Chapter Six

Layers of Memory & Euro-Western 'Cues to Connect'

The Design of Site
In their 2000 book ‘The Politics of War Memory and Commemoration’, T.G Ashplant, Graham Dawson and Michael Roper state “During the last two decades there has been a proliferation of public interest and concern throughout the world in the various cultural and political dimensions and phenomena of war memory, and in the forms and practices of war commemoration” (Ashplant, Dawson & Roper, 2000, p. 3). Identifying a number of key features, that are particularly relevant in the West, Ashplant, et al., suggest that firstly, the most powerful proliferation of war memory and commemoration has been the manifestation of visible memory of the Holocaust, from museums, documentaries, film and education curriculum. Second, victims, and social groups affected through suffering, injustice or trauma, have become increasingly prepared to demand public recognition of their experience and persecution. A third feature is the enhanced profile of anniversary commemorations – an ‘anniversary boom’ fuelled by the public media. Lastly, Ashplant, Dawson and Roper believe that public concern with the memory of war has been stimulated in the recent past by what Jeanne Vickers has termed ‘the explosion of ethnic strife’, fought between peoples in the name of ethnic, social, religious or cultural differences (Ashplant, et al., 2000, pp. 3-5). An issue that presents itself both in history books as well as each night on the news, the reality, fragility and ‘closeness’ of genocide to us all as human beings is one reason, additionally to those already discussed, why today we see a rise in Euro-Western tourism to international sites of tragedy.

Discussed in detail within this chapter, the post genocide memoryscapes of Cambodia and Rwanda exist today to fulfil the requirements of focused and specific agenda. Chapter six will introduce the idea of the politicisation of public memory using the example of Berlin’s memoryscape to genocide over time, before considering the factors that have directed the creation and evolution of memorial design in Cambodia and Rwanda. Through analysis of the ‘encountered’ data collected on and off site, specifically looking in depth at site description, Section 6.3 will introduce the concept of Euro-Western ‘cues to connect’, and describe in detail, how the design of the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, the Choeung Ek Genocidal Centre and the Kigali Memorial Centre inform and direct Euro-Western engagement with a space and event set quite distant from their everyday lives.
6.2 THE POLITICISATION OF PUBLIC MEMORY & MEMORIALISATION

In its function as a political tool, memory and memorialisation are likened directly to social remembering and forgetting. In post-conflict areas, for the purpose of re-writing national narratives, memory is used to select and distort the past to serve present political interests (Cairns & Roe, 2003; cited in Naidu, 2004). Memory is, as is especially the case with genocide, often written by the victors, and memorials therefore, as outward expressions of public memory, assume an important social role. Not only do memorials have the ability to unify a nation after tragedy such as genocide, but, on the other hand, also have the ability to further segregate a nation, identifying individuals and groups as ‘victims’ and others as ‘perpetrators’, further separating a society. After WWII ended for example, the conservatives argued against the attitude of the Allies, who mounted posters in Germany’s cities featuring a photograph of a scene in an Extermination Camp, and as part of their ‘re-education’ programme headed each poster with the words “You Are Guilty”, “for the simple reason that a rational, individual approach to responsibility made it difficult to mourn the nation’s own dead” (Schmeing, 2000, p. 63) - including the soldiers who had perished on the eastern front (Schmeing, 2000, p. 65). As a result, the ‘Western’ or at least ‘Christian’ position of ‘all dead are equal’ was tentatively adopted (Schmeing, 2000, p. 65).

6.2.1 GERMANY & THE MEMORYSCAPE OF THE HOLOCAUST

Time passes, and so with it, knowledge, witness and first-hand connection. For Germany, sixty years of post genocide society seems to have resulted in a renewed and strengthened dedication to the development of its memoryscape dedicated to the Jewish Holocaust. Today we see in the German landscape a progression of time, and memory. Depicted clearly through the creation of memorials, Germany has moved through many stages since 1945 and the end of Nazi rule. From the preservation of Concentration and Extermination Camps such as Sachsenhausen, Dachau, and Ravensbruck, to Jochen Gerz and Esther Shalev-Gerz’s anti-memorial titled ‘Monument against Fascism’, in Hamburg, to Eisenman’s 2005 ‘Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe’, Germany has crossed many thresholds and confronted the international memory of the Jewish Holocaust in many ways over the last 60 years.

6.2.1.1 SACHSENHAUSEN MEMORIAL & MUSEUM

While athletes and visitors from all over the world were participating in the 1936 Berlin Olympics, just 20km north, Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp was being transformed into what Heinrich Himmler called a ‘thoroughly modern concentration camp’ (Dommaschk, 2005, p. 2). The first Concentration Camp in Prussia, Sachsenhausen had originally been set up in an
old brewery in the centre of Oranienburg as early as March 1933. In July 1934, under the SS (Schutzstaffel – the protection squad of Adolf Hitler), the brewery camp was closed and a new camp erected on the periphery of Oranienburg. “As the concentration camp serving the Reich capital, it was to be a model for the SS” (Dommaschk, 2005, p. 4).

The new Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp (photo 6.1) initially housed 10,000 prisoners, and also acted as the command headquarters for the SS Death’s Head Units where they received their ideological and military training in preparation for their subsequent deployment as guard detachments in the Concentration Camps around Germany and throughout Europe. (Dommaschk, 2005, p. 4). By 1938, the camp was overcrowded and extensions were made, with the total number of barracks rising to 68. “Originally designed to hold 146 people each, there were occasionally over 300 prisoners per barrack after war broke out” (Dommaschk, 2005, p. 6).

Sachsenhausen was not an Extermination Camp like Auschwitz-Birkenau for example. Sachsenhausen was a ‘preventative detention camp’, to which the Gestapo took people it regarded as political enemies of the National Socialist regime, or those it persecuted for social, biological or racial reasons (Dommaschk, 2005, p. 8). Of the more than 200,000 inmates held at the camp between 1934 and 1945, tens of thousands died as a result of extreme abuse, malnutrition, execution and medical murder. Soviet and Polish troops invaded the camp on 22/23 April 1945.

The second chapter in the history of Sachsenhausen began soon after the camp’s liberation, in August 1945, when the Soviet Secret Service transferred its ‘Special Camp No. 7’ to Sachsenhausen. “It was here that those who had occupied official positions in the Nazi state apparatus, the Nazi party and its sections as well as members of police battalions and concentration camp guards were imprisoned” (Dommaschk, 2005, pp. 11-12). Remaining
operational until 1950, 12,000 out of a total of 60,000 people imprisoned at Special Camp No.7 are believed to have died (Dommaschk, 2005, p. 12).

The German Democratic Republic (1949-1980) began erecting the Sachsenhausen National Memorial in 1957, and it operated as such from 1961 - 1990. During this time, Sachsenhausen’s past as a camp run by the Soviet Secret Service was completely concealed. “The memorial was to serve solely as a reminder of the concentration camp” (Dommaschk, 2005, p. 18). The national memorial obelisk titled the ‘Tower of Nations’ (photo 6.2) is approximately 40 metres high and was the central memorial and emblem of the Sachsenhausen National Memorial. Eighteen red triangles are mounted on the obelisk’s peak representing prisoners’ main countries of origin. “The triangles were mounted in remembrance of Sachsenhausen’s political and foreign prisoners which wore a red triangle on their uniform” (Memorial and Museum Sachsenhausen, n.d., http://www.stiftungbg.de/gums/en/lageplan/legendemovie.swf).

![Photo 6.2](photo_6.2.jpg)

‘Tower of Nations’, with sculpture ‘Liberation’ in front
Sachsenhausen Memorial and Museum, Germany
Photo by Author, 2007

The German communists and the part played by the Soviet Union in the military downfall of the National Socialists was always a central part of the German Democratic Republic’s culture of remembrance. These ideas are further represented by Rene Graetz’s sculpture in front of the ‘Tower of Nations’, titled ‘Liberation’ (photos 6.3 & 6.4), which depicts two liberated prisoners standing next to a Red Army soldier (Memorial and Museum Sachsenhausen, n.d., http://www.stiftung-bg.de/gums/en/lageplan/legendemovie.swf).
This ‘Socialist realist’ monumental style of memorialisation such like the ‘Tower of Nations’ and Graetz’s ‘Liberation’ that developed in the Soviet Union during the 1930’s can also be seen exhibited in the Cambodia-Vietnam Friendship Monument in central Phnom Penh (photos 6.5 & 6.6). Erected in the 1970’s, during Vietnamese occupation, the Friendship Monument is
strongly reminiscent of the central monument at the Sachsenhausen Memorial created under the German Democratic Republic. Featuring the heroic scene of a Vietnamese and Cambodian soldier together with a Cambodian mother and baby (representing Cambodian civilians), the monument today is used occasionally as a site of protest. In fact, on July 29, 2007, just a day before these photos were taken, a bomb (causing little damage) was left at the base of the memorial.

