

A VOICE FOR PUBLIC MEMORY:  
A COMPARISON BETWEEN THE MEMORIAL PRACTICES IN INDIA AND THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO PROPOSE A SUITABLE RESPONSE TO THE  
26/11 ATTACKS IN MUMBAI

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*for my four stars  
in heaven  
watching over me*

*for my city and the lives lost  
on that November night*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

### ***Thesis Question and the Two Events***

"Why is it we want so badly to memorialize ourselves? Even while we're still alive. We wish to assert our existence, like dogs peeing on fire hydrants. We put on display our framed photographs, our parchment diplomas, our silver-plated cups; we monogram our linen, we carve our names on trees, we scrawl them on washroom walls. It's all the same impulse. What do we hope from it? Applause, envy, respect? Or simply attention, of any kind we can get? At the very least we want a witness. We can't stand the idea of our own voices falling silent finally, like a radio running down."<sup>1</sup>

*Margaret Atwood, The Blind Assassin*

This quote comes from a science fiction novel and yet expresses a deep human emotion. The United States of America has seen thousands of memorials built, especially in the last few decades that commemorate enslaved Africans, victims of terrorism, dead astronauts, murdered teenagers and even aborted fetuses. People often offer flowers, candles, teddy bears, ribbons and balloons forming spontaneous temporary memorials at sites of tragic death like road accidents. The frequency and the nature of these memorials point to an obsession with preserving memory and expressing this desire visually, in public. The discussions about memorials and active participation of the public in them represents efforts to control the narratives of historical events and people. Beginning with statues of important personalities, contemporary memorials in America have evolved to cover a wide range of subjects and perspectives. Broadly categorizing, memorials are a representation of emotions like grief, gratitude, fear, shame and anger.<sup>2</sup>

Memorials are essentially reminders of important historical events or people significant to our cultures. They are a way of preserving our memories,

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<sup>1</sup> Margaret Atwood, *The Blind Assassin* (New York Anchor Books, 2000), 95.

<sup>2</sup> Erika Doss, *Memorial Mania* (University of Chicago press, 2010), 1-2.

both good and dark, markers on a timeline documenting history of civilization. While the material and form of the markers may be contemporary, they preserve memory of events that get documented in historic texts. Memorials are one generation's way of allowing the next to experience the emotions evoked by a historic event.

Historic Preservation today has gone beyond its traditional role of protecting ancient historic monuments. As our cities embrace change more rapidly than ever before, preservationists take on the responsibility of placing these changes in context with the past. They are entrusted the task of conveying authentic knowledge of historic events to current and future generations in a relatable form. Contemporary memorials fulfil this demand-conveying important information about events contributing to our future, while their forms, materials and content displayed point to their era in civilization. Such memorials thus become a significant tool for preservationists to execute with utmost precision.

Immediately after September 11, 2001, America experienced feelings of anxiety about the future of the attack site. While New York City quickly became a collection of handmade memorials, the public was already expecting a permanent memorial for September 11. The articles that the New York Times carried expressed this public feeling with well-known artists and architects suggesting a park at the site of the towers or new buildings taller than the twin towers sculptures with the victims' names etched in them or even leaving the site as a stabilized ruin. "There was never a doubt that there would be a permanent memorial at what was quickly dubbed "Hallowed Ground Zero."<sup>3</sup>

Surely enough, after a carefully drafted, sensitive, long procedure that at times took dramatic and even violent turns, the fallen towers were commemorated with what is called today the National September 11 Memorial and Museum at the World Trade Center.

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<sup>3</sup> Erika Doss, *Memorial Mania* (University of Chicago press, 2010), 2, 6.

In November 2008, Mumbai the economic capital of India faced her most devastating terrorist attack on some of the city's most iconic locations. The city remained under siege for 60 hours that cost the country the lives of some of the top police officials, civilians and a number of foreign nationals.<sup>4</sup> Mumbai much like New York City, is global megacity, a part of the largest democracy in the world. Yet the city's response to this act of terrorism was starkly different from the reactions that the United States saw. The government while trying to assure their citizens of strict measures of safety in the future seemed to be on the defensive, hiding behind hasty resignations of high ranking ministers.<sup>5</sup> The reports of a demand for an explanation from the government and anger towards it overpowered, if not drowned, the candle light marches for the victims and the hordes of crowds attending the funerals of their brave police officers. It seems as if the country takes pride in its newspapers announcing how her cities, especially Mumbai, bounce back to routine life- taking their regular trains to work the day after a train bombing, calling it the "spirit of Mumbai".<sup>6</sup> What triggers this reaction of Mumbaiites? Is this the difference between New York presenting the world with the 9/11 Memorial while Mumbai is left dotted with several obscure, neglected memorials?

This thesis attempts to document and compare the differences in the aftermath of public tragedies in the two countries. It attempts to take into consideration the platform that the democratic form of governance gives the people to voice their opinion and the manner in which the two populations use this platform in terms of the demands and concerns people expressed. Do cultural and economic differences play a role in the process? The thesis uses

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<sup>4</sup> HomelandSecurityMgmt. "60 Hours of November 26 2008 Mumbai Terror Attack". Filmed March 2014. YouTube video, 50:04. Posted March 13, 2014.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Li4qNtHF9J0>

<sup>5</sup> Joe Leahy and James Fontanella-Khan, "India's Home Minister resigns over Mumbai Attacks", The Financial Times, November 30, 2008. <http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/e1ccc782-bd7e-11dd-bba1-0000779fd18c>

<sup>6</sup> Kalpana Sharma, "Mumbai Back on Track", The Hindu, July 13, 2006. <http://web.archive.org/web/20060721095149/http://www.hindu.com/2006/07/13/stories/2006071308100100.htm>



the 9/11 Memorial as a case study from the United States to examine the process of its creation and its effect on the people and New York City. Based on a comparison with the memorial traditions and opinions of modern India, the thesis determines why Mumbai has not reacted as strongly in terms of memorialization as New York City. This thesis studies both these memorial reactions and offers a critique on a more suitable response for India to adopt.

The following is a brief description of the events in comparison- the attack of September 11 2001 on the twin towers in New York and the November 26 2008 attack in the city of Mumbai.

#### SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, NEW YORK

On September 11, 2001, nineteen terrorists boarded four commercial jetliners, all transcontinental flights, carrying a maximum capacity of 11,400 gallons of jet fuel. Their objective was to take control of planes once they were airborne and turn them into flying weapons of destruction.<sup>7</sup>



*Figure 1: A series of images showing the planes hitting the towers on September 11, 2001, History Channel Staff, 9/11 Attacks, Photo Galleries, History Channel website, <http://www.history.com/topics/9-11-attacks/pictures/911-world-trade-center/series-o>*

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<sup>7</sup> Administrator, "9/11- A Summary", History in an Hour, posted September 11, 2011, accessed February 16, 2016. <http://www.historyinanhour.com/2011/09/11/911-summary/>

Four targets had been chosen, all iconic American buildings that would send a clear message. All four planes crashed, killing all on board- terrorists, crew members and passengers, along with hundreds who were killed inside the structures, on the ground, and the men and women who ran into the collapsing buildings in an effort to try and save others. Only one of the four planes did not find its target. Thanks to cellular phones, passengers heard of the other crashes and chose to sacrifice themselves rather than let another plane devastate a fourth target, killing even more innocent people. What little is known of the actual events on board the four flights comes from brief radio communications, observation by witnesses on the ground and phone calls made by crew and passengers.<sup>8</sup>

The flights departed from the three air fields on the East coast and were scheduled to take off fifteen minutes apart from each other. Once airborne the terrorists took control of the flights with basic weapons like box cutters and knives, as reported by a passenger.<sup>9</sup>

At 8:46 am the first flight crashed into the North Tower of the World Trade Center in New York. The entire crew of the flight and the passengers were killed instantly along with an unknown number of people in the building. Just as people were tuning into the closest television set to find out what had happened the second flight crashed into the South Tower at 9:03 am. At 9:37 am a third flight flew into the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia that sits right across the Potomac River from Washington, DC. It is believed that the fourth target was the White House. This mission however failed when the terrorist manning the aircraft lost control because of the resistance of the passengers and the flight crashed into the ground near Shanksville, Pennsylvania.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Administrator, "9/11- A Summary", History in an Hour, posted September 11, 2011, accessed February 16, 2016. <http://www.historyinanhour.com/2011/09/11/911-summary/>

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, supported by The 9/11 Commission Report, The Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, Executive Summary, accessed February 15th 2016. [http://www.911commission.gov/report/911Report\\_Exec.htm](http://www.911commission.gov/report/911Report_Exec.htm) History.com Staff, "9/11 Attacks",

The United States government responded to 9/11 with what came to be known as "The War on Terror", a united global opposition to oppose terrorism at legal, political, military and ideological levels. Congress passed the Homeland Security Act of 2002 which created the United States Department of Homeland Security and resulted in the largest restructuring of the government in U.S. history. The U.S.A. Patriot Act was also passed to help detect and prosecute terrorism. In November 2002 the National Commission Terrorism Attacks on the United States was formed which proceeded to investigate any aspect relevant to the 9/11 attacks.<sup>11</sup>

The site of the World Trade Center has come to be known as ground zero. All seven structures that were a part of the complex were either destroyed or damaged, along with other buildings in the vicinity. The design of the memorial includes the names of every one of the victims set into the footprints of the two towers. Those names number in the thousands. Every year, on the anniversary of 9/11, a ceremony is held at Ground zero in which the names of each and every victim is read aloud, one by one, against the background of silence. Across the entire United States, federal agencies and local organizations stop everything for a moment of silence at exactly 8:46 am in remembrance of the victims.<sup>12</sup>

#### NOVEMBER 26, 2008, MUMBAI

On the night of November 26<sup>th</sup> a group of 10 young terrorists approached the coast of Mumbai in a rubber inflated boat, divided themselves into pairs and set off to the targets that they were assigned to terrorize. The main targets were the Victoria Terminus Station (now renamed the Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus), a World Heritage Site and one of the busiest stations in Mumbai where it is rush-hour till 10 pm, next, the Café Leopold, a favorite

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Filmed 2010, video 4:45, published by A+E Networks, 2010, accessed February 15, 2016. <http://www.history.com/topics/9-11-attacks>

<sup>11</sup> Administrator, "9/11- A Summary", History in an Hour, posted September 11, 2011, accessed February 16, 2016. <http://www.historyinanehour.com/2011/09/11/911-summary/>

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

especially among foreign tourists in Mumbai, the Taj Mahal hotel, the most prestigious heritage hotel in Mumbai, another five star hotel, the Trident, not far away from the Taj and Nariman House, a Jewish community center.<sup>13</sup>



Figure 2: The Taj Mahal Palace Hotel under attack, Pal Pillai, Getty Images, Robert Mackey, *Tracking the Mumbai Attacks*, The New York Times website, November 26, 2008, <http://thelede.blogs.nytimes.com/2008/11/26/tracking-the-mumbai-attacks/>

At 9:40 pm a pair of terrorists approached Café Leopold in a taxi, left a time bomb under the driver's seat and proceeded to open fire in the café. The bomb in the taxi blew about two hours later in a suburb on Mumbai killing the driver and two passengers. At 9:50 pm the second pair reached the VT station in another taxi leaving behind a bomb in this one too. They began shooting indiscriminately in the main waiting hall of the station. The railway announcers however held their positions at the microphones and urged people to leave the station saving many lives. At 10:45 one pair of terrorists entered the Taj hotel while another began shooting at the nearby Cama Hospital, where the hospital

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<sup>13</sup> HomelandSecurityMgmt, "60 Hours of November 26 2008 Mumbai Terror Attack", Filmed March 2014, YouTube video, 50:04, Posted March 13, 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Li4qNtHF9J0>, Aey ASK, *Secrets of the Dead Mumbai Massacre*, Filmed February 2011, YouTube video, 52:03, posted February 28, 2011, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sCHAMYfuMpg>, Shailesh Desai, "Inside Mumbai Terror Attacks 26/11 Full Documentary", Filmed January 2015, YouTube video, 51:27, Posted January 23, 2015. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eBKTekkYy-E>

staff had already secured the patient wards. In a by lane behind this hospital the police engaged the terrorists and were able to wound enough that one was later captured alive. The police officers however had to sacrifice their lives in the process.<sup>14</sup>

As this ordeal of capturing a terrorist ended, the other four pairs were moving unchecked across South Mumbai and had begun wreaking havoc in the Taj, Trident and Nariman House. They shot at the hotel guests, set a few rooms in the hotels on fire and held the Rabbi, his wife, their two year old son and his nanny in the Jewish House hostage. The attacks on the Jewish residence was the terrorists' attempt at internationalizing the attacks; a call was made to the Israeli embassy in the United States from this residence.<sup>15</sup>

Mumbai was turned into a battleground for the next 56 hours while the Mumbai Police, the Mumbai Fire Department, the Elite NSG Commandos, the Indian Navy Commando Unit and other Army columns carried out operation Black Tornado to secure the terrorist targets. The operation finally ended on the morning of November 29<sup>th</sup> and 8:40 am when nine out of the ten terrorists were killed and one was captured alive.<sup>16</sup>

People all over the country carried out candle light marches and there were huge crowds at the funerals of the deceased police officers. Leading industrialist of India and owner of the Taj Ratan Tata reopened the tower wing of the hotel less two months after the attack, dedicated it to the victims of the attack saying, "We can be hurt but not knocked out".<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> HomelandSecurityMgmt, "60 Hours of November 26 2008 Mumbai Terror Attack", Filmed March 2014, YouTube video, 50:04, Posted March 13, 2014.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Li4qNtHF9J0>, Aey ASK, Secrets of the Dead Mumbai Massacre, Filmed February 2011, YouTube video, 52:03, posted February 28, 2011, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sCHAMYfuMpg>, Shailesh Desai, "Inside Mumbai Terror Attacks 26/11 Full Documentary", Filmed January 2015, YouTube video, 51:27, Posted January 23, 2015. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eBKTekkYy-E>

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> NDTV, "We Can Be Hurt, But Not Knocked Out: Tata", Reported December 2008, YouTube video, 3:09, Posted December 22, 2008. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pqnOqpknn2M>

On the first anniversary of the attack, the state paid homage to the victims. (Force One) a new security force was created by the Maharashtra (State) Government and they staged a parade across South Mumbai. Other memorials in the form of candlelight vigils were organized at the various locations of the attacks.<sup>18</sup>

## THESIS QUESTION

This thesis seeks to understand and analyze the response to the 26/11 Mumbai attacks with the process following the 9/11 attacks in New York as a precedent. It digs into survivor accounts, opinions of families of victims, focus of the governments' statements and other experts and the route to normalcy taken by the two countries. The thesis is a study of the memorial culture in the United States and in India. Deriving from the process of memorialization in the U.S.A. and the impact that memorials have had on the public, I conclude if it is possible to use the process or a version of the process in India, especially for events of mass tragedies which remain largely uncommemorated in the country.

## SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS

The first chapter delves into the history of memorials in India. It chronologically presents the various techniques used by the many cultures to memorialize and studies what each of these cultures commemorated. The chapter establishes that there has always existed a culture of memorialization in the country and analyzes how it has evolved to the contemporary forms.

The second chapter analyzes the history of memorial culture in the United States, and the evolving role and form of memorials in American society. It examines the long standing traditions and emotions symbolized by

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<sup>18</sup> Harmeet Shah Singh, "India Remembers Mumbai's Dead", CNN, November 26, 2010, accessed February 16, 2016, <http://edition.cnn.com/2010/WORLD/asiapcf/11/26/india.mumbai.anniversary/>

memorials that form the impetus for the reaction to the 9/11 attacks that led to the construction of the grand commemoration of the event.

As the thesis explores an appropriate response for the Mumbai attacks, the third chapter examines the effect of terrorism on the mental health of victims and the general public. This chapter researches scholarly work that establishes the role of memorials in healing mental trauma caused by terrorism.

The fourth and the fifth chapter presents facts about the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks in New York and the 26/11 attacks in Mumbai respectively. Survivor accounts, statements and reactions of important political figures, experience of victims' families in both cases help draw comparisons between the expectations of the citizens and the measures that the governments of the two countries took as a response to the attacks.

Based on the comparisons drawn from the previous chapters, the last sections examines the flaws in the current commemorative practices of the government observed from the responses of the victims' families and suggests a response for the November 2008 attacks in Mumbai. The response draws from international precedents like the 9/11 memorial process and comparable existing domestic practices.

## **CHAPTER 1**

### ***Memorialization through the Ages: India***

India prides itself in being a secular democracy today and has had a long history of welcoming people to her land for trade and other purposes, from all over Asia and Europe, some of whom also ruled over her people. The country absorbed the culture and religious beliefs of many of her visitors of which art and architecture was an important part. Architecture included domestic, religious, institutional and commemorative or funerary. Scholars have analyzed this architecture, trying to decipher its origins, the meaning of its ornamentation and its purposes in the ancient Indian society. Commemorative architecture or funerary monuments is an important typology among these.

