Ljiljana Radonić

Displaying Violence in Memorial Museums – Reflections on the Use of Photographs[1]

Abstract: This article examines if and how memorial museums exhibit graphic atrocity photographs, including pictures of executions and decomposing corpses, images taken by perpetrators that humiliate the victims or depict the persecuted in a stereotypical, antisemitic, or racist way, and voyeuristic photographs showing (almost) naked people being persecuted before their execution. The contribution sets out with a brief introduction to the general history of the approach taken towards photographic material since 1945, before describing the transformation of its use in memorial museums – first in the much-discussed Western Holocaust and World War II context, but then also for the Asian-Pacific World War II theatre in China and Japan and with regard to the museumization of the more recent 1990s genocides in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Rwanda. Finally, I categorize exhibited images taken by perpetrators, liberators, victims (turning into survivors) etc. Whether or not museums decide to display such representations of violence, they pay a price and thus need to counterbalance their decision by well-reflected methods.

Keywords: atrocity photographs, perpetrator-taken images, memorial museums

It is no merely abstract phrase or platitude when we start this article by stressing that people depicted in photographs in memorial museums are someone's close relatives. When visiting the US Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) in Washington, DC, Rhona Liptzin recognized her mother on a photograph George Kadish had

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Ljiljana Radonić, Institute of Culture Studies and Theatre History, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Bäckerstraße 13, 1010 Vienna, Austria; ljiljana.radonic@oeaw.ac.at

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taken in the Kovno ghetto. She wrote to the museum: "I stood there and stared right back at her. I stood there frozen in a particular space and time."[2] While Liptzin called this a "lucky" encounter because she possessed no pictures of her mother, the situation is different with perpetrator-taken atrocity photographs. A researcher of Mauthausen images, who in his articles has used a photograph showing the bodies of two Jews, was contacted by a relative of one of the victims who asked him to refrain from showing the picture. He did so and reflected on the encounter instead.[3]

Gerhard Paul argues that atrocity photographs and films revictimize the persecuted and prolong their victim status.[4] Janina Struk reflects on the photograph of an elderly woman and children from the infamous "Auschwitz album", which was made by SS men and has been displayed next to a path at Birkenau since 1999: "they have been condemned to tread the path for ever. Returning their image to Birkenau may be their final humiliation. They had no choice but to be photographed. Now they have no choice but to be viewed by posterity. Didn't they suffer enough the first time around?".[5] Susan A. Crane even proposes "choosing not to look", because Holocaust atrocity photographs have reached the limits of their usefulness, not only for public display but also as a testimony in general since it is not possible even for scholars to look at these images without reviving "the cultural codes of genocide and racism […] embedded in the images of the Holocaust."[6]

How, then, should scholars and museum professionals deal with (1) graphic atrocity photographs, for example of executions or decomposing human remains, (2) perpetrator-taken shots that humiliate the victims or depict the persecuted in a stereotypical, antisemitic, or racist way, and (3) voyeuristic images showing sexual violence and/or (almost) naked victims, especially women? How are these concerns addressed in memorial museums dealing with World War II and the 1990s genocides in Rwanda and Bosnia-Herzegovina? Can they avoid humiliating the victim or reproducing the perpetrators' gaze when showing photographs taken by perpetrators? Is there a way to display such images in exhibitions that is not itself violent? And how, if at all, does this intense and protracted discussion regarding, on the one hand, images from the Holocaust and Nazi camps and ghettos and, on the

2 Janina Struk, Photographing the Holocaust. Interpretations of the Evidence, London 2011, 200.

3 Lukas Meissel, Perpetrator Photography. The Pictures of the *Erkennungsdienst* at Mauthausen Concentration Camp, in: Hildegard Frübis/Clara Oberle/Agnieszka Pufelska (eds.), Fotografien aus den Lagern des NS-Regimes. Beweissicherung und ästhetische Praxis, Wien 2019, 25–47, 38.

4 Gerhard Paul, BilderMACHT. Studien zur Visual History des 20. und 21. Jahrhunderts, Göttingen 2013, 177.

5 Struk, Photographing, 2011, 216.

6 Susan Crane, Choosing Not to Look: Representation, Repatriation, and Holocaust Atrocity Photography, in: History and Theory 47/3 (2008), 309–330, 311.

other, much older forms of colonial and/or stereotypical photography[7], influence other memorial museums: those dealing, firstly, with World War II arenas beyond Europe and the US such as Japan and China and, secondly, with more recent atrocities such as the 1990s genocides in Rwanda and Srebrenica? In our project on "Globalized Memorial Museums. Exhibiting Atrocities in the Era of Claims for Moral Universals", my international team and I analyse 50 memorial museums worldwide devoted to the World War II era and the 1990s genocides. In this paper, I will draw on these examples.

The first part of the article sketches out the ways in which media, scholars, and courts in Europe and the West treated photographs after World War II. The second section discusses how the use of images in memorial museums has changed over time, from emotive, symbolic photographs as wallpapers or room-dividers to images treated as historical documents[8] with a strong focus on private photographs. I argue that there is a major difference between the ways permanent exhibitions that opened before 2010 still use photographs and the approaches of newer exhibitions that reflect recent scholarly debates. In response to the often very moralizing and dogma-driven debate about whether 'we' as scholars and memorial museums should display violence, I argue that museums pay a price for both choices, whether they use such photographs or not. If curators decide to leave out atrocity images and focus on individual victims, they must find other ways to counterbalance this, or risk failing to sufficiently explain the mass atrocity. If museums do show perpetrator-taken, humiliating, or voyeuristic photographs or depictions of sexual violence, and risk overwhelming the visitors with a pedagogy of horror, they must at least contextualize these photographs in a way that draws attention to their problematic character. And then there are also, of course, all the cases in between, such as victim-taken graphic photographs and inmate drawings. If a museum fails to reflect on the consequences of the (non-)use of such photographs, it may find itself discredited. What is important here is not only *why* a museum chooses to include or exclude such photographs but also *how* such photographs are displayed.

While the first two sections of this article work with numerous examples from 'Western' and European World War II and Holocaust museums, the third part looks (1) at World War II museums in China and Japan and (2) at the musealization of the 1990s genocides in Rwanda and Bosnia. In both Kigali and Sarajevo, photographs of decomposing human bodies are displayed prominently, and domestic curatorial

7 Kevin Grant, The Limits of Exposure Atrocity Photographs in the Congo Reform Campaign, in: Heide Fehrenbach/Davide Rodogno (eds.), Humanitarian Photograph. A History, Cambridge 2015, 64–88; Frank Reuter, Der Bann des Fremden. Die fotografische Konstruktion des "Zigeuners", Göttingen 2014.

8 See Jens Jäger, Fotografie und Geschichte, Frankfurt am Main 2009.

practices are combined with international influences provided by experts invited from Western Holocaust memorials to design the permanent exhibition.

In the final section, which also includes some recommendations, I map the different categories of use of photographs in contemporary memorial museums. The aim is to show that the terms 'perpetrator-taken', 'atrocity photograph', 'liberation image', 'clandestine photograph' etc. each have several different sub-categories that museums might want to treat differently. Photographs from some of these categories have turned into "icons of annihilation"[9], while the story-telling potential of others has barely been discovered or has been marginalized up to now.