For the Sachsenhausen Memorial, like all spaces of public memory throughout the territory, leaders of the German Democratic Republic were primarily interested in propaganda –
‘historical policy’ – not in preserving the traces of history and making them visible in public view. As a result, the process of demolition and elimination of ‘some’ history occurred. Sachsenhausen National Memorial, operating for 29 years as such, was designed to make a heroic statement of the communist resistance in Europe. “The historical topography was transformed by the systematic re-organisation of the site and its conversion into a monumental glorification of the defeat of SS rule” (Dommaschk, 2005, pp 19). As a result, entire groups of victims were disregarded and actively forgotten, and it was only after international protest that a small exhibit presenting the plight of the Jewish victims was hurriedly erected in the Jewish Barracks 38 and 39, which had been reconstructed from parts from other barracks. After the reunification of Germany in 1990, the German Democratic Republic memorial at Sachsenhausen became the ‘Sachsenhausen Memorial and Museum’ in 1993 and today houses 13 permanent exhibitions which cover, in a more complete way, the camp’s 21 year history, from 1936 - 1957.

Like many Concentration and Extermination Camp Memorials around Germany, Sachsenhausen today stands as a preservation, documentation and education centre for thousands of students, visitors and tourists every year. Between 1988 and 2005 however, the discussion continued to rage over a new proposed national memorial for Germany to be specifically dedicated to the murdered Jews of Europe, which was to be located in central Berlin. Acting as the catalyst for a wide ranging debate concerning the way in which Germans related to their Nazi past and the Holocaust, Eisenman’s ‘new generation’ memorial, located away from one specific site of tragedy is today titled ‘The Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe’ and was officially opened on 10 May 2005. Offering the opportunity for a renewed look at the process of memorialisation and memorial design, the creation of Eisenman’s Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe forms a key discussion on design interpretation within Chapter eight. Below however is an introduction to the history and design of site.
The site, covering an entire inner-city block is surrounded on three sides by busy streets, housing, and foreign embassies. On the west side, the site faces the Tiergarten – Berlin’s largest park. It is located near the Reichstag, the Brandenburg Gate and Potsdamer Platz, all of which can be seen from the site (photo 6.7). Reworked, from an early competition-winning design by Peter Eisenman and Richard Serra, the memorial today is, on the ground plane, a moving topography of 2711 stelae, and underneath, a ‘documentation’ centre.

Important here to explain the history and context of the memorial to better understand its place and position within contemporary Berlin life, the original Eisenman/Serra design (photo 6.8) was to fill the whole city block with stelae - right up to the street boundaries where people were forced to either cross the road to avoid the memorial, or enter it as an individual since no two people walking can fit side-by-side in the narrow corridors. As Astrid Schmeing describes,

*It is not a representation of memory so much as it is part of memory. It is an unconventional memorial that does not suggest how to remember. A conventional memorial would perhaps provide a figure to be ‘looked at’. The figurative object, witnessed by the observer’s external perspective, would provide a sense of wholeness of ‘completion’, which would suggest ‘how to remember’. This memorial, however, refuses*
to do so. There is no figure, and one does not even face an ‘object’. Instead, the individual moves within and inside the components of the memorial. One’s body becomes involved as a part of it, and the memorial is only complete when faced by each, single participating observer. Any form of memory transported to it by the observer becomes part of the memorial (Schmeing, 2000, p. 62).
Under a conservative government at the time however, Eisenman and Serra were asked to re-work their design, a request that saw Richard Serra resign from the project. The requests, made by the government of the time, ultimately changed the focus of the memorial from a singularly individual experience, to a more civic or collective experience as expressed by more traditional forms of memorialisation. Eisenman was asked to reduce the number and height of the stelae, so that they would become less dominant, and offer the opportunity for pedestrians to walk comfortably around the periphery of the site, giving them more choice as to whether to enter or not. He was also asked to integrate trees, a space for buses to park, and also a designated area to lay wreaths (photo 6.9). As a result, the changes would “allow pedestrians to stroll along its edges and perceive it as an object from outside” (Schmeing, 2000, p. 63) – in the way ‘traditional’ memorials are viewed. With the new proposed changes, and the ability for the memorial to be now comfortably viewed from the outside, the reminiscent form of a graveyard (photo 6.10) today allows for a politically motivated, universal mourning for all who died, without laying blame on the individual (Schmeing, 2000, p. 65).

Despite the compromises and adjustments outlined above however, the memorial today still allows for the possibility of a modernist reading of individual experience, self reflective interpretation and infinite meanings, at extremes with the traditional memorial focus of one expression, of one reading, and will be discussed in more detail alongside interpretation of the post genocide memoryscapes of Cambodia and Rwanda in Chapter eight.
6.2.2 CAMBODIA & THE MEMORIESCAPE OF GENOCIDE

Although we do not know the internal discussions that went into the design of the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum during 1979 and the 1980’s, Mai Lam, the Vietnamese specialist on researching battles and war crimes, in charge of overseeing the development of S-21 into a Genocide Museum, gave an interview on the subject on March 1, 1995, conducted by Sara Colm in Ho Chi Minh City, and cited by Judy Ledgerwood in her 2002 article ‘The Cambodia Tuol Sleng Museum of Genocide Crimes: National Narrative’. After creating the Vietnamese Museum of American War Crimes in Ho Chi Minh City, Mai Lam worked in Cambodia from 1979 - 1988 creating the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum and Choeung Ek Genocidal Centre. Describing himself as a ‘researcher’, his goal, or ‘duty’ as he put it, “was to research what happened, to provide the proof of DK crimes, and therefore an understanding of what happened to average Cambodians” (Mai Lam personal communication in interview conducted with Sara Colm, 1995, cited in Ledgerwood, 2002, p. 108).

The master narrative of the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, as discussed by Judy Ledgerwood (2002), associate professor of anthropology at Northern Illinois University, states that the story is told through the eyes of the successor state – the People’s Republic of Kampuchea (1979 – 1993). It “tells of a glorious revolution stolen and perverted by a handful of sadistic, genocidal traitors who deliberately exterminated three million of their countrymen. The true heirs to the revolutionary movement overthrew this murderous tyranny three years, eight months, and twenty days later” (Ledgerwood, 2002, pp. 103-104). She continues, “Providing evidence to the outside world that the invasion by the Vietnamese army was indeed a liberation was the primary concern of those who designed Tuol Sleng as a museum” (Ledgerwood, 2002, p. 108). When asked during the interview if Tuol Sleng was modelled after any other museums, Mai Lam said that he had travelled to Germany, Russia, France, and Czechoslovakia to research other museums. A 1980 report by the Cambodian Ministry of Culture, Information, and Propaganda also confirms help from East German specialists (Sara Colm, 1995, cited in Ledgerwood, 2002, pp. 108-109).

Evidence that the museum was indeed designed for foreign consumption is evident in both history and, as we will see in Section 6.3, is also evident today. Opening first on January 25, 1979 to foreign journalists from socialist countries, these were the first official visitors to the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum. Mostly orientated towards members of the fraternal socialist parties abroad, tours were focused “to convince them of the extent of Khmer Rouge atrocities” (Ledgerwood, 2002, p. 108). A 1980 report issued by the Ministry of Culture, Information, and Propaganda said that the museum was “used to show the international guests the cruel torture committed by the traitors to the Khmer people. . . The centre was not open to the public, but for the international guests and participants [sic] only” (Ledgerwood, 2002, p. 108). The memo also noted “the need for bright lights in the rooms so that the foreigners can take pictures easily. Requests are made for more workers who speak French and English in order to help with research and preparation of documents for publication” (Ministry of Culture, Information, and Propaganda, 1980, cited in Ledgerwood, 2002, p. 109). Today at the Tuol
Sleng Genocide Museum there are English and French speaking guides, and on-site information in the form of information boards and pamphlets written in English, French and Khmer. On July 13, 1980, however, the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum did open its gates to the Cambodian public. In the first week, the museum had 32,000 visitors, 1930 of them foreigners (Ledgerwood, 2002, p. 108). “From January to October 1980 . . . the museum had 320,214 visitors: 11,000 foreigners and 309,000 Khmer” (Ledgerwood, 2002, p. 108).

While foreigners saw evidence of atrocities, many Khmer, particularly in the first two years of the museum’s operation, were coming to view the photos to search for missing relatives. They were also, of course, searching for meaning, for some explanation of what happened. A visit would not have been as easy task; people who went through the museum in the first year said that the stench of the place was overpowering. But still they came, standing in line for hours to file through, carefully checking each photo (Ledgerwood, 2002, p. 110).

