

Memorialisation and the Land of the Eternal Spring: Performative practices of memory on the Rwandan genocide.

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Abstract

In 1994, Rwanda became the site of a three month brutal campaign of genocide. Since the cessation of this campaign, a number of memory projects have been undertaken, assuming various forms, including public and private spectacles (including trials and ceremonies); the preservation of sites; the erection of structures and museums; the writing of various types of literature; the production and re-production of art and images; and the undertaking of various cinematic projects. It is this practice of memorialisation that will be the focus of the paper.

In particular, the paper seeks to examine the process of memorialisation in post-genocide Rwanda so as to elucidate an explanation of its interrelationship with international law and politics. Before engaging with the process in Rwanda, this article will firstly undertake an examination of the various theoretical discussions of memorialisation, explicating the complex ways that trauma, memory, law and politics interact in the process of commemorating genocide. Having set out the material on the process, this article will then detail the process as undertaken in Rwanda, with two case studies being provided to highlight the particularities of the practice in this state: the Kigali Memorial Centre and the literary project of Fest’Africa 2000.

Whilst detailing the practice with regard to Rwanda will be the central enterprise herein, this article will also endeavour to highlight that memorialisation has attained such a privileged position in the post-genocide international community that it has moved beyond merely being a rite and ritual for the victim/witness and their community, becoming a compulsively practiced politicised rite and ritual for 'international society'. It argues that Euro-Western projects of memory and international criminal law have permeated projects in non-Western locales, shaping both their form and content to reflect the view of genocide as a grave crime against humanity. In this way, memorialisation has evolved beyond being an extra-legal, nation-state building process, to an aesthetic extension of international law and politics.

Keywords: *Memorialisation; Genocide; Rwanda; Memory.*

Introduction

In 1994, Rwanda became the site of a brutal campaign of violence that resulted in the death of between a half and one million people. Following the shooting down of the Rwandan President's plane on April 6th, three and a half months of widespread violence ensued. Murder, rape and torture were all perpetrated with the intention of exterminating the Tutsi population. Killings were carried out with devastating speed and efficiency, with mobs of Hutu soldiers, militias, and civilians methodically perpetrating slaughter of the Tutsi, political moderates, sympathisers and citizens unwilling to engage in atrocities. In the absence of UN troops, which had been withdrawn early in the conflict following the targeting of assistance mission staff and troops, close to three quarters of all Tutsi in Rwanda were killed, along with thousands of Hutu, Twa, and foreign citizens. Whilst the UN had conceded that genocide was being committed in April 1994, UN forces were not deployed to the region until late June (International Peace Academy 2004; Des Forges 1999).

By July 1994, the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) regained control over the capital and government, resulting in a mass exodus of Hutus into neighbouring states (GlobalSecurity.org 2005). But for those individuals who survived the genocide and for the communities from which victims came, the end of the killing did not mark the end of the genocide, but rather the point at which the 'physical' and 'visible' violence has ceased. Whilst UN peace building troops arrived in the country to assist in the restoration of infrastructure and repatriation of survivors back into their communities, the effects of the 100 days of genocide were still strongly reverberating.

Indeed, as the visible violence ceased and UN intervention progressed, 'memory', 'grieving' and 'truth' intersected in various processes, including the practice of memorialisation. Since 1994, a number of memory projects were undertaken, assuming various forms, including public and private spectacles (including trials and ceremonies); the preservation of sites; the erection of structures and museums; the writing of various types of literature; the production and re-production of art and images; and the undertaking of various cinematic projects. It is these practices of memorialisation that will be examined herein.

Whilst extensive analysis has been undertaken regarding memorialisation in other locales, only ephemeral attention has been paid to the process in post-genocide Rwanda. As such, this article will seek to explore memorialisation as practiced in Rwanda, so as to provide an understanding of 'sites of memory' relating to this genocide (Nora 1989). This exploration will be undertaken through a two-fold analysis, with the first section surveying theoretical material on memorialisation, so as to provide an understanding of its nature and purpose, and the second looking to memorialisation regarding the Rwandan genocide.