This endeavour can neither do justice to the vast literature on exhibiting the history of the Holocaust and Nazi camps, nor systematically discuss global trends beyond the 'West' and Europe. Nonetheless, combining the two questions is potentially fruitful for identifying patterns and a preliminary categorization and is thus worth the risk. Moreover, ex-post criticism of the decades-long (mis)use of photographs seems inappropriate given the battles that had to be fought to bring atrocities into the public consciousness or even to gain access to exhibitable material at all. And yet, since many of the problems discussed here are still evident in museums, such an intervention might also be useful for museum practitioners. Another risk is that simply to write detailed descriptions of graphically violent images is, to a certain degree, to reproduce violence. Although it is important to stress that text can also transmit violence, I argue that the need for analysis of how museums display violence justifies taking such a risk. Finally, while I have elsewhere often discussed the mnemonic actors and memory politics that are crucial for understanding the development and content of such museums,[10] here I have chosen to look exclusively at the way these institutions use photographs without introducing the museums themselves at great length. Interestingly, the grade or depth of reflection on visual material does not necessarily correspond with the overall quality or (self-)critical potential of the exhibitions.

Transforming approaches to photographs in media, scholarship, and courts since 1945

Before I turn to the use of photographs in museums, this section first discusses how the use of atrocity photographs in general has transformed since World War II

9 Cornelia Brink, Ikonen der Vernichtung. Zum öffentlichen Gebrauch von Fotografien aus nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslagern nach 1945, Berlin 1998.

10 Ljiljana Radonić, Der Zweite Weltkrieg in postsozialistischen Gedenkmuseen. Geschichtspolitik zwischen der "Anrufung Europas" und dem Fokus auf "unser" Leid, Berlin 2021.

and the different meanings that have been attributed to them by survivors, media, courts, and scholars.

Photographs are ambiguous; both an imprint of reality and an interpretation of it. They directly refer to what is pictured but are open to interpretation, are simultaneously matter of fact and highly emotional.[11] A photograph can "speak for itself" only when the circumstances of its origin and use, the history of its reproduction, distribution, and exhibition are made as clear as possible.[12] The photo of a woman wading seemingly peacefully in shallow water turns out to "show a Nazi prisoner used as a human mine detector when we also take into consideration the inscription on the back: "*Die Minenprobe*", a mine test in Donez in 1942.[13] Photographs show only a segment of a supposed reality. Just as with other documents, it is necessary to look for the standpoint, the author, and the perspective. Images never only reproduce reality; they simultaneously shape the perception of war and atrocities.[14] They articulate a visual aesthetic or an ideological standpoint and judge what is worthy of being photographed.[15]

Much has been written about the misleading potential of the photographs from concentration camps that have become icons of the Holocaust.[16] Liberation images show the last, chaotic phase of the concentration camps after their liberation by the Western allies, like Bergen-Belsen and Buchenwald, which did not have gas chambers. The heaps of corpses they depict are deluding because, when the crematoria were still in operation, this is not how the camps actually appeared.[17] And the photographs of the 'living corpses', of the emaciated inmates, suggest that extermination was about death through starvation and not through mass elimination directly upon arrival.[18] It was the images of concentration camps liberated by the Western allies – and not of the extermination camps – that became the icons of annihilation and began to symbolize 'the camps' and, later, 'the Holocaust'.

11 Brink, Ikonen, 1998, 10.

12 K. Hannah Holtschneider, The Holocaust and Representations of Jews: History and Identity in the Museum, London 2011, 48.

13 Cornelia Brink/Jonas Wegerer, Wie kommt die Gewalt ins Bild? Über den Zusammenhang von Gewaltakt, fotografischer Aufnahme und Bildwirkungen, in: Fotogeschichte 125 (2012), 5–14.

14 Gerhard Paul, Bilder des Krieges – Krieg der Bilder. Die Visualisierung des modernen Krieges, Paderborn 2004, 15.

15 Ibid.

16 Judith Keilbach, Photographs, Symbolic Images, and the Holocaust: On the (Im)Possibility of Depicting Historical Truth, History and Theory 48/2 (2009), 54–76.

17 Cornelia Brink, How to Bridge the Gap? Überlegungen zu einer fotografischen Sprache des Gedenkens, in: Insa Eschebach/Sigrid Jacobeit/Susanne Lanwerd (eds.), Die Sprache des Gedenkens, Berlin 1999, 108–119.

18 Ute Wrocklage, Majdanek und Auschwitz in der internationalen Bildpresse 1945, in: Yasmin Doosry (ed.), Representations of Auschwitz, Auschwitz 1995, 35–45; David Shneer, Through Soviet Jewish Eyes: Photography, War, and the Holocaust, New Brunswick 2011.

For decades the field has lacked a thorough examination of visual materials' sources. Furthermore, it has been the rule rather than the exception to crop and even retouch precious, unique visual material. In any case, for a long time mnemopolitical agents and scholars, including historians, artificially distinguished between photographs and other documents and used images as anything but contextualized historical sources.

When photographs did not meet the expectations of the respective mnemopolitical actors, other images were published instead, or claimed to show what was actually missing. There were, for instance, no images from the Jasenovac concentration camp in Croatia that could capture the horror of the brute mass killings with hammers and knives or the high death toll. The Ustaša had blown up the camp and the investigators could reach it only one month later. A few badly decomposed bodies in shallow river water were all there was left.[19] As a result, photographs from Sisak, 60 kilometres upstream, became iconic for Jasenovac: a dead man with a shattered frontal skull bone and a victim with their belly slashed open. These prisoners, who were possibly destined *for* Jasenovac, quickly became described as inmates *from* Jasenovac.[20]

Photographs from the camps obviously had a different meaning to survivors than to others. Nonetheless, survivors considered even perpetrator-taken photographs precious if they were all that was left of their loved ones. In contrast, for decades after the war, courts considered them only relevant if they directly 'proved' the guilt of perpetrators. When the former Auschwitz inmate Lili Jakob, who found the "Auschwitz album" that was produced by SS men and shows the 'selection' of Hungarian Jews in Birkenau in 1944, testified at the first Auschwitz trial in Frankfurt in 1964, the miscommunication between her and the judge was striking. The judge was only interested in getting her to identify perpetrators in the pictures. She could point out Dr Mengele, but not Dr Lukas, who was in charge of her family's selection. The judge was disturbed by this "weird gift"[21], while Jakob testified that ever since she recognized her family in the album "I feel that was the only possession left to me".[22] Afterwards, the album was more or less forgotten until she donated it to the Israeli Holocaust museum Yad Vashem in 1980.[23]

Another collection that today is well known consists of the four photographs taken clandestinely by a member of the Jewish *Sonderkommando*, probably the

19 Byford, Jovan. Picturing Genocide in the Independent State of Croatia. Atrocity Images and the Contested Memory of the Second World War in the Balkans, London 2020, 54.

20 Ibid., 61.

21 Tonbandmitschnitte des Auschwitz-Prozesses (1963–1965) (3 December 1964), https://www.auschwitz-prozess.de/zeugenaussagen/Zelmanovic-Lili/ (9 December 2022).

22 Ibid.

23 Stefan Hördler/Christoph Kreutzmüller/Tal Bruttmann, Auschwitz im Bild. Zur kritischen Analyse der Auschwitz-Alben, in: Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft 7/8 (2015), 609–632, 615.