Figuring prominently in state publications for national and international consumption, the ‘official’ interpretation of the Genocide Museum was quickly standardised. “Some of the earliest visitors to the museum just wrote that they had visited and signed their names; but soon the writings echoed almost precisely the rhetoric of the state publications” (Ledgerwood, 2002, p. 111), with the most prominent phrases emerging as; “Cambodians wanted to remember the criminal acts of the Pol Pot-Ieng Sary-Khiev Samphan clique”, secondly, “that the purpose of this remembering is to prevent the return of the Khmer Rouge to power”, and third, the phrase, “chheu chap” – an agony that seizes you physically, emotionally and spiritually (Ledgerwood, 2002, p. 111). The central message of the government was, under Vietnamese control, “you must support us because to fail to do so will result in the return to power of the Khmer Rouge” (Ledgerwood, 2002, p. 112). Today, the role of the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum as evidence of Khmer Rouge atrocities and justification for Vietnamese invasion is accepted across both national and international boarders. “Genocide and death, as displayed at Tuol Sleng, have become the national narrative, the biography of Cambodia as a nation” (Ledgerwood, 2002, p. 116).

Not much has changed at the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum since its initial conception in 1979. Arranging the narrative to fit the requirements of the People’s Republic of Kampuchea, and its Vietnamese mentors, Mai Lam created a memorial museum, and indeed a memoryscape for Cambodia, that, at its core provided ‘evidence’ of the crimes committed under the reign of the Khmer Rouge. Much like the role of the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, the Choeung Ek Genocidal Centre also “serves to illustrate ‘typical evidence’ of mass political violence” (Hughes, 2006, p. 270).

As well as the two national memorials to the Cambodian Genocide, the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum and the Choeung Ek Genocidal Centre, Cambodia is spotted with local level memorials that mark the sites of mass graves and former Khmer Rouge sites of significance. In a 1983 government memo, dated October 5, and cited in Hughes (2006), their construction during the 1980’s, organised by the Ministry of Information and Culture, called for “municipal and provincial officers to inspect local genocide sites, prepare statistical data on the sites,
create a “file of evidence” on genocidal crimes committed in the area and to report this information to the Ministry” (Ministry of Information and Culture, RPK, 5 Oct 1983, memo No. 3123; cited in Hughes, 2006, p. 277).

The officers are also instructed to widely encourage local people to “carry onward their vengeance” about the “crimes and suffering” by preparing “memorial sites” to “the victims of the Pol Pot-Ieng Sary regime (Ministry of Information and Culture, RPK, 5 Oct 1983, memo No. 3123; cited in Hughes, 2006, pp. 277-278).

According to the two page memo, Hughes states that “at least one memorial was to be completed in each province or municipality prior to the fifth anniversary of National Liberation Day on January 7, 1984” (Ministry of Information and Culture, RPK, 5 Oct 1983, memo No. 3123; cited in Hughes, 2006, p. 278). On 14 October, 1983, another memo was released that reiterated that the construction of memorials to the victims of the genocidal regime was an important historical matter of national and international note (Ministry of Information and Culture, RPK, 5 Oct 1983, memo No. 3123; cited in Hughes, 2006, p. 278). Hughes also notes that the uniformity in age, and form (predominantly using the stupa) of more than 80 memorials throughout Cambodia suggests that the government directives were carefully followed. “Almost without exception, local memorials contain (or once contained) human remains” (Hughes, 2006, p. 279). Further evidence that the genocide memorials in Cambodia are today also strongly directed towards the international visitor is today found on the official Choeung Ek website, where the outline of a new preservation policy states, “In order to preserve the remains as evidence of these historic crimes and as the basis for remembrance and education by the Cambodian people as a whole, especially future generations, of the painful and terrible history brought about by the Democratic Kampuchea regime against the people and territory of Cambodia . . for national and international tourists in the future, the government issue the following directives:

- All local authorities at province and municipal level shall cooperate with relevant expert institutions in their areas to examine, restore and maintain existing memorials, and to examine and research other remaining grave sites, so that all such places may be transformed into memorials, with fences, trees and informative plaques for both citizens and tourists; the Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts and the Ministry of Tourism shall issue further technical guidelines, and shall appoint expert officials to work together with the local authorities on this issue.

-Circular on Preservation of remains of the victims of the genocide Committed during the regime of Democratic Kampuchea (1975-1978), and preparation of Anlong Veng to become a region for historical tourism

(http://www.cekillingfield.com/preservation.htm)

Below (photo 6.11) is a local memorial in Kandal Province. Victim remains exhumed from the mass grave that surrounds, are stacked within the memorial stupa. For many Cambodians the genocide memorials that are today still so strongly focused on the retention of victim remains,
are not places that are readily visited, and sit in an uncertain state between not being wanted (due to Khmer Buddhist belief that the remains of the dead must be cremated in order to allow the spirits to be re-born) and being needed as a source of first-hand evidence for genocide trials. Chey Sophera, Director of the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum stated that removing the skulls at the museum would “end the fear [Cambodian] visitors have while visiting the Museum” (Hughes, 2003, p. 188).
Today like in Cambodia, the Rwandan countryside is dotted with hundreds of genocide memorials mostly orientated around sites of mass graves. The national genocide memorial, the Kigali Memorial Centre, stands on Gisozi Hill and is the final resting place for more than 258,000 victims of the 1994 genocide. “Whilst the site was borne out of the necessity to do something with massacre remains around Kigali (with public health demanding that bodies be moved or buried), one can deduce that the project has evolved to serve various political and ideological endeavours (Mistiaen 2004, p.W1; cited in Steele, 2006, p. 6). A highly complex case study, the development of the Rwandan memoryscape to genocide must consider the fact previously discussed in relation to Germany’s approach to remembering the dead: that memorialisation can result in the inevitable labelling of victim and perpetrator groups. In a country where ethnic division and genocide ideology still run deep, the process of memorialisation in Rwanda runs the risk of handicapping government efforts to ensure safe cohabitation and reconciliation (Cook, 2006, p. 306). “Indeed, the Centre clearly was formed in line with the official Rwanda Government perspective, which holds that preservation and constructed memorialisation should be pursued to serve an agenda of national reconciliation and to educate individuals (both Rwandan and non-Rwandan) with the aim of ending genocide and establishing a culture of peace” (Mistiaen 2004, p.W1; cited in Steele, 2006, p. 6).

The international community also has a stake in the memorialisation processes in Cambodia and Rwanda. Cook (2006) outlines the fact that, international courts want to use the remains from genocide sites as physical evidence in genocide trials. She also notes that “international visitors to post genocide Rwanda want to witness the horror of what happened there by viewing the authentic remains of the violence... and [t]hose with a desire to make the world understand the scope of the tragedy that befell this small nation wish to keep the physical remains of the killing on display as a testament to what they experienced” (Cook, 2006, pg. 293). The UK based Aegis Trust, as has been discussed previously, has directed the development of Rwanda’s national genocide memorial “largely out of a desire to provide a record of history so as to educate and thus prevent future genocides” (Mistiaen 2004, p.W1; cited in Steele, 2006, p. 6). This is in contrast to survivors’ motives, which “have largely been to construct a site to mourn relatives” (Mistiaen 2004, p.W1; cited in Steele, 2006, p. 6).

Today, the Kigali Memorial Centre officially aims to be an ‘international’ centre, where all exhibits and information are presented in Kinyarwanda, French, and English. The Aegis Trust states that the Memorial Centre was designed and directed in this manner as the memorial “deals with a topic of international importance, with far-reaching significance, and is designed to engage and challenge an international visitor base” (Aegis Trust; cited in Steele, 2006, p. 8).

Unlike the memorials in Cambodia there is no disagreement that the Kigali Memorial Centre is strongly aligned with the Jewish Holocaust, and other genocides that have occurred throughout the world during the 20th century. Devoting an entire room to ‘Genocides of the World’, including a map of the world on an outside terrace, and including text and facts that strongly align Western powers with the genocide in Rwanda, international visitors to the Kigali
Memorial Centre are constantly asked to consider their place, in this place, far removed from the comfort of home. The Memorial Centre recognises the basic fact that genocide plagues millions of people around the world, unbounded, as has been stated, by geographic location, culture or religion.

Entering into a political debate into the role and specific intention of the Rwandan government to align the 1994 genocide with that of the Holocaust is beyond the scope of this research, the results of such an arrangement being both complex and far-reaching. Steele suggests however, that considering many Rwandans express no desire to re-live the trauma through varying artefacts, clearly the form and function of the Kigali Memorial Centre is designed to reach future generations and non-Rwandan audiences. “[T]he structure of the museum clearly reflects a trend in Western, specifically Holocaust, museums” (Steele, 2006, p. 7).
International tourism is vitally important to both Cambodia and Rwanda’s economic futures, however, to date both countries have developed little in terms of organised and well maintained tourist infrastructure. In 2007, Cambodia had a total of just over two million international visitors (Sopheareak, & Vanny, 2008), while Rwanda had approximately 40,000 visitors, with a government aim of reaching 60,000 for 2009 (Mazimhaka, 2007, p. 4).

