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Designing the memory of terror, negotiating national memory: The National September 11 Memorial and the National Memorial for Peace and Justice

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Abstract

This essay analyzes two American memorials that were built in the post-9/11 era: the National September 11 Memorial in New York City, which opened in 2011, and the National Memorial for Peace and Justice, which opened in Montgomery, Alabama, in 2018. Both of these memorials pay tribute to victims of terrorism, the first to victims of foreign terrorism and the second to victims of lynchings, a form of racial terrorism within the United States. This essay argues that these two memorials define the beginning and end of the post-9/11 era, from memorialization as a nationalist enterprise to memorialization as a reckoning on race that demands the destruction of racist monuments and the construction of memorials to victims of racist violence. It looks in particular at how the modern designs of these two memorials produce very different kinds of experiences of memory to tell distinct narratives of victimhood, loss, and nation.

Keywords

9/11, American, cultural memory, memorial, race, terrorism

Two memorials to the victims of terrorism opened in the United States in the years 2011–2018: The National September 11 Memorial (known as the 9/11 memorial) in New York City, and the National Memorial for Peace and Justice (known as the lynching memorial) in Montgomery, Alabama. One is a memorial to victims of Islamic fundamentalist terrorism and the other to victims of racial terrorism. The 9/11 memorial honors the memory of the almost 3000 people killed in the terrorist attacks on 11 September 2001, victims who have been collectively mourned, the subject of innumerable stories and tributes, whose remains were subject to a massive project of DNA identification. The lynching memorial honors of memory more than 4000 Black victims of lynchings between 1877 and 1950, whose bodies were brutalized as a spectacle of death, whose identities were repressed. The 9/11 memorial was created in a relatively short period of time, with an

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imperative to memorialize quickly in what was considered to be the worst domestic terrorist attack in US history. The lynching memorial was created many decades after the victims died and were largely erased from history.

The origins and intents of these memorials could not be more different, yet their simultaneous emergence at this moment in US history points to the changing politics of American cultural memory in what can be referred to as the post-9/11 era of American history. These memorials both deploy memory strategically to tell very different stories about America. The 9/11 memorial, along with its accompanying museum, uses memory of the 9/11 attacks to tell a story of nationalistic pride, one that justifies US actions that followed in its wake, such as the US wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. The lynching memorial, and its accompanying Legacy Museum, in contrast, demands that the story of the nation take into account its racist origins and past. Thus, while the post-9/11 era of US history begins with a patriotic and nationalized memorialization, it ends with debate over contested memories of race, the removal and destruction of confederate monuments and statues exemplifying white supremacy, and the intervention of the National Memorial for Peace and Justice, demanding a new story for the nation's racial legacies.

It is their shared goal to memorialize victims of *terrorism* that reveals the very radical coincidence of these two memorials being built at the same time. The 9/11 memorial is in many ways iconic of how the US public has come to understand terrorism, as a foreign force that comes, it is often said, "out of the blue." The myth of the innocent nation, attacked in an unprovoked way, is a key element of the 9/11 story that is told in the 9/11 museum that accompanies the memorial in New York. Within the myth of American exceptionalism, terrorism has thus been narrated in US history as something that came from elsewhere to threaten the "American way of life," that attacked "our freedom." As Erika Doss (2010) has written, in US history, terrorism has been reduced to the narrative of demonic foreigners or evil misfits, allowing it to appear to remain outside of everyday American life (p. 122).

The definition of lynching as terrorism has had a more complex history. Historically, lynching has been understood within the frameworks of racism and segregation, but the actual effects of lynching *as terrorism* have been undertold. Civil rights activists and the black power movement aimed for decades to define lynching as a form of terrorism, and aim was taken up by Bryan Stevenson of the Equal Justice Initiative (EJI), a nonprofit that does legal advocacy in Alabama for death row inmates and those wrongfully accused or receiving excessive sentences. Working in the heart of the racist criminal justice system of Alabama, EJI and Stevenson (2014) came to understand that their legal project could only go so far without a broader change in the culture of the United States and its telling of US history. They pursued a number of memory projects that culminated in the National Memorial for Peace and Justice and the Legacy Museum, which both opened in 2018 (Hasian and Paliewicz, 2021; Pierce and Heitz, 2020). Lynchings were an appallingly effective means to terrorize whole populations in the South, deploying the spectacle of death to instill fear in all Blacks. Terrorism aims to undo life, to unmake the world, to shake the foundation of life as the everyday. Lynching was a truly effective practice to this end.

Understanding lynching *as terrorism* is a deep challenge to the national story of the United States, which includes the myth of racial uplift of the Civil Rights movement. The challenge is to define terrorism at the heart of the nation's story, to understand that this was a nation conceived in the genocide of Native Americans and through the institution of slavery. In other words, this means an understanding of terrorism not simply as a threat to the "American way of life" but as an integral part of that "way of life."

