

Contemporary History in Relation to Memory, Museums and Memorial Sites Internationally - Past, Present and Future

La historia contemporánea en relación con la memoria, los museos y los espacios de memoria Internacionales - pasado, presente y futuro

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ABSTRACT

The article examines conceptions of Memorials, Memorial Sites and Museums on an international level. It starts with the Terminology of Contemporary History as a term that has developed and broadened since the 1950s. Contemporary History influences also the field of the Fine Arts. Memorials or Memorial Sites at authentic places are of great importance for consciousness-raising. In combination with Museums they have the possibility to collect diverse objects such as written sources, artefacts, photos, and records of oral history as testimonies of former events. Concerning Museums, this is particularly reflected in conceptions of Museums to War and Peace, Memorial Museums on Genocide, and Museums of Resistance Movements. A particular artefact of the terrorist attack on September 11, 2001, is the Karyatide of the famous German artist Fritz Koenig, now placed in Battery Park, in the south of Manhattan. Finally, the National September 11 Memorial and Museum are explained with their architecture, the idea of "Reflecting Absence" and the Memorial Mission for the future.

KEY WORDS: *Authentic Sites. Contemporary History. Memorial Museums. Memorial Sites. Museum Conceptions. Resistance Movement. Tolerance.*

RESUMEN

El artículo examina los conceptos de Monumentos, Sitios y Museos conmemorativos a nivel internacional. Se comienza con la terminología de historia contemporánea como un término que se desarrolló y amplió desde 1950. La historia contemporánea influye también en el campo de las Bellas Artes. Los monumentos conmemorativos o sitios de la memoria en lugares auténticos son de gran importancia para la concienciación. En combinación con los museos tienen la posibilidad de recoger diversos objetos como fuentes escritas, artefactos, fotografías y registros de la historia oral como testimonios de los antiguos acontecimientos. En cuanto a los museos, esto se refleja particularmente en las concepciones de los museos para la Guerra y la Paz, los museos de la Memoria sobre el Genocidio, y los museos de Movimientos de Resistencia. Un artefacto particular del ataque terrorista del 11 de septiembre de 2001 es la Karyatide del famoso artista alemán Fritz Koenig, ahora colocado en el Battery Park al sur de Manhattan. Por último, el Memorial y Museo Nacional 11 de Septiembre se explica junto con su arquitectura, la idea de "Ausencia Reflexionada" y la Misión de la Memoria para el futuro.

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Sitios Auténticos. Historia Contemporánea. Museos de la Memoria. Sitios de la Memoria. Concepciones del Museo. Movimiento de la Resistencia. Tolerancia*

In his horrific novel “The Gulag Archipelago”, the distinguished Nobel Prize winner, Alexander Solzhenitzyn (1918-2008), describes the life of the inmates of the Gulag labor camps under the totalitarian regime of the former Soviet Union. He deals with the worst period of the reign of terror under Stalin from 1934 to c. 1938 and up to 1954 when acts of intimidation, appalling violence and the pressure of political prisoners were the norm. The question has now arisen as to whether the former Gulag camps should be obliterated from the face of the earth and their history forgotten, or whether they should be preserved as Memorial Sites.

Solzhenitzyn influenced in this concern Contemporary History as the moral and political conscience of Russia because he didn't only relate to the past but much more he was also a “Prophet of History” (www.faz.net/aktuell/feuilleton/31.03.2014).

Several middle European countries had similar problems in the nineteen sixties concerning former NS-concentration camps. Most of them decided to preserve the authentic sites as memorials. Although history is usually presented in a way that people can be proud on their culture, in this case museums, Memorial Sites and documentation centers are like symbols for a “negative” history. Nevertheless, also this heritage of the 20th century has to be preserved and used as an input for educational issues and consciousness-raising (Viereg 2000: 115). In this concern also recently developed Museums for Contemporary History, Memorials and Memorial Sites should be considered.