Greek Jew Alberto Israel Errera.[24] They include graphic atrocity images of corpses being burned and of naked women before execution – yet in this case these are victim-taken images. The resistance smuggled out the film in a toothpaste tube. The photographer risked his life as he hid inside what was probably the gas chamber[25] to take two pictures of the *Sonderkommando* burning corpses outdoors, while guarded by SS men. The third photograph is a tilted snapshot of women taking off their clothes in the woods just moments before execution. The fourth photograph shows 'only' the silhouette of trees and demonstrates how dangerous and almost impossible these shots were. The troubling history of their use shows the enduring lack of understanding about their unique character as the only clandestinely taken photographs of mass annihilation in an extermination camp. Publications cropped them to cut out what is believed to be the gas chamber or the 'empty space' on the photograph of the women[26] and thus obscured their clandestine character, or left out the fourth picture because it shows 'nothing'. As late as 2001, a publication made a shocking alteration of another kind: "the bodies and the faces of the two women in the foreground were touched up; a face was created, and the breasts were even lifted."[27]

A far less well known set of photographs comprises five images the Polish Ravensbrück inmate Joanna Szydłowska clandestinely took of her fellow inmates in order to document the swellings and huge scars they still bore one year after they had been subjected to medical experiments. In close-up photographs, the women are shown with the wounds inflicted on them by the experiments. In the other kind of shots, they are seen in a wider perspective, standing next to a shed. Although these photographs are a rare example of clandestinely taken photographs in a camp and the only ones I am aware of in which women self-organized and documented what had been done to them, their value has never been acknowledged, even when they were finally shown.[28] The photographs were cropped in a sense-changing way and retouched in a Polish volume on Ravensbrück from 1961.[29] After the alterations, Maria Kuśmierczuk is no longer shown looking down but gazes directly into the camera, turning a shy pose into a challenging one; her scarf and coat have been

24 Robert Jan van Pelt/Luis Ferreiro/Miriam Greenbaum, Auschwitz: Not Long Ago. Not Far Away, New York 2019, 157; Georges Didi-Huberman, Images in Spite of All: Four Photographs from Auschwitz, Chicago 2008, 11.

25 Ibid., 12.

26 Teresa Swiebocka, Auschwitz: A History in Photographs, Oswiecim 1993, 173. Dan Stone calls this photo a "genuine snapshot, literally shot from the hip". Dan Stone, The Sonderkommando Photographs, in: Jewish Social Studies 7/3 (2001), 132–148, 137.

27 Didi-Hubermann, Images, 2008, 34–36.

28 Andrea Genest, Fotografien als Zeugen. Häftlingsfotografien aus dem Frauenkonzentrationslager Ravensbrück, in: Hildegard Frübis/Clara Oberle/Agnieszka Pufelska (eds.), Fotografien aus den Lagern des NS-Regimes, Wien 2019, 85–112, 102.

29 Wanda Kiedrzyńska, Ravensbrück. Kobiecy obóz koncentracyjny, Warsaw 1961, 196.

retouched.[30] A 1970 Polish publication containing testimonies by survivors of medical experiments in Ravensbrück uses the same retouched photograph, but cropped to show only the upper body without the swelling on her leg.[31] I will return to the (non-)use of these important photographs in museums.

Displaying photographs in museums

Museums have a long history of using photographs, even those of atrocities and perpetrator-taken shots, as illustrative or design elements, such as wallpaper backgrounds for other exhibits and overwhelming images that hit the visitor upon entering a room. Often, photographs taken by perpetrators, allies, and victims are exhibited together without indicating their (different) origins.[32] They are instrumentalized for a kind of pedagogy of consternation, in the expectation that the shock they evoke will be salutary or politically instructive. This has been discussed as problematic for several reasons for at least twenty years now.[33] The 'icons of annihilation' misrepresent the historical events, thus being mere canonized symbols; such depictions (re)humiliate the victims; and the pedagogy of consternation and horror is criticized as an inappropriate means for educating visitors. Although the iconic pictures, like the heaps of bodies recorded after the liberation of the camps, create an askew picture of the Holocaust and genocide, they remain a core part of many museums to this day. The use of photographs in museums was mostly informed by what it was felt was needed or expected to show rather than an engagement with rare and special sources.

In some museums, re-enacted photographs were exhibited if they seemed to show how 'it' really was. The so-called "*Baumhängen*" punishment, often applied at Buchenwald, inflicted horrible pain on the inmates by hanging them from trees by their arms tied behind their backs. What we today know to be a re-enacted photograph after the liberation of Buchenwald has been shown for a long time as 'authentic' proof in many memorials.[34] It shows two inmates in striped uniforms hanging

30 Genest, Fotografien, (2019), 103.

31 Wanda Symonowicz (ed.), Über menschliches Maß. Opfer der Hölle Ravensbrück sprechen, Warsaw 1970, 13. See Genest, Fotografien, (2019), 104.

32 Holtschneider, The Holocaust, 2011, 69.

33 Matthias Heyl, Bildverbot und Bilderfluten, in: Bettina Bannasch/Almuth Hammer (eds.), Verbot der Bilder – Gebot der Erinnerung. Mediale Repräsentationen der Schoah, Frankfurt am Main 2004, 117–128, 125; see also Wolfgang Muchitsch (ed.), Does War Belong in Museums: The Representation of Violence in Exhibitions, Bielefeld 2013, 10.

34 Sandra Starke, "…davon kann man sich kein Bild machen." Entstehung, Funktion und Bedeutung der Baumhängen-Fotos, in: Hildegard Frübis/Clara Oberle/Agnieszka Pufelska (eds.), Fotografien aus den Lagern des NS-Regimes, Wien 2019, 49–66, 50.

and a third prisoner lying in front of an SS man. The buildings were built in 1943, but the SS man is wearing a cap only used until 1941. The photograph was obviously taken by former inmates with the help of US soldiers and by employing a captured SS man.[35] Nevertheless, the knowledge that this was a re-enactment got lost at some point. Buchenwald Memorial stopped showing it in the early 1980s because of its unclear provenance, but many other museums like Yad Vashem und the German Historical Museum (at least in the permanent exhibition shown until 2021) still use it as 'authentic'.[36] Once it becomes widely known that it is re-enacted, the image can be rediscovered as evidence of self-confident former inmates who took initiative to show the world what they had experienced.

In museum exhibitions, another typical element has often been head shots of resistance fighters, heroes, or martyrs. However, in recent decades the individual *everyday* victim of senseless persecution has started to play a prominent role. The value of private photographs changed from neglected to well-appreciated and this allowed a new representation of violence to be shaped. After the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, over 2,600 private photographs, which had been confiscated from the victims upon their arrival, were handed over to those survivors who decided to stay and prepare an exhibition in Auschwitz. For decades, hardly anyone took an interest in these images.[37] In the 1990s, the new interest in personal Holocaust stories and private photographs "propelled them from relative obscurity into significant additions"[38] to exhibitions on the Holocaust. In 1995, this paradigmatic turn prompted the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum's chief archivist Barbara Jarosz to personally bring the collection of photographs to the USHMM for duplication[39] and huge efforts were undertaken to identify people and locations on the photographs. The exhibition *Before They Departed — Photographs Found at Auschwitz* opened at the "central camp sauna", as the disinfection building was called, in 2001. The two main role models for the display of private photographs are the USHMM's multi-story installation called "Tower of Faces" and Yad Vashem's 10-meter high cone in the middle of the circular "Hall of Names". In Washington, a three-story installation shows private photographs from 1890 to 1941 from the small town Eišiškės in Lithuania, whose Jews were massacred in 1941. In Jerusalem, a ten-meter-high cone reaching skyward displays 600 photographs and stores biographical information of

35 Starke, Bild, (2019), 56.

36 Ibid., 51. Yad Vashem, Buchenwald, Germany, Sommer, a SS guard, next to prisoners hanged by their hands, 1941, https://photos.yadvashem.org/photo-details.html?language=en&item_id=100789&ind=5 (9 December 2022).

37 Struk, Photographing, 2011, 197; Kersten Brandt/Hanno Loewy/Krystyna Oleksy, Vor der Auslöschung… Fotografien, gefunden in Auschwitz, München 2001.

38 Struk, Photographing, 2011, 197.

39 Ibid.

the victims below the photo installation. Telling the story with private photographs is a curatorial strategy now seen in most museums we analyse in our project.