It will be suggested that, as the corporeal form of 'memory', memorialisation is a complex and multifaceted process, which acts as a ritual, a sacred behaviour authorising a connection to the past, and a rite of passage, wherein narratives impressed on the site promote metamorphosis in the present and future. Having attained a privileged position in the post-genocide international community, memorialisation has moved beyond merely being a rite and ritual for the victim/witness and their community, having become a compulsively practiced

politicised rite and ritual for 'international society'. Because Euro-Western projects of memory and international criminal law have permeated projects in non-Western locales, shaping both their form and content to reflect the view of genocide as a grave crime against humanity, memorialisation has thus evolved beyond being an extra-legal, nation-state building process, to an aesthetic extension of international law and politics.

Memorialisation: Definitions and Theories of Corporeal Practices of Memory

Over the past half century, activities of collective remembrance with regard to genocide have proliferated rapidly in numerous forms. Whether taking form as permanent sites (such as memorials, cemeteries, museums, art works, transcripts, literature, even cinema), or as impermanent gestures (such as ceremonies and street theatre), the practice of memorialisation has been undertaken by individuals and societies alike. As a frequent social act and an embodiment of the cultural act of memory and remembering, memorialisation has, thus, become a subject of particular interest for historians, sociologists and anthropologists.

Albeit that these theoretical approaches have taken numerous forms, overwhelmingly discussion has agreed that memorialisation as the practice in which individuals, communities, and societies, interact at sites of symbolically represented 'memory', deriving from, and impressing on, a item or act 'narratives about specific times, places, persons, and events laden with affective meaning' (Evans 2002, p.2). Having built on psychological definitions of memory, scholarly discussions have largely centred on memorialisation as the social or 'collective' embodiment of the practice of remembering.

Whilst there has been agreement of what memorialisation is, there has, however, been far less agreement on 'why' it is undertaken. For Caruth (1995; 1996), the practice is linked to trauma, being a rite of passage wherein trauma is expressed, processed and integrated. In this sense, memorialisation is a therapeutic practice, wherein trauma is worked through, thus acting as a rite of passage, specifically for survivors. Traumatised not only by an inability to integrate their experience, but also by an inability to communicate the complete catastrophic knowledge to others, survivors are 'caught between the compulsion to bear witness and the impossibility of doing so' (Ronell 1998, pp.312-313; Edkins 2003, p.177; Laub 1993). Where genocide has created an inability to witness, both through death and by 'blocking' traditional transmission models, the process of memorialisation becomes a performative practice to construct a 'trauma' in a transmissible form. This construction of trauma though, is not a true and complete representation of the genocide, but facilitates the creation of a conveyable 'meaning' and the projection of a 'truth', aiding the survivor/witness to express and integrate the experience.

Winter (1995), however, views memorialisation as a search for meaning, the product of which are corporeal expressions of grieving where groups of people can come together to undertake the ritual of mourning. However, the practice also embodies the rituals of mourning and remembering a 'lost other'. Often being imbued with customs and traditional ceremonial acts, the memorialisation project thus is inextricably linked to ritual. The proliferation of religious symbolism in projects and the adoption of other traditional practices (such as the lighting of a flame or the laying of a wreath)

are more often fundamental aspects of 'sites of memory'. Nevertheless, the practice of memorialisation itself has become a ritualised practice in post-genocide (and more generally, post-trauma) periods. It has become itself a ritual of mourning and catharsis, becoming entwined with the concepts of a loss, absence, and remembering.

Edkins (2003) suggests, though, that memorialisation serves not only individuals but other social purposes, because '[t]he production of memory is a performative practice, and inevitably social' (p.54). The process, in creating a narrative, creates an 'authentic memory' with which individuals can interact through designated 'sites of memory' (Alcock 2002). Indeed, overwhelmingly memorialisation projects take place in the public spaces with the intention of engaging and involving individuals with both the site and each other. Thus, the process of the memorialisation is not unidirectional; it is not simply a projected memory, but a process in which individuals read into and impose upon the site, as well as interacting with each other. Whether a composed 'site' (a museum, art work, structure or event) or a preserved 'site' (where materials or a location are kept in the state they were at the end of the genocide), the 'site of memory' is not a static representation of the genocide, rather involving 'an active practice of remembering which takes an inquiring attitude toward the past and the activity of its (re)construction through memory... undercut[ing] assumptions about the transparency or the authenticity of what is remembered' (Kuhn 2000, 186).