For Cambodia, the existing tourist circuit is primarily dominated by the Angkor Temples in the northwest province of Siem Reap, with the capital city of Phnom Penh lacking any real developed tourist infrastructure (Williams, 2004a, p. 205). While run-down colonial buildings add charm and interest for the Western visitor, and the Mekong River a place of much geographical interest, the city itself houses few tourist attractions. Apart form the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum and the Choeung Ek Genocidal Centre, Phnom Penh houses just three other ‘listed’ attractions - the Royal Palace and Silver Pagoda, Wat Phnom, and the National Museum (devoted to Khmer fine arts). For a government critically concerned with the outward projection of stability to international visitors, the city attractions of the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, and the Choeung Ek Genocidal Centre occupy an uneasy place in the city’s tourist geography. It is difficult to ignore the reality that genocide provides a specific tourist experience in Cambodia – one that has a feeling of danger that allows the visitor to imagine themselves as adventurers (Williams, 2004a, pp. 206-207). In our modern world today, these landscapes of evil are increasingly attracting international visitors (Koonz, 1994, p. 259). Providing an emotional experience of the horror that gripped Cambodia during the 1970s, the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum and the Choeung Ek Genocidal Centre today offer international tourists an engagement with a site and reality that most have no previous personal connection with (Williams, 2004a, pp. 207-208).

The primary feature of Tuol Sleng and Choeung Ek is their untouched appearance. Tourists to other sites of genocide have become accustomed to artefacts and buildings presented “as is” that are, in fact, heavily mediated. Roped sections, glassed walls, guides and docents, restricted areas: all are parts of a typical, and passive, encounter with the “real thing.” By contrast, at Tuol Sleng and Choeung Ek the general absence of guards and other visitors provides the opportunity to explore – to one’s nervous limits (Williams, 2004b, p. 242).

In April 2005, after almost 20 years as the general manager of the Choeung Ek Genocidal Centre, Neang Say revealed to the Cambodian media that a plan to privatise the site, turning over Cambodia’s management to a Japanese company so it can be transformed into a revenue-generating tourist attraction, was in motion. According to Say, a contract signed on March 18, 2005, by the new operator, JC Royal Co, is expected to ‘increase revenue for the state and develop and renovate the beauty of Choeung Ek killing fields’. The successor company, JC Royal, “is to pay the municipality of Phnom Penh $15,000 a year. In return, it will be allowed to jack up entrance fees, charging foreign visitors up to $3 instead of the current 50 cents” (Doyle, 2005). The 30-year deal, which came into effect on April 1, 2005, was kept secret until
Neang Say spoke to the media. In an interview with ‘Time International’ (Asia ed.) Say said, “I want the world to know that Cambodia has become a place where they use the bones of the dead to make business” (Say, cited in Doyle, 2005).

For Rwanda, 15 years since genocide has seen the nation develop into one of the safest countries in Africa today. Tourist numbers are still small compared to other African nations, but tourism is an important and rapidly growing industry for Rwanda. Today primarily centred around the mountain gorillas located in the Volcanoes National Park that borders Uganda, 13,000 visitors came to Rwanda to see the gorillas during 2006 (Whitlaw, 2007). The strictly regulated visitor numbers (set to just over 20,000 per year) that are granted permits to visit the endangered gorillas has seen Rwanda recently look to other sites to attract international visitors, as they have an ambitious goal of 70,000 visitors by 2010 (Whitlaw, 2007).

With regard to Rwanda’s national genocide memorial, the tri-lingual and cultural form of the Kigali Memorial Centre clearly demonstrates the desire to engage international visitors. Offered as an afternoon ‘stop’ on the official Kigali City Tour, the Memorial Centre, along with the site of the killings of the Belgium UN soldiers at the start of the 1994 genocide, is visited alongside the Kigali Institute of Science and Technology, the Parliament Buildings, a traditional pottery workshop and other local sites. “Surveyed Rwandans have indicated no desire to view artefacts and images from the violence, thus indicating clearly that the Memorial’s current form reflects both a desire to reach and attract the international community” (Steele, 2006, p. 9).
As has been established, the practice of memorialisation is an intensely complex process where tensions of politics, economics, religion, culture and time manifest. Presenting themselves as a public and collective expression of memory, the genocide memorials visited within the context of this research have offered an opportunity to look in-depth at the influences and tensions placed upon the post genocide memoryscapes of Cambodia and Rwanda. While conducting site visits to the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum and the Choeung Ek Genocidal Centre in Cambodia, and the Kigali Memorial Centre in Rwanda additional memorial sites were also visited as part of the ‘encountered’ enquiry and contextual study of this research. Introduced below is a documentation of design strategies and site features from the three case study sites, as well as additional examples from other memorial sites in Cambodia and Rwanda, with a strong focus on identifying those site elements that engage Euro-Western visitors, primarily due to their familiar manifestation within the tradition of Western memorialisation that forms part of our ‘pre-understanding’ or ‘doors of perception’ for experiencing and interpreting genocide memorials.

One key aspect to the expression of public memory in Cambodia and Rwanda is the issue of ‘Westernisation’. Serge Thion states, that the paradigm of genocide, for the West, is still very much centred on the Holocaust. “Jews and Khmers do not mourn and bury the dead in the same way and there is a risk that our Western concept of “memory” could be entirely irrelevant to the Khmers who obviously have their own. I wish we may not succumb to the temptation to force our views on them, as we already do in so many other fields” (Thion, 1993, pp. 181-182). In Cambodia, Lam constructed a history through the design of the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum and the Choeung Ek Genocidal Centre that denied the Khmer Rouge any socialist credentials. He created an exhibition that “encouraged viewers to make connections between the DK [Democratic Kampuchea] regime and Tuol Sleng on the one hand, and Nazi Germany and what Serge Thion has called the “sinister charisma” of Auschwitz on the other” (Chandler, 1999, p. 5). An on-site information board at the Choeung Ek Genocidal Centre states, “Even in this 20th century, on Kampuchean soil the clique of Pol Pot criminals had committed a heinous genocidal act. They massacred the population with atrocity in a large scale. It was more cruel than the genocidal act committed by the Hitler fascists, which the world has never met”.

For the West, the genocide that unfolded in Rwanda in 1994 was watched each night on the television by millions of people around the world. The Rwandan genocide, for this reason along with the extensive proliferation of documentaries and films in the 15 years since, and the shocking magnitude of the killing that took place, has sparked an interest in many Westerners regarding Rwanda, and has seen Western aid, particularly in the form of money and professional services spill into the East-African nation. The national memorial in Kigali is no exception.
Outlined below is an analysis of site features and design strategies from memorial sites in Cambodia and Rwanda that were recognised by the researcher as engaging with Euro-Western visitors through an intensive analysis of the ‘encountered’ phenomenological enquiry. Whether through comfort or contention, through consciousness or unconsciousness, the memory layer that is considered here is that which relates to the established Euro-Western experience of memorialisation in the West.

Sections 6.4.2 and 6.4.3 below, identify key design themes and key site content commonly experienced within the Western culture of memorial design (particularly with reference to the experience of Western memorialisation of the Jewish Holocaust), and that were identified at genocide memorials in Cambodia and Rwanda, using the term ‘cues to connect’ to describe this phenomena. Some designed and some un-designed, some purposeful, others not so, elements of site are considered here as offering levels of identification and ‘connection’ for Euro-Western visitors and are outlined below within the categories of ‘cues to connect – theme’, and ‘cues to connect – content’. The format of each sub-section below, introduces a site theme or content element, highlights its use and appearance in Western memorialisation or Western culture, and then offers site exemplars of its proliferation at memorial sites in Cambodia and Rwanda.

6.4.1 APPLYING THE ‘ENCOUNTERED’ PHENOMENOLOGICAL METHOD

As has been established within Chapter five, the attempt to carry out a traditional ‘first-person’ phenomenological enquiry at the case study sites in Cambodia and Rwanda, was developed into what is termed within this research, an ‘encountered’ phenomenological enquiry where a detailed site documentation process was undertaken and where pre-understanding and personal bias by way of emotive thought or reaction were accepted, noted, and considered within analysis undertaken. What emerged, and became the focus of analysis for the research presented here, is the concept of Euro-Western ‘cues to connect’. Derived from the term ‘cues to care’ introduced by Joan Nassauer, professor of landscape architecture at the University of Minnesota, in her 1995 article ‘Messy Ecosystems, Orderly Frames’, and used to illustrate how, when placed within a social landscape of ‘care’, ecologically valuable habitats become visible through the frame of human intention, and culturally acceptable through the familiar cultural language of landscape ‘care’ (Nassauer, 1995). Nassauer realised that to get people to engage with a site, it was necessary to have something familiar for them to identify with – a cue (Nassauer, 1995). Used here, the ‘cues to connect’ defines those design strategies or site features at genocide memorials in Cambodia and Rwanda that, either consciously or unconsciously engage Euro-Western visitors with site. By placing the ‘distant’ or ‘less familiar’ history expressed within the narrative of the case study sites, within pre-understood and culturally acceptable ‘Western’ frames, the narrative of memorial sites in Cambodia and Rwanda become more assessable to the Euro-Western visitor in terms of site experience and interpretation. The term is used within this research to establish a base, a footprint of the design.
of each of the three case study sites, from which analysis of the ‘existential’ data that investigates the role of design in shaping Euro-Western experience of genocide memorial sites, can be considered. ‘Cues to connect’ are categorised within this study in terms of design theme and design content, and are presented below as follows:

**CUES TO CONNECT - THEME**

- New beginnings
- Connecting Site & Context
- The Vastness of Death – Names and Faces
- Giving Identity – Names and Faces
- Shock and the Reality of Death
- The International Style and ‘The Everyday’
- The Internationalisation of Genocide
- The Colour of Life – The Colour of Death
- The Fragrance of Beauty and Death
- The experience of Fellow Euro-Western visitors

**CUES TO CONNECT - CONTENT**

- Death and Torture Equipment
- The Display of Victim Clothing
- Victims’ Belongings and Artefacts
- The Graveyard
6.5 SITE DESIGN & EURO-WESTERN
‘CUES TO CONNECT’ - THEME

Below, is an introduction to the key ‘themes’ expressed at genocide memorial sites in Cambodia and Rwanda. Specifically this research will identify Euro-Western ‘cues to connect’ that became apparent through the ‘encountered’ phenomenological enquiry carried out by the researcher.