Both of these memorials are thus more than memorials to the dead, they are explicitly constructing narratives about the nation within the frameworks of how they ask visitors to mourn. In what follows, I argue that the designs of these memorials, both deploying modernist form, are crucial to



Figure 1. Pool at the 9/11 Memorial, designed by Michael Arad, New York. Photo: Marita Sturken.

how they shape the story of the nation, and what it means to mourn within a national frame. These designs shape the movement of bodies within them, and produce very different kinds of experiences of memory to tell particular narratives of victimhood, loss, and nation.

Modernism, minimalism, and memory

In the context of the memory boom of the last few decades, there has been a proliferation of memorials deploying a modernist style to create memorial experiences for visitors. In the United States, the memorial that set this trend was the Vietnam Veterans Memorial (VVM), designed by Maya Lin, which was dedicated in 1982. The low, black granite walls of the VVM, etched with names of the dead, were anti-monumental and drew visitors into spaces of contemplation, becoming screens onto which many meanings of the war were projected. The memorial has had a significant aesthetic influence on what was subsequently built—inspiring both a trend of modernist memorials and, in particular in Washington, DC, trends that could be considered anti-modernist (with the traditional aesthetic of the 2004 World War II memorial, for instance, even evoking fascist design to some critics). Architectural historian Irene Cheng (2019) identifies several trends in the design of modernist memorials that "could be termed 'victim' monuments that commemorate not heroes but those whose lives were torn apart by war and unjust violence." Significantly, she notes that these memorials tend to be "spatial rather than sculptural," and have largely been designed by architects. These newer memorials, she notes, "tend to adopt a therapeutic rather than triumphalist tone."

While they are quite distinct in design and intent, the 9/11 memorial and the lynching memorial share this modernist aesthetic. The 9/11 memorial, which was designed by Michael Arad with landscape design by Peter Walker, was built on the site of Ground Zero in New York City, where the twin towers of the World Trade Center were hit by two hijacked commercial airplanes and subsequently collapsed that day, a highly overdetermined site that was immediately politicized. The memorial consists of two extremely large voids in the former footprints of the towers, with cascading water falling down toward a central pool in each. The pools are lined with bronze parapets onto which are inscribed the names of those who died on 9/11 and in the 1993 bombing of the towers. The pools create two negative spaces in a large plaza lined with trees, in the center of which

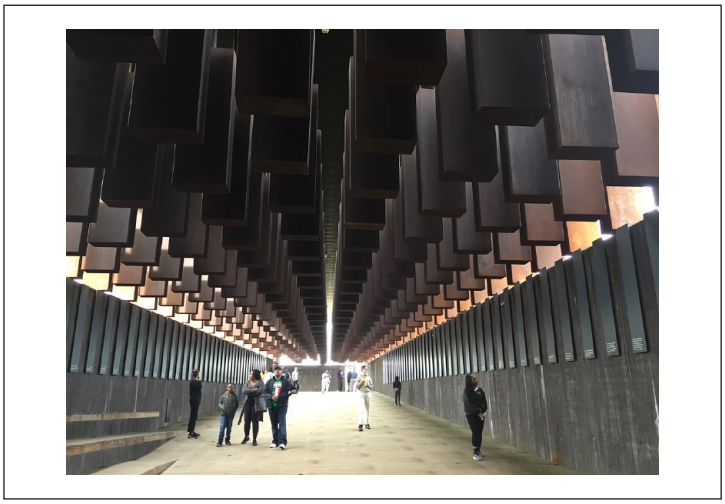


Figure 2. Central corridor of the National Memorial for Peace and Justice, designed by MASS Design Group, Montgomery, Alabama. Photo by Marita Sturken.

is the pavilion entrance to the 9/11 museum (Figure 1). The memorial is massive in size while aiming to create intimate spaces with the names. Its aesthetic, composed of bronze and black granite and defined by clean geometric lines, is emphatically modern.

The Peace and Justice Memorial deploys the vocabulary of modernism to embody those killed by lynching and to quantify their numbers (Figure 2). Sitting on top of a hill above downtown Montgomery, the memorial, designed by MASS Design Group in collaboration with EJI, consists of 816 Corten steel columns that hang from a pavilion roof arranged on a slowly descending walkway (Pasnik et al., 2019). Designed to be walked through and then under, the hanging steel markers are inscribed with the names (some are anonymous) of those lynched in particular counties—this chronicles 4075 lynchings in 12 states from 1877 to 1950 that the Equal Justice Initiative (2017) has been able to determine through research so far. The columns look like stone stelae and like coffins, evoking bodies hanging downward from trees.