Indeed, for Pere Nora sites of memory are not static, and as such are not 'coordinated', but rather involve 'an endless recycling of ... meaning and an unpredictable proliferation of ... ramifications' (Nora 1989, p.9). Because the individual impresses on the site meaning, and understands the site from their socialised positions, the site tells no specific 'story' and has no one consistent meaning. Each individual impresses and then disseminates a different and altered narrative regarding the site. As Young (1993) describes, memorialisation aims 'not to console but to provoke; not to remain fixed but to change; not to be everlasting but to disappear; not to be ignored by passers-by but to demand interaction; not to remain pristine but to invite its own violation and desanctification; not to accept graciously the burden of memory but to throw it back at the town's feet' (p.30). As such, sites of memory are projects that are dynamic.

In this way, the process of memorialisation not only offers new meaning to events, but marks bonds between individual, social groups, cultures, and communities (Durkheim 1961; Turner 1967). The 'site of memory' operates to connect individuals and to engage them with broader ideological and political projects. In this way, sites not only serve to direct perception, emotion and interaction, as social and political processes, but also derive meaning as a consequence of these processes. Memorialisation constructs and reshapes memory, producing narratives that are the performance of socio-political views of the event. As such, the site can never be separated from the people that exchange at and through it (Hamber and Wilson, 1999). 'Memory and its expression are an active, shaping and dynamic force in ... sites' (Samuel 1994 cited in Gouriévidis 2000, p.124)

Indeed, the memorialisation project provides a construct of the past, whilst informing the present, and directing the future. Like memory itself, memorialisation mediates the past, present and future (Davison 1998). In this way, the practice of memorialisation is more than an exercise of 'recall of external stimuli...[i]t involves

emotion, will and creativity in the reconstruction of the past to serve present needs' (Coleman 1986, p.2). A key aspect of this reconstruction and mediation, however, is what is not done. By undertaking a project of memory, the other- forgetting- is too constructed. Inextricably linked to memory, forgetting also becomes ingrained in the memorialisation project, not simply because the project is often undertaken in opposition to forgetting, but also because in selecting what and how to represent, narrative itself 'forgets'. This is because the narratives produced and facilitated by the site, as projects of shared memory, are partial, biased and selective. But this distortion does not merely serve symbolic functions, rather being equally driven by practical demands. The creation of a narrative and its physical embodiment in a site generates a usable past.

Thus, for Sturken (2001), the process can serve admonitory and/or pedagogical purposes. Memorialisation projects in presenting symbols of the violence can convey a warning and a 'lesson' regarding 'the human capacity for violence' (Sturken 2001). By presenting material which allows for the formation of 'history', as well as the imposition of its meaning in the contemporary, sites of memory thus have the capacity to act as places of metamorphosis, wherein individual and social change can be pursued. Indeed, often sites incorporate material directed at encouraging individuals to self-reflect, as well as to disseminate an understanding of an event to cause others to similarly engage in a reflective process.

For Gillis (1994), however, memorialisation is an activity that is undertaken to construct through a mythical 'truth' a new identity and social bond, and thus is entangled with the (re)building of the nation-state and communities, rather than working through traumas. Memorialisation does not seek to educate, but rather seeks to create a 'myth' through which individuals engage and interact. Indeed, '...commemorative activity is by definition social and political, for it involves the coordination of individual and group memories, whose results may appear consensual when they are, in fact, the product of processes of intense contest, struggle, and in some instances, annihilation' (Gillis 1994, p.5).