6.5.1 NEW BEGINNINGS

The octagon is an architectural and symbolic statement that crosses both the Jewish and Christian faiths. An important and prominent figure in both the Christian and Jewish religions, the eight sided form has manifested itself in religious representation in a range of ways throughout time. In the Jewish faith, eight is the number that symbolises salvation and regeneration, and is associated with the eighth letter of the Hebrew alphabet called ‘Chet’ which has the symbolic meaning of ‘new birth’ or ‘new beginning’. In early Christianity, eight was the number which symbolised the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the formation of the New Covenant (McGough, n.d). The eight sided form can today be seen prominently in European religious architecture such as the Florence Baptistery (photo 6.12), built between 1059 and 1128, and also in religious form, such as the church font used in the baptising of Christian children.

![Photo 6.12
The Florence Baptistery
Florence, Italy
(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Firenze.Baptistry06.JPG)]

In relation to genocide memorials that were researched and visited as part of the case study and contextual components to this study, the octagon is a prominent form in the architecture of several genocide memorial sites, including the ‘Hall of Remembrance’ at the US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington DC (photo 6.13), Beth Shalom - the UK Holocaust Centre (photo 6.14), and two significant memorial sites in Rwanda, the Kigali Memorial Centre (photo 6.15) and the Murambi Technical School Memorial (photo 6.16).
Photo 6.13
Hall of Remembrance
US Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington DC

Photo 6.14
The eight sided octagon form, present in the architecture of the UK Holocaust Centre
Laxton, Nottinghamshire, UK
Photo by Author, 2007

Photo 6.15
The octagon form present in the architecture of the Memorial Centre
Kigali Memorial Centre, Rwanda
Photo by Author, 2008

Photo 6.16
The octagon again apparent in the architectural form
Murambi Technical School Memorial, Rwanda
Photo by Author, 2008
Stephen Smith, co-founder of the UK Holocaust Centre, Beth Shalom, states that the Centre aims to challenge non-Jews in general, and the Christian faith in particular, in response to the Jewish Holocaust (Smith, 2002, p. 77). The eight-sided octagon form that dominates the architecture has both the Hebrew meaning of ‘new birth’, and the ‘Christian’ meaning of the resurrection and new covenant, which, in the Bible is used to refer to an epochal relationship of restoration and peace following a period of trial and judgement, a theme that seems appropriate to the phenomenon of genocide memorialisation. Developed in conjunction with the UK based genocide prevention charity the Aegis Trust (who founded the UK Holocaust Centre), two memorials visited in Rwanda also present the same octagonal architecture – the Kigali Memorial Centre on Gisozi Hill (photo 6.15), and at the Murambi Technical School Memorial near Gikongoro in south-west Rwanda which marks the site where 50,000 people were murdered in 48 hours during the 1994 genocide (photo 6.16). The Kigali Memorial Centre, a completely ‘new’ building designed as a co-ordinated project between the Kigali City Council and the Aegis Trust, and the Murambi Technical School Memorial, that through the assistance of the Aegis Trust has added an octagonal architectural form as part of the site redevelopment, sees both memorial sites in Rwanda bear the eight-sided form as an intrinsic part of the architectural communication. Bringing Christianity to Rwanda during the colonisation of Africa, more than 85% of Rwandans today define themselves as Catholic. The Christian symbolism therefore represented by the octagonal form of the memorial buildings sits comfortably within the cultural landscape as part of the ‘Christian’ rhetoric; but also somewhat awkwardly within the cultural traditions of the Rwandan civilization as an African society.
6.5.2 CONNECTING SITE & CONTEXT

Connecting site with context is a design issue that presents itself very differently at memorial sites in Europe, Cambodia and Rwanda. For the Concentration and Extermination Camps in Europe, the genocide memorials in Cambodia, and also for many of the local level memorials in Rwanda (many located at sites of mass killings, commonly in churches and schools), the issue of responding to context is vastly different from that of a purpose-built memorial away from one specific site of tragedy, such as the Kigali Memorial Centre, or the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe in Berlin.

For memorial sites in Cambodia and Rwanda focused on preserving genocide sites and mass graves, the priority of site sits in its ability to retain evidence. For the Kigali Memorial Centre however, the purpose-built complex allows for an ‘outward’ dialogue with the context in which it sits. The architectural octagonal form introduced earlier as symbolically referring to the restoration and peace following a period of trial, is particularly potent when viewed across the valley from the city. Orientated to face across the valley and towards the city of Kigali, views projected from the Memorial Centre itself, bounce to and fro, back and forth from the city (photos 6.17 & 6.18, and figure 6.1). Through the design, location and orientation of the memorial site, a dialogue has been set up between memorial site and city, with a powerful symbolic message of new beginnings.
Different to the Kigali Memorial Centre in Rwanda, that actively encourages the consideration of context by those who visit the memorial, the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum in Cambodia does the opposite, and continually, through the nature of site, rebounds any attempt to connect with the surrounding context back onto site. There is a reciprocal dialogue in Kigali where city speaks to memorial, and memorial speaks to city through the design and orientation of the site. In Cambodia however, the reality that the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum was not purpose built as a memorial, as the Kigali Memorial Centre was, and the fact that it was originally a high school built within an existing Phnom Penh suburb during the early 1960’s has resulted in the site having its back to the surrounding community, to its context. Remnants of prison life are obvious at every turn, and the large dominating barbed wire fencing that surround the site (photo 6.19), along with bars on each window (photos 6.20 & 6.21), offer little opportunity for dialogue or connection with its immediate context (figure 6.2).
Photo 6.19
Boundary fence of the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum
Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, Cambodia
Photo by Author, 2007

Photo 6.20
View from one of the upper rooms at the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, out onto the surrounding neighbourhood
Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, Cambodia
Photo by Author, 2007
Photo 6.21

View from one of the upper rooms at the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, out onto the surrounding neighbourhood

Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, Cambodia

Photo by Author, 2007
6.5.3 THE VASTNESS OF DEATH – NAMES & FACES

The oldest and most common form of a memorial is the gravestone, acting as a marker, a remembrance point for someone who has passed, recording, at least, their name (Jackel, 2005, p. 122). Memorialising the memory of large numbers of dead however is a tradition that has today gained much significance as war, genocide and terror attacks plague the world. Offering many examples in the West, this type of memorial that lists the names of vast numbers of dead is today part of a memorial tradition common within the realm of memorialising war and tragedy. Calling upon examples such as the Arc de Triomph in Paris, World War I and II memorials throughout allied nations and Maya Lin’s Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington D.C (photo 6.22), the importance of naming the dead in Western nations is shown.

The importance of naming the dead within a culture or people that have suffered tragedy, is well represented by the efforts made by Yad Vashem in Israel where the names of three million Jewish Holocaust victims have been collected. Understanding the importance of these names in telling the story of the Holocaust and the persecution of Jewish people in Europe, approval was granted as part of the development of the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe in Berlin, to access and use the names collected at Yad Vashem within the documentation Centre beneath the field of stelae. Never before has another institution been granted permission to use the names database. “The belief was that the names of the murdered Jews of Europe should be gathered in two prominent places: in the land of the victims and in the land of the perpetrators” (Jackel, 2005, p. 123).

Like the victims of Nazi genocide crimes during WWII, almost no victims of the Cambodian or Rwandan genocides have their own grave or gravestone stating their name or date of birth or
cause or date of death. In Rwanda, each local memorial site (photo 6.23), along with the national genocide memorial in Kigali (photo 6.24), is attempting to name the dead, and list them in stone at the memorial sites. For the national memorial in Cambodia, the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, photos that were taken of prisoners at S-21 on arrival have been developed and displayed within the memorial site, as well as by the Yale University Genocide Studies Programme who has created an online database of the images. As one scrolls through the thousands of images however, few have names.