I shall be dealing with the following aspects:

1. The Terminology of Contemporary History
2. The Importance of Authentic Sites
3. Museums with Regard to War and Peace
4. Memorial Museums on Genocide
5. Museums on Resistance Movement against the Totalitarian Regime of National Socialism
6. A Relic of the Terror Attack and the National 11 September Memorial

1. The Terminology of Contemporary History

1953 “Contemporary History” was introduced as a specific term by the German Historian Hans Rothfels (1891-1976). It is until now used as

both a subject in change and progress. Rothfels reflected “Contemporary History” from his own view back to the First World War (1914-1918). In a similar way our approach to Contemporary History is usually connected with Hitler's Totalitarian State (1933-1945), political events, persecutions of groups of population, particularly Jewish People, and resistance to the Totalitarian Regime of National Socialism. It is also associated to works of art which came into existence in this period of time - or afterwards as memorials reflecting the past as signs and symbols which are reminders to be aware of political events in future. However, the term Contemporary History is nowadays permanently used and not only restricted to the history of National Socialism. [URL:<http://www.museum-joanneum.at/de/museumsakademie/veranstaltungen/gegenwart> 17/06/2014].

The term “Contemporary History” has to be thought over from time to time. It is now linked to Museology, Museums, the Science of Museums or the Museum Studies in general- for each period of history. There is an important indication in the statutes of the International Council of Museums that relates to “... ethnographic monuments and historical monuments and sites of a museum nature that acquire, conserve and communicate material evidence of people and their environment” (International Council of Museums (ICOM) 1990: 3).

The museums, documentation centres and sites are in this concern considered as a mirror of the interpretation of the history.

The innovative Memorandum of Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (1974) influenced the development to future research and the significant changes of museums from a traditional “Temple of the Muses” to an institution on the one hand keeping the humanitarian, cultural and political memory and on the other hand considering the needs of people on education in present times (Spickernagel & Walbe, 1976, Rojas, Roberto/Crespán, José Luis *et al* 1977).

Additionally, the typology of Museums was enlarged to manifold branches as museums of Contemporary History, Memorial Sites and Memorial Museums.

What is a Museum of Contemporary History?

Nowadays, Museums of Contemporary History are particularly related to the various facets of the history of 20th Century. Those are Museums on the History of the Wars and the History of To-

talitarian States. There are also Memorial Sites on former NS-Concentration Camps in European Countries and Memorials to other political events. And now, as we can consider e.g. on Museum Brandhorst in Munich/Germany we include also Museums of other type, as e.g. Art History into Contemporary History – or may be Ethnology like Musée de Quai Branly/Paris (its “predecessor” was “Musée de l’Homme”). 2013 this museum reacted on the demands of the ethnical group of Maori, the indigenous people of New Zealand, to return human remains. Herewith it gave an example and influenced the consciousness of museum-curators and the visitors.

When we talk about Contemporary History there are many sites, museums and memorials of different kind and typology all over the World -as e.g. the “National Memorial of the 11th of September 2001” in New York/USA- one of the youngest, opened in May 2014. Contemporary History has above that another aspect. This means the influences of events of the day as for example to the field of the Arts in general, finally presented on a museological basis. At present, Intercultural approach and international exchange play an important role also for the future of contemporary history in museums and on Memorial Sites. The performance of Contemporary History

arises mostly from a historical and philosophical background: Already the philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) emphasized on that the worst and saddest events of history may become performed in an aesthetic way by artists (Lissmann 1999: 27). This is an important point concerning the works of art, the documentation of history, the Museums and Memorial Sites (**Fig. 1**).

Friedrich Wilhelm Hegel (1770-1831), another philosopher of the era of “Idealism”, and a professor at the Universities of Jena and from 1818 at Berlin/Germany, published already in the year 1802 the famous work “Faith and Knowledge” that is representative of the “Reflections-Philosophy” related to Museology and Philosophy. His approaches to the museums are particularly involved in his lectures about the “Aesthetics” given in the period from 1817 to 1829 where he focused on the arts as an important articulation. His starting point of thought was to comprehend an object on the way that all of its perspectives should become known by performing. Insofar he was of great influence on the theory of the arts and the knowledge. One of his most important works in this concern was “Philosophy of the Arts” (Gethmann-Siefert 2005) and [URL:[http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel](http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Georg_Wilhelm_Friedrich_Hegel) 21/02/2014]. Art is according to He-