It is this view that has pervaded much of the traditional understanding of memorialisation. Indeed, by facilitating narrative and collective memory, memorialisation has been both directed by and appropriated by the state. Politics and aesthetics are viewed as fundamentally linked, with politics permeating and appropriating aesthetic expressions. This is not to say, however, that memorialisation is linked traditionally to other aspects of statehood, such as law; indeed, as an aesthetic social practice tied with expression and emotion, memorialisation has traditionally been constructed as separate from law, which is structured as the realm of reason and regulation. But does memorialisation as practiced support this traditional conception? Is law divorced from memorialisation, or are the two connected? Do the other conceptions of memorialisation hold true? Through the Rwandan genocide one can gain an understanding of the practice and ascertain the answer to these questions in the Rwandan context.

'Sites' of Memory and the Rwandan Genocide

In the post-genocide period, Rwanda has become peppered with, and the source of, many projects of memory. In the country itself, the majority of sites are memorials and monuments, housed in churches, schools, and other locations of group massacre. Several museums have been built, or permanent installations fitted in existing museums, both within the state, and around the world. Archival projects have also been undertaken, largely linked to the museums in Rwanda, wherein testimonies from various parties and artefacts and media from the genocide period, have been collected and preserved. Artistic endeavours, including literature, films, photographs, paintings and sculptures, have been produced and disseminated not only by witnesses, but by numerous interested parties from around the world. A national day of mourning has also been established in Rwanda, with the month of April assuming an unofficial status as a month of mourning. For the Tenth Anniversary, this day too became an international day of commemoration, and the period of genocide became a period where various activities to express and interpret the meaning of the genocide and its effects were encouraged not only by the Rwandan government, but by international parties, including the United Nations.

Because 'sites of memory' are so varying and numerous in Rwanda, it is impossible to provide a comprehensive understanding of the entire process herein. However, by examining the practice with regard to two projects, one can gain an insight into the complexity of the practice in Rwanda, as well as acquiring an understanding of memorialisation as undertaken more generally with regard to genocides in the post-Holocaust period.

The Kigali Memorial Centre

Opened on the 10th Anniversary of the genocide, the Kigali Memorial Centre is built on a mass grave site where over 250,000 people are buried. Unlike many of the country's other memorials, which are largely preserved sites signified by a single sign, the Kigali Memorial is a constructed complex built under the auspices of partnership between the Kigali City Council and Aegis Trust, an independent, non-government charity based in the United Kingdom. Part cemetery, part museum, part archive centre and part education centre, the site contains many aspects and thus serves multiple objectives.

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. Indeed, the Centre clearly was formed in line with the official Rwandan 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. Albeit that the international community has promoted memorialisation as projects that should be pursued at local or national levels, Aegis Trust when invited to do so by Rwandan officials, has directed the project, largely out of a desire to provide a record of history so as to educate and thus prevent future genocides. In contrast, for survivors motives for undertaking the project have largely been to construct a site to mourn relatives, to create a site that

educates and warns, or in other cases to simply meet international demands, with the survivor desiring no site personally due to fear of being re-traumatised (Mistiaen 2004, p.W1). Indeed, examining the various aspects of the Centre, one can see various aspects of the memorialisation process.

The first aspect of the Centre with which most visitors engage is the main building. This building houses three permanent exhibitions, including an exhibition that 'documents the genocide in 1994', an exhibit dedicated to children, and an exhibit on the history of genocide internationally. Whilst these exhibits are structured sequentially, they do not provide the viewer with a complete story in traditional time sequential descriptive form. Rather, the displays use artefacts, documents, photographs and audio-visual testimonies of witnesses and survivors, along with a short explanatory text, which allows the individual to interpret and thus impress a narrative on the site (Kigali Memorial Centre 2004). Indeed, like other sites in Rwanda, the Centre does not offer a reconstruction of the killing, nor a detailed account of the genocide, but rather engages the individual through ordered and gradual presentation of artefacts, testimonies and secondary sources to devise an account of events and to impress on these events a meaning.