Like the lists of names on memorials, the use of victim photos at genocide memorials around the world is relatively common (see photos 6.25 – 6.28), especially with regard to the display of Holocaust victim photographs. Similar to the long lists of names, the sheer numbers of victims represented by thousands of photos has a direct and emotive effect on all who view. The rooms filled with ‘facing death’ mug-shots at the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum for example (photos 6.29 & 6.30), and the photo bays at the Kigali Memorial Centre (photo 6.31) where relatives of victims can bring photos of loved ones, together embody a strategy to represent the vast number of genocide victims.
Photo 6.25
Victim photos at the Topography of Terror
Berlin, Germany
Photo by Author, 2007

Image removed due to copyright

Photo 6.26
The Tower of Faces, US Holocaust Memorial Museum
Washington DC, USA
(From Branham, 2000, p. 56)

Photo 6.27
The fifth Void & “Fallen leaves” by Menashe Kadishman
Jewish Museum, Berlin, Germany
Photo by Author, 2007
"Sam Pivnik, a survivor of Bendzin, Poland, stands by the images of 653 people from his home town, most of whom perished."
Beth Shalom, UK Holocaust Centre, Laxton, UK
(From Smith, 2002, p. 100)

Photo 6.29
‘Facing Death’ photos
Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, Cambodia
Photo by Author, 2007

Photo 6.30
‘Facing Death’ photos
Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, Cambodia
Photo by Author, 2007

Photo 6.31
Faces of victims
Kigali Memorial Centre, Rwanda
(From Kigali Memorial Centre Website, http://www.kigalimemorialcentre.org/old/centre/exhibition.html)
6.5.4 GIVING IDENTITY – NAMES & FACES

As well as communicating the vastness of death, the inclusion of victim photographs and victim names can also offer an opportunity to identify and individualise each victim. Room three of the underground documentation centre of the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe for example, is dedicated to the projection of the names of Jewish Holocaust victims. One after another, onto the bare room walls, the names of the three million victims collected by Yad Vashem are projected, while each victims recorded biographies are heard (photo 6.32).

The presentation of known names of victims
Documentation Centre, Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, Berlin, Germany
(From Quack & Von Wikken, 2007, p. 47)

The US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington DC, has extended the use of names so that each visitor, before entering the permanent exhibition is given an identification card that explains the story of a Holocaust victim or survivor of the event. Personalising the museum experience for each visitor, this strategy encourages visitors to connect with the victim on the identification card which they carry with them through the exhibition, connecting information presented in the exhibition with the experience of “their victim’s” story.

For international visitors to the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum in Cambodia connections may be made with victims through individual victim circumstances portrayed in ‘facing death’ photographs. For example the ‘facing death’ photo of mother and baby (photo 6.33), or the battered and beaten boy (photo 6.34), on display within the memorial site.
Photo 6.33
Facing death - Mother and child
Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, Cambodia
Photo by Author, 2007

Photo 6.34
Facing death
Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, Cambodia
Photo by Author, 2007
6.5.5 SHOCK & THE REALITY OF DEATH

The Church of Bones in the Czech Republic town of Sedlec is a European example of the display of human remains, a site which was also documented and considered during this research. A Cistercian monastery founded in the 12th century, the associated cemetery is believed to have existed from the mid 13th century. The Abbot of the Sedlec Monastery, Heidenreich, is said to have brought a handful of earth from the grave of the Lord in Jerusalem and to have scattered it over the cemetery in the Ossuary grounds around the 13th century. The earth in the cemetery thus became part of the Holy Land and people wished to be buried there from all over the country. Thousands of people were also buried in the cemetery during the great plague of 1318, when it is said 30,000 bodies were buried there. Work began on the All Saints cemetery chapel at the beginning of the 14th century and bones from abolished graves were piled up within the chapel. After many alterations to the display and presentation of the bones, the wood carver Frantisek Rint was, in the 18th century, commissioned to decorate the interior of the Ossuary using the human bones (photos 6.42 – 6.44). It is estimated that the skeletons of 40,000 persons were used to decorate the Sedlec Ossuary (Kulich, undated).

The confrontation of bones presented at The Ossuary in Sedlec seems vastly different to experiencing the human remains displayed at memorial sites in Cambodia and Rwanda. Partly due to the greater period of time removed, and the fact that these people died mostly natural deaths due to old age or sickness, the bones on display at the Sedlec Ossuary, although a bizarre experience, seems calm. The experience of bones on display at genocide memorials in Cambodia and Rwanda however is a vastly different and ‘retching’ experience.

The ability to shock Euro-Western visitors appears an easy and deliberate task at memorial sites in both Cambodia and Rwanda, with the inclusion (or exploitation as some would say) of human remains. Again representing the raw reality of death, and again the vastness of killing, human remains, in the form of skulls, bones, and semi-preserved corpses are all a key part of the design of memorial sites in both Cambodia and Rwanda. Photos below portray a 30 year old blood stained floor at the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum (photo 6.35), the memorial stupa at the Choeung Ek Genocidal Centre where exhumed bones are sorted, categorised and presented by age and sex (photo 6.36), the protrusion and appearance of bone fragments, teeth and clothing out of the ground at the Choeung Ek Genocidal Centre (photos 6.37 & 6.38), and the semi-decomposed, preserved corpses on display at the Murambi Technical School Memorial in Rwanda (photos 6.39 - 6.41).
Photo 6.35
Blood stained floor in one of the ground floor torture rooms
Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, Cambodia
Photo by Author, 2007

Photo 6.36
Skulls on display in the memorial stupa
Choeung Ek Genocidal Centre, Cambodia
Photo by Author, 2007
Photo 6.37
Bones, teeth and clothing can be seen protruding from the ground
Choeung Ek Genocidal Centre, Cambodia
Photo by Author, 2007

Photo 6.38
Bones, teeth and clothing can be seen protruding from the ground
Choeung Ek Genocidal Centre, Cambodia
Photo by Author, 2007
Photo 6.39
Semi decomposed, preserved corpses lying on display
Murambi Technical School Memorial, Rwanda
Photo by Author, 2008

Photo 6.40
A baby on display
Murambi Technical School Memorial, Rwanda
Photo by Author, 2008
Photo 6.41
Bones of those exhumed bodies that were not preserved in lime
Murambi Technical School Memorial, Rwanda
Photo by Author, 2008

Photo 6.42
Skulls and bones on display
The Ossuary, Sedlec, Czech Republic
Photo by Author, 2007
Photo 6.43
Skulls and bones on display
The Ossuary, Sedlec, Czech Republic
Photo by Author, 2007

Photo 6.44
Skulls and bones used to decorate the interior of the church
The Ossuary, Sedlec, Czech Republic
Photo by Author, 2007
6.5.6 THE INTERNATIONAL STYLE & ‘THE EVERYDAY’

As noted previously, the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum was a high school before it became S-21 under Khmer Rouge rule. Today, everything about the architectural appearance of the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum speaks of its former use as a school. From the modernist architectural form (photos 6.45 & 6.46) of four, three storied concrete classroom blocks, reminiscent of many schools built in the international style throughout the world during the mid 20th century, the semi-enclosed concrete staircases at either end of the classroom blocks, the long outdoor corridors (photo 6.47), and the courtyard layout, today, Euro-Western visitors to the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum are able to instantly respond to the form, making the raw reality of the site even more sinister.

Photo 6.45
The ‘international’ style of 1960’s architecture, reminiscent of many schools built during this era in the west
Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, Cambodia
Photo by Author, 2007

Photo 6.46
A ‘typical’ school-yard structure
Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, Cambodia
Photo by Author, 2007
The former use of S-21 as a high school is again apparent in the large detention rooms of the upper floors of the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, as classroom blackboards still hang at the front of each room (photo 6.48). A bed, a place for rest and relaxation, is sharply contrasted here by its use during torture.
At the Choeung Ek Genocidal Centre, day-to-day life goes hand-in-hand with the experience of the ‘Killing Fields’. A ‘Pepsi’ drink Kiosk (photo 6.49), lunching area (photo 6.50), souvenir shop (photos 6.51 & 6.52), local children playing (photo 6.53), noise and laughter from the school next door (photo 6.54) and school children participating in a parade celebrating the onset of the rainy season (photo 6.55), the juxtaposition of life and death, and the extraordinary and the ordinary is blurred. The addition of a bright green ‘welcome mat’ as one approaches the memorial stupa housing the bones of thousands of genocide victims, is again a stark connection for any Euro-Western visitor (photo 6.56).
Photo 6.51
Souvenir shop
Choeung Ek Genocidal Centre, Cambodia
Photo by Author, 2007

Photo 6.52
Souvenir shop sign
Choeung Ek Genocidal Centre, Cambodia
Photo by Author, 2007
Photo 6.53
Kids playing
Choeung Ek Genocidal Centre, Cambodia
Photo by Author, 2007

Photo 6.54
The school next door to the ‘Killing Fields’
Choeung Ek Genocidal Centre, Cambodia
Photo by Author, 2007

Photo 6.55
Children from the school next door participating in a parade to celebrate the start of the rainy season
Choeung Ek Genocidal Centre, Cambodia
Photo by Author, 2007
Photo 6.56
The 'English language' welcome mat.
Choeung Ek Genocidal Centre, Cambodia
Photo by Author, 2007
6.5.7 THE INTERNATIONALISING OF GENOCIDE

Direct in-text reference to the West by way of comparison with the Holocaust and Nazi crimes, as is the case at the Choeung Ek Genocidal Centre (photo 6.57), or with reference to European and Western involvement, or lack of, during the genocide in Rwanda, as is the case with the Kigali Memorial Centre, make direct connection between the genocides in these foreign nations and the Euro-Western visitor. Also at the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, and the Choeung Ek Genocidal Centre, the inclusion of the photo of David Lloyd Scott (photos 6.58 & 6.59), an Australian caught off the coast of Cambodia, imprisoned at S-21, and presumed killed at Choeung Ek, makes for a clear and direct connection for Euro-Western visitors to the memorial sites in Cambodia. The major on-site information board at the Choeung Ek Genocidal Centre reads: “It was more cruel than the genocidal act committed by the Hitler fascists which the world has never met.”