Today, European and Western museums contextualize photographs more often – as opposed to the cropping or mixing of clandestine with perpetrator-taken photographs in exhibitions that took place up to the 2000s. In the 2005 Yad Vashem permanent exhibition, the *Sonderkommando* photographs from Birkenau are (as at Birkenau itself) shown without the fourth photograph that allegedly shows 'nothing'. The door of the gas chamber is cut from the burning of corpses images. As a result, they appear to have been taken in the open, which does not fit with the caption saying that "they were secretly taken by a member of the Sonderkommando".

At the Holocaust Memorial Center in Budapest, the 2006 permanent exhibition mentions the story of the "Auschwitz album" in Lili Jakob's biography; but the album images are scattered throughout the exhibition without mentioning their provenance. Some are part of a video montage titled "A Day in Auschwitz," which incorrectly suggests that all the photographs were taken of a single "Hungarian Jewish transport from Beregszász" on 26 May 1944. These SS photographs are combined with one of the four *Sonderkommando* images – without mentioning their very different context of production and provenance.

In contrast, the Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw, inaugurated in 2014, displays all four photographs in their initial size, uncropped, and in a prominent location of the exhibition, together with the testimony of a *Sonderkommando* member. The unique circumstances of their origin are explained. Elsewhere, the same museum displays oversized historic photographs as an emotionalizing element, *and*, next to them, the very same photographs in the size of the preserved prints along with all the known details, such as the names of photographers, who belonged to a Nazi propaganda military unit.

In this Warsaw museum, perpetrator-taken photographs are exhibited in a way that shows awareness of their problematic character. Fifty-three perpetrator-taken photographs, including the iconic image of the Jewish boy with raised hands in the Warsaw ghetto, are presented as part of the "Stroop report", which General Stroop prepared for the SS chief about the suppression of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. The report is displayed page-by-page with the original (translated) captions and a warning that the report "dispassionately describes the brutal suppression of the uprising and the liquidation of the Warsaw ghetto." The antisemitic context of the Nazi report is made unmistakably clear.

In this museum, curators decided to also show humiliating pictures of half-naked victims before their execution, but in a way that points to the problematic nature of the images. The photographs are hidden in symbolic woods, in a dark part of the room, and displayed in the size of the initial copy, so it takes effort to see them

behind the tree trunks. The photographs are contextualized by a quote from "Otto Schroff, a German bookkeeper, who took this photograph," in which he describes the path to the execution.

This curatorial strategy is used by several museums in dealing with atrocity photographs. The images are hidden behind or on top of an obstacle, as at the USHMM and the Warsaw Rising Museum. However, at the Warsaw Rising Museum's permanent exhibition from 2004, these images lack contextualization. The museum explicitly addresses children as an audience and has a "little insurgents' room", which has been criticized for re-enacting the uprising and for militarism.[40] The museum 'hides' atrocity photographs on an elevated platform surrounded by walls, so that they cannot be seen by children. But their very unreachability makes them all the more attractive to children, who often make their parents lift them – despite the warning "Attention! Drastic scenes!" Visitors see an uncontextualized mix of horror photographs that are usually attributed to a camp like "Dachau" or a murder site like "Wawer" in Warsaw, where a massacre took place in 1939, but without any further information. Children and adults are thus exposed to a contextless assemblage reiterating atrocities: they see photographs of medical experiments, anonymous heaps of bodies or slashed bellies.[41] There is another such installation on the second floor in the section about victims killed by "the Germans" at the Wola hospital in Warsaw in September 1944. However, the text board does not explicitly reference the graphic photographs and thus one can only assume that they show the Wola victims. Dead or decomposing bodies and a skeleton in clothes are again shown without information about who took the photographs or anything about the lifecycle of the photographs. The only acknowledgement of the particular demands of exhibiting atrocity photographs is thus hiding them behind walls, which only serves to turn them into an attraction for children.

Unlike the Warsaw case, the newer 2014 permanent exhibition at the Austrian Mauthausen Memorial shows no graphic images of violence against inmates or dead bodies. A 1941 execution of Soviet prisoners by the Wehrmacht is shown, but the victims' faces are too far away to be recognized. Perpetrator-taken identification photographs are displayed not only with the names of the victims but also with the context in which they were taken and a year. Voyeuristic pictures of humiliated victims are no longer shown. The only graphic image is that of the naked corpse of the Nazi camp commander who was fatally wounded during his arrest a few days after the camp's liberation and whose body was hung on the barbed wire by Mauthausen survivors.

40 Jutta Wiedmann, Erinnerungskultur des 20. Jahrhunderts in Polen und Deutschland – Warum dieses Projekt?, in: Michał Łuczewski/Jutta Wiedmann (eds.), Erinnerungskultur des 20. Jahrhunderts. Analysen deutscher und polnischer Erinnerungsorte, Frankfurt am Main 2011, 11–13.

41 Radonić, Der Zweite Weltkrieg, 2021, 214.

When it comes to voyeuristic perpetrator-taken photographs or videos of naked or half-naked victims, many older permanent exhibitions exhibit these images without pointing to their humiliating character. The permanent exhibition shown until 2012 at the Museum of the Occupation of Latvia in Riga is a case in point. While we see the names and portraits of Latvian rescuers of Jews, Jewish victims can only be seen in a blown-up photograph of four women in underwear and a girl hiding from the camera behind one of them, moments before their execution in Liepāja in 1941. The (German-language) guidebook at least mentions the date of the massacre, 15 December 1941, and names SS-Scharführer Carl-Emil Strott as photographer.[42] However, we do not learn here that the Jewish electrician David Zivcon accidentally discovered the four film rolls, made secret copies of them, which he buried until after the liberation, and returned the rolls before anyone realized they were missing.[43] The museum avoids portraying any Jewish protagonists individually – maybe this will change in the new permanent exhibition in the enlarged museum building.

In contrast, the newer Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw chose to exhibit voyeuristic shots in a different way. The text on the 1941 Lwów/Lviv pogroms points out: "The Germans photographed and filmed the pogrom." The Nazi-made video of the pogrom on 30 June /1 July 1941, which US soldiers found after the war, shows Jews being hit and shot, but also publicly undressed. We see barely clothed or naked men and women being beaten and chased around.[44] These images are not simply openly displayed here: when approaching the Lwów pogrom section, you cannot at first see the video, which is hidden in a recess. Visitors need to move their head into the installation. Above the video there is the quote from a victim, but the curators chose a line in which both sexualized violence and the role of the camera are strikingly missing: "Fainting women and the elderly, lying almost breathless – were set about frenziedly with truncheons, kicked and dragged around on the ground." There is, however, a known testimony that would have addressed nakedness and the camera's role. Rosa Wagner reported about being dragged out of her apartment on 30 June 1941:

> "And while the greedy killers took all the clothes off one of the women and were mercilessly beating her naked body with a stick, the German soldiers who were passing by and who we asked to get involved, answered: '*Das ist*

42 Valters Nollendorfs, Lettland unter der Herrschaft der Sowjetunion und des nationalsozialistischen Deutschland 1940–1991, Riga 2017, 74.

43 Yad Vashem, The visual evidence of the murder of the Jews of Liepaja, https://www.yadvashem.org/righteous/stories/sedul-schimelpfening/liepaja-murder-evidence.html (15 February 2022).

44 USHMM, Lvov pogrom, Jews rounded up, beatings. Film, https://collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/irn1001275 (15 February 2022).

die Rache der Ukrainer' (This is the revenge of the Ukrainians), in a tone full of approval of their actions. They were passing by with a look of masters and taking pictures of the naked women who were raped and violently beaten."[45]

Survivors remember the cameras' clicks as part of the torture.[46] In his analysis of the post-war use of these images, Gerhard Paul shows ten photographs of naked or barely clothed women. Although he argued that the photographs are a form of violence on their own, he did not explain his reasons for showing them, even when doing so in order to analyse the troubling history of their use. And yet, displaying such voyeuristic images of sexualized violence certainly does add an additional layer of violence to the 'mere' showing of atrocity photographs because the victims are exposed in their mortifying (almost-)nakedness in front of their tormentors.