As this thesis analyzes the current memorial culture in India, it is important to understand the evolution of memorials in the country- what has traditionally been commemorated, who commissioned those memorials and the forms that the memorials adopted. A study of this timeline may point to the basis and sensibilities of the current memorial practices in India. It would help analyze the drawbacks of contemporary practices and formulate a response that aligns Indian contemporary culture better with the international norms.

Some of the most well-known and recognizable monuments in India like the Taj Mahal or the recently restored Humayun's tomb are in fact memorials. The Mughals who built these monuments however, were not the first to memorialize in India. There have existed scriptures that have taught and encouraged Indians to construct memorials for their deceased family members.



## ANCIENT MEMORIAL SCRIPTURES (since 1<sup>ST</sup> C. A.D.)

The custom of building memorial temples, to honor deceased sages and kings, has persisted in India from before the time of the Buddha up until the recent past. Related to the funerary monuments built over the remains of Jains

and Buddhists, we find in parallel old Hindu and Jain temples furnished with icons and deities. It has not been determined however, if these structures were simple funerary monuments whose chief objective was to commemorate the deceased- or they were principally constructed for the patron to accrue spiritual merit.<sup>1</sup>

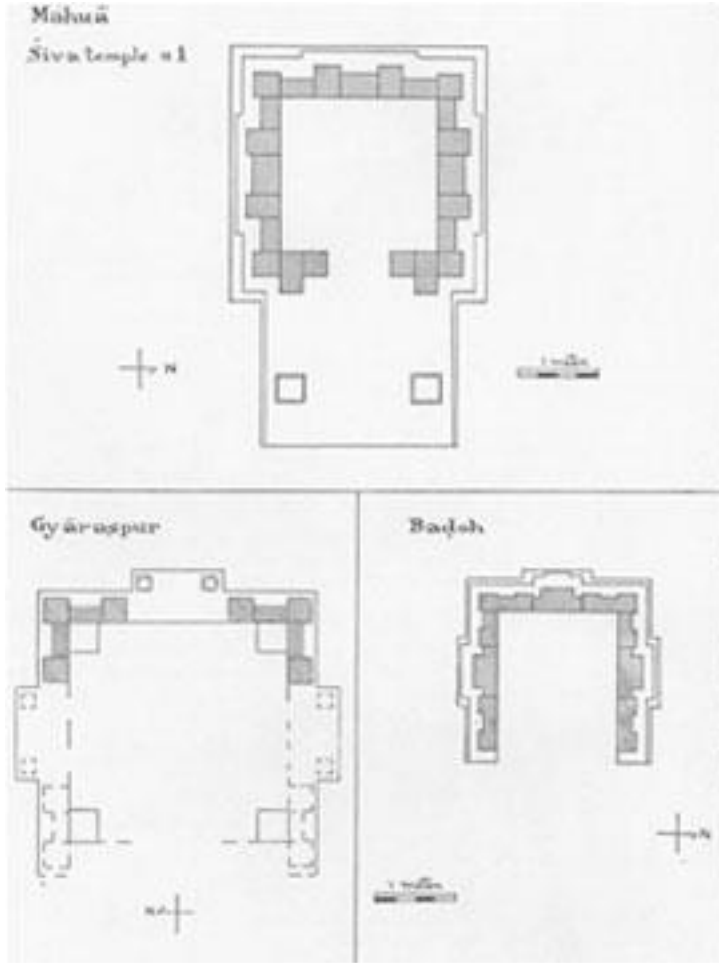


Figure 3: Form of the Mandapika shrines, Michael Meister, 1976, "Construction and Conception: Maṇḍapikā Shrines of Central India", *East and West* 26 (3/4). Istituto Italiano per l'Africa e l'Oriente (IsIAO), 409–18.

Some of the earliest documentation of funerary monuments was that of the *Swargrohana Prasadas*- a class of temples conceived of as vehicles for ascending to heaven. In the article 'A Temple for Ascending to

Heaven', the authors have used the terms memorials and mortuary or

<sup>1</sup> Prabhaskar O. Sompura and Madhusudan Dhaky, "A Temple for Ascending to Heaven", first published in Gujarathi and Sanskrit as "Svargarohana Prasada", *Svadyaya*, Vol. 5, No. 2, (February 1968), 191-195, translated by Nachiket Chanchani and Deven Patel, *Art In Translation*, Vol. 2, Issue 1, 80.

commemorative monuments interchangeably, contrary to their definitions. If this usage is based on their roles in ancient Indian civilization or is simply the result of translating from the original Sanskrit text remains to be examined.

A chapter on the design and construction of the *Swargrohana Prasadas* is part of the *Vaastuvidya* (the science or knowledge of architecture and construction) manuscript. The monument may be built for a relative such as mother, father, brother or maternal grandfather. The manuscript describes the design of three types of the monument- the eight-by-eight square design, ten-by-ten square design and the twelve-by-twelve square form. There are examples of this monument from North India like Khajuraho's Lakshmana temple, Adityeshvaram temple in the Todalmandu region in South India and even from other parts of South Asia like the famous Angkor Wat temple in Cambodia. Their forms eventually evolve to *chattris* like the ones near the city of Bhuj commemorating the Raos. These chattris later took a domed form suggesting the influence of Islamic architecture and they appear to be Hindu versions of Muslim tombs.<sup>2</sup>

To build this, divide the area into eight-by-eight squares. To parts should be converted into corners and four parts should be made into a central offset in the wall. The ground floor should be the site of the main entrance as well as a bench to sit on. Having laid out the ground floor as described earlier, one should make a pillared hall on the second floor. Its offsets should have a raining motif and screen. One entrance should face East and one West. One should then build a towering superstructure in the Northern Indian style above a platform that rests on the flat roof of this pillared hall. In front of the sanctum, and aligned to the central offset of the wall, there should be a multi-pillared hall with semi-divine celestial beings bearing different expressions. This hall should have a complex pyramidal roof with a fluted crowning member. Finally the structure should be adorned with carvings of earthly heroes, elephant head and composite animals, spiritual adepts, semi-divine beings, lions etc.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Prabhashankar O. Sompura and Madhusudan Dhaky, "A Temple for Ascending to Heaven", first published in Gujarathi and Sanskrit as "Svargarohana Prasada", Svadhyaya, Vol. 5, No. 2, (February 1968), 191-195, translated by Nachiket Chanchani and Deven Patel Art In Translation, Vol. 2, Issue 1, 82-83.

<sup>3</sup> Excerpt from the original ancient Sanskrit text "Vaastuvidya" (science or knowledge of architecture or construction) Prabhashankar O. Sompura and Madhusudan Dhaky, "A Temple for Ascending to Heaven", first published in Gujarathi and Sanskrit as "Svargarohana Prasada", Svadhyaya, Vol. 5, No. 2, (February 1968), 191-195, translated by Nachiket Chanchani and Deven Patel Art In Translation, Vol. 2, Issue 1, 81-82.

## MEMORIALS AFTER THE ADVENT OF ISLAM (8<sup>TH</sup> C. A.D.)

Among all the regions that Islam had spread to, South Asia was one that was a clear slate which required the entire range of Islamic institutions. This gave the foreigners freedom to create and variations of Islamic architecture were observed that incorporated local aspects of construction and ornament. They used materials and elements of constructional traditions of the Indus while ornaments conspicuously marked contact with the rest of the Islamic world. Though local construction techniques and materials quickly found presence in Islamic architecture, local beliefs may not have been as easily incorporated. Under the Arab Muslim hegemony, Multan became an important pilgrimage center and this region appeared to be more secular; where the killing of cows was banned, the rulers even began to dress like their Hindu counterparts but soon after being captured by the Ismailis a conservative Islamic rule was established.<sup>4</sup>

Mausoleums to holy men were a special religious form predominant in Central Asia dedicated to the warriors of faith. The South Asian counterpart of such a monument of the frontier spirit, a response of the local craftsmen, is the twelfth century fortified brick tomb attributed to Khalid Walid located South-east of Multan in Pakistan.<sup>5</sup>

The Mughals established themselves in India making Agra and later Delhi their capital. The city of Delhi; which is today divided into *Purani Dilli* (old Delhi) and the new planned city of New Delhi; has been reinvented so many times that it can be difficult to know where its heart is- in the edifices left behind by the British or the austere medieval tombs of the Mughals which are scattered all over it.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Meister, Michael W. 2003. "Crossing Lines: Architecture in Early Islamic South Asia". RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics, no. 43. (President and Fellows of Harvard College, Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology), 117–30. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20167593>.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ellen Barry, "A Castle Receives a Weekly Delivery of Delhi's Secret Desires", New York Times, Asia Pacific, Delhi Journal, November 8, 2015, accessed February 17, 2016, [http://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/09/world/asia/a-castle-receives-a-weekly-delivery-of-delhis-secret-desires.html?\\_r=3#story-continues-4](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/09/world/asia/a-castle-receives-a-weekly-delivery-of-delhis-secret-desires.html?_r=3#story-continues-4)

The Taj Mahal and Humayun's tomb are two of the most loved Mughal monuments in India and are both designated World Heritage Sites by UNESCO.

#### THE TAJ MAHAL, AGRA, INDIA



Figure 4: *Taj Mahal*, M & G Therin-Weise, *Taj Mahal*, UNESCO website, <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/252/>

Commissioned in 1632 by the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan to house the remains of his cherished wife, the Taj Mahal stands on the southern bank of the Yamuna River in Agra, India. The famed mausoleum complex, built over more than 20 years, is one of the most outstanding examples of Mughal architecture, which combined Indian, Persian and Islamic influences. Designated a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1983, it remains one of the world's most celebrated structures and a stunning symbol of India's rich history.<sup>7</sup>

Named the Taj Mahal in honor of Mumtaz Mahal, the mausoleum was constructed of white marble inlaid with semi-precious stones (including jade,

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<sup>7</sup> "Taj Mahal", as on February 17, 2016, UNESCO website, <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/252/>. History.com Staff, "The Taj Mahal", published by A+E Networks, 2011, accessed February 17, 2016, <http://www.history.com/topics/taj-mahal>

crystal, lapis lazuli, amethyst and turquoise) forming intricate designs in a technique known as pietra dura. Its central dome reached a height of 240 feet (73 meters) and was surrounded by four smaller domes; four slender towers, or minarets, stood at the corners. In accordance with Islamic tradition, verses from the Quran were inscribed in calligraphy on the arched entrances to the mausoleum, in addition to numerous other sections of the complex. Inside the mausoleum, an octagonal marble chamber adorned with carvings and semi-precious stones housed the cenotaph, or false tomb, of Mumtaz Mahal. The real sarcophagus containing her actual remains lay below, at garden level.<sup>8</sup>

The rest of the Taj Mahal complex included a main gateway of red sandstone and a square garden divided into quarters by long pools of water, as well as a red sandstone mosque and an identical building called a jawab (or “mirror”) directly across from the mosque. Traditional Mughal building practice would allow no future alterations to be made to the complex. As the story goes, Shah Jahan intended to build a second grand mausoleum across the Yamuna River from the Taj Mahal, where his own remains would be buried when he died; the two structures were to have been connected by a bridge. In fact, Aurangzeb (Shah Jahan’s third son with Mumtaz Mahal) deposed his ailing father in 1658 and took power himself. Shah Jahan lived out the last years of his life under house arrest in a tower of the Red Fort at Agra, with a view of the majestic resting place he had constructed for his wife; when he died in 1666, he was buried next to her.<sup>9</sup>

Under Aurangzeb’s long rule (1658-1707), the Mughal Empire reached the height of its strength. However, his militant Muslim policies, including the destruction of many Hindu temples and shrines, undermined the enduring strength of the empire and led to its demise by the mid-18th century. Even as Mughal power crumbled, the Taj Mahal suffered from neglect and disrepair in

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<sup>8</sup> “Taj Mahal”, as on February 17, 2016, UNESCO website, <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/252>. History.com Staff, “The Taj Mahal”, published by A+E Networks, 2011, accessed February 17, 2016, <http://www.history.com/topics/taj-mahal>

<sup>9</sup> History.com Staff, “The Taj Mahal”, published by A+E Networks, 2011, accessed February 17, 2016, <http://www.history.com/topics/taj-mahal>

the two centuries after Shah Jahan's death. Near the turn of the 19th century, Lord Curzon, then British viceroy of India, ordered a major restoration of the mausoleum complex as part of a colonial effort to preserve India's artistic and cultural heritage.<sup>10</sup>

Today, some 3 million people a year (or around 45,000 a day during peak tourist season) visit the Taj Mahal. Air pollution from nearby factories and automobiles poses a continual threat to the mausoleum's gleaming white marble façade, and in 1998, India's Supreme Court ordered a number of anti-pollution measures to protect the building from deterioration. Some factories were closed, while vehicular traffic was banned from the immediate vicinity of the complex.<sup>11</sup>

#### HUMAYUN'S TOMB, DELHI, INDIA



Figure 5: Humayun's Tomb, Delhi, Indovacation website, [http://www.indovacation.net/Humayun\\_Tomb\\_Delhi.htm](http://www.indovacation.net/Humayun_Tomb_Delhi.htm)

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<sup>10</sup> History.com Staff, "The Taj Mahal", published by A+E Networks, 2011, accessed February 17, 2016, <http://www.history.com/topics/taj-mahal>

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

The tomb of Humayun is one of the more important of the Mughal tombs in India. In a sense, as the first great Mughal tomb, it is a counterpart to all that follows and finds its apogee in the tomb of Mumtaz Mahal- the Taj Mahal. Humayun's wife Haji Begum dedicated herself to raise this tomb for her husband aided by their son Akbar.<sup>12</sup>

The mausoleum and its environs are Persian in their influence. The plan is essentially based upon a square with prominent octagonal components. However, as in many tombs of Persia, there was an eschewal of the strict outlines of the square. Essentially, the tomb consists of four blocks which are attached to a central mass that is in turn topped by a massive dome- a five part arrangement. The exposed corners of these outer four blocks are trimmed off hinting at the octagonal form of the central space under the dome. Each of these corner blocks possess five means of ingress to their central space, and from these four spaces narrow passageways lead diagonally to the central chamber. This central chamber possesses four additional passageways, oriented to the cardinal points of the compass, which lead to the central portals of each façade. In addition there are four passageways leading, diagonally, from the deep porches of the main portals to the adjacent porch.<sup>13</sup>

The enclosed space is a complex in the maze of passageways leading to and from the four corner chambers; to and from the main inner space and the diagonal passageways connecting the four deep porches. This is not to say that the chamber holding the monarch's cenotaph is dimly lit. Quite to the contrary, there are doorways and windows on three levels which bathe the interior with sufficient light, particularly during the bright daylight hours of Delhi.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Fredrick W. Bunce, "Islamic Tombs in India", (New Delhi: D. K. Printworld (P) Ltd., 2004), Tomb of Humayun, 114-125. "World Heritage Sites- Humayun's Tomb", as on February 17, 2016, The Archeological Survey of India website, [http://asi.nic.in/asi\\_monu\\_whs\\_humayuntomb.asp](http://asi.nic.in/asi_monu_whs_humayuntomb.asp)

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Fredrick W. Bunce, "Islamic Tombs in India", (New Delhi: D. K. Printworld (P) Ltd., 2004), Tomb of Humayun, 114-125.



The tomb of Humayun is an architectural marvel of design and content, albeit off from the mainstream accepted western architectural practices- part architecture, part sculpture as are the Pyramids of Gizeh. It stands, as does the Taj Mahal, as a monument of a spouse for a deceased partner.<sup>15</sup>

In the latter years of the 20th century, the Humayun's Tomb site suffered from a condition that had befallen many World Heritage Sites. Its gardens were worn, its masonry cracked, and the stonework broken or incomplete leaving it in a ruinous state.<sup>16</sup>

Recognizing that heritage sites could sustain themselves and prove to be catalyst for revitalization of historic districts, the Aga Khan trust for Culture began the restoration project of the monument and its gardens as a gift to India on 50 years of independence. The project was eventually expanded to include an urban renewal project of the adjoining areas of the Hazrat Nizamuddin Basti.<sup>17</sup>

Before undertaking conservation works, a significant archival research program, coupled with meticulous documentation, was initiated, including the use of 3D Laser Scanning technology. An exhaustive condition assessment carried out by a multi-disciplinary team of conservation architects, archaeological engineers, and historians, revealed that although the Mausoleum and its associated structures were in a relatively stable structural condition, they were however, in a severe state of material deterioration wherein architectural details used by the Mughal builders had been compromised by 20th century repairs carried out using inappropriate modern materials.<sup>18</sup>

The conservation works thus aimed at restoring the architectural integrity and the original Mughal splendor by using traditional building craft

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<sup>15</sup> Fredrick W. Bunce, "Islamic Tombs in India", (New Delhi: D. K. Printworld (P) Ltd., 2004), Tomb of Humayun, 114-125.