Fig. 1. “March to Death” – a Memorial created by the sculptor Hubertus von Pilgrim (*1931). There are 22 identical memorials on different sites in Southern Bavaria (Germany) and one in Yad Vashem (Israel). (Photo: Hildegard Vieregg).

gel the spiritual and thoughtful presentation of the pure idea. The work of art is, when we follow Hegel's ideas, at the same time a result of a serious work, non-verbal language and a topic of religious philosophy (Gethmann-Siefert 2005: 74). Even in our times we should follow the ideas of this great philosopher and try to proceed in those ideas.

The Korean Jeong –Im Kwon relates in his book with the title: "Hegels Bestimmung der Kunst" ("Hegel's Definition and Purpose of the Arts") (Kwon 2001: 18, 39-41, 190) to

- The purpose of the historical importance of the Fine Arts
- The symbolism as a kind of manifestation of the Arts
- The combination of spirituality and the arts. Symbolism in this concern means the possibility to get knowledge by the medium of contemplation (Kwon 2001: 18 and 190).
- The meaning of symbols and allegories. Therefore from Hegel's view a symbol means the unity, totality and sensitiveness, the spirit and the reality represented in an object. In the Art of the Ancient Greece lies according to Hegel the most convincing realisation of the symbolism (Kwon 2001: 39-41).

As we know Mythology or Symbolism of the Ancient Greece play an important role in contemporary works of art, too. They are incorporated e.g. in the triptychs of the famous artist Max Beckmann (1884-1950), Pablo Picasso's (1861-1973 "Guernica" or in the cycle "Battle of Lepanto" created for the Biennale in Venice/Italy (2001) by Cy Twombly (1928-2011).

2. The Importance of Authentic Sites

The relationship to Memory, Museums and Memorial Sites shall be dealt with museological examples. As we intend to examine the international approach, I will relate to Museums of World War I. in France, to the Jewish Museum in Sydney/Australia, to Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles and the Memorial of September 11, 2001 and the "Karyatide" in New York as a work of art that changed itself from a true artifact to a memorial.

A visit to a Museum of Contemporary History cannot offer the same impression as a visit to an

authentic site – a possibility to be at the scene of contemporary history – as e.g. a former concentration camp, sites of unhappy war-events or acts of terror. Rather Memorial Sites at authentic places are witnesses of the previous reality, together with sources, documents and original objects (Bookmann 1987: 51). Nevertheless, the museological part of a memorial site - usually a kind of Documentation Center or a path along the traces- plays an important role. Memorial Sites represent authentic traces, and additionally a process of development. According to the trial to realize Contemporary History at Memorial Sites the final knowledge depends on the one hand from the genesis and history of a concentration camp in Hitler's Totalitarian State, and on the other hand on the capability of the visitors who -as we hope- are aware of the political circumstances today (**Fig. 2**).

Authentic sources and recent records are necessary to clarify the transformations from past to present times – also to the changes from the authentic site to a Memorial Site with certain monuments. We have also to think about that each monument (at a memorial site or anywhere else) is itself again a mirror and a indicator of the epoch in which it came into existence. In comparison to written sources monuments as "artificial testimonials" rarely don't relate to historical facts precisely - as persecution, terror and assassinating. Therefore it is necessary to develop structures for the memory, to show correlations between levels of different periods, the context of Contemporary History and present times. In this concern conceptions of traces with means of



Fig. 2. Model of the NS-Concentration Camp (1933-1945) in the Documentation Area of the Memorial Site Dachau (Germany). (Photo: Hildegard Vieregg).

the Fine Arts and the using of familiar forms in an unfamiliar way belong also to the authenticity (Vieregg 2006: 235-6).

3. Museums with Regard to War and Peace

Already during the First World War museum experts tried to show the events of the War for the audiences "at home". Particularly museums of local history installed departments on the events or to the memory of the so called "Great War". Sometimes those objects exhibited were like "relics" of the sacrifices of War. Since that time was a great change in the conceptions of Museums which were defined to show events of the many Wars.

