photographic technique.