<sup>16</sup> "Humayun's Tomb, Sundar Nursery, Hazrat Nizamuddin Basti- Urban Renewal Initiative", as on February 17, 2016, the Aga Khan Trust for Culture and Aga Khan Development Network website [http://www.akdn.org/publications/2013\\_Humayun\\_Tomb\\_Conservation.pdf](http://www.akdn.org/publications/2013_Humayun_Tomb_Conservation.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.



skills of masons, plasterers, stone carvers, and tile makers – all of whom would be working with the traditional materials. In view of the scale of work to be carried out and with a major departure from a 'preserve as found' approach, a Conservation Plan detailing the all proposed works was peer-reviewed at the outset by international experts.<sup>19</sup>

The resident communities of Hazrat Nizamuddin Basti are bearers of living cultural traditions that have survived for over seven centuries. Yet many residents here did not have access to basic urban services. The project, through improvements in education, health, sanitation and infrastructure, has aimed to improve the quality of life. Physical upgrading has always been accompanied by training and empowering residents. Neighborhood parks have been landscaped, housing improvements undertaken in partnership with house owners and support provided to the municipality to undertake a major street improvement program. Performance areas have been created for the practitioners of Quwwali music traditions that were created here in the 14th century by Hazrat Amir Khusrau and continue to draw a wide audience.<sup>20</sup>

Both the Taj Mahal and Humayun's Tomb are predominantly popular tourist attractions in India today rather than performing the function of commemoration. The restoration project of Humayun's Tomb however, the first public-private partnership for such a cause, has set a successful precedent for the role that such monuments can play in the revitalization of its surrounding community.

#### INDIA GATE AND RAJ GHAT: MEMORIALIZATION IN 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

At the center of New Delhi stands the 42 meter high India Gate, an "Arc-de-Triomphe" like archway in the middle of a crossroad. Similar to its French counterpart, it commemorates the 70,000 Indian soldiers who lost their lives fighting for the British Army during the World War I. The memorial bears the

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<sup>19</sup> "Humayun's Tomb, Sundar Nursery, Hazrat Nizamuddin Basti- Urban Renewal Initiative", as on February 17, 2016, the Aga Khan Trust for Culture and Aga Khan Development Network website [http://www.akdn.org/publications/2013\\_Humayun\\_Tomb\\_Conservation.pdf](http://www.akdn.org/publications/2013_Humayun_Tomb_Conservation.pdf)

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.



Figure 6: India Gate, Staff, Travelokam website,  
<http://travelokam.com/india-gate/>

names of more than 13,516 British and Indian soldiers killed in the Northwestern Frontier in the Afghan war of 1919.<sup>21</sup>

The foundation stone of India Gate was laid by His Royal Highness, the Duke of Connaught in 1921 and it was designed by Edwin Lutyens. The arch was especially designed to be secular, devoid of any religious symbology. The monument was

dedicated to the nation 10 years later by the then Viceroy, Lord Irwin. Another memorial, Amar Jawan Jyoti was added much later, after India got its independence. The eternal flame burns day and night under the arch to remind the nation of soldiers who laid down their lives in the Indo-Pakistan War of 1971.<sup>22</sup>

The entire arch stands on a low base of red Bharatpur stone and rises in stages to a huge molding. The cornice is inscribed with the Imperial suns while both sides of the arch have INDIA, flanked by the dates MCMXIV (1914

<sup>21</sup> "India Gate" as on February 17, 2016, the Delhi Tourism website  
[http://www.delhitourism.gov.in/delhitourism/tourist\\_place/india\\_gate.jsp](http://www.delhitourism.gov.in/delhitourism/tourist_place/india_gate.jsp)

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.



Figure 7: Raj Ghat, Staff, Mobsea website, <http://m.mobsea.org/Places-to-Visit/Delhi/Raj-Ghat>

left) and MCMXIX (1919 right). The shallow domed bowl at the top was intended to be filled with burning oil on anniversaries but this is rarely done.<sup>23</sup>

Close to the India Gate, Raj Ghat is a memorial to Mahatma Gandhi. Originally the name of a historic landing in Old Delhi of the banks of the Yamuna River, it loosely translates to the “King’s bank”. The memorial is a simple black marble platform with his last words “Hey Ram” inscribed on it that marks the spot of Mahatma Gandhi’s cremation on January 31<sup>st</sup> 1948, a day after his assassination. It is left open to sky while an eternal flame burns perpetually at one end. Much like the tomb of Humayun it is part of a memorial complex surrounded by other memorials commemorating important political leaders of India.<sup>24</sup>

Besides the World Heritage monuments with exquisite architecture, the more recent iconic memorial structures and statues of important historic

<sup>23</sup> “India Gate” as on February 17, 2016, the Delhi Tourism website [http://www.delhitourism.gov.in/delhitourism/tourist\\_place/india\\_gate.jsp](http://www.delhitourism.gov.in/delhitourism/tourist_place/india_gate.jsp)

<sup>24</sup> Based on the description in the articles “Rajghat” and “Rajghat New Delhi” as on February 17, 2016, on the Delhi Tourism websites [http://www.delhitourism.gov.in/delhitourism/tourist\\_place/memorial\\_delhi.jsp](http://www.delhitourism.gov.in/delhitourism/tourist_place/memorial_delhi.jsp) <http://touristplaces.hotelsofnewdelhi.com/rajghat.html>

personalities erected to honor them, India is dotted with several other typologies of memorials. Examples include, memorials constructed to commemorate smaller, less celebrated events or people related to India's independence struggle like the "Hutatma Chowk" in Mumbai. While driving in the mountains of Himachal or Kashmir or along the highway that connects Shrinagar to Kargil and further to Leh, every few minutes one might come across small clearings where localities have constructed memorials by putting up a plaque on a mound of rocks for soldiers who lost their lives in wars.

The history of memorials in India points to the fact that memorialization has existed in India for more than 2000 years. It is also evident that the early Hindu and Jain forms were a manifestation of personal loss, as were the Mughal tombs, despite their grand, inviting designs. The struggle for independence in the 20<sup>th</sup> century infused a strong sense of national pride and respect for the country's most prominent political figures which are visible as major underlying themes of the memorials constructed in this era. More recently, contemporary international practices like candle light vigils mourning a terrorist attack have found their way into Indian memorial culture, however the general public is rarely commemorated as victims of a tragedy through government sanctioned memorials. Is this due to lack of demand or has the lack of governmental efforts kept memorialization from becoming a popular culture in India?

#### BHOPAL GAS TRAGEDY MEMORIAL

On the night of December 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> 1984, the city of Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh in central India saw a catastrophe that has no parallel in the world's industrial history. Forty tons of toxic gas (Methy-Iso-Cyanate, MIC) was accidentally released from Union Carbide's Bhopal plant, which leaked and spread throughout the city. The result was a nightmare that came to be known as the "Bhopal Gas Tragedy" and still has no end.<sup>25</sup>

Residents awoke to clouds of suffocating gas and began running desperately through the dark streets, victims arrived at hospitals; breathless

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<sup>25</sup> "The Bhopal Gas Tragedy", as on February 19, 2016, the Bhopal Memorial Hospital and Research Center website <http://www.bmhrc.org/Bhopal%20Gas%20Tragedy.htm>

and blind. The lungs, brain, eyes, muscles as well as gastro-intestinal, neurological, reproductive and immune systems of those who survived were severely affected. When the sun rose the next morning, the magnitude of devastation was clear. Dead bodies of humans and animals blocked the street, leaves turned black and a smell of burning chili peppers lingered in the air. An estimate of 8,000 people died in the first two weeks and another 8,000 have died since. Approximately 500,000 people suffered agonizing injuries with disastrous effects of the massive poisoning. None can say if future generations will not be affected.<sup>26</sup>

A memorial commemorating the Bhopal gas tragedy and its victims was a long-standing demand of the survivors. In 2005, 20 years after the tragedy, the State Government of Madhya Pradesh floated a national design competition for a memorial. Unlike in many other parts of the world, public projects in India tend to be usually awarded to government empaneled architects and primarily hinge on the financial bidding process. However, architecture commissions in many other countries, especially important memorials such as the much lauded Vietnam War Memorial by Maya Lin, Hiroshima War Memorial by Kenzo Tange, 9/11 Memorial Complex by Daniel Liebeskind etc. have traditionally been awarded through open competitions, between architects with diverse experience and background, that focus on design and encourage fresh ideas. The Bhopal Memorial Competition, therefore, was a departure from the norm. Moreover, the Environmental Planning and Coordination Organization (EPCO, 2005), which coordinated the exercise, provided a remarkably open ended competition brief for the designers. In his analysis of the memorial design, Hans C Bjorness appreciates the open ended premise for the competition provided by EPCO, "which suggested that the memorial complex should first of all be for the victims of the gas tragedy. Secondly, 'The central issue to the memorial complex, *whether to retain the dark side of the event or to suggest recovery from the tragic event* towards a new understanding and hope of

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<sup>26</sup> "The Bhopal Gas Tragedy", as on February 19, 2016, the Bhopal Memorial Hospital and Research Center website <http://www.bmhrc.org/Bhopal%20Gas%20Tragedy.htm>

human endeavors, is totally open to competitors in the presentation of their architectural intentions". The erstwhile Union Carbide Factory site in Bhopal, where the tragedy unfolded on the night of December 1984, was chosen as the memorial site, yet the design brief was non-committal on the role of the factory structures themselves in the proposed memorial, stating that "*the participants can integrate them or replace them replace them in any suitable form and function*".<sup>27</sup>

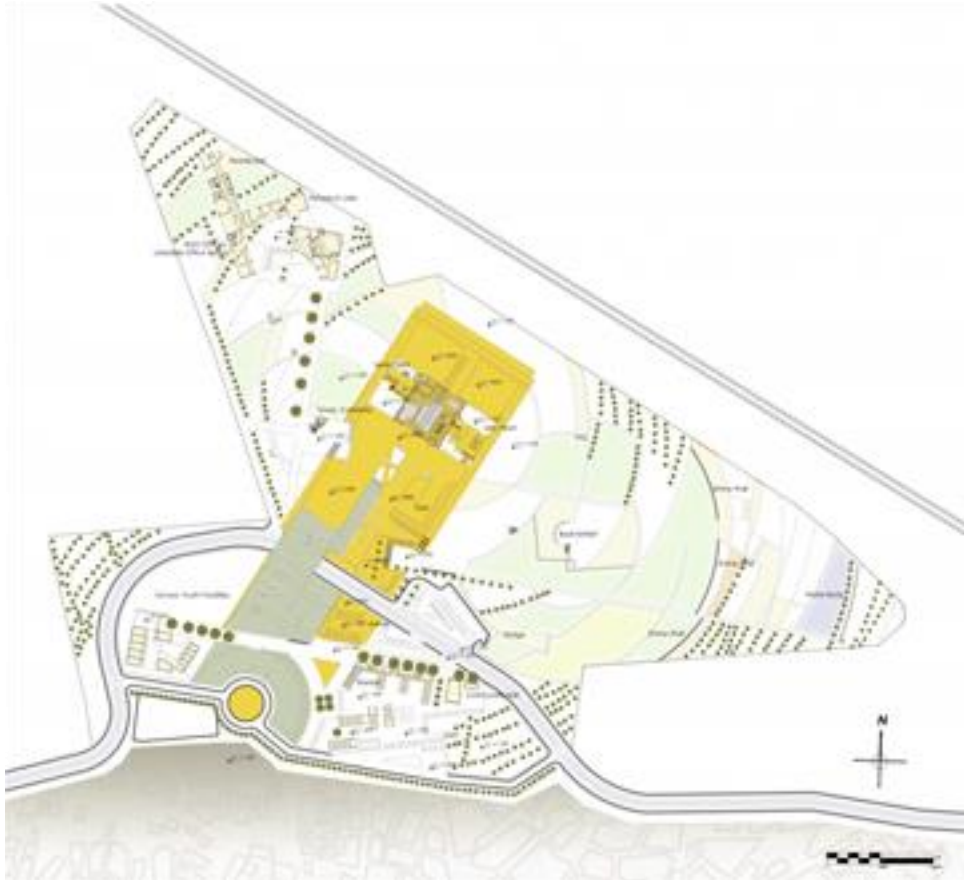


Figure 8: Site Plan, Memorial Complex for the Victims of the Bhopal Gas Tragedy, SpaceMatters, Architecturez website, <http://architexturez.net/doc/az-cf-122776>

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<sup>27</sup> Suditya Sinha, edited by Amrita Ballal and Jan af Geijerstam "Bhopal Gas Tragedy Memorial", Bhopal 2011- Landscapes of Memory, (New Delhi, India: SpaceMatters with Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), 2011), 113-118. <http://architexturez.net/doc/az-cf-122797>



The winning entry by SpaceMatters, selected by a jury of eminent Indian architects, exploited the possibilities provided by this brief with an understanding that the 'dark side of the event' had to be acknowledged in order to 'move towards recovery'. Secondly, rather than having a new memorial take center stage, the entry was unique in identifying the existing factory structures as a powerful icon of the tragedy – a painful yet integral part of the cultural heritage of Bhopal. The proposal stresses that the factory structures remain the truest, most evocative and lasting, physical reminders of the tragedy. This valuable heritage and legacy of the structures is preserved in the proposal as the heart of the memorial complex.<sup>28</sup>

A movement by the name "International Campaign for Justice in Bhopal" has been going on for appropriate education about the event and sensitive memorialization. They created a website in 2014 that has published their demands from the governments of India, the state of Madhya Pradesh, United States of America and American Multinational companies. The following was published in a circular titled "Remember Bhopal":

No memorial has been built for the survivors. An independent artist, working with survivors, created a modest statute in front of the Union Carbide factory in 1985. But the state has never instituted a day of memory nor any type of memorial. Now the State government is proposing to fund a 100 crore memorial but is entirely excluding gas victims from the process. Although a memorial is crucial, the best memorial would be to take care of the needs of the gas victims - both their basic needs like clean water and medical care, and their human needs of memorializing and publicly acknowledging their suffering. "The government has no moral right to construct a memorial when it is not even able to meet the medical and other needs of the gas victims," says Satinath Sarangi of the Bhopal Group for Information and Action, an NGO working among gas victims. Any memorial must do all of the above simultaneously, with the guidance and involvement of survivor's groups.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Suditya Sinha, edited by Amrita Ballal and Jan af Geijerstam "Bhopal Gas Tragedy Memorial", Bhopal 2011- Landscapes of Memory, (New Delhi, India: SpaceMatters with Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), 2011), 113-118. <http://architexturez.net/doc/az-cf-122797>

<sup>29</sup> Bhopal Gas Peedit Mahila Stationery Karmachari Sangh, Bhopal Gas Peedit Mahila Purush Sangharsh Morcha, Bhopal Group for Information and Action, Bhopal ki Aawaaz, "Remember Bhopal", as on February 19, 2016, International Campaign for Justice in Bhopal website [http://www.bhopal.net/old\\_studentsforbhopal\\_org/Assets/13RememberBhopal.pdf](http://www.bhopal.net/old_studentsforbhopal_org/Assets/13RememberBhopal.pdf)

It is to this end that SpaceMatters has been working with stakeholders for the past seven years, starting from the survivors and the State Government of Madhya Pradesh, to a network that has today grown to include researchers, universities, other architectural firms, cultural heritage experts, conservation experts, museum designers, media people etc. This was not planned; it has evolved as the design team sought to understand and engage with this highly complex scenario. As architects we can articulate a vision but the practice of architecture is a humbling process with shared responsibilities; it requires the right people to bring the vision to life. In the case of the Bhopal memorial, this involves museum experts, industrial heritage experts along with decontamination agencies. Over and above that, it requires a committed vision from the State and engagement from the people of Bhopal – those directly affected by the tragedy and many more living with its toxic physical and cultural legacy. The site has the possibility to contribute towards reversing the decades-long cycle of neglect and failure.<sup>30</sup>

These developments point to a modern, global approach to memorializing in India with the proposed process. There is a demand for memorials attempting to deal with complex issues of important industrial heritage and dark history. It has certainly opened up mature dialogs about what and how India memorializes, adding an important event and typology to the list traditionally present.

With the Bhopal Gas Tragedy memorial process as a precedent, this is the ideal time to begin discussions about memorialization for other events of mass tragedies like terror strikes. Considering the various terror strikes in Mumbai, it is evident that memorials are constructed for these events- plaques or installations of varying degrees of grandeur. Almost none of these however

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<sup>30</sup> Suditya Sinha, edited by Amrita Ballal and Jan af Geijerstam "Bhopal Gas Tragedy Memorial", Bhopal 2011- Landscapes of Memory, (New Delhi, India: SpaceMatters with Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), 2011), 113-118.  
<http://architexturez.net/doc/az-cf-122797>



commemorate the civilian casualties. These memorials are obscure both in their locations and designs and have failed to become symbols of healing- if that was their objective. In the light of this memorial culture for terrorist attacks in India and comparison to its counterpart in the United States, this thesis further explores and reacts to the public feeling in India.