To conclude: some of the newer exhibitions treat images as historical documents, display them in the size of the initial copy, and give the name of the photographer. There is a major trend to include private photographs and individual stories. Images of atrocities, perpetrator-taken photographs, and those depicting sexual violence are still used, but recently often in a way that shows at least some awareness of their 'problematic' character. The reasons for this slow shift – and one that has not reached all newer exhibitions – probably differ from museum to museum. In some countries it has been particular publications or debates, such as that surrounding the first Wehrmacht exhibition (1995–1999),[47] that have decisively influenced curators. However, these scholarly discussions have been in different languages and probably could not have been responsible for inspiring both the 2014 Mauthausen and the 2014 History of Polish Jews Museum exhibitions. Nonetheless, (self-)critical discussions regarding the use of photographs evidently seem to have permeated the museum sector.

While the World War II museums discussed so far have been located in Europe and the 'West', the following section asks if and how these trends resonate, firstly, in museums dealing with the World War II era in China and Japan, and, secondly, in the institutions devoted to the 1990s genocides in Rwanda and Bosnia.

45 Anatoly Podolsky, The Tragic Fate of Ukrainian Jewish Women under Nazi Occupation, 1941–1944, in: Sonja M. Hedgepeth/Rochelle G. Saidel (eds.), Sexual Violence Against Jewish Women During the Holocaust, Waltham 2010, 101.

46 Paul, BilderMACHT, 2013, 165.

47 Helga Embacher, Controversies over Austria's Nazi Past: Generational Changes and Grassroots Awakenings following the Waldheim Affair and the "Wehrmacht Exhibitions," in: Nationalities Papers (2022), 1–21, doi:10.1017/nps.2022.40.

Travelling trends in displaying violence?

In our project on "Globalized Memorial Museums" we pay special attention to museums in the Asian World War II theatre and to those devoted to the 1990s genocides in Rwanda and Srebrenica, in order to add a global dimension to musealization debates and case studies that are often limited to Europe, the US, and Israel.

In order to do justice to the global dimension of WWII museumization and focus on actors with particularly conflicting views on it, the following section discusses museums in China and Japan that are geographically close but politically and culturally miles apart. When we compare how atrocity photographs and perpetrator-taken photographs are displayed in museums in China and Japan, it soon becomes clear that these two museum landscapes share few similarities. Chinese museums like the Museum of the War of Chinese People's Resistance Against Japanese Aggression in Beijing and the Memorial Hall of the Victims in Nanjing Massacre by Japanese Invaders make excessive use of graphic images.[48] Both museums, first established in the 1980s, were redesigned in 2015 and the exhibitions still show, for instance, a man's severed head, placed by Japanese soldiers on a wooden roadblock with a cigarette in his mouth. "In both museums, hugely blown-up photographs are used as a constant frieze-style backdrop for the artifacts encased below."[49] In Nanjing, the image iconic for the Nanjing massacre, showing a riverbank full of bodies, is displayed in large format and dominates the room. The name of the photographer or post-war use context is usually not given – except when foreigners documented the atrocity or a US magazine published the image. In these cases, the context is considered relevant because the foreign source brings more credibility – especially as Japanese memory politics and museums tend to downplay and justify what they refer to as the Nanjing 'incident'.

In the section on "Abusing women", the Beijing museum shows a naked woman with a broken neck. Her head, turned the wrong way, looks into the camera. Uncharacteristically, the caption reads: "Murdered Liu Yaomei, Director of the Women Salvation Association of Luoyu Village, Fuping County, Hebei Province". The people depicted on the photographs are usually not named in Chinese museums, which seldom emphasize the individuality of victims, especially those shown in atrocity photographs. And yet this naked woman is named, probably to highlight the martyrdom of an active Communist Party member, for which the fact that she is shown naked and brutalized does not seem to be an obstacle.

48 Margaret Hillenbrand, Negative Exposures: Knowing What Not to Know in Contemporary China, Durham 2020, 46.

49 Ibid., 67.

Two relevant things have changed in the Chinese museum landscape since 2015. Firstly, individual private photographs have entered the Nanjing museum on a larger scale. Whole walls with private photographs of victims and "registered survivors of the Nanjing massacre" were added in 2017. This change can be understood as the result of the international trend to include such individualizing elements. At the same time, this does not mean that victims are exhibited in less humiliating ways or that the 'pedagogy of horror' is being abandoned. Both elements now co-exist here.[50]

The second new development is that two museums devoted to so-called 'comfort women' have opened. The Museum of the Site of Lijixiang Comfort Stations, opened in 2015 as a branch of the Nanjing Massacre Memorial Hall, and the Chinese "Comfort Women" History Museum in Shanghai, opened in 2016 on the campus of Shanghai Normal University. Korea was the first to demand justice for the 'comfort women', with China only joining this movement much later – when it coincided with its attempts to obtain recognition of the sites as UNESCO heritage.[51] It is therefore only now, for the first time, that museums in China deal with this case of sexual slavery and abuse on a large scale and in an open manner. Troublingly, however, both exhibitions show multiple photographs of naked women, with the Nanjing museum even showing the same naked 'comfort woman' – Park Yeong-sim – four times in situ at the place where she was victimized. The only 'progress' compared to the Beijing museum, where one of these images can also be found, is that in the 'comfort women' museums the women's genitals and breasts are pixelated. While Chinese museums essentially never problematize perpetrator-taken photographs, one caption in Nanjing at least gestures in this direction: "In Yangzhou 'Comfort Station', the Japanese soldiers took photographs with the 'Comfort Women.'" Summing up, Hillenbrand characterizes the Chinese case as "circulation of unattributed war pornography[52] retooled as patriotic propaganda logos […]. To date, a robust discourse on the uses of the atrocity photographs has yet to emerge in China, and what scant debate there is lies low in private conversation or the interstices of social media sites."[53]

In general, the approach in Japan contrasts with the widespread exhibiting of nude victims of sexual violence in China. A small museum, which is by no means

50 I am grateful to Markéta Bajgerová, the PhD student researching Chinese museums in my team, for sharing her photographs, discussing the use of photographs in the museums she analyses, and the point regarding the co-existence of the two elements.

51 Markéta Bajgerová, Survivors, Victims, and Soldiers as Figures of Nationalism: Women's Representations in War of Resistance against Japan Museums in Mainland China, in: East Asian Journal of Popular Culture 8/2 (2022), 291–309.

52 I am using the term 'voyeuristic' instead of 'war pornography' because the later stigmatizes pornography in general as violent.

53 Hillenbrand, Exposures, 2020, 80.

representative for the Japanese museum landscape, is dedicated to the 'comfort women': the Women's Active Museum (WAM) in Tokyo does not show such voyeuristic images and primarily offers visitors walls covered with private photographs, survivors' names, and biographies.[54] Outside this private museum that seeks to give agency back to the women, and another similarly small and private one, the Oka Masaharu Memorial Nagasaki Peace Museum, sexual violence is usually not covered in Japanese museums. At the Oka Masaharu Memorial, which addresses Japanese atrocities usually avoided in Japanese museums, there is one photograph of a "pitiful sight of a Nanjing woman after being raped in turn (Obtained from imprisoned Japanese army man)": we see a suffering woman who is naked below the waist, a black bar covering her genitals. This is not the mainstream approach of Japanese museums, because in general Japanese crimes are only rarely acknowledged and thus not shown explicitly. In the case of the Peace Osaka museum, they were shown in the earlier permanent exhibition, but the display of the Nanjing massacre and of Japanese aggression in general had to be removed for the new 2015 permanent exhibition due to nationalist government pressure.[55] The two most prominent museums in Tokyo, the Shōwakan and the Yūshūkan, rely heavily on photographs, yet not on those that show atrocities. The Yūshūkan, for example, shows ordinary, friendly men who, due to external circumstances, become heroic soldiers – but death is strikingly absent from these images. Atrocities are depicted not in photographs but in drawings, dioramas, or oil paintings.