Photo 6.57
Information board at the Choeung Ek Genocidal Centre
Choeung Ek Genocidal Centre, Cambodia
Photo by Author, 2007
For the Kigali Memorial Centre, as well as the clear documentation of the various roles that Western nations took during the 1994 genocide, including the arms deal with a French company worth $12 million, with a loan guaranteed by the French government (Kigali Memorial Centre, 2004, p. 14), and the blatant inaction of the United Nations, the connection with Euro-Western visitors is also encouraged by the inclusion of an entire exhibition titled ‘Wasted Lives’ that documents and presents genocides from around the world, namely Namibia, Armenia, Nazi Germany, Cambodia and the Balkans. Also present at the Kigali Memorial Centre, relevant to the Euro-Western experience of site, is the world map terrace as you enter the memorial complex through the main gate (photo 6.60). Able to locate any nation that a visitor may originate from, the map shows how close we all were during the 1994 genocide, and reiterates the message inside that we are all responsible for what happened through our inaction.
Photo 6.60
World map terrace
Kigali Memorial Centre, Rwanda
Photo by Author, 2008
The colour white in Western tradition, is associated with concepts of peace, innocence, purity and life. Often used in religious and cultural ceremonies, white is the colour of marriage, and the symbol of neutrality. Used in the memorialisation of death throughout the West, the colour black also has strong symbology in Western cultures and can be seen to be used in numerous examples of memorialising death. Common and intrinsically identified by Euro-Western cultures, the use of the colour black at sites of death and tragedy is an inherent part of our culture, and has the ability to consciously or unconsciously inform our interpretation. Having the opposite meaning in Eastern cultures, it is the colour white that is associated with ‘evil’ or death, and its use on the lower portion of the memorial stupa at the Choeung Ek Genocidal Centre offers an interesting cultural conflict in terms of Euro-Western experience and interpretation (photo 6.61).

Rwanda, a dominantly Christian nation, has also adopted the colour white (or near shade thereof) to adorn their national genocide memorial (photo 6.62).
White is the colour of the entire Kigali Memorial Centre complex
Kigali Memorial Centre, Rwanda
Photo by Author, 2008
6.5.9 THE FRAGRANCE OF BEAUTY & DEATH

The inclusion of the frangipani tree on site is very significant in Cambodian culture who associate the tree with death. For Euro-Western visitors however, the frangipani tree has very different connotations of beauty and fragrance to a point where many beauty products include extract from the frangipani tree. The use of the frangipani tree on site at both the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum (photo 6.63) and the Choeung Ek Genocidal Centre (Photo 6.64) again offers an interesting juxtaposition in terms of Euro-Western interpretation, where fallen flowers during site visits in June, July and August 2007 had been picked up and placed on site objects (photos 6.65 - 6.67). A practice that may not occur in everyday Cambodian society.
Photo 6.65
The frangipani flower left on a bed used for torturing prisoners during interrogation
Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, Cambodia
Photo by Author, 2007

Photo 6.66
A frangipani flower left beside the ‘facing death’ photo of a young female prisoner
Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, Cambodia
Photo by Author, 2007

Photo 6.67
A frangipani flower left in an on-site ‘comments’ book
Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, Cambodia
Photo by Author, 2007
6.5.10 THE EXPERIENCE OF ‘FELLOW’ EURO-WESTERN VISITORS

Comments left by Euro-Western visitors in visitor books at the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum and graffiti written on the inner walls of buildings made up a series of on-site expressions left by visitors. Below, photo 6.68 shows an open visitor book with comments written in both Khmer and English.

Graffiti written on the walls of the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum also showed a stark connection with site for Euro-Western visitors, through personal histories, identity, comparison, compassion and pre-understanding. Photo 6.69 states ‘They learn nothing about the history, I can say that, I am a German’. A connection made with personal identity, history and pre-understanding, this photo portrays clearly an example of Euro-Western connection with site.
The comment made in photo 6.70 is an example of visitors struggling to comprehend and come to terms with the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, its history as S-21, and the realisation that genocide is an unpredictable and indefinable human problem.

Photo 6.70
Graffiti – ‘The pain of man’s inhumanity is unbearable – Wayne’
Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, Cambodia
Photo by Author, 2007

Photo 6.71 shows a series of comments written and scratched into the wall under one of the stairwells. The comment ‘Don’t let shit like this ever happen again Please!’ stands out as one that represents much that is said in both the visitor books and other graffiti around the site.

Photo 6.71
Graffiti – ‘Don’t let shit like this ever happen again Please!’
Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, Cambodia
Photo by Author, 2007
Often found in grouped areas, graffiti such as this may speak of support for one another’s comments, or debate them. In an archived visitors comment book stored at DC-CAM (the Documentation Centre of Cambodia) a series of comments between visitors for instance reads:

“Cambodia will never move forward unless they deal with this history. Why don’t the big shots like Bush and Blair help, instead of starting another war?” – Ireland 7/2/2003

“Good point”
“Because people are being tortured to death in Iraq as we speak”

“I really enjoyed seeing this prison. I would like to see more pictures of dead piles of bodies” – Chris 7/7/2004

“You forgot to say you were American
“Sick fucker, I wish I believed in hell when I encounter deranged humans such as you”
“This is the same mentality as Pol Pot. You will eventually meet Pol Pot in hell”
Below, is an introduction to the key ‘content’ elements expressed at genocide memorial sites in Cambodia and Rwanda, specifically identifying any Euro-Western ‘cues’ that became apparent through the ‘encountered’ phenomenological enquiry carried out by the researcher.

### 6.6.1 DEATH & TORTURE EQUIPMENT

The inclusion of torture and death equipment as part of a memorial site is an approach commonly seen in the Concentration and Extermination Camp memorials throughout Europe which are primarily orientated around the acts of site preservation and historical documentation, as in the image below of the crematorium oven at Sachsenhausen Memorial and Museum (photo 6.73). For Euro-Western visitors to memorial sites in Cambodia and Rwanda, the inclusion of death and torture equipment, even if that visitor has not directly experienced a visit to a Concentration or Extermination Camp memorial site for example, is a chilling experience, and I argue, can be a ‘connected’ experience, due to the vast proliferation of knowledge surrounding the fate of victims of the Nazi regime during WWII within Western cultures.

![Extermination furnaces at Sachsenhausen Memorial and Museum](Photo 6.73)

*Extermination furnaces at Sachsenhausen Memorial and Museum
Germany
Photo by Author, 2007*
At the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum in Cambodia, the inclusion of death and torture equipment in the memorial courtyard is doubly disturbing. ‘The Gallows’ (photo 6.74) used for torturing prisoners during interrogation, have been adapted from the existing playground equipment that today stands as a testament to the former use of the site as a high school before Khmer Rouge occupation of Cambodia. Numerous pieces of torture equipment are also displayed within the buildings of the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum (photos 6.75 & 6.76).
In Rwanda, the Kigali Memorial Centre is set away from one specific site of tragedy, and was instead set up as a place for the burial of victims killed during the genocide in the Kigali area. Today, development as the memorial centre associated with the mass graves, sees a factual account of the genocide presented to visitors through mixed media applications. For local memorials however, the raw utensils left, or collected from nearby villages, roads and fields, offers visitors a raw connection with genocide. Machetes for example lie on church pews at the Ntarama Church Memorial 20km from Kigali (photo 6.77).
6.6.2 THE DISPLAY OF VICTIM CLOTHING

The display of victim clothing has been a central focus in Holocaust memorialisation throughout Europe, especially as part of the preservation of Concentration and Extermination Camp memorials. “The magnitude of the process of killing is . . . communicated by the tattered prisoners’ clothing” (Williams, 2004a, p. 201). A strategy that ‘humanises’ the victims as individuals, with a message of ‘like you and me’, clothing and other belongings have been used for many years at Holocaust memorial sites throughout Europe. The display of clothing at case study sites in Cambodia and Rwanda offers a direct point of connection for Euro-Western visitors, and is an occurrence in many memorial sites, both local and national in Cambodia and Rwanda. The idea to include victim clothing at memorial sites, I believe, occurs sometimes out of design strategy, for example the display of ‘evidence’ as is the case at the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum (photo 6.78), and sometimes out of not knowing what to do with them, or not having the resources to deal with them in a different way, as is the case for many local memorials in Rwanda (photos 6.81 & 6.82). Pieces of ‘first-hand evidence’ that may be called upon or used in the trial of genocide perpetrators in the future, victim clothing also certainly has an evidential use. Whatever reason however for the inclusion of victim clothing at memorial sites in Cambodia and Rwanda, the display of blood-soaked victim clothing indeed acts as a ‘cue to connect’ for the Euro-Western visitor by almost offering an international language of suffering – a language that is understood by all humans regardless of culture.