The various memorials described in this chapter put together a picture of memorialization practices in India. Each memorial is part of the evolution of these practices influenced by the many cultures to settle down in the country, their religious practices, art and architecture. India is still a young country but is certainly a part of the globalization movement and is taking steps towards international practices as evidenced by the developments in the Bhopal Gas Tragedy memorialization process. India has always graciously accepted and absorbed the ways of her immigrants and now seems ready to open herself to the norms followed by a large part of the world.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **Memorialization in USA**

“Memorials are archives of public affect, repositories of feelings and emotions that are embodied in their material form and narrative content.”<sup>1</sup>

*Erika Doss, Memorial Mania*

““Memorial to what?” What is driving the contemporary American frenzy to memorialize, and who is being remembered? At the most basic level, memorials are designed to recognize and preserve memories. They are typically understood as gifts that honor particular people and historical events.”<sup>2</sup> With the National Mall becoming the most prime location to construct memorials, the Congress became worried that too many memorials would get in the way of one another and compete for attention. Subsequently, in 1986, the Congress passed the National Commemorative Works Act that restricted the rising number of memorials on the National Mall. The act however is meant to promote commemorative works that evoke the memory of an individual, group event or other significant element of American history.<sup>3</sup>

Memorials are often forms of gifts exchanged between countries. However, one may often be able to interpret some of these gifts as a way of establishing presence or supremacy between political and commercial powers. Consider these examples, in 1957, some nine thousand members of the American Bar association paid for a memorial to the Magna Carta, which was erected near the site in England where the Great Charter of Freedoms was issued in 1215. In 1965, the British National Trust gifted an acre of land near

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<sup>1</sup> Erika Doss, *Memorial Mania: Public feeling in America*, (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2010), 13.

<sup>2</sup> Erika Doss, *Memorial Mania: Public feeling in America*, (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2010), 7.

<sup>3</sup> Erika Doss, *Memorial Mania: Public feeling in America*, (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2010), 18-19. Peter Jan Margry and Cristina Sanchez-Carretero, *Grassroots Memorials: The Politics of Memorializing Traumatic Death*, part of the series *Remapping Cultural History*, (New York: Berghahn Books, 2011), ix.

the Magna Carta Memorial to the United States, on which a new memorial to President John F. Kennedy was erected. With the political frictions between the United States and England during the cold war, both memorials can be interpreted as symbols of American authority on British soil.<sup>4</sup>

Martha Norkunas documented a dramatic increase in memorial numbers in her study of monuments and memory in Lowell, Massachusetts. She observed that 252 memorials were erected in that northeastern textile town since the mid-nineteenth century while more than 65 were erected in the last two decades of the twentieth century. This dramatic increase in numbers points to a deeper interest and understanding of commemoration. The collection of memorials in America today is extremely varied, to say the least, in terms of its stakeholders to the subjects, forms and materials of memorials. They may be multi-acres properties like the National September 11 Memorial and Museum at the World Trade Center or single monuments like the David Berger National memorial in Beachwood, Ohio, an abstract sculpture dedicated to an American athlete killed during terrorist attacks at the 1972 Munich Olympics. Some limited to temporary shrines erected at the site of school shootings and car accidents and others that form permanent memorials intended as timeless national figures. Contemporary kinds of commemoration include plaques, parks, cairns, quilts, trees and even Web sites.<sup>5</sup>

## EARLY MEMORIALS

Memorials have changed forms, designs and their concepts have become more sophisticated over the last century in America. Memorials today have evolved from the practice of constructing statues of respected personalities that developed both in America and Europe from the 1870s to the 1920s. These statues, usually of great men like Christopher Columbus and other explorers, inventors, statesmen and soldiers, instilled a sense of national

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<sup>4</sup> Erika Doss, *Memorial Mania: Public feeling in America*, (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2010), 7, 9.

<sup>5</sup> Erika Doss, *Memorial Mania: Public feeling in America*, (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2010), 19.

pride among the public. They performed the function of unifying the nation after the Civil War. This commemorative movement contributed towards rebuilding a nation divided by the Civil War. Strong public loyalties observed towards family, religion, or racial and ethnic groups were redirected towards the country. The unifying nature of such commemoration was evidence by the equal participation of the African American community as reported by the Washington Bee, an African American weekly in 1889.<sup>6</sup>

The turn of the twentieth century saw the "City Beautiful" movement that adopted the Greco-Roman style to project the Progressive Era. This period also saw a rapid advance of modernism, immigration, and mass culture. "However much they were meant as timeless vessels of permanent national values and beliefs, turn-of-the-twentieth-century public statues embodied presentism ideals and interests that became irrelevant and even irreconcilable in later decades."<sup>7</sup>

## EVOLUTION OF MEMORIALS IN AMERICA

Why and how are memorials changing today in America? Memorials today, are not conceived as objects, singular objects, as much as they are unfolding events, moving compositions. Memorials today are squeezed into crowded urban infrastructure, they are vulnerable to invisibility for instance, the George Cohan statue at Times Square, New York, competes with bill boards, street signage and street noise. Memorials have to compete for the public's increasingly short attention span. Another influence on memorial change is the "you are there" intensity that pervades many new memorials. The public's demand to know exactly where Martin Luther King Jr. gave his famous "I have a dream..." speech in the steps of the Lincoln Memorial was so great that the Park Service using films and photographs figured out exactly

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<sup>6</sup> Erika Doss, *Memorial Mania: Public feeling in America*, (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2010), 20-21.

<sup>7</sup> Erika Doss, *Memorial Mania: Public feeling in America*, (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2010), 27, 30. Richard Klein, *An Overview of the City Beautiful Movement as Reflected in Daniel Burnham's Vision*, (Georgetown, Ohio), 61.



Figure 9: George Cohan Statue, Times Square, Alice Lum, Daytonian in Manhattan blog, <http://daytoninmanhattan.blogspot.com/2014/01/the-george-h-cohan-statue-duffy-square.html>

where he was standing and there is a bronze inset now on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. This connects to the Ken Burns approach to history, which has had a tremendous impact on the way people perceive it, where people experience history up close and personal through diaries, photographs or letters.<sup>8</sup>

What should be commemorated? There seems to be no longer a shared consensus on what should be commemorated and what design vocabulary should be used to do it. The days of Classicism where a figure,

statue, temple or a reflecting pool are over. There is a lot larger group of people today who have a say in what memorials can look like. Some people prefer figuration, realistic sculptures, others would rather have it be a park where they can sit and contemplate and still others want to see the artifacts of the tragedy as proof of what survived. The 9/11 Memorial has come to be a combination of all these concepts, figuration, abstraction, a park and artifacts.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Judith Dupre, "Monuments-Part 1", filmed December 2008, YouTube video, 6:24, posted December 30, 2008, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xsK\\_Ga4fyGQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xsK_Ga4fyGQ)

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

The Gates in Central Park, NYC talks about the spaces in between- the space between the citizen and the memorial, space between the memorial and the city, between the historic event, the present moment and the future, everything that is soft rather than hard about the memorial design. Another example of this contemporary approach to memorial designs in America is the Boston Women's Memorial by Meredith Bergmann along Boston's Commonwealth Avenue Mall which is crowded with monuments. White, male figures perched high on their pedestals is a common thread in most of those monuments. Meredith subverted the traditional role of pedestals and we see her women not on the pedestals but putting them to good use.<sup>10</sup>



Figure 10: *The Gates* in Central Park, Tyler Neylon,  
[http://www.math.nyu.edu/~neylon/pictures/the\\_gates/index.php](http://www.math.nyu.edu/~neylon/pictures/the_gates/index.php)

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<sup>10</sup> Judith Dupre, "Monuments-Part 1", filmed December 2008, YouTube video, 6:24, posted December 30, 2008, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xsK\\_Ga4fyGQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xsK_Ga4fyGQ)





Figure 11: Boston Women's Memorial, Anastasia Yefremova, Boston city website,  
[http://archive.boston.com/yourtown/news/downtown/2013/10/boston\\_women\\_s\\_memorial\\_looks\\_back\\_on\\_a\\_decade\\_on\\_comm\\_ave.html](http://archive.boston.com/yourtown/news/downtown/2013/10/boston_women_s_memorial_looks_back_on_a_decade_on_comm_ave.html)

Monuments are being amended to reflect the perspectives of the populations that were previously ignored and reflect lifestyle changes. Franklin D. Roosevelt told his friends, "If they were to put up a memorial for me, I should like to be put up in the center of that green plot in front of the archives building. I should like it to consist of a block about the size of this desk". He did get that memorial, a white marble, desk-size tablet, in front of the National Archives Building. But over a period of sixty years he also got a memorial spanned over seven acres on the National Mall designed by Lawrence Halprin in collaboration with several sculptors and was hugely debated over. It includes waterfalls, sculptures and an incredible inscriptional program. The monument was conceived of as four rooms to reflect FDR's four terms as president. By the time it was finished, it represented views of the disabled, anti-smoking partisans and animal rights activists. The heroic end portrait of Franklin Roosevelt shows no sign of his disability, which caused dozens of people in

wheel-chairs to protest at the first dedication of the memorial. With the National Organization on Disability and the approval of the Roosevelt family, Robert Graham designed another portrait of the president in a wheelchair which now sits in the fifth room added as the "prologue room".<sup>11</sup>



Figure 12: Franklin D. Roosevelt Memorial at the National Archives, Washington D.C., Staff, DCMemorials website, [http://www.dcmemorials.com/index\\_indiv0000582.htm](http://www.dcmemorials.com/index_indiv0000582.htm)

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<sup>11</sup> Judith Dupre, "Monuments-Part 1", filmed December 2008, YouTube video, 6:24, posted December 30, 2008, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xsK\\_Ga4fyGQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xsK_Ga4fyGQ). Judith Dupre, "Monuments- Part 2 Dupre", filmed January 2009, YouTube video, 6:39, posted January 15, 2009, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EgOrp-oeT7o>





Figure 13: Franklin D. Roosevelt Memorial, Washington D.C., clockwise from top left- four rooms representing four terms. Room 1, cliff1066, flickriver, <http://www.flickriver.com/photos/nostri-imago/sets/72157608591528296/>, Room 2, Wikimedia commons website, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:FDR-Memorial-One-Third-of-a-Nation-color.jpg>. Room 3, Wikimapia website, <http://wikimapia.org/1796/Franklin-Delano-Roosevelt-Memorial>. Room 4, cliff1066, flickriver, <http://www.flickriver.com/photos/nostri-imago/sets/72157608591528296/>



Figure 14: Prologue Room, Franklin D. Roosevelt memorial, Washington D.C., DCMemorials website, [http://www.dcmemorials.com/index\\_indiv0001160.htm](http://www.dcmemorials.com/index_indiv0001160.htm)

Amendment sometimes means acknowledging the past, more than an attempt to view history that only monumentalizes the victors but remembering survivors and victims. There is so much said about the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, it is a benchmark of contemporary memorial design. There are more than fifty-eight thousand names carved into the wall and the power of this piece lies in those names; the fact that there is nothing said about who those people were. One cannot read those names without seeing their own reflection in the highly polished black marble. The memorial makes no claims about who won the war, it just represents the cost of war. Significant as the Vietnam War Memorial is, the AIDS quilt shown on the National Mall, addresses the revolution in memorial design in the last several decades; a memorial that celebrates survivors rather than heroes, it is intended to provide solace through interaction. It is the most democratic of the monuments. The idea that any and all people make the monuments, is one of the most apparent memorial trends.<sup>12</sup>



*Figure 15: Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Washington D.C., National Park Foundation website, <http://www.nationalparks.org/explore-parks/vietnam-veterans-memorial>*

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<sup>12</sup> Judith Dupre, "Monuments- Part 2 Dupre", filmed January 2009, YouTube video, 6:39, posted January 15, 2009, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EgOrp-oeT7o>

Monuments do not tell us everything about history, they don't tell us specific stories. They tell us that at one time there were others, heroes and survivors, ordinary people like us who were called to greatness. Monuments ask that each one of us live our lives as though they make a difference.<sup>13</sup>

#### TEMPORARY MEMORIALS AND THEIR ROLE IN MODERN AMERICA

Along with the evolution of the forms and subjects of memorials, the mourning practices have also evolved. The growing culture of temporary memorials seem to suggest that they are expected to play a significant role in the mourning of tragic deaths and the healing process after. The study of temporary memorials offers answers to some questions while raising some new questions- "how are feelings of grief mediated in contemporary America? What do temporary memorials tell us about who and what is deemed memorable in American history, and in terms of an imagined national future? By extension, is grief a useful or productive public affect? Or are there psychic and political dangers for a nation seemingly "too attached" to public expressions of grief?"<sup>14</sup>

While temporary memorials have become a common occurrence as a response to tragedy, they are however referred to by different names based on their nature and functions.

While obviously omnipresent, there is little agreement about what temporary memorials actually mean or represent. The subject is confounded by the problem of definitions. Some call them "vernacular memorials" to distinguish them as individual, handmade, localized, and grassroots projects rather than officially sanctioned or institutionalized kinds of commemoration. Some refer to them as "performative memorials" to emphasize their fundamentally active and social nature. Some use the terms "spontaneous memorials or shrines" to evoke their seemingly abrupt and unpremeditated appearance, and to reference their religious overtures.<sup>15</sup>

Temporary memorials originate as ephemeral forms and sites of commemoration, but as they are visited, photographed, and collected they

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<sup>13</sup> Judith Dupre, "Monuments- Part 2 Dupre", filmed January 2009, YouTube video, 6:39, posted January 15, 2009, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EgOrp-oeT7o>

<sup>14</sup> Erika Doss, *Memorial Mania: Public feeling in America*, (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2010), 64.

<sup>15</sup> Erika Doss, *Memorial Mania: Public feeling in America*, (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2010), 66-67.

enter into new taxonomic registers. The formulaic and increasingly universalized terms of their production call into question their vernacular sensibility. However impromptu they may seem, temporary memorials are actually highly orchestrated and self-conscious acts of mourning aimed at expressing, codifying and ultimately managing grief. Their spontaneity is only in their origination, in their swift response to sudden and unexpected events of tragic and traumatic death. The term "temporary memorials" recognizes that what we are especially considering is the cultural production and consumption of ephemeral forms of commemoration, some of which are eventually transformed into permanent memorials.<sup>16</sup>

Immediately after the September 11, 2001 attack, spontaneous memorials cropped up all over the world. New Yorkers gravitated to Union Square, long a magnet for public gatherings in celebration and in sorrow. Because 14<sup>th</sup> street, the square's southern border, was the northern edge of the "frozen zone", it was a natural choice for those looking to mourn together. Within a day, continuous vigils to honor victims began, and the park was lined with candles, photographs, flags, letters, poems, and children's drawings.<sup>17</sup>

Around the city, the front doors of firehouses and police stations became shrines and first responders left the lockers of those who had fallen as they were, uniforms hanging and personal effects just as they had been on the morning of 9/11. New Yorkers paused in front of "Missing" posters plastered on surfaces throughout the city. As hope of rescue faded, many of those posters were transformed into memorials themselves, sewn into quilts and pasted onto murals and sculptures. Memorial services allowed all Americans opportunities to gather together- from the National Day of Prayer and Remembrance at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., and a Prayer for America service at Yankee Stadium, to the tens of thousands of simple candle light vigils in town squares and other public settings across the nation.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Erika Doss, *Memorial Mania: Public feeling in America*, (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2010), 66-67.

<sup>17</sup> Allison Blais and Lynn Rasic, *A Place of Remembrance- Official Book of the September 11 Memorial*, (Washington, D.C.: National Geographic, 2011), 94-95.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*





Figure 16: Temporary memorial after 9/11, 9/11 memorial website, <http://www.911memorial.org/blog/tags/make-history>

Peter Margry and Cristina Sanchez-Carretero use the term “grassroots memorial” for such temporary, spontaneous memorials- the phenomenon of placing memorabilia, as a form of social action, in public spaces, usually sites where traumatic deaths or events have taken place. These forms of memorialization are now socially sanctioned and, in a way, they are expected to appear as part of the commonly ritualized practices that deal with unexpected death and the causes of these deaths. This process of memorialization expresses not only grief but also social discontent and protest and that represents forms of social action. Grassroots memorialization is understood as the process by which groups of people, imagined communities, or specific individuals bring grievances into action by creating an improvised and temporary memorial with the aim of changing or ameliorating a particular situation. “Grassroots”, a concept in memorialization and social action signifies what happens after untimely and traumatic death: the creation of memorial bricolages and makeshift memorials in public space in order to achieve change. This authority shift mobilizes the involved community, which through

grassroots memorials brings together individuals to participate in actions without being linked to a group-organized initiative.<sup>19</sup>

## EFFECT OF TERRORISM ON MEMORIAL PRACTICES

America has had a long-standing legacy of violent extremism and in recent times terrorism has dominated American media as it has many other parts of the world. The scale of 9/11 instilled fear among Americans as a national center of Disaster Preparedness survey revealed. The government and media have projected terrorist attacks as “attacks on America”, despite the victims, especially those of 9/11 spanning 92 nationalities. In turn, the commemoration of such tragedies is also remembered on American terms.<sup>20</sup>

The sites of acts of terrorism are permanently linked to violence and loss. They embody authenticity and often become the only sacred, physical mourning site for some survivors and family members. Acts of terrorism lend complexity to the memory of the victims and the approach of the treatment of the site afterward. While these are sites of trauma and loss, they are entrusted with the responsibility of rebuilding- reaffirming the sense of social stability, unity and endurance. As elaborated by Judith Dupre in her critique of the Vietnam Veterans memorial, a minimalistic aesthetic is considered by many to be the most effective in juggling these complex narratives.<sup>21</sup>

“Competing accounts of trauma are played out in contemporary commemoration and explain both minimalism’s use in terrorism memorials and the heated public debates that surround them. While trauma is the organizing theme of terrorism memorials, its representation is often superficial and mostly oriented toward the restoration of social order and the revitalization of

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<sup>19</sup> Peter Jan Margry and Cristina Sanchez-Carretero, *Grassroots Memorials: The Politics of Memorializing Traumatic Death*, part of the series *Remapping Cultural History*, (New York: Berghahn Books, 2011), 1-2.