Graphic atrocity photographs can be found primarily in the atomic bomb museums, which show Japanese people as victims. At the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, numerous depictions of individual victims were added in the new permanent exhibition from 2019. The Exhibit Planning Committee stressed the new central role of survivors and their objects, photographs, paintings, and testimonies, in the narratives presented at the memorial "in order to convey the tragedy of the A-bomb from a human (hibakusha) point of view."[56] This memorial space also includes a wall with names and private portraits of "individuals who died in the bombing". The exhibition dedicated to the "Reality of the Atomic Bombing – Victims and Survivors" displays names and portraits of children killed in the bombing as well as images of people with burn injuries, but no pictures of corpses lying uncared-for on the street.

54 Frauke Kempka/André Hertrich, What Does the Individual Stand for? Victims, Survivors and Noble Spirits in Japanese Memorial Museums, u:japan lecture, 28 October 2021, Vienna. I am grateful to André Hertrich and Frauke Kempka, who research Japanese museums in our project, for sharing their photographs and pointing out relevant examples from Japanese museums.

55 Philip Seaton, The Nationalist Assault on Japan's Local Peace Museums: The Conversion of Peace Osaka, in: The Asia-Pacific Journal 30/3 (2015), 1–20, 1.

56 Ran Zwigenberg, Modern Relics: The Sanctification of A-Bomb Objects in the Hiroshima Museum, in: Holocaust and Genocide Studies 35/1 (2021), 44–62, 55.

Details are given of the photographer, the place where the people were being medically treated, and, sometimes, the donor of the photograph. Despite the warning that the exhibition contains "graphic content", it is more the paintings and drawings than the photographs that show brutal scenes. The section titled "Injured in Mind and Body" shows horrible scars, but these are the scars of the living, who are shown not as abandoned but, again, as being medically cared for. Death is generally absent from the photographs throughout the exhibition – with the exception of two images from the hypocentre of the bomb and of a pretty female victim in an open coffin full of flowers. One graphic photograph therefore stands out all the more dramatically: in the late "It never ends" section there is an oversize enlargement of an image of human remains "excavated seven years after the bombing" in Aki County in 1952 – a room-high installation showing a mass of skeletal remains, with the numerous skulls the most prominent element. Here, the purpose seems to be to overwhelm viewers at the end of their visit as if to ensure they "never forget".

In contrast, the older permanent exhibition at the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum from 1996 prominently displays images of burned corpses, mostly of children, and decomposing human remains in the rubble. Some graphic images are shown first as an emotive element upon entry and later again with a caption. Even where the person shown in the photograph is alive, the flash burns we see are much more horrifying than the ones exhibited at Hiroshima. As in the European examples, the comparison between the older and newer Japanese atomic bomb museums shows a shift towards displaying violence less through atrocity photographs and more through individual stories and private images.

Turning now to the question of how museums and exhibitions devoted to the 1990s genocides in Bosnia and Rwanda display violence, it is notable that scholars have primarily discussed the issues around exhibiting human remains or photographs of them.[57] In contrast to the photographs discussed so far, the ones from the 1990s are in colour and thus appear even more graphic, as I will show here. Another immediately striking parallel between Bosnia and Rwanda is that there is international involvement by experts on either Nazi camps or Holocaust memorials in designing several of the exhibitions, which in itself interlinks the discussions regarding World War II and the 1990s genocides.

In the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina, permanent exhibitions devoted to the 1995 Srebrenica genocide and the siege of Sarajevo have opened only recently. The two exhibitions discussed here show two very different approaches to the display of

57 Rémi Korman, Bury or display? The Politics of Exhumation in Post-Genocide Rwanda, in: Élisabeth Anstett/ Jean-Marc Dreyfus (eds.), Human Remains and Identification: Mass Violence, Genocide, and the "Forensic Turn," Oxford 2015, 1–14.

violence. The private Museum of Crimes against Humanity and Genocide, which opened in 2016 in Sarajevo, uses graphic photographs as its constitutive element. Exhumed bodies, among them that of a not yet fully developed foetus in a woman's open womb, dominate the exhibition. As a visitor, one can barely look at the subsequent biographical, non-violent victim-related objects, drawings, and photographs, and the touching testimonies from survivors of the atrocities since they, too, are surrounded by photographs of the anonymous mutilated corpses and bloody bodies of victims. The exhibition presents Bosnian Muslims as victims of a 'new holocaust' by drawing an explicit parallel between two photographs placed next to each other on a board: of a boy selling armbands in the Warsaw ghetto and a man's arm with an armband that Serbs forced Bosniaks to wear in the Bosnian town of Prijedor in 1992. Serb perpetrators are thus not only presented as evil but also as the new Nazis.

In contrast, the Srebrenica-Potočari Genocide Memorial uses graphic images only in very specific sections and not as mere illustrations of the genocide. Located opposite the memorial cemetery, at the site of the former battery factory and later UN base in which many sought refuge, the permanent exhibition opened in 2017. One of three curatorial approaches, or "planes" as the museum calls them, of the *in situ* permanent exhibition is devoted to the materiality of the former battery factory, which housed the UN's Dutchbat contingent in 1995. The historical graffiti left behind by Dutchbat soldiers during their missions in 1994 and 1995, which also include sexist and racist drawings, are preserved and contextualized by historical photographs – even though "many of the people visiting the former compound are shocked by some of the content of the graffiti that they perceive to be sexist or racist. Many of the Dutchbat soldiers regret the graffiti were made but also emphasize they were only meant for the small circle of military comrades", as the inscription says.

A second plane on which the curators narrate the story of Srebrenica is the "personal storyline", presenting fourteen survivor stories including photographs, for example of the teenager Riki and his mother's search for him, which accompany the visitors throughout the exhibition. One reason for this focus is probably that the exhibition was created in large part by a team involved in the Holocaust memorialization at the former Nazi transit camp Westerbork in the Netherlands, where, as is typical for Holocaust memorials, is also a strong focus on individual victims and their private photographs.

The third plane is the chronological storyline. In the two-floor exhibition, three atrocity photographs can be found in the corner of the introductory room in the section about the aftermath of the war. All have a specific function. The photograph of the infamous Markale market bombing in Sarajevo on 28 August 1995 "urged the necessity of international engagement to end the Serb aggression". Skeletal remains and a skull in a mass grave are displayed on boards next to photographs

from the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) trials of "Milošević, Karadžić and Mladić", placed between texts about the trials, and are meant to demonstrate the men's guilt. Human remains are again shown much later in the exhibition in sections about evidence, secondary and tertiary mass graves, and identification, some with evidence numbers placed next to the evidence. Graphic colour images are not used as general illustrations of the genocide, therefore, but as evidence of specific aspects of the crimes and Serb attempts to cover them up.

This exhibition does not describe the sexualized violence and rape that are usually so prominently discussed in the Bosnian case. It focuses mostly on the Srebrenica genocide, in which men and boys were murdered. But even the few more general parts on the war in Bosnia do not show sexual violence. The only photograph that could be called voyeuristic was taken in Sarajevo during the siege and thus not in the context of rape: it shows a wounded woman whose face is unrecognizable because it is covered in blood and whose sweater has slipped up so that one breast is visible – and a neighbour holding her hand in support. Sexualized violence and rape remain strikingly absent in the Srebrenica permanent exhibition.