Photo 6.78
Clothes on display
Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, Cambodia
Photo by Author, 2007
Clothes on display at the base of the memorial stupa that also displays the skulls and bones of 8000 victims exhumed from the mass graves at Choeung Ek.

Choeung Ek Genocidal Centre, Cambodia
Photos by Author, 2007

Victim clothing has slowly emerged from the ground at Choeung Ek as natural processes move and erode dirt that once covered them.

Choeung Ek Genocidal Centre, Cambodia
Photos by Author, 2007
Clothes on display at the Murambi Technical School Memorial that is also working with the Aegis Trust to develop the memorial site into a national genocide prevention centre
Murambi Technical School Memorial, Rwanda
Photo by Author, 2008

Victims’ clothes hanging from the rafters
Ntarama Church Memorial, Rwanda
Photo by Author, 2008
6.6.3 VICTIM BELONGINGS

Like the inclusion of victim clothing at memorial sites, the display of victim belongings and artefacts from the genocide also humanises the victims as individuals and connects visitor with victim without the use of language. Again, commonly used within Concentration and Extermination Camp Memorials throughout Europe (photo 6.83), the display of victim belongings act as proof and first-hand evidence, as well as offering the opportunity for cross cultural connection with visitors from other nations. A design act to identify victim to visitor, as in the case of the display of Rwandan identification cards at the Kigali Memorial Centre (photo 6.84), or for example the problem of not knowing what to do with the mountain of cooking utensils, water containers and other numerous belongings left by victims killed at the Ntarama Church (photo 6.85), the display of victim belongings again speaks of an international and human language, where Euro-Western visitors can connect with the victims and survivors of genocide.

Photo 6.83
Prisoners' shoes on display at the Majdanek Concentration Camp Memorial
Majdanek, Concentration Camp Memorial, Poland
(Photo by Donald Woodman: in Young, 1993, p. 129)

Photo 6.84
ID Cards on display
Kigali Memorial Centre, Rwanda
(From Kigali Memorial Centre, 2004, p 47)

Image removed due to copyright
Photo 6.85
Victims belongings left at the Ntarama Church Memorial 20km from Kigali
Ntarama Church Memorial, Rwanda
Photo by Author, 2008
6.6.4 THE ‘GRAVEYARD’

The ‘graveyard’ is a feature within the landscapes of many cultures, an international landscape of death perhaps. Whether viewing the individual graves of the fourteen dead prisoners found at S-21 after Vietnamese invasion (photo 6.86), or the mass graves at the Choeung Ek Genocidal Centre (photos 6.87 & 6.88), the Kigali Memorial Centre (photos 6.89 & 6.90), or the thousands of mass graves throughout Cambodia and Rwanda, some identified, others not, Euro-Western visitors connect with death through the external expression of the grave. Identified symbolically by some who interpret the field of stelae which is the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, as ‘graves’ (photo 6.91), the graveyard is indeed an intrinsic part of the European, the Cambodian and the Rwandan culture, and is therefore identified and understood by Euro-Western visitors in Cambodia and Rwanda as a landscape of death.
Photo 6.87
Exhumed mass graves
Choeung Ek Genocidal Centre, Cambodia
Photo by Author, 2007

Photo 6.88
Covered mass grave pit – ‘Mass grave of 166 victims with out heads’
Choeung Ek Genocidal Centre, Cambodia
Photo by Author, 2007
Photo 6.89
Mass Grave
Kigali Memorial Centre, Rwanda
Photo by Author, 2008

Photo 6.90
Mass Grave terrace
Kigali Memorial Centre, Rwanda
Photo by Author, 2008
Photo 6.91
Concrete Stelae
Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe
Berlin, Germany
Photo by Author, 2007
6.7 CONCLUSION

As social constructs, genocide memorials fulfil a range of roles, from being a political tool and social statement, container for first-hand evidences, history receptacle, burial ground, commemoration space, education centre and tourist attraction, the purposes and functions of memorial sites in Cambodia and Rwanda are no exception. Various forms of visual symbols that ultimately enlighten and direct experience for Euro-Western visitors act as ‘cues’ for international tourists, and have been identified and discussed within the ‘encountered’ research presented in this chapter. Each case study site utilising a selection of identified ‘cues’ attempts, either consciously or unconsciously, to engage the international visitors through the use of what I have termed ‘cues to connect’. For the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum, the use of photos representing the ‘vastness of death’ is a key tool in engaging the international visitor through both its connection as a strategy commonly found with Holocaust memorialisation in the West, and through the sheer ‘human’ element of the display. The theme of ‘shock and the reality of death’ is another ‘cue’ consistently utilised at the Museum, with its inclusion and display of torture equipment and paintings depicting death scenes. Offering on-site and pamphlet information in Khmer, French and English, the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum can engage the Euro-Western visitor in a number of ways, appealing to the pre-understanding and memorial traditions common in our society.

For the Choeung Ek Genocidal Centre, the idea of ‘shock and the reality of death’ is again a key theme. Humanising the experience as to communicate with all visitors beyond any language or cultural barriers, the display of human remains at the Choeung Ek Genocidal Centre is certainly an experience that ‘touch’ all who visit. Located within a context of ‘everyday’ Cambodian life, the Choeung Ek Genocidal Centre is positioned within a rural community on the outskirts of Phnom Penh. The sharp contrast of life today represented by the voices of hundreds of children from the school next door, to the mountain of human remains lying static and voiceless in the memorial stupa, the Choeung Ek Genocidal Centre is a space like no other when compared to examples of Western memorialisation. Framed within those humanising aspects however, like the display of victim clothing at the base of the stupa, or the clothing piled up at the base of the ‘Killing Tree’, and juxtaposed by the children playing under the shade of thatch, or the family cow tied to a nearby tree, the experience of the ‘surreal’ and the ‘everyday’ living side-by-side as represented at the Choeung Ek Genocidal Centre is one which certainly engages the mind of the Euro-Western visitor. Here death is identified and amplified through the frame of the ‘everyday’. Here, the certainty of death is framed within the uncertainty of life – an unusual perspective in Euro-Western culture.

For the Kigali Memorial Centre, a place designed and managed with the help of a UK charity, the representational Western religious expression through symbolic architecture defines, from the outset, an approach of memorialisation that communicates with the international visitor as much as the local. Stephen Smith states: “Memorials bring respect to the dead, but are not just
about the past. Survivors today are deeply wounded. Memorials are an acknowledgement of their loss” (Aegis Trust, undated). He also states that “Memorials are also important for the international community and for policy makers to reflect on our past failures, to prevent genocide, and about our responsibility to protect those who remain under threat, both now and in the future” (Aegis Trust, undated). The strong and outward narrative of the Kigali Memorial Centre, internationalising genocide as a human problem frames the Rwandan Genocide, in an obvious and easily understood rhetoric for Euro-Western visitors.

This chapter has shown that the design of site at each of the three case study locations can, and does, engage the Euro-Western visitor at some level through both site themes and content. Retuning to the issue outlined at the start of this chapter of the politicisation of public memory and memorialisation, this encountered research has shown that the memorial sites in Cambodia and Rwanda do indeed fulfil a purpose of more then mourning the dead and remembering the tragedy. They are places infused with the pressures of post genocide society, where Western visitation and experience of these landscapes fulfil both political and economic goals through engaging the Euro-Western tourist with site and context. For Cambodia, the official narrative of justification for Vietnamese invasion continues to project strongly on site. For Rwanda, the official narrative of internationalising responsibility for the 1994 genocide also dominates site design and ultimately tourist experience.

Within Chapter seven, the results of this encountered enquiry carried out by the researcher will form the base from which analysis of the existential phenomenological data provided by Euro-Western participants, is compared and discussed. Building a layered discussion about memorial design and Euro-Western interpretation, Chapters six, seven and eight shape the core discussion on data collected at the ‘encountered’, ‘existential’ and ‘hermeneutic’ stages of enquiry, ultimately informing the discussion and conclusions drawn in Chapter nine.