<sup>20</sup> Erika Doss, *Memorial Mania: Public feeling in America*, (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2010), 120-121. Jack Saul, *Collective Trauma, Collective Healing- Promoting Community Resilience in the Aftermath of Disaster*, (London and New York: Routledge, Taylor and Francis, 2014), 59, 60.

<sup>21</sup> Erika Doss, *Memorial Mania: Public feeling in America*, (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2010), 122. Jack Saul, *Collective Trauma, Collective Healing- Promoting Community Resilience in the Aftermath of Disaster*, (London and New York: Routledge, Taylor and Francis, 2014), 107, 109.

presumably shared national norms. Trauma's historical terms- and transgressive possibilities- are generally over-looked if not entirely ignored."<sup>22</sup>

On the tenth anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, the public got their first view of the Reflecting Absence, Michael Arad's long awaited memorial to the thousands killed in the in the Twin Towers, the Pentagon, the United Airlines flight 93, and in the February 26, 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center. Those who come to this memorial acutely feel the Absence. The memorial shares the minimalistic approach of the Vietnam War memorial and attempts to deal with multiple complex emotions of various stakeholders and their expectations, which is an extremely humanistic approach since the site is a burial monument for almost 40 percent of the victims' families who were never able to recover the remains of their loved ones.<sup>23</sup>



Figure 17: Reflecting Absence, the 9/11 memorial, Anthony Domancio, Cnet website, <http://www.cnet.com/news/video-time-lapse-of-911-memorial-museum-progress-will-inspire-you/>

<sup>22</sup> Erika Doss, *Memorial Mania: Public feeling in America*, (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2010), 133.

<sup>23</sup> G. Roger Denson, Michael Arad's 9/11 Memorial 'Reflecting Absence': More Than a Metaphor or a Monument, *Huffpost Arts and Culture*, updated November 11, 2011, accessed February 20, 2016, [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/g-roger-denson/michael-arads-911-memoria\\_b\\_955454.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/g-roger-denson/michael-arads-911-memoria_b_955454.html)

The memorial occupies eight of the site's sixteen acres. Two reflecting pools, each 192 by 192 feet, occupy the spots where the towers once stood. In the center of each is another void, allowing the water cascade downward. Bronze panels surround the pools, listing the names of the 2,983 victims of the 9/11 attacks and the 1993 WTC bombings. The public walkways around the water features are surrounded by rings of oak trees. These landscape elements screen the more contemplative memorial space from the rest of the site. They also border the 212 by 212 foot perimeters of the original towers, becoming symbolic memories of the original structures.<sup>24</sup>

The architect paid special attention to the arrangement of the names of the victims on the memorial and there were several debates about whether the names should be alphabetical; if there should be any special mention for the first respondent. Arad himself felt very strongly about having the names of people associated with each other in some way have their names placed together in death too. After several letters from the families and public expressing their opinions and requests and serious deliberations Arad method of "meaningful adjacencies" was followed. Though this required extensive research and coordination with the families and the employers in the towers, the resulting placements were powerfully infused with meaning where the names were arranged in accordance with geographic and familial ties, links with co-workers and specific wishes of victims' loved ones.<sup>25</sup>

The concepts, forms and designs, even the subjects of memorials have evolved in America through the ages. Memorialization however, has always been a part of American culture. Studying the memorials constructed, demonstrates the roles they have played for the society- a source of national pride, a symbol of mourning and markers of progress and development in the United States. It is beneficial to understand how the country has recognized

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<sup>24</sup> "Reflecting Absence" Memorializes 9/11 with Voids that give Shape to Memory, as on February 20, 2016, AIA website, <http://www.aia.org/practicing/AIAB090845>

<sup>25</sup> Allison Blais and Lynn Rasic, *A Place of Remembrance- Official Book of the September 11 Memorial*, (Washington, D.C.: National Geographic, 2011), 136.



the significant roles these memorials perform and attempt sophistication of their processes to avail maximum benefit from them.

Memorial culture may be deemed significantly more profound in the United States. Countries around the world however, have turned to large memorial projects to commemorate such events of mass tragedies. The approach to their execution though may vary depending on the gravity of the event commemorated, the influence of the country's own cultural traditions and also its economic position. Berlin's Holocaust Memorial on the former site of the Berlin Wall makes a powerful statement- its location implies that the recognition of that crime is necessary for the city's reunification. The "Monument to the Disappeared" in Buenos Aires commemorating the military state's political intolerance, though not located in as significant a location, also sends a similar message- that of acknowledging the past before moving on to the future.<sup>26</sup>

While scholars have questioned the excessiveness of memorials in the United States, memorials for mass tragedies like the 9/11 attacks have known to have brought some peace to victims' families, perhaps given not just Americans but citizens of the world to stand up again and propagate peace. If managed efficiently and not allowed to become political tools, are memorials the ideal method for survivors to get closure? Having the histories and the memorial culture of India and the United States as the backdrop, this thesis explores the role of memorials, possibly free of any cultural boundaries and the best, most successful methods of executing the memorialization process.

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<sup>26</sup> Susana Torre, "Constructing Memorials", in Okwui Enwezor, editor, Documenta 11, platform 2: Experiments in Truth, (Kassel: Documenta, 2002), 347.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### ***Healing through Honoring Memory***

"We don't heal in isolation, but in community."<sup>1</sup>

*S. Kelley Harrell*

Memorialization is a complex phenomenon, deeply rooted in a nation's culture and even politics. While in the United States of America, memorialization is almost an obvious response to mass tragedies, or any tragedies for that matter, Indians have had to either struggle for years to have mass tragedies formally, physically and permanently memorialized, as in the case of the Bhopal Gas Tragedy or have never had the chance to discuss permanent memorialization amidst the din of anger and diplomatic discussions after terror strikes. Why explore the possibility of a new route for India to take?

Memorials, especially for tragedies brought on by terror strikes are entrusted with the responsibility to deal with numerous stakeholders and their emotions. Scholars have studied through various precedents about what propels the impetus to memorialize, in whose interest memorials are constructed, and how memorials may fulfil multiple and competing purposes. They are a form of symbolic justice or reparations to the victims, an instrument for reconciliation, a mechanism for nation building and political legitimacy, and a pedagogical tool to inculcate the preventive lessons of "never again". They are thus a challenge for architects, policymakers and civil actors in the construction of memorials, to not only target their design toward the intended purpose, but is also to navigate the fact that memorials are eminently present and can enact violence through their representation of the past.<sup>2</sup> The result of all this delicate work however, has set many examples of a memorial becoming the symbol of and for a nation raring to rise above the tragedy. The speeches

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<sup>1</sup> S. Kelley Harrell, *Gift of the Dreamtime - Awakening to the Divinity of Trauma*, (North Carolina: Soul Intent Arts, 2004)

<sup>2</sup> Moore, Lisa M. "(Re) Covering the Past, Remembering Trauma: The Politics of Commemoration at Sites of Atrocity", *Journal of Public & International Affairs* 20, (2009), 47

of countering terrorism may go beyond words to find a permanent physical form in these memorial structures.

In recent decades, there has been an increasing academic interest in the study of politics of death and memory, the relationship between history and memory, memory and nation building, memorialization of catastrophes, war and monuments, and links between death and remembrance as well as studies on social trauma and memory from historical, anthropological, and psychological perspectives.<sup>3</sup> In public policy, clinical psychiatry, and law, trauma is typically perceived on pragmatic terms as a devastating psychic blow that can be accessed and must be cured; trauma is a problem, but it can be resolved. In literary criticism and social theory, trauma is also problematic but mainly because it is so overwhelming that it exceeds comprehension. In other disciplines, trauma is increasingly utilized to reframe historical conditions and political interests. Including the trauma of slavery in the American historical narrative, for example, profoundly disrupts national paradigms of freedom and liberty. Trauma's disruption "brings us to the limits of our understanding", but it also portends transgressive possibilities: new modes of reading in literary studies; new concepts of evidence and interpretation in history; new narratives of identity and purpose in the national imaginary.<sup>4</sup>

Trauma is dissonant, confusing, and chaotic, a kind of dismantling that its victims describe in terms of physical and emotional modes of detachment: time and space "out of order". Trauma's inexpressible pain "unmakes" the body, shattering the unity of the subject. Minimalism, often selected to commemorate trauma, is said to resolve it; it conjures trauma's profound dissonance and also speaks to the recovery and reaffirmation- the remaking- of individual and collective harmony. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial's long

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<sup>3</sup> Peter Jan Margry and Cristina Sanchez-Carretero, *Grassroots Memorials: The Politics of Memorializing Traumatic Death*, part of the series *Remapping Cultural History*, (New York: Berghahn Books, 2011), 1.

<sup>4</sup> Erika Doss, *Memorial Mania: Public feeling in America*, (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2010), 132-133.

cuts of black granite, for example, embody both the wounds of the war and its reconciliation in the national narrative: time and space are disrupted when we descend into the memorial's disorienting depths and then are returned to normalcy as we exit along the inclined path facing the Washington Monument. The Wall has become the model for contemporary trauma memorials: since its unveiling in 1982, artists and audiences have learned to read its redefined minimalism in terms of an experimental procession or pilgrimage from grief to mourning to healing.<sup>5</sup>

Terrorism is defined as the use of violence by fanatical extremists as a mode of governing or opposing governments by intimidation. It is coercion of the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives. Its aim is to immobilize the civilian population with fear and anxiety. Terrorists terrorize by using threats or physical destruction to kill and maim innocent people, create sensationalism and chaos, and gain instant publicity for the terrorist's cause. The terrorist acts are unprovoked and intentional, causing overwhelming fear. These acts evoke feelings of helplessness in individuals; terrorists randomly target innocent and defenseless groups of people.<sup>6</sup>

The battlefield is not the land upon which the attacks take place, but rather, it is the mind - the psychology - of those who survive. Psychotherapy alone, no matter how brief, seems inadequate to effectively respond to the psychological needs of both civilian and military personnel in the wake of terrorism and disasters. Both types of disasters, natural and human-made, can elicit fear, anger and worry in victims, their families and friends and could lead to psychological symptoms of anxiety and depression. Research has shown that human-made disasters are more psychologically pathogenic than are

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<sup>5</sup>Erika Doss, *Memorial Mania: Public feeling in America*, (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2010), 132-133.

<sup>6</sup> Mathewson, Judith. "The psychological impact of terrorist attacks: Lessons learned for future threats." *The homeland security papers: Stemming the Tide of Terror* (2004), 191-192.

natural disasters. Terrorism may be the most pathogenic of all due to its unpredictable and unrestrained nature.<sup>7</sup>

A recent survey of victims of violence reported that memorialization was prioritized as the second most valuable form of state reparations following monetary compensations. In part it is perhaps the impetus to bear witness to the suffering of the victims that has given rise to a proliferation of memorials in recent decades. As a form of transitional justice, memorials have too often been relegated to the domain of artists and architects whereas they represent a strategic resource in conflict and peace.<sup>8</sup>

Many veins of memorialization can be pursued in the space between justice and reconciliation, forgiveness and retribution, and remembrance and forgetting. Memorials can act as a conduit for reconciliation, bringing opposed groups together, or they can entrench divisions and aggravate old wounds. They may consult afflicted parties and deliver a form of justice through acknowledgement to the aggrieved or they may entirely exclude the victims from the process of construction. They function as pedagogical instruments, instilling the lessons of "never again" in future generations or threaten a nascent peace by inciting retaliation through an inflammatory rendering of the past. Memorials can also provide a place of sanctuary for mourning or they can become targets of future aggression due to their symbolic resonance. There is no right or formulaic way to construct memorials. The choice facing survivors and nations alike is not only whether to memorialize, but also in what form and to what end. At best, memorials help to heal the wounds of antagonism and to induce individuals to reflect on what they can do to prevent future violence. At worst, memorials undermine peace building and reconciliation, "providing zones of 'symbolic' politics where both national governments and local constituents may promote divisive or repressive messages in ways they

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<sup>7</sup> Mathewson, Judith. "The psychological impact of terrorist attacks: Lessons learned for future threats." *The homeland security papers: Stemming the Tide of Terror* (2004), 191-192.

<sup>8</sup> Moore, Lisa M. "(Re) Covering the Past, Remembering Trauma: The Politics of Commemoration at Sites of Atrocity", *Journal of Public & International Affairs* 20, (2009), 48.

could not in other spheres". At the very least memorials must be taken seriously as socio-political forces that wield tremendous symbolic influence.<sup>9</sup>

Memorials affirm the humanity of those who were killed and ascribe accountability for their deaths, thereby fighting a culture of impunity often endemic after violence. The processes of preservation and archival research involved in their creation help to provide an official transcript of atrocities that can be useful for the pursuit of justice through legal channels. It has been suggested that memorialization is a cathartic process that allows survivors to work through their trauma. This assumes, of course, that survivors have agency in the process itself. The diverse experiences of survivors may not be compatible so it may be difficult to create a memorial that is inclusive of all perspectives. The challenge is also how to reconcile the construction of memorials with the immediate needs of post-conflict communities. Some argue that funds are being misallocated to create memorials to the dead, rather than to support those who survived. Given the need to reconstruct schools and public institutions after conflict, it may be difficult to justify preserving these sites as memorials.<sup>10</sup>

At the inception of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. in 1999, staff wore lapel pins with the messages "Remember" and "Never Again." As Gourevitch remarks, "The museum was just a year old; at its inaugural ceremony, President Clinton had described it as 'an investment in a secure future against whatever insanity lurks ahead'". The most frequently cited rationale for memorials is hence their pedagogical value in preventing recurrences of the past. How can memorials engage new generations with little or no knowledge of what they commemorate? Each generation, indeed every visitor, will view memorials through a different lens to draw relevance for their own lives. If the explicit goal of their pedagogy is prevention through learning

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<sup>9</sup> Moore, Lisa M. "(Re) Covering the Past, Remembering Trauma: The Politics of Commemoration at Sites of Atrocity", *Journal of Public & International Affairs* 20, (2009), 48, 49.

<sup>10</sup> Moore, Lisa M. "(Re) Covering the Past, Remembering Trauma: The Politics of Commemoration at Sites of Atrocity", *Journal of Public & International Affairs* 20, (2009), 56.

from the mistakes of the past, then “their very presence indicates our failure to do so: they most clearly represent evidence that history has been repeated”. Yet, to caution that those who forget the past are bound to repeat it, as the famous truism ominously warns, does not mean that those who remember it will not.<sup>11</sup>

Exploring the different functions that memorials play is not to distinguish between good and bad memorials. To make such a distinction would be entirely subjective. There are, however, best practices that can be drawn with regard to civil society engagement, local ownership, presentation, and pedagogy for extension elsewhere. Attempts to compare examples of memorialization in different contexts often elicit the truism that “no one size fits all” and that each context is different. This is not in dispute. In the aftermath of genocide and mass atrocity, while efforts to memorialize will have to be calibrated to the local context, recovering countries, communities, and individuals do not entirely have to remake this enterprise. Within this field of study, there is considerable value added in fleshing out some of these existing best practices.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Moore, Lisa M. “(Re) Covering the Past, Remembering Trauma: The Politics of Commemoration at Sites of Atrocity”, *Journal of Public & International Affairs* 20, (2009), 57-58.