Considering many Rwandans expressed no desire to 're-live' the trauma through varying artefacts, clearly this form and function is designed to reach future generations and non-Rwandan audiences. Indeed, the structure of the museum clearly reflects a trend in Western, specifically Holocaust, museums towards providing a seemingly neutral space with minimal 'extraneous' information, which deploys abstraction to facilitate an appearance of 'politics of the sensible' (Mirzoeff 2005).

As well as these exhibits, the Centre houses several artworks that compliment the form and function of the exhibits. The first is a series of sculptures by Rwandan artist, Laurent Hategekimana. Crafted from regional wood and produced by locals, these sculptures employ traditional Rwandan, as well as contemporary styles and designs, and represent the three stages of the genocide exhibit: before, during and after the genocide. The sculptures are progressively presented, with only segments of the art able to be viewed from each section of the exhibit. Indeed, whilst depictions of Rwandan life are evident as one enters the exhibits, movement through the displays reveals other aspects of the sculpture, including depictions of rape, torture and killing. In this way, Sturken's (2001) understanding of memorialisation becomes evident in the project, with individuals being encouraged to question and revisit their understanding of genocide, being encouraged to be aware of genocide as a process that it can be ignored or made 'invisible', despite it being clearly visible to victims and perpetrators.

The second artwork, 'Windows of Hope', an installed stained-glass artwork by the son of a Holocaust Survivor, functions in a similar manner. In two parts, this work comments on inaction in a progressive manner. The first window depicts stairs blocked by semi-abstracted machetes, with blues and reds contrasting bleached bones and small areas of light. It represents that the genocide was not inevitable, with a path of light being available, which the world in turn chose not to follow (Halkin 2004; Halter cited in Kigali Memorial Centre 2004). The second window depicts a mound of skulls and a different staircase ascending to blue sky, broken with shards of yellow light, representing the people who rescued and resisted, but again representing a path

not taken by all (Halkin 2004; Kigali Memorial Centre 2004). These two artworks, thus, as gradual depictions, fall in line not only with the structure of the exhibit, but also use abstraction, serving Western understanding and a perception of 'rationality' and 'neutral' awareness.

In addition to these permanent installations, there is also an Education Centre, Memorial Gardens and National Documentation Centre, which 'all contribute to a meaningful tribute to those who perished, and form a powerful educational tool for the next generation'. Indeed, attached to the Documentation Centre are a survivor testimony project and a Gacaca Filming project, which seek 'to provide the resources necessary to study and teach about genocide as a step towards genocide prevention' (Kigali Memorial Centre 2004). Clearly, therefore, these projects were devised under and to serve admonitory and pedagogical objectives.

Additionally, outside the main building are eleven mass graves, which were established shortly after the genocide from the hundreds of shallow mass graves around Kigali. The Kigali City Council undertook to relocate the thousands of bodies from around the city to a 'single place of burial where victims could be laid to rest with dignity' (Kigali Memorial Centre 2004). The graves are concrete, three metre deep crypts filled with coffins filled with victims' remains. Because of the difficulty in identifying individual remains, the majority of coffins contain multiple victims, being 'symbolic of the dignity that Kigali wishes to afford to its dead' (Kigali Memorial Centre 2004). The provision of a memorial garden and wall with engraved names, not only provides survivors with a place to mourn lost loved ones, but also provides a site which confronts the individual to consider the scale of the genocide. By leaving some of the graves open for viewing, the non-Rwandan is directed to consider the magnitude of violence, indicating an additional desire for the graves to serve as educational and warning devices as well.

Another notable facet of the Centre is that it aims specifically to be an 'international' centre, with all exhibits and materials being presented in Kinyarwanda, French and English. The exhibits were made in the United Kingdom and then shipped to Rwanda, and were designed by a mix of Rwandan and international artists, historians and archivists. Aegis states that the 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'. Whilst this intention is not unique, with most genocide sites in the country being marked with tri-lingual signage indicating the internationalism of those expected to participate at the site, the Kigali memorial is one of few that include information regarding genocides on other continents. The inclusion of this information about international genocides not only serves pedagogical purpose, but serves also to deconstruct the genocide in Rwanda as a brutal 'tribal' slaughter (Creskey 2005, p.10). By highlighting that genocide is not a symptom of African barbarity, but rather a violence that has been perpetrated in many societies these displays seek to break down ethicised narrative.