In November 1995 a symposium – organized by the International Committee for Collections and Museums of Archaeology and History (IC-MAH/ICOM) and the working group on Museums for Contemporary History – took place in the "Deutsches Historisches Museum" in Berlin. The experts came to the result that on the one hand the "War" is a subject to be exhibited and has to be made known to present and further generations. On the other hand they emphasized on the outstanding importance and the necessities of performing Peace.

The Museum "*Historial de la Grand Guerre*" situated in Péronne/Department Somme/France, is one of the most important museums which gives knowledge from World War I (1914-1918). It follows the idea to show the "war-enemies" from different angles. Although this is a conceivably impossible act, the French, Britain and German "War-opponents" are intended to be shown in an "objective" perception. The presentation compares the problem of the "War-Parties" on these three aims. Each of them is represented by (War)-newspapers, posters, books, uniforms, letters written and objects produced by the soldiers when they remained behind the lines. A specific focus is to explain individual human destinies in War for everybody, and the suffering and consequences for the further life.

The *Centre Mondial de La Paix in Verdun*/France, situated in the former Bishop's Palace, is also a museum that aims at the Memory of World War I. Above the many reasons and misfortunes in each War it uses the possibilities to educate people to the love of Peace. If somebody enters Verdun from the West, he firstly discovers lots of similar memorials along the road that is called

"Voie Sacrée". These single memorials dedicated to soldiers killed in World War I guide the audience straightforward to the Museum in Verdun. In this concern it is also a center in the middle of endless battlefields and cemeteries – and therefore itself a kind

of Memorial The Museum deals with the terrible events of World War I in the region North-East of France. Extraordinary authentic objects are exhibited according to different themes. They relate like a reminder also to wars in present times.

A large museum-hall is designed as a symbolic cemetery with many tombstones. The visitors don't at the first moment see anything else than this arrangement of tombs. Walking around this "cemetery" is opening itself in a moving way because each tombstone is designed as a grave that describes the individual destinies and together with these a part of the history of the so-called "Great War" (Vieregg 2000: 131-154).

4. Memorial Museums on Genocide

One of them is *Sydney Jewish Museum/Australia* a Memorial Museum that considers the Jewish Genocide ("Holocaust") under the Totalitarian State of National Socialism from its own perspective (**Fig. 3**).

The Museum in Sydney is particularly a meaningful place of remembrance and intangible heritage. Concerning my own observation Sydney Jewish Museum is also an excellent example for teaching and learning about Genocide, particularly because Australia doesn't own additional Memorial Sites or museums related to NS-dictatorship and to concentration camps of the Hitler-Era.

This museum of Contemporary History was opened 1992. It is not as well-known as Simon Wiesenthal Centre in Los Angeles (1993) or United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington (1993). Nevertheless, it is a very important example on this type of a Memorial Museum. In an exceptional way visitors are helped to comprehend Nazi-dictatorship and the destinies of Jewish people and, beyond to be fostered to consciousness-raising and further peaceful undertakings.

Sydney Jewish Museum was performed concerning both the Genocide in the context of Jewish History in Germany and the National History of Australia. Jewish History in Australia began



Fig. 3. Museum Interior. Sydney Jewish Museum. Museum of Australian Jewish History and the Holocaust. (Photo: Sydney Jewish Museum).

between 1788 and 1852 when almost 1000 Jewish arrived. Most were skilled workers, such as tailors, watchmakers, shoemakers, manufacturers and even orange-sellers. They brought with them their old traditions and history which included poverty and exile. This helped them to adapt to their new land and circumstances of life.