To sum up, both of the Bosnian exhibitions, with their very different approaches, opened at roughly the same time and can thus be explained not by *when* they were made but by *who* made them. Srebrenica was developed in partnership with the Westerbork experts, who had already been engaging with similar debates for some time, while the Sarajevo museum is a private enterprise meant to highlight Muslim victimhood and gloss over Muslim crimes, such as those of the foreign Mujahidin in the Bosnian war.

To compare the Bosnian and Rwandan cases seems promising not merely because of the obvious parallel that both genocides happened at roughly the same time. Both of these two recent atrocities have drawn significant international attention, not only from the tribunals (ICTY and International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda) and in the context of the belated acknowledgement of rape as war crime but also, for example, from forensic experts who had to divide their time between the two countries because their expertise was urgently needed simultaneously.

In contrast to Srebrenica, in Rwanda there is a special focus on the topic of sexual violence at the Kigali Genocide Memorial Museum in the capital.[58] First, rape and mutilation are briefly mentioned, then the exhibition explicitly discusses these crimes as weapons of genocide in the section on "Women and Children": visually represented by an image of a women who holds a hand in front of her face in a gesture of shame. The topic of rape, including by HIV-positive men, and mutilation

58 I am grateful to Eric Sibomana, the PhD student in my project who analyses Rwandan museums, for sharing the photo documentation of the sites and discussing the Rwandan museums.

as dehumanization reappears in the section "Legacy of Genocide". On the visual level, it is accompanied by six portraits of women with a range of expressions, from self-confident to troubled. It seems, therefore, that humiliating images have been explicitly avoided in this case.

In contrast, the graphic, high-resolution, colour atrocity images in Kigali strongly affect visitors, they are the most graphic discussed so far. Interestingly, no perpetrator-taken photographs exist of the Rwandan genocide; all images stem from post-genocide documentation, for example by journalists, or have been provided by surviving family members. Again, upon entering the genocide section, there is a warning that the section "contains shocking images of the genocide". In contrast to Srebrenica, here the story of the genocide itself, not of its forensic and judicial aftermath, is told with the help of very graphic atrocity photographs that are displayed throughout the exhibition and are mostly used not as historical sources but as blown-up backgrounds for other documents. Right from the first panel on the genocide, a room-high enlargement of an image showing dead bodies, including a male one hanging from a car window, serves as the background wallpaper for other images and text. This panel is followed by, again, a non-described room-high enlarged photograph of covered and uncovered bodies on the ground – as background for a video screen. Other colourful images of clothed bodies that are somewhere between decomposed and skeletal bear captions that are only indirectly linked to what is shown in the photograph, and the information about who owns the copyright is the only source. In the "After Genocide" section, not even basic information about the image – of obviously only recently murdered men and women and four men passing by – is given. The 'caption' says instead: "Genocidal political parties in the [refugee] camps used persuasion and intimidation to prevent refugees from returning to their homes, to recruit combatants and organize financing for operations against Rwanda. ©Reuters/Peter Andrews". Since murder is not mentioned in the text, we can only guess that Hutu might have again killed Tutsi in this refugee camp, but context is missing. Furthermore, in the "Legacy of Genocide" section, the 'caption' about the difficulties in identifying bodies in mass graves and the image of a heavily mutilated upper body skeleton of, presumably, a child are not explicitly linked to each other.

The Kigali museum also has a memorial room containing walls full of private photographs of the victims. In this case the visitors are invited (only in Kinyarwanda in this exhibition that otherwise also has texts in French and English) to bring photographs of their relatives for this participatory part of the exhibition. This is probably connected to the international cooperation in curating the museum: after a visit to the Beth Shalom Holocaust Centre near Nottingham, the mayor of Kigali formed a partnership with its directors. Rwandan political leaders subsequently called for

a memorial "comparable to Holocaust memorials in Europe and the US", and commissioned the Aegis trust, a British NGO responsible for the Nottinghamshire Holocaust memorial, to create the exhibition.[59] In this museum too, individual victim stories and private photographs thus coexist with atrocity photographs, used as mere illustrations of genocide and in no way as historical documents with a context in which they were taken, a photographer, and a history of use.

The museums discussed in this section have shown that the trend to include individual victims' stories and private photographs has found its way into at least one museum in each of the four countries discussed. In most cases, however, these photographs have not replaced shocking images used in a pedagogy of horror, but coexist with them. The Chinese case is the only one where victims of sexual violence are shown naked or in humiliating poses in multiple instances. In contrast to the extensive discussions about perpetrator-taken images in the case of the Nazis, there is essentially no reflection to be found here on the practice of reproducing, or not, the perpetrator gaze.

Categories of photographs displayed in memorial museums

After discussing these examples of museums' use of photographs, in this section I attempt to categorize different kinds of photographs from the much-discussed World War II context in the hope of providing potential recommendations for displaying other forms of mass violence. A systematic discussion of the precise subcategories that can be included in the terms 'perpetrator-taken', 'bystander-taken', 'clandestine', or 'liberation photograph', and of how they differ, could serve to aid reflection on the specific kinds of responsibility that come with exhibiting different kinds of images.

There are several kinds of photographs taken while violence is unfolding: perpetrator-taken, openly taken by bystanders and clandestinely taken by the persecuted, or those hiding to observe and document the event from outside. The category of perpetrator-taken images includes (1) official photographs taken as documentation of, for example, the good work of the commander and their staff in running a 'productive ghetto', crushing an uprising or similar (for instance, the above-mentioned Stroop album). There are, by default, so many aspects missing from this kind of image that exhibiting them in a meaningful way should include either a critical

59 Rachel Ibreck, International Constructions of National Memories: The Aims and Effects of Foreign Donors' Support for Genocide Remembrance in Rwanda, in: Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding 7/2 (2013), 149–169, 157.

reflection of their purpose, a contrasting juxtaposition with other images or testimonies or similar strategies. (2) Private photographs taken by perpetrators showing their social or family life often contain no trace of violence or combine harmonious family pictures with work. They can be a valuable source to show the relationship between perpetrators and their local environment of beneficiaries, collaborators, or bystanders. (3) Photographs of inmates taken for the purpose of identification upon their imprisonment imply classification and de-individualization – for example, by shaving their heads – even if the photographs were taken by fellow inmates but on the perpetrators' orders.[60] They can be contrasted with private photographs of the persecuted to either document the effects of their mistreatment or to confront the perpetrators' gaze with people's own chosen ways of being photographed. (4) Trophy photographs are mostly group images that are staged to capture moments such as beheadings.[61] (5) Atrocity images like the ones taken at Mauthausen of those allegedly 'shot while attempting to escape', which was a code for execution, document the murders immediately after they were committed.[62]

All these perpetrator images will usually reproduce a humiliating, antisemitic, racist, or otherwise stereotypical gaze, which must be considered when exhibiting them. There are several ways in which these circumstances can be implied or openly reflected in the exhibitions and the pedagogical context.[63] Photographs taken by perpetrators might, for example, be addressed as their self-testimonies – not showing the victims 'as they were', but telling us more about the perpetrators. It can be productive to contrast images from these categories with other perpetrator images or with other categories.

Beside photographs taken by outsiders, either openly or clandestinely, another crucial and long-underrepresented category is that of the rare images taken from within the Nazi camps. I have discussed the four *Sonderkommando* images from Birkenau and the five photographs from Ravensbrück that were taken by a female Polish inmate. Interestingly enough, it was only in the new exhibition of 2013 that the latter were first displayed in Ravensbrück. They go against expectations – the inmates are not wearing the striped suits because the camp ran out of them[64] – but they document brave and history-conscious female agency, and thus should receive much more attention.