However, this international perspective also embodies and serves present international criminal law and dominant human rights discourse. In portraying the genocide, and other genocides, along side slogans like 'never again', the Centre accepts and proliferates the status of the crime as special and particularly grave. Indeed, the

memorial directly mirrors, and in turn extends, the *Convention of the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide*, which states ‘Recognising that at all periods of history genocide has inflicted great losses on humanity, and [b]eing convinced that, in order to liberate mankind from such an odious scourge, international cooperation is required’.¹ In doing this, the Memorial acts not simply to direct understandings of Rwanda, but directs those participating in the site to accept, and to disseminate, contemporary international legal norms and several concepts from dominant international discourse. Indeed, in portraying genocide not only as violence against Rwandans, but as a violation of ‘humanity’ (a construct of the discourse of human rights and international law), the Memorial Centre engages and encourages individuals to accept and apply this discourse. Whilst debates over the universality of human rights will not be engaged in herein, it is clear that the Centre, as a postcolonial space, not only is permeated with Western influence through its inherency in the society, but also by the intentional inclusion of human rights discourse in the project.

Whilst this can be attributed to the direct participation of Western consultants and Holocaust survivor artists in the construction of the site, the integration of tri-lingual exhibits and the inclusion of materials that seek to involve and engage an international audience suggests that it is not simply an unintended product of Western participation in the building of the Centre, but rather a reflection of a desire to engage a broader visitor base. Indeed, the tri-lingual nature of the site evidences a willingness and desire for international visitors. Cultural tourism scholars and anthropologists have documented the rise of this ‘dark’ tourism (Lennon and Foley 2000), which not only reverberates in the decision to memorialise, but on the form of the Centre. 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, in addition to providing a ‘history’ for future generations. In this way, the Memorial Centre evidences a more complex and ingrained obsession with humanity with a place to participate in the ‘act’ of, and appropriate, memory. It reflects a compulsion to surpass relevance to the victim and their society, having relevance to humanity generally; a compulsion devising from, and impeded with, international legal principles.

Fest’Africa 2000

In the 1990s, the Arts et Medias d’Afrique invited ten African writers to a writing residency in Rwanda. They were given the directive of using the art of literature to render what they ‘would see, hear and understand of post-genocide Rwanda’ (Tadjo 2004). Operating under the motto of ‘writing as a duty to memory’, the project sought to memorialise the genocide, emphasising that ‘writing is a duty to memory, to history and to pan-Africanism’ (Mwita 2000). The ten participating writers came from Chad, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Guinea, Kenya, Djibouti, Cote d’Ivoire and Rwanda, and were joined, once the project was underway, by two film-makers from Senegal and an artist from South Africa (Tadjo 2004).

¹ *Convention of the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide* (1946) 78 UNTS 277, adopted by Resolution 260 (III) A of the United Nations General Assembly on 9 December 1948, entered into force 12 January 1951.

The motivations and objectives guiding both participation and the literature produced varied between the members of the group. In speaking about the motivations for forming the project, the Director, Nocky Djedanoum, stated:

Artists, especially writers, wanted to fill a gap in their hearts; we wanted to take a position... mourning for Rwanda, Africa and the world had to take an immortal dimension. And therefore we came to Rwanda, listened to the Rwandese and thus produced works, thereby opening an important page in the history of Rwanda. It was a case of Africa being committed to Africa (Mwita 2000).

One of the writers at a later festival commemorating the genocide spoke of her motivation to undertake the residency, as being grounded in collective memory (Tadjo 2004). 'For us, all the issues of the African continent and of humanity as a whole are laid out in Rwanda... what we were interested in as writers was to - in a way - resurrect the dead, render the full human dimension ... so people could understand it at an ordinary level' (Tadjo 2004). For other authors, the primary objectives ranged from the need to grieve and remember lost loved ones, through to the desire to make a statement about how genocide evolves, and that it should never happen again.