In the middle of 19th century most Jews emancipated themselves and established in both their businesses in George Street of Sydney and in their religious world (Sydney Jewish Museum 1992:15). When Hitler came into power 1933 a refugee problem was given by the persecution of Jews in Germany. While the American President Franklin Roosevelt in July 1938 invited 32 states to the Conference in Evian/Switzerland and examined the possibilities of the emigration of Jews from Germany and Austria to other countries, the Australian Government decided a strict quota system for alien immigration afterwards. However, as the situation of Jewish life in Germany deteriorated, the demand for entry permits increased. Nations all over the world tightened their immigration laws. In Sydney Jewish Museum Hitler's rise to power and predicament against Jews after November Pogrom (1938) is followed by the theme of Ghetto-life, titled "Walking into the Ghetto" and symbolised by a high relief. It was 1992 designed by the artist Thomas Greguss. In interrelationship to documentation it shows the arrival to and the circumstances in the Ghettos: Crowded Ghetto-scenes, delivery of bread for distribution, queuing for water rations, children begging for food, hunger and illness in the Ghettos, Jewish

children caught by the Nazis smuggling food into the Ghetto and clandestine Thora studies. Other documents exhibited are giving detailed account of Jewish Ghetto inhabitants determined to extermination and of those Jews forced by SS to supervise deportations to extermination camps.

A further museum department -in the same way dedicated to remembrance and intangible heritage- is named "Transport to the Camps" and "Final Solution" decided on Wannsee-Conference. (January 1942). Jews from all over occupied European countries were deported to extermination camps, particularly to camps in Poland. To provide imagination and give an impression about the approximately 5000 estimated camps, various transit camps, labour camps, sub-camps, branch camps and extermination camps are recalled to memory. Sydney Jewish Museum focuses in this concern on about 150 former concentration camps and describes by the way of example the conditions in Majdanek, Chelmo, Sobibor, Belzek, Treblinka and Auschwitz-Birkenau. Finally, the "Gallery of Courage" is dedicated to non-Jewish people who risked their lives to save Jews. On behalf of those Righteous Among the Nations the remembrance goes to the famous teacher Janusz Korczak (1878-1942) and to Raoul Wallenberg (1912-1947), a Swedish diplomat who was sent to Budapest in July 1944 to help about 200 000 Jews who had remained there after the deportation of more than 400000 Hungarian Jews to the extermination camps Auschwitz.

The aim of the *United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington/USA* (opened



Fig. 4. “Tower of Faces” – a Memorial to the Genocide. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Washington. (Photo: Hildegard Vieregg).

April 1993) is particularly intended to remind the audience of the terrible Genocide and the acts of inhumanity under Nazi-dictatorship. The museum was explicitly elaborated in order to educate American visitors (Wieland 1993; Giovannini 1994). It is a National Museum, built on governmental land, partly funded by the Government and founded as both a National Memorial and at the same time a political challenge. A main focus of this Museum – one of the 22 “Holocaust-Museums” in the USA - is the critical “American Reaction” to Genocide because only 40,000 Jewish immigrants from Europe were given the opportunity to enter and to settle in the USA. Another important aim is to promote the audience to be aware of their individual human and political responsibility at present times. According to the motto “Knowledge is the Prime Need” it goes into all of the sad issues of the Genocide in order to avoid those in future (**Fig. 4**).

The museum is “dedicated to presenting the history of the persecution and murdering of more than six million Jews, and added to that, many victims of the Nazi-tyranny in the period from 1933 to 1945. (Berenbaum: 1993). Its first mission is to make American people aware of this extraordinary tragedy. We have, on the one hand to remember to those who were suffering, and, on the other hand, to intensify the interest of the visitors in the moral and ethical questions.

Concerning “didactic architectural language” (Schleußner 1989) of that Memorial Museum, the architect, James Freed (1930-2005), studied structures of former concentration camps built

up under the Terror Regime of National Socialists. Then he transposed the iron construction of cremation pits to the architecture of this museum.

The Hall of Remembrance inside is an outstanding meditation room intended to symbolise the “vacuum” after Holocaust. The audience should both become aware of and reflect on these terrible events and become sensitised to do one’s utmost for human rights in present times and in future.

The museum demands active participation by the audience. Therefore the “Wall of Remembrance” was created in co-operation between about 3,000 American children youngsters and museum experts. It is dedicated to the 1,5 million children, and teenagers murdered in the Genocide. Primarily, the young audience found individual artistic motifs related to the extermination of Jewish children under Nazi-dictatorship. Then every participant designed a memorial-tile. Finally, the tiles were combined to the “Wall of Remembrance”. The department “Daniel’s Story”, considering the life of a Jewish child under Nazi-dictatorship, was developed for visitors from eight years on. This story is an example for numerous children and families and the individual tragedies in the “Holocaust”. While the “Hall of Remembrance” is dedicated to all those children and teenagers who were murdered, “Daniel’s Story” shows how a single child could survive.