Images taken clandestinely in the ghettos exist in greater numbers, and are even frequently shown, but more often than not without telling the story of the photogra-

60 Didi-Huberman, Images, 2008, 24.
61 Byford, Picturing, 2020.
62 Meissel, Photographs, (2019).
63 Heyl, Bildverbot, (2004), 129.
64 Genest, Fotografien, (2019), 89.

pher who took them or the circumstances in which they were taken. For example, a photograph the Polish-Jewish photojournalist Henry Ross clandestinely took in the Łódź ghetto is exhibited at the Museum of Occupation and Freedom Fights in Vilnius, but simply bears the (wrongly dated) caption: "Jews driven out of their homes, 1941". Contrasting these images with the very different perpetrator-taken ones has proven to be a promising curatorial strategy.

When it comes to images taken after the liberation, so much has been written about Allied photographs showing heaps of dead bodies, anonymous dead or dying starvation victims that have become "icons of annihilation". Showing them comes with the price of risking humiliating the victims again. The photographers and cameramen have been heavily criticized for callously dehumanizing the victims and survivors.[65] Tobby Haggith, however, who analysed the captions of the Bergen-Belsen footage, finds this critique too one-sided: the "touchingly respectful accompanying comments in the dope sheets suggest that for the cameramen such scenes [of inmates washing] were in fact a celebration of life and humanity", an example of enduring "decency" in spite of all the horror.[66] "With great prescience, they grasped that the humanity and individuality of the people they were filming could not be expressed to the viewer, and as a result frequently wrote down accounts of conversations they had with the inmates and named their subjects whenever possible."[67] This context could be provided when showing these images.

Re-enacted photographs like the Buchenwald images of prisoners hanging from trees by their tied hands could be rediscovered as acts of self-empowerment by former inmates.[68] An often-discarded category is that of inmates turning photographer-survivors, like the Spanish photographer Francisco Boix, who was liberated from the Mauthausen camp. He documented scenes of self-empowerment, like fellow inmates who chose to be photographed in their uniforms after liberation, but this time wearing their hats, which they had always been forced to take off for the mugshots.[69] Other liberated inmates chose to be photographed in what had been the unreachable dead zone outside the barbed-wire fence. Boix also photographed

65 Barbie Zelizer, Gender and Atrocity: Women in Holocaust Photographs, in: Barbie Zelizer (ed.), Visual Culture and the Holocaust, London 2001, 247–271, 247.

66 Tobby Haggith, Filming the Liberation of Bergen-Belsen, in: Tobby Haggith/Joanna Newman (eds.), Holocaust and the Moving Image, London 2005, 33–49, 43.

67 Tobby Haggith, The Filming of the Liberation of Bergen-Belsen and its Impact on the Understanding of the Holocaust, in: Suzanne Bardgett/David Cesarani (eds.), Belsen 1945: New Historical Perspectives, London 2007, 89–122, 113.

68 Starke, Bild, (2019).

69 Stephan Matyus, Die Befreiung von Mauthausen, die fotografische Perspektive eines Häftlings: Francisco Boix, in: Hildegard Frübis/Clara Oberle/Agnieszka Pufelska (eds.), Fotografien aus den Lagern des NS-Regimes, Wien 2019, 159–176, 167.

developments the Allied liberators were not at all interested in showing, such as the founding meeting of the Spanish Communist Party in Mauthausen.[70]

Finally, there are private photographs. These are shown in exhibitions all over the world today in ways that are not self-explanatory, in contrast to their original family album context, and need re-contextualization.[71] Subjective memory is construed as an object for others. Again, we need as much information as possible about how the particular picture was created, by whom, what it shows, and how it became an exhibit. When people who would later become victims of the Holocaust are shown in private photographs with the intention, for example, of emphasizing their Jewishness, 'they' are depicted as different.

Interestingly enough, different victim groups are often depicted with very different visual material in the very same museum. As I have shown in my previous works, in European museums, 'our' victims are often exhibited with the help of private photographs or video testimonies that evoke empathy, while 'their' victims are represented as numbers, anonymous masses, heaps of corpses, or in a way that reproduces the very stereotypes that motivated the perpetrators and thus also informed their gaze. For example, museums devoted to the Soviet and the Nazi occupations in the Baltic countries often use empathy-evoking testimonies, objects, and private photographs to depict the non-Jewish majority population as victims of the Soviets.[72] In contrast, Jewish victims are mostly not named, remain anonymous, and are often shown in a humiliating way, perpetuating the perpetrators' gaze. In many museums that depict Jewish Holocaust victims in an individualizing way, curators are starting to include Roma victims for the first time, yet in a non-individualizing, stereotypical way.[73]

Unsurprisingly, the non-Western museums and their approach to photographs show the limitations of this categorization attempt. In cases like Rwanda, where there are no perpetrator-taken photographs from the genocide, other questions are of interest, such as the differences between the post-genocide Northern gaze of international journalists and observers on the one hand and domestic photography on the other. Provenance plays no role in Chinese museums, so there is essentially no distinction between perpetrator-taken and other atrocity photographs. In Japan, future analysis of the display of violence should move beyond photographs to focus on paintings, drawings, and dioramas. This broadening of the geographical scope

70 Ibid., 170.

71 Brink, Ikonen, 1998, 226.

72 Radonić, Der Zweite Weltkrieg, 2021, 179.

73 Ljiljana Radonić, "People of Freedom and Unlimited Movement:" Representations of Roma in Post-Communist Memorial Museums, in: Social Inclusion 3/5 (2015), 64–77.

helps to reflect on the limits of the discussions stemming from Western as well as European Holocaust and World War II museumization contexts.

Conclusion

The decision to label images with notes about their origin, purpose, and history, or not, hints at the curatorial intention. Labels, or the omission of labels, direct the visitor's gaze towards or away from the specific historical context of the production and original use of images.[74] There is a new trend to understand photographs not primarily as evidence of the deed but of the doer. Nonetheless, images are still often tailored according to aesthetic requirements, for example, into a square format, cropped because one part of the picture is considered irrelevant to its message or displaying anonymous people wearing a signifier like a Star of David in order to represent the typical victim. The decisive question here is often – but not always – when the exhibition was installed: there are, for example, far-reaching similarities between the topical visual history approach at the Museum of History of Polish Jews and the Mauthausen Memorial in Austria, both of which opened in 2014. Furthermore, the analysis of the non-Western memorial museums has shown that different trends and questions are pertinent there and that graphic photographs are still utilized as evidence and illustration.

While I have discussed many curatorial approaches to how to display violence in a reflected way, it should have become obvious that putting a warning of graphic images at the entrance or pixelating the no-longer private 'private parts' of victims of sexual violence should not be considered enough – any more than overwhelming visitors with emotionalizing room-size atrocity pictures without considering that they show someone's murdered relatives. While cultural differences and traditions in dealing with visual material must always be reflected self-critically, it still is important to point out, for example, that the severed head of a Chinese victim, impaled on a fence by Japanese soldiers, is in fact someone's family member and that individual fates matter beyond the national narrative.

Different approaches bear different risks. Choosing not to show one category of images because the harm it does cannot be undone by meta-level reflections must lead to other ways of painting a complete picture of the violence. Explicitly contrasting different categories of photographs to point out the different perspectives they show still means displaying atrocities, but at least not randomly mixing them into a collage of illustrative suffering.

74 Holtschneider, The Holocaust, 2011, 16.

One final point of this tour of global museums is that in most cases the photographers are men – except when it comes to the famous liberation images taken by the first American female war photojournalist Margaret Bourke-White and by Lee Miller, a war correspondent for *Vogue* who covered Buchenwald and Dachau. Curators, no matter if they are men or women, do not usually explicitly address the photographers' gender beyond rare exceptions, mostly when it comes to perpetrator-taken images showing female victims of sexualized violence. Szydłowska's Ravensbrück documentation of medical experiments and the various largely unknown shots by female perpetrators could be highlighted here.