<sup>12</sup> Moore, Lisa M. “(Re) Covering the Past, Remembering Trauma: The Politics of Commemoration at Sites of Atrocity”, *Journal of Public & International Affairs* 20, (2009), 49.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### ***Evaluating the Aftermath of 9/11: The Memorial Process and its Effects***

"Even the smallest act of service, the simplest act of kindness, is a way to honor those we lost, a way to reclaim that spirit of unity that followed 9/11."<sup>1</sup>

*President Barack Obama, in a 2011 radio address*

The attacks of September 11, 2001, which killed nearly 3000 people, had an impact on the United States of America and in turn, the world, that is still felt today. Industries changed policies, the government formed new agencies- airports, immigration, domestic surveillance, tourism and the American psyche changed forever.<sup>2</sup>

In his first address to the nation after the attacks, President George W. Bush strongly condemned the acts of terrorism and maintained that America remained the strong and powerful country that it has been in the face of this evil. He assured the citizens that "terrorist attacks can shake the foundations of our biggest buildings, but they cannot touch the foundation of America. These acts shatter steel, but they cannot dent the steel of American resolve".<sup>3</sup> The attack prompted numerous memorials and services all over the world with many countries, along with the United States, declaring a national day of mourning. In Berlin 20,000 Germans marched to show their solidarity with America. The French newspaper of record, Le Monde, ran a front page headline, "We are all Americans". In London, the American national anthem was played at the changing of guard at the Buckingham Palace. In the immediate aftermath, support for the United States' right to defend itself was

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<sup>1</sup> Lauren Weigle, 9/11 Quotes: Remembering September 11<sup>th</sup>, as on September 11, 2015, blog site Heavy.com, accessed on March 24, 2016, <http://heavy.com/news/2015/09/9-11-quotes-september-11th-remembering-sayings-george-bush-victims-from-firefighters/>

<sup>2</sup> Paraphrasing Charles Polandian, The United States Changed After 9/11: 6 Things That Have Changed Since 2001, as on March 26, 2016, International Business Times website, <http://www.ibtimes.com/pulse/united-states-after-911-6-things-have-changed-2001-2093156>

<sup>3</sup> CNN Staff, Text of President Bush's address, as on March 26, 2016, CNN website, <http://www.cnn.com/2001/US/09/11/bush.speech.text/index.html? s=PM:US>



expressed across the world, and by United Nations Security Council Resolution 1368.<sup>4</sup> Australian Prime Minister John Howard was in Washington D.C. at the time of the attacks and invoked the ANZUS military alliance to pledge Australian assistance to America.

True to the American spirit, as the terrorists targeted the powerful Twin Towers as a symbol of America's economic strength, the country responded with the 9/11 Memorial at the site of the towers as a symbol of American unity. In the chaos of the reconfiguration that the world went through after 9/11, the site of the attack itself saw a humanistic approach in dealing with the event and the loss it brought on. The path from the first rescue operations to the completion of the 9/11 memorial required some tough decisions and cooperation from a huge country. The process was analyzed and critiqued, but it sure set a precedent to study, for an organized method to follow in the face of such a tragedy.

Almost immediately after the attack, the site was engulfed in spontaneous, temporary memorials and offerings. Questions ran through every mind though, about the future of the downtown site and a memorial seemed to be the righteous route. The economic reality for Larry Silverstein was that he had signed a huge lease for each 110 story, office spaces and had lost it in six weeks. His first instinct as a developer was to claim insurance and declare that he would exercise his right to rebuild. He even hired architects to redesign the site despite the uncertainty of a market for office space in downtown that had occurred to New Yorkers. "The people who have inflicted this upon us are clearly out to destroy our way of life. It would be a tragedy to allow them their victory"<sup>5</sup>, declared Silverstein, while remaining open to a memorial on part of the site, however largely garnering sympathy for his quick reaction to rebuild rather than showing a way for America to rise again. The

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<sup>4</sup> United Nations Security Council, Resolution 1386, adopted by the Security Council on December 20, 2001, accessed March 26, 2016, <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N01/708/55/PDF/N0170855.pdf?OpenElement>

<sup>5</sup> Elizabeth Greenspan quoting Larry Silverstein, *Battle for Ground Zero: Inside the Political Struggle to Rebuild the World Trade Center*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 21.

fact remained that Larry Silverstein held the lease for the property and in the path ahead, authorities would face the complex challenge of dealing with a large range of people who now had stakes in the property.

Besides dealing with the complexity of human emotions now associated with Ground Zero, the authorities had to deal with practical challenges like ownership of the property, financial and political implications of either reconstructing office space or a memorial. The result- the 9/11 Memorial, is regarded as a successful memorialization of the event that stands today at Ground Zero for all to see. The behind-the-scenes process thus becomes one for all governments and people world-wide to study.

## THE OWNERS

When David Rockefeller built them, the Twin Towers were the largest office space in the country, developed for the Port Authority to recover losses on the PATH station. The Port Authority did suffer losses on the PATH, but the demand for the Trade Center was so weak that Governor Nelson Rockefeller leased the entire South Tower for state government offices, enmeshing tax payers in the project. It took twenty years for the Port Authority to fill the buildings and was a precedent for architects and planners for how not to build. It did not keep the towers however, from becoming a symbol of power and was the biggest deal of Larry Silverstein's career as a developer.<sup>6</sup>

At the time of 9/11, business were leaving downtown, a recession had begun, and few were clamoring to work at the top of rebuilt skyscrapers at Ground Zero. Yet, Governor Pataki, the Port Authority and Larry Silverstein wanted to rebuild the destroyed office space. The Port Authority Counted on Silverstein's rent payments for its budget and Silverstein who had completed the deal merely six weeks before the attack agreed to continue paying the \$120 million a year to keep the property and ensure his right to rebuild.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Paraphrasing Elizabeth Greenspan, *Battle for Ground Zero: Inside the Political Struggle to Rebuild the World Trade Center*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 25-30.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

Silverstein's announcement to rebuild was a statement that many Americans likely agreed with, at least in the abstract- building "bigger, taller, stronger". While it made sense to Silverstein to announce his plans early- he could establish himself as the guy in charge and reassure people that he was committed to the rebuilding effort- the announcement risked alienating everyone else grappling with the more immediate, and human, aspects of the attacks.<sup>8</sup>

## ARCHITECTS

The public hoped, however naively, that all critical decisions regarding the site would be made through a public, democratic process; they were not ready to believe that rebuilding office space at a site where 3000 people had lost their lives was the ultimate plan. With these thoughts running through their minds, people found voice in a group of architects.<sup>9</sup>

Ever since the attacks, a number of architects, planners and artists had been visiting the site, reimagining what rebuilding for this site would mean. They saw an opportunity in the destruction of the Twin Towers, though the word "opportunity" had an insensitive ring to it, to correct many of the planning mistakes of the 1960s. What better response to trauma and loss, than to achieve something completely innovative and original at the site, a new form of public space, to design a new version of the American skyscraper, to create a new vision of urban memorial art? Like everyone in New York, they wanted to join their city's recovery, but their sense of purpose was amplified by a professional obligation to make downtown better.<sup>10</sup>

Many of these architects wanted to make sure a memorial was built at Ground Zero and dedicated themselves to securing a place for it or setting in place contours of a public process. A smaller subset focused on more immediate problems.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Paraphrasing Elizabeth Greenspan, *Battle for Ground Zero: Inside the Political Struggle to Rebuild the World Trade Center*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 25-30.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Paraphrasing Elizabeth Greenspan, *Battle for Ground Zero: Inside the Political Struggle to Rebuild the World Trade Center*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 31-44.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

Architect Kevin Kennon lived ten blocks from the attack site and had seen hordes of people visit the site every day, climb the fences and light poles to look at the wreckage, which was at times extremely unsafe. He along with David Rockwell, Elizabeth Diller and Ric Scofidio decided to address this issue by creating a public viewing platform. They had meetings with the authorities concerned and the victims' families and the work for the platform was underway. It was an extremely simple design with plywood panels on which people could leave their messages and metal scaffolding that held it in place. A host of people visited the site and used this platform, and like every aspect associated with Ground Zero, there were differences of opinion regarding the viewing platform. It achieved one of its most important feat however, the day it was opened to the public, which was also Mayor Rudolph Giuliani's last day in office and before he visited the viewing platform, in his last address to New York he said,

"I really believe that we shouldn't think about the site out there, as a site for economic development. You've got to think about it from the point of view of a soaring, beautiful memorial. If we do that part right, then the economic development will just happen. Millions of people will come here and you'll have all the economic development you want".<sup>12</sup>

This statement allowed people to open discussions and realistically think about a memorial at Ground Zero.

## PUBLIC CONTRIBUTION AND REACTIONS TO THE MEMORIAL PROCESS

### THE MASTER PLAN

The democratic process that ensued inevitably garnered passionate, both positive and negative responses. The city and the Port Authority had Larry Silverstein's lease to honor as Governor George Pataki tried to introduce subtly that New York City was a place for office buildings. A program was set for taking into considerations the opinions of the public but the program for the

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<sup>12</sup> Elizabeth Greenspan quoting Rudolph Giuliani, *Battle for Ground Zero: Inside the Political Struggle to Rebuild the World Trade Center*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 41-42.

master plan of the WTC site was set by the Port Authority that still included 10 million square feet of office space that Larry Silverstein was missing.<sup>13</sup>

After a series of town halls where members of the public were allotted time to voice their opinions, the “Listening to the City” public hearing was organized, where the public would make the decisions. Over four thousand people signed up for this exercise. They were organized into tables of 6 to 8 people and were allowed to discuss the six options of master plans designed by Beyer Blinder Belle and vote on the one they considered the best. There were almost as many opinions as there were people but to the dismay of the Port Authority almost the entire gathering agreed that none of the plans presented to them were acceptable to them. While all of the plans had a memorial component to them, the office space seemed to have an overbearing presence which did not stay hidden from the public.<sup>14</sup>

The overwhelmingly negative response to the master plans did not allow the authorities to carry on with any one of them and Governor Pataki was forced to develop an alternative process for redesigning that involved an international competition to design the master plan for the WTC site. In spite of appeals to void Larry Silverstein’s lease from the public, the program for the competition continued to include the office space lost in the attacks. The world’s most reputed designers participated in this competition including Richard Meier, Peter Eisenman, and Lord Norman Foster. Seven designs were selected to be displayed to the public, this time in an exhibition where people could leave their comments. The response to this exhibition was equally profound and the public seemed more accepting of the designs, responding to the emotion of memorialization well merged into the plans presented by some of the most talented designers in the world.<sup>15</sup>

Lower Manhattan Development Corporation favored Daniel Libeskind’s “Memory Foundations” which was ultimately declared the winner. The

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<sup>13</sup> Paraphrasing Elizabeth Greenspan, *Battle for Ground Zero: Inside the Political Struggle to Rebuild the World Trade Center*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 71-90.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

centerpiece of Libeskind's design was a sky-scraper that reach 1776 feet into the air with a graceful, asymmetrical, twisting spire, designed to echo the raised arm of the nearby Statue of Liberty. His plan expanded beyond buildings, however, and was the most overtly commemorative. It sectioned off a large swath of land for a memorial park, which recessed seventy feet into the ground, creating a permanent public space to mark the tragedy. This space made visible and memorialized the slurry wall of the "bathtub", the foundation of the Twin Towers that did not crack when the buildings fell, keeping the Hudson Bay from flooding the site. Libeskind linked this wall to the American constitution because they both "assert the durability of Democracy and the value of individual life."<sup>16</sup>

The 9/11 attack was one of unprecedented magnitude that sent a huge, diverse nation into fear and chaos. While critiquing the authorities' decisions regarding the response at the site it is important to consider that there was no established protocol for such a situation. The range of stakeholders and their needs were extremely complex and making decisions for such a large group would have been overwhelming.

Despite the authorities' politics and the subtle manipulation of the citizens to be able to continue with program that they preferred for the WTC site, the public hearings and the exhibition could not be labeled as entirely a farce. Be it limited, it had given a voice to the public, made it clear that the whole country was genuinely interested in following the decisions taken regarding Ground Zero and would not shy away from voicing their displeasure. The country was expecting a democratic, transparent decision-making process and would make sure they got one.<sup>17</sup>

## THE MEMORIAL

In April 2003, the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation launched what became the largest design competition in history. Across six continents,

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<sup>16</sup> Paraphrasing Elizabeth Greenspan, *Battle for Ground Zero: Inside the Political Struggle to Rebuild the World Trade Center*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 71-90.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

from 63 nations and 49 states, 5,201 individuals answered to the call to honor all those who were killed in the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 and February 26, 1993. The global outpouring of support reflected an unbounded faith in humanity- one that transcended nationality and geography.<sup>18</sup>

The LMDC issued a document that detailed the guidelines of the program for the memorial. This invited artists from around the world to participate, carried the letters of the LMDC chairman and president to the competitors and went on to give a full background of the current condition of the site and Libeskind's master plan. It identified the mission statement of the memorial and the guiding principles along with the criteria for judging.<sup>19</sup>

The Memorial Mission Statement serves to guide the creation of the memorial as well as its evolution through the ages, ensuring that the memorial never diverges from its mission. The Memorial Program contains Guiding Principles and Program Elements that must be embodied within and conveyed through the memorial design. Program Elements provide memorial designers with a list of specific elements that should be physically included in the memorial, without prescribing how or inhibiting creativity. A few Program Elements are numbered to assist competitors in identifying these elements in their memorial designs, as further explained in section 7. The design for the memorial must be related directly to both the Memorial Mission Statement and Memorial Program as well as the Additional Program Considerations. The World Trade Center site memorial should honor the loss of life equally and the contributions of all without establishing any hierarchies.<sup>20</sup>

The Memorial Mission Statement:

Remember and honor the thousands of innocent men, women, and children murdered by terrorists in the horrific attacks of February 26, 1993 and September 11, 2001. Respect this place made sacred through tragic loss. Recognize the endurance of those who survived, the courage of those who risked their lives to save others, and the compassion of all who supported us in our darkest hours. May the lives remembered, the deeds recognized, and the spirit reawakened be eternal beacons, which reaffirm respect for life, strengthen our resolve to preserve freedom, and inspire an end to hatred, ignorance and intolerance.<sup>21</sup>

The Program Guiding Principles:

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<sup>18</sup> Virtual Exhibit of all 5,201 Submissions from Around the World Opens, as on March 27, 2016, Lower Manhattan Development Corporation website, <http://www.wtcsitememorial.org/submissions.html>

<sup>19</sup> World Trade Center Memorial Competition Guidelines, Lower Manhattan Development Corporation, 2003, accessed on March 27, 2016, <https://www.911memorial.org/sites/all/files/LMDC%20Memorial%20Guidelines.pdf>

<sup>20</sup> Memorial Mission Statement and Program, World Trade Center Site Memorial Guidelines, Lower Manhattan Development Corporation, 2003, 18-19. Find the full document here- <https://www.911memorial.org/sites/all/files/LMDC%20Memorial%20Guidelines.pdf>

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

The memorial is to: Embody the goals and spirit of the mission statement; convey the magnitude of personal and physical loss at this location; acknowledge all those who aided in rescue, recovery and healing; respect and enhance the sacred quality of the overall site and the space designated for the memorial; encourage reflection and contemplation; evoke the historical significance and worldwide impact of September 11, 2001; create an original and powerful statement of enduring and universal symbolism; Inspire and engage people to learn more about the events and impact of September 11, 2001 and February 26, 1993; and evolve over time.<sup>22</sup>

Program Elements:

There are five physical program elements which have been enumerated below. These should be used as a key in each competitor's submission. A competitor should use these numbers on their presentation boards in accordance with the instructions provided in section 7.

The memorial should:

Recognize each individual who was a victim of the attacks: victims of the September 11, 2001 attacks in New York, Virginia and Pennsylvania; victims of the February 26, 1993 terrorist bombing of the World Trade Center

Provide space for contemplation: An area for quiet visitation and contemplation; an area for families and loved ones of victims; separate accessible space to serve as a final resting-place for the unidentified remains from the World Trade Center site

Create a unique and powerful setting that will: Be distinct from other memorial structures like a museum or visitor center; make visible the footprints of the original World Trade Center towers 5; include appropriate transitions or approaches to, or within, the memorial Convey historic authenticity.<sup>23</sup>

The memorial or its surrounding areas may include: Surviving original elements; preservation of existing conditions of the World Trade Center site; allowances for public ceremonies and celebrations.<sup>24</sup>

Of all the designs submitted, the jury found that "Reflecting Absence" by Michael Arad, in concert with landscape architect Peter Walker, fulfilled most eloquently the daunting but absolutely necessary demands of this memorial. It was powerful, yet simple articulation of the footprints of the Twin Towers, "Reflecting Absence" had made the voids left by the destruction the primary symbols of our loss. By allowing absence to speak for itself, the designers had made the power of these empty footprints the memorial. At its core, this memorial was anchored deeply in the actual events it commemorates-

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<sup>22</sup> Memorial Mission Statement and Program, World Trade Center Site Memorial Guidelines, Lower Manhattan Development Corporation, 2003, 18-19. Find the full document here- <https://www.911memorial.org/sites/all/files/LMDC%20Memorial%20Guidelines.pdf>

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.



connecting us to the towers' destruction, and more important, to all the lives lost on that day.<sup>25</sup>

While the footprints remained empty, however, the surrounding plaza's design had evolved to include beautiful groves of trees, traditional affirmations of life and rebirth. These trees, like memory itself, demanded the care and nurturing of those who visited and tended to them. They remembered life with living forms, and served as living representations of the destruction and renewal of life in their own annual cycles. The result was a memorial that expressed both the incalculable loss of life and its consoling regeneration.<sup>26</sup>

At this stage of the memorialization process, the jury, which included a representative of the families of the victims, were the ones to select the final winner. There was extremely stiff competition between another design and the "Reflecting Absence" that ultimately became the memorial. Dramatic controversies ensued and after the public displayed a lot of reluctance through protests towards the possible other choice, a public hearing was held where the designer explained the concept of his design to the people. The continued displeasure of the public was upheld and "Reflecting Absence" was considered the most suitable to memorialize the historic events of September 11, 2001. New Yorkers and the country fought hard for what they believed in and secured a design fit for the site through the public process that they had hoped for.