The “*Museum of Tolerance*” situated in the Simon Wiesenthal Centre in Los Angeles/USA starts from the intention to educate visitors to help prevent such a disaster from ever recurring. In a journey through the history you become an ‘eyewitness’: from the Roaring Twenties, a period of optimism and the “Golden Age” of the 1920th in Berlin (Crabtree 1993: 27) to the murdering of Millions of Jews in the extermination camps like in the “Death Factory Auschwitz/Birkenau”.

The Museum introduces also in the many reasons for the final “Holocaust” as racism, bigotry, intolerance and conditions beneath human dignity in so many countries of the World. The Museum of Tolerance reminds on political responsibility and individual human behaviour at present and in the future. Named in honour of the distinguished Holocaust survivor and humanitarian Simon Wiesenthal, this Centre has more than 380 000 member families and offices throughout the United States, France, and also Israel.

5. Resistance Movement to Totalitarian Regimes - Musée de la Résistance et de la Déportation Grenoble

Musée de la Résistance et de la Déportation in Grenoble is dedicated to Resistance Movement against the tyranny of National Socialists. It came into existence almost at the same time as Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, Simon Wiesenthal Centre with Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles/USA and Bavarian Army Museum Ingolstadt/Germany. Grenoble was chosen as a location because it was the center of Résistance in France. From the museological view it is related to Contemporary History and Politics and above that a place of remembrance and future considerations. In regard to Heidegger's theory of knowledge it is connected with the process of memorizing. It shows the French Résistance against National Socialism in totalitarian Germany (1933-1945) from a critical view. Museum architecture and the concept of composition build a unity: It means hiding from the Gestapo, foundation of nests in Résistance Movement at the University and at military places with help of a special air-division. The presentation regards to the reality of French Résistance Movement, people who went into hiding at the mountains around Grenoble. Authentic items are the witnesses on

inmates of Gestapo-prisons, e.g. blue-and-navy-striped uniforms, effigies on doors of Gestapo-basements, authentic sources, photos of men and women taken to court and finally murdered, scenes which demonstrate the situation of being forced to go to underground because of the intolerable conditions. The museum shows the different scenarios in a convincing way (Fig. 5).

One example is an arrangement of chairs around a table showing the terrible situation of people inquired by the Gestapo. The back rests of these chairs are designed as a kind of symbols: Each of them shows a photo of a human being who became a victim of Gestapo. After those inquires Gestapo caught, deported or executed members of Résistance. The individual destinies are proved on sources and credentials. One of the most impressive is a door of a cell in the Gestapo-prison with texts and inscriptions scratched by an inmate.

6. National Memorial 11th September. A Relic of the Terror Attack and the National 11 September Memorial

Documentation is really a kind of presentation in contrary to a classical exhibition in a museum. In this concern at first authentic sites, relics, monu-