Whilst the material produced varied in structure and was undertaken in different literary forms, one can see from the authors' statements alone the multifaceted nature of memorialisation. Adopting varying forms (including novels, short stories, poetry and scripts) in an endeavour to reach varying audiences, these writings broke 'the silence of African intellectuals on the issue', also seeking to encourage a greater proliferation of information about the genocide for Africa and the world (Mwita 2000). The fictional accounts produced not only were designed to provide a 'record' of the genocide, but also were directed at educating, warning and motivating Africa and the International Community, thus in turn facilitating a rite of passage to a genocide-less international society. To this end, many of the texts have been translated from French into English, so as to have international reach. Indeed, according to Djedanoum, as a 'crime against humanity ... by definition, Rwanda's pain affects us all...', directing and necessitating an international response (Goujon 1998).

In line with this comment by the project's director, the position of the crime as a violation of humanity thus permeates the project, with a desire for international reach pervading the entire *Fest' Africa 2000* venture. As such, the literature produced has been written in light of, and is saturated with, international legal principles, embodying genocide as perpetrated not only against individuals or ethnic groups alone, but as ultimately violence against humanity itself. However, this project also highlights the compulsive nature of 'breaking silence on genocide', specifically in an international context. Memorialisation, in this case through the literary, film and dramatic arts mediums, reflects the compulsive need to create and reflect a 'past' usable by, and designed for, the international community. Silence by artists is constructed as negative- as needing to be overcome- rather than as a symptom of an inability to portray events beyond the understanding of most non-witnesses, and too traumatic for those who have witnessed to speak of. In particular, silence, as a form of forgetting, is constructed as linked to the genocidal intent to erase, as well as being linked to international inaction. Thus, remembering through literature becomes a

compulsory act not only to create a useable past, but so that Africa and the international community do 'not forget'.

In this way, the project becomes not so much about the past, as about adapting the past to the needs of the present and future. The literary project is reflective of a wider need not only to produce a 'history' for future generations, but also of an international desire to express, rectify and heal a contemporary guilt over the genocide, and to demonstrate solidarity in both grief and disgust. The authors' works not only seek to explore trauma, but often encourage either directly or indirectly the exploration of, and movement beyond, inaction, guilt, and the human propensity for violence (see for example, Tadjó 2004). Indeed, the project is motivated by asking participants in the projects as members of 'humanity' to undertake the act of 'knowing', so as to foster 'hope and respect for life'; an undertaking that reflects the dominant purpose of the *Convention of the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide*. Again, memorialisation embodies and echoes dominant legal and human rights culture, acting as an extension of international law, rather than in isolation from it.

Conclusion

Since 1994, memorialisation has been pursued both in, and regarding, the Rwandan genocide. Many people have had a stake in the process, with sites in turn serving numerous purposes and objectives. Sites of memory, as corporeal expressions that bind trauma, memory, forgetting and narrativisation, have in turn evolved into rituals, and become sacred performances themselves. In turn, memorialisation has become a rite of passage, encouraging metamorphosis and re-bonding, both by victims and Rwandans more widely.

However, the practice of memorialisation has evolved to more than a rite and ritual for the victim/witness and their community, having become a compulsively practiced rite and ritual for 'international society'. As an examination of the practice in Rwanda revealed, international legal and political systems have stimulated the proliferation of memorialisation, developing the practice in such a way as to make it a compulsive reaction to genocide. Beyond effectuating a proliferation of sites, though, international legal and political influence has extended, permeating international norms throughout genocide memory projects, including those undertaken in Rwanda. The position of genocide as a grave crime against humanity has infused through the form and content of sites. In this sense, prior scholarly understandings of memorialisation as an extra-legal process and as an exercise connected to the building of nation-states no longer is appropriate. Rather, the practice with regard to genocide has become both an aesthetic extension of, and a performative practice of, international law and politics.

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