These events that followed the competition really displayed the depth of the complexities of opinions. The competition brief and guidelines were by all means detailed in presenting what was expected of the participants. Daniel Libeskind included his personal statement that outlined his own vision for the site and emphasized its symbolic importance. The process was certainly fair towards all participants, however it could not establish guidelines for the strong emotional reactions of the public. Could the authorities have prepared for such an event? Should the authorities have to prepare for such an event? A debate

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<sup>25</sup> Design Competition, as on March 27, 2016, 9/11 Memorial website, <http://www.911memorial.org/design-competition> Find the Design Statement by Michael Arad and Peter Walker here- <http://www.wtcsitememorial.org/fin7.html>

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

of right or wrong however did not change the fact that the government had to present the people with a memorial that they could accept. The journey of these events inspired Amy Waldman to compile them into a thought provoking novel- The Submission.

#### THE RESPONSE TO THE 9/11 MEMORIAL AND MUSEUM: Stakeholders' Perspectives

For the first time since the 2001 terrorist attacks, the long-awaited National September 11 Memorial and Museum was open to the victims' families and first responders after the 13th anniversary ceremony on September 11, 2014. The memorial was then opened to the public after 6 p.m. and has ever since seen millions of visitors.<sup>27</sup>

This terrorist event has had a profound impact on the world and the process of memorialization and the memorial itself is a unique reminder of it. What compels people to visit sites of mass death, like the 9/11 Memorial? Auschwitz in the South of Poland, a makeshift camp set up as an overspill from Germany in 1940 became the defining, chilling symbol of the holocaust. The empathy felt by the visitors more than sixty years after the atrocities is striking. "There is a lot of sadness but also gratitude (that) it wasn't me. It is unbelievable to see what could happen. We have seen the holocaust museum in Washington, D.C. and that is very interesting too, but this is the real place and it's scary as well as sad", says a tourist. Over a million people were exterminated in that camp and every year over 500,000 people troop through to pay their respects. They call it dark tourism, but is it really tourism?<sup>28</sup>

Ground Zero, along with creating a space for mourning for the victims' families, has hugely boosted tourism in New York. Lee Ielpi, father of the fire fighter Jonathan Ielpi who died in the attack is a founding member of the

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<sup>27</sup> Greg B. Smith, 9/11 Memorial and Museum will open for families of victims, first responders, after anniversary ceremony, New York Daily News, September 9, 2014, accessed March 28, 2016, <http://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/9-11-museum-open-families-responders-ceremony-article-1.1934218>

<sup>28</sup> Clare Spencer, The Rise of Genocide Memorials, BBC News, June 11, 2012, <http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-16642344>

September 11 Families' Association. The association has set up a Tribute Center with 500 local people acting as guides. Lee Ielpi sees these visits as pilgrimages. "Many of these sites from around the world from the holocaust sites to Pearl Harbor, you must leave there with the thought that- they gave, and we have to remember them but we also have to remember that we can make tomorrow better by what we say, education and enlightenment. That is our biggest wish for the memorial plaza and our Tribute Center", he says about the institution they have set up that has seen more than 2.5 million visitors.

Sometimes these numbers become over whelming for the locals. It is a difficult balance for them between the feeling of pride, that people care so much and being supportive that the world still wants to remember this, but also wary of the fact that somehow the more that people come, the less powerful or intense the experience tends to become. The numerous hawkers selling brochures and merchandise that is not sanctioned by the families of victims is an issue at the site and the literature in these is often inaccurate. Is it morbid or is it simply an economic necessity?<sup>29</sup>

The sheer numbers of people who have visited the site of 9/11 since the event and the memorial since it was opened, communicates some or the other connection that they feel with the site. The scale of the memorial project is certainly justified by the scale of the tragedy that occurred there, but also by the need of the millions of people who were invested in its process. The way in which the memorial has resonated with Americans as well as foreign tourists is quite visible. Criticisms and some faults are inevitable with projects like these but the larger picture is the final word and in this case, it communicates a city that functions with the void left in it, drawing energy from that pool every day.

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<sup>29</sup> Clare Spencer, The Rise of Genocide Memorials, BBC News, June 11, 2012, <http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-16642344>



Figure 18: Reflecting Absence, 9/11 Memorial, CNN Wire Staff, CNN website,  
<http://www.cnn.com/2011/12/29/us/new-york-911-memorial/>

## **CHAPTER 5**

### ***Evaluating the Aftermath of the Mumbai Attacks: Survivor Accounts, Victims' Families and Official Statements***

"The one who does not remember history is bound to live through it again."<sup>1</sup>

*George Santayana, Madrid, Spain*

India is no stranger to terrorism. In addition to Kashmir in the north, a state that has been embroiled in dispute ever since India's independence in 1947, which is the most prone to attacks, Mumbai, India's financial capital too has had a tough time keeping terror attacks at bay. The serial blasts in 1993, car bombs in 2003, a series of 7 train bombings in 2006 and the attacks at 12 locations in South Mumbai on November 26, 2008, were some of the deadliest events in Mumbai. Memorials that commemorate the many civilian lives claimed by such tragedies is missing from the list of typologies introduced in this thesis and this chapter evaluates the aftermath of the November 2008 attacks in Mumbai to attempt to decipher the reason.

Relations between India and Pakistan have been complex due to a number of historical and political events and have been defined by the violent partition of British India in 1947, the Kashmir conflict and numerous military conflicts fought between the two nations. Diplomatic missions like the Shimla Summit, the Agra Summit and the Lahore Summit have attempted to improve the relations between the neighbors, but in vain. In these circumstances, terrorist activities like the attack on the Parliament of India in 2001 that led the two countries to the brink of nuclear war, have only worsened the situation and nullified the success of projects like the Delhi-Lahore bus service. The Mumbai attacks of November 2008 carried out by Pakistani militants had a similar effect on the ongoing Indo-Pak peace talks.

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<sup>1</sup> George Santayana, Holocaust Museum, Auschwitz, Poland, appears in, Clare Spencer, The Rise of Genocide Memorials documentary, BBC News, June 11, 2012, <http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-16642344>

These political implications became evident when the Indian Prime Minister delivered his first address to the country while the attacks were still in progress. He assured the country that strict actions would be implemented to send a message to the people responsible and change laws within the country to deal with the problem of terrorism. He was quick to mention that there was a foreign hand in the attacks by saying, "it is evident that the group which carried out these attacks, based outside the country, had come with single minded determination to create havoc in the commercial capital of the country."<sup>2</sup> The media promptly spread the word that the terrorists were discovered to be Pakistani citizens; hatred and anger were the most dominant emotions apart from fear and grief over the next few days.

For a city that had experienced multiple bomb blasts in the past, this attack came as something it had never seen before and was completely unprepared for. Stationary bombs were replaced by mobile, thinking, well-coordinated men who held sophisticated weapons, specifically being directed to cause as many casualties as possible. The chosen targets too said something about the agenda of the attacks; moving away from the local railway stations, they targeted some of the most high profile locations in the city- prestigious, historic, busy railway station, 5-star hotels and restaurants frequented especially by foreign tourists, this attack was meant to cause an international impact, even targeting Americans among the hostages in the hotels and a Jewish community house. This nature of the event and the information about its source revealed by the investigation was what further stressed the situation between the already estranged neighbors and the nation made politics the focus of all its anger.

Further this attack brought to India's attention, the complete lack of preparation of the emergency response units in the country to handle a situation like this.

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<sup>2</sup> Realityshowsindia44, Mumbai Terror Attack Prime Minister of India Manmohan Singh addresses the nation, Filmed November 2008, YouTube video, 2:16, posted November 27, 2008, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=92BqgjsIESo>

"What happened was a failure of imagination. Nobody had anticipated that something of this kind would take place. What we were anticipating were bomb blasts occurring in the city. We were used to beginning the investigation after the bomb blasts. This was probably the first time that there was simultaneous, random and indiscriminate firing at different locations in the city, there were bomb blasts, there was a hostage situation and there were encounters with the terrorists. The force didn't anticipate such an attack."<sup>3</sup>

The police and other counter-terrorism agencies were ill-equipped to handle such an attack. The ATS was able to intercept the calls between the terrorists and their handlers, but only at quite a late hour into the attack and even with this insight into the events, the apprehending and neutralizing of a dwindling band of young men, was hampered by poor organization, mismanagement and a general lack of preparedness. It took twelve hours for the National Security Guard, whose members are trained in rescuing hostages, to get to the Taj Mahal hotel. They did not receive the official green signal to mobilize from Delhi for several precious hours, then impeded by transport blunders and faulty, outdated equipment and protective gear. The naval officers in charge of the MARCOS- India's equivalent to US Navy SEALs- hesitated to send them, fearing that they were "the wrong dog for the fight".<sup>4</sup> These scenes were covered meticulously by the media that opened discussions about this incompetence.

Three top cops of Mumbai fell victims to the terrorists during an encounter with them- Mr. Hemant Karkare, Mr. Vijay Salaskar and Mr. Ashok Kamte. Vinita, Mr. Kamte's wife, had spoken to her husband on the phone when he was deployed to the five star hotel Trident, one of the attack sites, yet he was found dead with the other two officers in a lane behind the Cama Hospital. Vinita wanted to know what had happened to her husband in the time in between. Answers to these simple questions were not to come easily though. "Political bigwigs who visited our home for condolences flung unpalatable

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<sup>3</sup> Linda Blake, 26/11 Response a "Failure of Imagination", Wall Street Journal, November 27, 2009, accessed April 1, 2016, <http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB125930283726866127>

<sup>4</sup> Emma Garman, When India Failed in the Mumbai terrorist Attacks, The Daily Beast on November 2, 2013, accessed April 1, 2016, <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2013/11/02/when-india-failed-in-the-mumbai-terrorist-attacks.html>

statements like 'they did not understand the gravity of the situation'", she writes in her book- *To the Last Bullet*. She then decided to find out the truth. What should have been a simple conversation with the Police Commissioner turned out to be a battle that went on for months. She found out that she had been lied to; she had to speak to eye-witnesses and go through the 'Right to Information' to get simple documentation like her husband's post-mortem report and the transcripts of the wireless conversations between the cops and the control room to finally find out what had happened.<sup>5</sup>

Since Vinita Kamte released her book, it helped expose the inadequacies in the police system and brought about important reforms like a better Quick Response Team, upgrades to weapons and protective gear and programs to involve citizens in security schemes. She participated in the Women without Borders conference in Vienna which brought together the women who were victims of violent terrorism from India and Pakistan together to talk about what they have been through and how women can help deter radical ideologies. "Speaking about it wasn't easy because we don't speak about it in India to anybody", she says, "we have bound together as victims of terrorism, because you realize that each one has been through some grief in life and have now overcome it to give something back to the society, and that is extremely satisfactory". Vinita set up the Ashok Memorial Fund in memory of her husband. The fund helps women whose husband's work in the police force focusing on education and training.<sup>6</sup>

US national Kia Scherr lost her husband and daughter in the terror strike at the Trident hotel. Ever since she has been working to inspire Mumbaiites to strive for peace. "I refuse to leave the memory of them lying under that table", she said in an interview six years on, "this place is transformed now, people are alive in there, they are celebrating, enjoying each other's company, there

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<sup>5</sup> Paraphrasing Vinita Kamte and Vinita Deshmukh, *To the Last Bullet*, (Pune: Ameya Prakashan, November 2009), 7, 22-24, 37.

<sup>6</sup> Women without Borders WwB, *After the Bullet- Mumbai Attacks*, Filmed February 2012, YouTube video, 17:50, posted February 6, 2012, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BT6wxLgKtOc>



is death in that lobby and that restaurant anymore and so I go there for that reason, to remind myself that I am alive and I have a choice". Her peace initiative led her to form the One Life Alliance Trust which works with schools and strives to better India's rank on the Global Peace Index. "We have an opportunity to increase the safety and security of Mumbai by raising the Mumbai Peace Index, but that would involve building trust and integrity in the police department with the community by including peace education in their training program", she proposed to the Commissioner of Police of Mumbai and he agreed to work with her to develop such a program. On every anniversary of the attacks she works with various educational institutes in Mumbai to organize commemorative events. A "peaceathon" or a walk for peace followed by events at the Gateway of India (opposite the Taj Mahal hotel) with a children's choir apart from a Global Peace Forum at Wellingkar's (a business management institute) marked the 4<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the attacks.<sup>7</sup>

The message of peace and healing together spread by Vinita Kamte and Kia Scherr through their social work was shared by many of the survivors of terror. Forgiveness was a dominant reaction among the numerous survivors interviewed in the process of documenting the events of those days. Healing has come slowly for them and many times they have turned to each other for solace and support. They have found each other online and are comforted by the common reaction to the horror they have endured. A Turkish couple who survived say that going through it together has brought them closer but has left a permanent fear of separation in them which will take a while to subside. However, them and others trapped in the hotels that night are very quick to point out that they don't feel any animosity towards those young men despite the fact that they were hunted down by them. They understand that these were young kids, "brainwashed and used like dispensable robots" and feel sorry for them. An American couple in India on a vacation decided to continue

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<sup>7</sup> Times Now, Mumbai 26/11 Terror Attack- Lost her Husband and Daughter, Filmed November 2014, YouTube video, 4:12, posted November 25, 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xctithcyAek>

on the rest of their trip while their scared families called them home. "If we succumb to fear, terrorists win. We were not going to do that, we worked hard for this trip."<sup>8</sup>

The Taj Mahal hotel was commissioned by Jamshetji Tata and first opened its doors in December 1903 and has been under the ownership of India's steel giants, the Tata Group ever since. At the time of this terror strike of November 2008, Ratan Tata was the chairman of the Tata Group, a well-established businessman known for his philanthropic work. He personally visited the hospital the victims were admitted into almost every night after the attack. In a few days the hospital was filled with people from other places, not aware that they were around victims of the attack some of whom had lost their entire families, "they all seemed to be forgotten people".<sup>9</sup> As a reaction, he made sure that the tower wing of the Taj and the Trident hotel were restored and reopened less than a month after the attack in a private reception. The 541 staff members of the Taj who stayed on duty for over three days during the attack were honored and Mr. Tata dedicated the reopening to the victims of the attack saying that the Taj would stand as a symbol of tenacity, it could be hurt but was far from being knocked out.<sup>10</sup> After restoration to repair the damage from the attacks, the Taj was fully operational again on August 15th 2010, India's Independence Day.

The terror strike inspired a number of survivors and citizens to commit to bringing about reformation in several departments to make Mumbai stronger and a safer place. The security forces have been the focus of such attempts that have tasted success. Mumbai's Joint Police Commissioner Rakesh Maria says his 45,000-strong police force now can "match any police agency in the world when it comes to facing terrorist strikes" and the only way

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<sup>8</sup> Aey ASK, Secrets of the Dead Mumbai Massacre, Filmed February 2011, YouTube video, 52:03, posted February 28, 2011, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sCHAMYfuMpg>

<sup>9</sup> Columbia Business School, Engaging Leaders: Ratan Tata Remembers the 2008 Mumbai Attacks, filmed November 2013, YouTube video, 3:54, posted November 20, 2013, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wksSdGkrkmw>

<sup>10</sup> NDTV, We can be hurt, but not knocked out: Tata, filmed December 2008, YouTube video, 3:09, posted December 22, 2008, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pqnOqpknn2M>

to combat terrorists' ability to hit anywhere is for the nation's and world's law enforcement agencies to work together to counter the scourge.<sup>11</sup>

#### MEMORIALS TO 26/11



Figure 19: Marine Drive Police Memorial, Kunal Chonkar, DNA website, <http://www.dnaindia.com/locality/mumbai-south/remembering-2611-cm-devendra-fadnavis-along-top-officers-pay-homage-martyrs-memorial-site-marine-76777>

Every anniversary of the November 2008 attacks is marked by memorial services, candlelight vigils and prayer meetings. There have been multiple isolated attempts at physically memorializing the lives lost in the ordeal of those three days. These memorials were commissioned by officials at various levels of the government but it is safe to say that they have failed to become symbols of strength and one often hears a lament that there is no grand memorial to commemorate what the city endured over those few days. Moreover, all the installations and plaques commemorating the event are memorials to the security force officials and do not mention the loss of civilian lives. The five star hotels have commemorated and honored their staff in

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<sup>11</sup> Linda Blake, 26/11 Response a "Failure of Imagination", Wall Street Journal, November 27, 2009, accessed April 1, 2016, <http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB125930283726866127>

private events. A common thread unifying these memorialization attempts however is missing and renders many of these attempts ineffective.