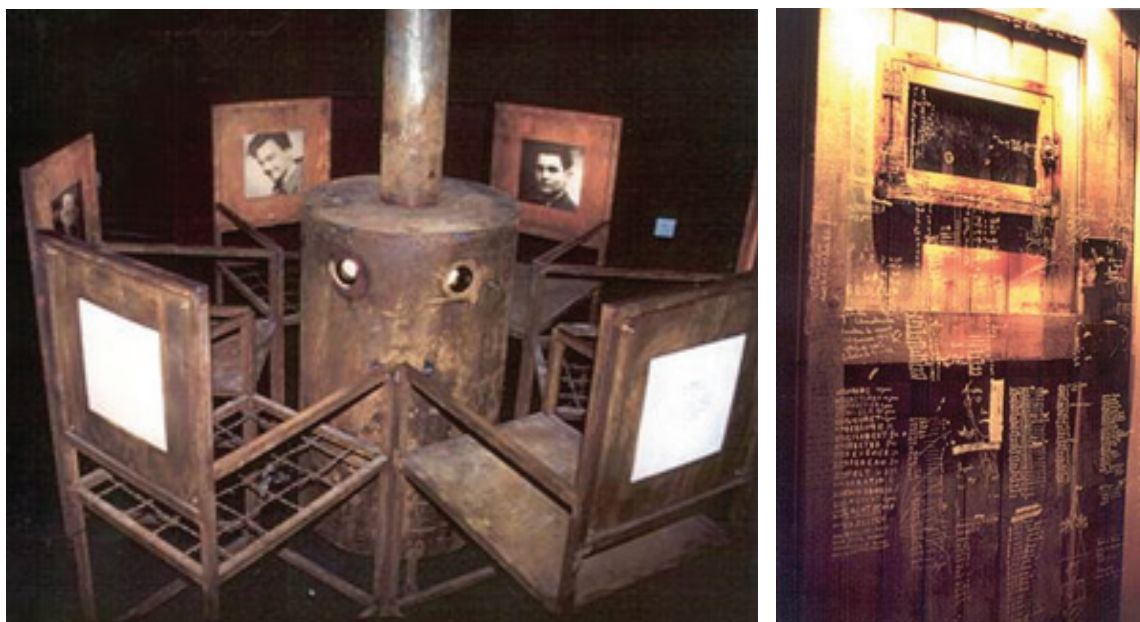


Fig. 5. Testimonies on Inmates of the French Résistance Movement (Gestapo-prison Grenoble). Musée de la Résistance and de la Déportation in Grenoble/France. (Photo: Hildegard Vieregger).



Fig. 6. The “Kugelkaryatide” survived as A Relic of the Terror Attack on 11 September 2001 in New York when the Twin Towers were completely destroyed. It was created by the famous German sculptor Fritz Koenig (*1924) and is now situated on Battery Park, South of Manhattan.

ments and memorials serve as representatives of functions. Those kind of documentation is mostly found related to former concentrations camps. In opposite to museums which usually collected their objects in a thematic way, objects in a documentation are defined by a strictly historical event. Mostly the documentation is supported by text- or visual resources. This is also valid concerning Contemporary History.

Everybody knows about the 11th of September 2001 when the Twin Towers in New York were destroyed by terrorists and so many people murdered or came to death as helpers. From this terrible event only some single objects remained. One of them is the so called “Kugelkaryatide” created by the most famous German sculptor Fritz Koenig (*1924). He as a soldier in the Second World War (1939-1944) was also an eye-witness for concentration camps and acts of terror. On 11th of September 2001 – up to this date the sculpture was situated in the inner of the Plaza of World Trade Center – the Kugelkary-

atide was damaged – but survived the Inferno. Afterwards it was placed in Battery Park South of Manhattan (**Fig. 6**).

It is like a living Memorial because most of the contemporaries remember the event of 11th September 2001 and understand the intention (Viereggs 2006: 26).

2004 an International competition was decided for the 9/11 Memorial and the 9/11 Museum.

The two winners were Michael Arad (architect) and Peter Walker (a landscape-architect) with the design of “Reflecting Absence”. “Reflecting Absence” relates at the authentic site to the Absence of the former Twin Towers which were bombed and totally destroyed on September 11, 2001. The Memorial Site consists of a field of trees and two sunken fountains which mark the footprints of the destroyed Towers. They are like Memorials because the names of the 2983 victims of September 11 and another terror-attack in the year 1993 are engraved into the frame. Above that, the “Waterfalls” inside

the pools symbolize the collapse of the towers which almost 3000 people swept to death.

Since May 21, 2014 National September 11 Memorial and Museum are completely open to the public. Let us hope that people more and more understand that Memorials are symbols in order to think for the future, as it is expressed in the Memorial Mission: "May the lives remem-

bered, the deeds recognized, and the spirit re-awakened be eternal beacons, which reaffirm respect for life, strengthen our resolve to preserve freedom, and inspire an end to hatred, ignorance and intolerance." [URL:http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_September_11_Memorial_&_Museum 21/07/2014].

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