The government sanctioned memorials see varying degrees of upkeep, or rather the lack of it. "Why don't we respect our martyrs?" read the headline of a report carried by DNA on the second anniversary of the terror strike and brought to light the scant regard paid to the existing memorials of this attack and others that the city has faced before. The report critiqued the locations chosen for these memorials like the one at CST station built too close to a kiosk that dumps its wares right next to the memorial and is often used by people to lay soft drink crates. The Marine Drive Police Memorial is more elegantly built than any of the other memorials around the city and is dedicated to the police officers that the city lost in the attacks but this spot too is a picture of neglect and apathy which is simply a convenient spot for people to park the motorcycles.<sup>12</sup> A Martyrs' Memorial stands at a prominent crossroad in one of



Figure 20: Clockwise from top left- Memorial for 26/11 attacks at CST station, Memorial to 7/11 serial train blasts at Mahim station, plaque for 7/11 serial train blasts at Matunga station, DNA staff, DNA website, <http://www.dnaindia.com/mumbai/slideshow-why-don->

<sup>12</sup> DNA staff, "Why don't we Respect our Martyrs?", November 26, 2011, accessed April 2, 2016, <http://www.dnaindia.com/mumbai/slideshow-why-don-t-we-respect-our-martyrs-1472307>



the far northern suburbs of Mumbai, dedicated to 5 police officers. This memorial had fallen into such disrepair and become a haven for addicts and vandals that martyred police officer Vijay Salaskar's wife had to put out a statement saying,

"If local politicians cannot maintain memorials, they should refrain from building them. Not only is this a waste of public money, the shabby and filthy condition of such memorials only serves to rub salt on our wounds. The government should impose stringent norms for the construction of such memorials and action should be taken against those who fail to maintain them. Why insult the deceased and their families in this manner?"<sup>13</sup>



Figure 21: Memorial for 26/11 at Kalyan, Swarali Purohit, NDTV website, <http://www.ndtv.com/mumbai-news/7-years-after-26-11-martyrs-insulted-by-shabby-memorials-1247764>

As introduced earlier in this thesis the Bhopal Gas Tragedy is one such event of public grief that saw a vociferous demand for a memorial. Though it took two decades, the people were finally successful in opening up the government to the idea of memorial construction as more than a symbolic act;

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<sup>13</sup> NDTV staff, 7 Years After 26/11, Martyrs Insulted by Shabby Memorials, November 26, 2015, accessed April 2, 2016, <http://www.ndtv.com/mumbai-news/7-years-after-26-11-martyrs-insulted-by-shabby-memorials-1247764>

as a platform to address the needs of the people including medical along with commemorative. The process has set some precedent for further memorialization in India to be brought up to international standards.

Terrorism is a complex and sensitive topic with a potential to affect international politics among other aspects. However, based on the recent approach of the government and the responsible suggestions of the people towards the Bhopal Gas Tragedy memorial, it can be said that this is the ideal time to open discussions about the mature and sensitive topic of terrorism memorials. Observing the widespread awareness about terrorism and reforms that it brought about, the November 2008 Mumbai attacks might be the place to begin these discussions.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### ***A Response: Inferences and a Possible Path Ahead for Mumbai***

More than seven years have passed since the November 2008 attacks in Mumbai and the city seems to have settled into its usual routine. References to those horrific nights are limited to the occasional news reports of the Indian government trying to get its Pakistani counterpart to speed up the trials of the accused; the Pakistani courts have responded by hearing six witnesses over six years. Indians reply with a frustrated rant in front of their television sets. Other references happen in conversations of “where were you that night?” and then stories are exchanged between friends or colleagues at the office. This is what the general picture comes across as today. There are people all over the world however, victims and their families for many of whom that night has shaped the rest of their lives. They have been awaiting the trials, that justice may be served.

Mohammed Ajmal Amir Kasab was the only surviving gunman of the attacks who had killed more than 40 at the CST station. He was arrested just after midnight by the Mumbai police in a stolen car just outside downtown, an encounter in which police constable Tukaram Omble sacrificed his life so that the terrorist may be arrested. He had confessed by December that he was a part of the Lashkar-e-Taiba based in Pakistan and finally by January 2009, Pakistan had recognized him as a citizen of their country. With numerous witnesses, surveillance camera footage and more than 11,000 pages of evidence, the Mumbai police were quick to file a charge sheet that accused him of murder, criminal conspiracy and waging war against India among other charges. During his trial that started in April 2009 and went on till August 2012, Kasab went back and forth, at times claiming that he was only seventeen years of age and others confessing to the crime, narrating everything from how he became a militant. He was hanged on November 21, 2012 at 7:30 am

days before the fourth anniversary of the attacks after his mercy petition was rejected by President Pranab Mukherjee.<sup>1</sup>

The relatively speedy trial and execution brought a sense of justice to the whole country along with the victims and their families. Police officer Vijay Salaskar's wife told the country that she had vowed to not celebrate any of the Indian traditional holidays at home until the terrorist was brought to justice and that while the trial in Pakistan was far from being concluded, she was happy that her own country had made sure that her citizens got justice. Constable Tukaram Omble's brother shared her sentiments. He was proud that his brother had laid down his life to protect his countrymen and with the execution of Kasab, his country had honored his sacrifice. American national Kia Scherr who lost her entire family in the attack had been working to raise the peace index of the city ever since and hoped that President Obama's visit to Delhi in January 2015 would give a boost to the sluggish trails in Pakistan.<sup>2</sup>

After the effect of some much awaited closure from Kasab's execution had passed, in the following years the attention moved to the lack of upkeep of the many memorials built for the attacks around the city. The memorials are a now a constant reminder of the neglect and cause the victims' families (families of the police officers who have been memorialized) to question their intent.<sup>3</sup> Whether or not the construction of these memorials was a political

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<sup>1</sup> The WSJ staff, Timeline: The trial and Death of Ajmal Kasab, The Wall Street Journal, November 21, 2012, accessed April 3, 2016,

<http://blogs.wsj.com/indiarealtime/2012/11/21/timeline-the-trial-and-death-of-ajmal-kasab/>

<sup>2</sup> ABP Majha, Kasab's hanging came a bit late: Smita Salaskar, filmed November 2012, YouTube video, 2:36, posted on November 20, 2012, (translated from Marathi and paraphrased), [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qJ0\\_8t\\_1kTE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qJ0_8t_1kTE), Gaurav448, Reaction of 26<sup>th</sup> November 2008, martyr's families and from Pakistan too, filmed November 2012, YouTube video, 30:35, posted on November 22, 2012, (translated from Hindi and paraphrased), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=icJUA29he0Y>, Times Now, Mumbai 26/11 Terror Attack- Lost her Husband and Daughter, Filmed November 2014, YouTube video, 4:12, posted November 25, 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xctithcyAek>

<sup>3</sup> NDTV staff, 7 Years After 26/11, Martyrs Insulted by Shabby Memorials, November 26, 2015, accessed April 2, 2016, <http://www.ndtv.com/mumbai-news/7-years-after-26-11-martyrs-insulted-by-shabby-memorials-1247764>



move, the disparity that they have fallen into is not acceptable and is a situation that needs to be fixed.

It would certainly be appropriate to explore more satisfying ways to achieve what the existing memorials and their lack of maintenance have failed to deliver. The ongoing memorialization process of the Bhopal Gas Tragedy provides great precedents to evaluate what the public seek to gain from such memorial projects- government's recognition of the tragedy, a project that involves steps to provide aid to the public and involves survivor organizations at every stage of the planning and execution of the project.<sup>4</sup> Combined with a study of the memorialization process followed by terrorism memorials like the 9/11 Memorial and Museum, the nation could provide its citizens some much needed relief from the authorities' current careless attitude towards the existing memorials.

Based on my assessment of the events and people's reactions following the 26/11 Mumbai attacks, I propose some routes to a possible response to the attacks in the form of a memorializing process.

## DEFINING THE STAKEHOLDERS AND GOALS

As in the case of the 9/11 Memorial, it would be a wise choice to define the scope of a memorial project at the initial stage. The existing memorials of the Mumbai attacks that the government has sanctioned commemorate the police officers exclusively. The five star hotels- the Taj and the Trident have commemorated their hotel staff. The general public however have largely gone unmentioned- a large section of the victims that the authorities should consider for such a project. This memorial would not be merely a reminder of the pain and loss but an acknowledgement of the previous mistakes. This memorial

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<sup>4</sup> Bhopal Gas Peedit Mahila Stationery Karmachari Sangh, Bhopal Gas Peedit Mahila Purush Sangharsh Morcha, Bhopal Group for Information and Action, Bhopal ki Aawaaz, "Remember Bhopal", as on February 19, 2016, International Campaign for Justice in Bhopal website [http://www.bhopal.net/old\\_studentsforbhopal\\_org/Assets/13RememberBhopal.pdf](http://www.bhopal.net/old_studentsforbhopal_org/Assets/13RememberBhopal.pdf)

process would have to be inclusive to generate public trust in the authorities and communicate the genuine intentions.

Unlike the 9/11 attacks which were largely targeted at a single location, the Mumbai attacks were spread across eight. Ground Zero the site of the memorial is extremely powerful being the sacred ground where the event unfolded. Whether ambitious structures or simple tablets with commemorative inscriptions, the connection between site and meaning is direct, and the site itself is a memorial. When a memorial is remote from the site of the event, it becomes more dependent on its relationship to the city's symbolic location of the memory.<sup>5</sup> Site for this memorial would thus have to be decided after careful examination.

As mentioned before, the citizens of New York City have expressed their concerns of the memorial being lost among the hordes of visitors treating it as any other tourist site. The residents and regular commuters through the site become important stakeholders to consider through the memorialization process.

## ENGAGING THE PUBLIC

Focus groups aimed at understanding the expectations of the citizens based on the opinions of the stakeholders would be an ideal start to the public process. Though it was a response to the public demands, in the Bhopal Gas Tragedy Memorial project, the public were allowed a chance to speak only after the design was selected. This can potentially increase costs and delay the project. Considering the large base of stakeholders, there are bound to be opposing opinions as observed in the 9/11 memorial process. The authorities in such a case, have to take executive decisions on organizing public participation so as to arrive at productive, usable conclusions. Once the

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<sup>5</sup> Susana Torre, "Constructing Memorials", in Okwui Enwezor, editor, Documenta 11, platform 2: Experiments in Truth, (Kassel: Documenta, 2002), 334.

authorities have taken stock of the public expectations, the design process can ensue.

Based on the statements of family members of victims, there is currently a lot of displeasure about the condition of the memorials constructed. Engaging the stakeholders in such a case would have to go beyond just selecting the design for the memorial. Medical and financial aid for families of victims, especially the security forces in this case, would have to be an important part of the process. People like Vinita Deshmukh, Kia Scherr and others have been working towards certain goals to help the victims or make the city better equipped. This public engagement could provide a common platform for such isolated efforts to reach a larger audience. The public process can thus be about devising practical solutions for people to be able to support themselves along with the memorial design.

## MEMORIAL DESIGN

The purpose of the memorial, its agenda, manifests in the selection of the site, the type of its inscription and the formulation of the ideas and values to be presented. The memorial itself cannot satisfy demands of truth or justice, those are issues that can be better addressed in courts or even by conducting the stakeholders' engagement as mentioned above. The design of the memorial would rather serve the aims of creating a place for grieving, publicly recognizing suffering and acting as a permanent reminder of a crime so that it may not be repeated. In these ways they can help survivors transform their present trauma into past- into memory.<sup>6</sup> Vinita Deshmukh found it extremely helpful to acknowledge the trauma with other victims, a culture that she had not experienced in the Indian society before and later also used to help families of other police officers. While this is the opinion of a small group of victims,

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<sup>6</sup> Susana Torre, "Constructing Memorials", in Okwui Enwezor, editor, Documenta 11, platform 2: Experiments in Truth, (Kassel: Documenta, 2002), 347.

this memorial program can become the platform to probe further into the advantages of such public recognition of grief and need for support.

The design is the aspect of the memorial project that has physical connection with the city, the part of the memorial that the people experience. Thus the design and the designer would be under pressure to create in a way that resonates with the public and successfully conveys the goals of the project. Selecting the designer can have multiple approaches and the following are some that India can explore.

#### Commissioning a Highly Regarded Indian or International Artist

The warmly accepted war memorial India Gate was commissioned to Sir Edwin Lutyens, who was not only the main architect of New Delhi but a leading designer of war memorials of Europe. The design is modeled after the Arc de Triomphe in Paris and is one of the most important monuments in India. Based on this precedent it is safe to conclude that the Indians are accepting of foreign artists to design significant monuments. India too has a strong base of artists and Mumbai is abundant in creative industries. The city hosts a widely popular art festival every year that exhibits installations conceived from social issues and life in Mumbai. It might thus also be appropriate to look within the country to select a suitable artist for the memorial project. Commissioning an artist selected by the authorities however, might take away from the public nature of the process and it might be made more inclusive if a range of artists are allowed to express their ideas.

#### National Competition

A competition would be the most democratic form of selection of an artist for such a significant and sensitive task. The Bhopal Gas Tragedy Memorial applied this process and has proved to be a successful venture despite some displeasure expressed by the public. The designs received for the memorial were extremely imaginative and varied in their vision of the site which allowed the authorities to broaden the scope of the memorial to later

include some of the public demands. The results of this competition reinforce the authorities' and the public's belief in Indian artists who are certainly capable of handling expression of the sensitive subject of the memorial.

While the Bhopal Gas Tragedy was essentially a national disaster, the terrorist attacks in Mumbai claimed victims beyond the Indian border. Moreover, terrorism itself is an international issue. An aim of creating this memorial would certainly be to raise this issue in front of the whole world and provoke dialogs. As seen earlier, the attack has caused foreign nationals take efforts to work with the country to address the issue of terrorism. Restricting this memorial project to the Indian borders might be an opportunity lost in terms of allowing the world to participate in the discussions or even simply letting the world know that an initiative is being taken in India.

#### International Competition

The United States opted for an international competition for the 9/11 Memorial which saw excellent response from the world over. While the memorial designers were New Yorkers, the selected master planner was a designer based in Berlin, Germany. Some may argue that the 26/11 memorial design should follow Indian sensibilities and it is important for the designer to be familiar with the sensitive Indian political climate. As stated before however, terrorism is a global issue and an international competition would allow the memorial to be discussed on a global platform.

The pattern of the attacks in Mumbai were unique- a human led massacre rather than a single or a series of bomb blasts that the city had experienced before. This pattern, almost exactly similar was observed again in Paris November 13, 2015. A group of eight terrorists, as opposed to ten in Mumbai, attacked seven pre-determined targets, as opposed to eight in Mumbai. This is certainly cause to encourage more and constant discussions on the matter. An international memorial competition aimed at commemorating victims of such attacks shall provide that initiative.

The elected winner would need assistance, beyond the competition brief regarding matters other than the design. The authorities may sought to arrange a panel of experienced artists and other experts to provide that assistance.

## AFTER THE MEMORIAL

When the wounds are fresh, it is easy to sympathize and feel the loss, your own and that of others. A memorial such as this however is meant to convey the same sense of loss to the generations beyond, who were not present when the tragedy struck. We, as preservationists, are expected to be far-sighted when proposing such a project. Studying precedents around the world, again is an effective method to understand the issues before they arise and prepare for them. These may include inaccuracy of historical facts conveyed or the number and type of people visiting the site and how it affects its setting. Successfully anticipating and tackling these issues would allow the memorial to be the intended symbol effectively for a longer duration, possibly making the process of management transfers smoother.

Even as the planners and designers try to keep the memorial from falling into oblivion in the later generations, the building alone cannot summon the persistent reinscription of memories without commemorative ceremonies connected to the program. While we may argue that one is more important than the other, they would achieve the best effects in combination.<sup>7</sup> The reading of names of the victims and the moment of silence will continue to lend meaning and strength to the 9/11 memorial through future generations.

Memorials form a part of the cultural landscape of their cities or towns. Their treatment during and after execution reflects on the public's care and concern towards the projection of their historical narratives. As for preservationists, they have the opportunity to study the public attitude

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<sup>7</sup> Susana Torre, "Constructing Memorials", in Okwui Enwezor, editor, Documenta 11, platform 2: Experiments in Truth, (Kassel: Documenta, 2002), 343.

towards their heritage through these memorials. They are able to form opinions about best practices and exchange this information- educating different people about alternatives they may adopt.

Such memorials form a part of the global narrative of terrorism. Though memorial practices may vary in various countries and cultures, the human emotional reactions remain the same- grief, fear, trauma, anger. This research is an opportunity to learn to cope with such tragedies from counterparts around the world. These memorials together form the world terrorism story- a narrative that is part of the common human history. As is a preservationist's effort, memorials are a way of permanently connecting a site to the value lent to it through history and memory associated with it. When executed with precision a memorial ensures a voice for public memory absorbing new values and interpretations as it ages.

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