In a field next to the pavilion, there are duplicate markers, which are designated for each of the counties named on them. This is the memorial's most radical intervention. EJI is asking those counties to retrieve those markers and place them within their counties, to honor those who were lynched near the sites where it took place. The process for counties to do this is a complex and careful negotiation with EJI, one that more than 100 have undertaken to this date. Here, the intention of the memorial to be a dynamic and activist memorial can be seen. These counties would not have constructed memorials on their own, but the central memorial in Montgomery functions as a kind of moral demand that disseminates outward throughout the nation (names reach as far as New York State and Oklahoma) that these victims be named and mourned. This strategy of the memorial is a provocation, demanding a site specificity to memory and an ownership by these counties and towns of these histories of violence. This is narrated by MASS designer Michael Murphy (2016) and others as a healing. It is also intended to be a shaming, as more markers are retrieved, those that remain will mark those counties as refusing to acknowledge their complicity, what Stevenson calls a "report card of which communities have claimed their histories and which haven't" (Gladstone, 2018).

We can situate both the 9/11 memorial and the lynching memorial in relation to minimalism. In their spare lines and metallic aesthetic, both offer non-figurative abstract forms through which visitors are asked to engage with the dead through their names. On the face of it, minimalism would not necessarily be seen as a style conducive to memorialization. The original intentions of minimalism in modern art were avant-garde with an embrace of pure form, aiming to be deliberately devoid of emotion and artistic expression. Yet that aesthetic is transformed when minimalism is deployed in memorialization. *New York Times* critic Michael Kimmelman (2002) wrote an essay about how minimalism "of all improbable movements of the last 50 years" had become the primary aesthetic of contemporary commemoration. He notes that minimalist abstraction "in all its allegorical pliancy, turns out to function in a memorial context as the best available mirror for a modern world." While modern abstract memorials have often been accused of being elitist and anti-heroic, their designs have resonated with the public precisely because they allow for a range of emotions to be projected upon them. Maya Lin's design for the VVM set the stage for minimalism as a strategy for memorialization. As Cheng (2019) notes, Lin was clearly influenced by "the idea that a work of art should be extremely restrained in its form, in order to heighten the perceiver's experience—[which] was a hallmark of minimalist art of the 70s."

The primary aim of minimalist memorials is thus not formalism but affect, the creation of restrained forms that encourage affective engagement from viewers. When placed in the service of mourning, minimalist forms are transformed. The minimalist chairs of the Oklahoma City Memorial, a memorial to victims of the 1995 bombing of the federal building there, may look, as Kimmelman (2002) notes, like Donald Judd boxes, but the moment one sees them as representing one of the dead or a child who was killed, they evoke absence in powerful ways. Similarly, the markers of the lynching memorial may be minimalist in their space forms, but once one sees them as allegorically representing the bodies of the dead, their forms engage viewers with an array of emotions, from grief to horror to discomfort. Kimmelman notes that the high abstract forms of minimalism become their rhetorical opposite in memorials, something "sentimental, narrative, populist." The open language of modernism's forms allow for ambiguity, ambivalence, and both loss and renewal. Doss (2010) notes that "minimalism is often selected to commemorate trauma because it simultaneously evokes this disorientation [of trauma] and resolves it: it conjures trauma's profound dissonance and also speaks to the recovery and reaffirmation—the remaking—of individual and collective harmony" (p. 133). In this capacity to mediate trauma, minimalism can provide, ironically, a kind of comfort.

Monumentalism and scale

The pliancy of minimalism has been deployed in concert with monumentality. This relationship to monumentality would seem contradictory. After all, modernism deeply distrusted the monument—famously, according to Lewis Mumford (1937), "The very notion of a modern monument is a contradiction in terms. If it is a monument, it cannot be modern, and if it is modern, it cannot be a monument" (p. 265). Certainly, the voids of the 9/11 memorial have a kind of monumentality in their vast scale. The two huge black granite pools of the memorial are each nearly an acre in size, 192 feet squared, housing what the memorial website bills as "the largest manmade waterfalls in North America." The pools are so dominant in the memorial and plaza space, both in terms of size and sound, with their constant roar, that they crowd out other features and modes at the site. In particular, they overshadow what is arguably the memorial's most important feature, the names etched on the pools' edge. Yet, the pools are voids, negative spaces that pull viewers down into them. One could argue that this constitutes a kind of anti-monumental deployment of massive scale.

Scale is thus a key signification of the 9/11 memorial, one that aims to convey, in an almost crude fashion, that the event itself was so big, so consequential, that the memorial itself has to be big, to take up space. From the beginning of the memorial process, the footprints of the twin towers were marked as "sacred," and their vast spaces dictated the memorial design. James Young (2016), who was a member of the jury that choose the memorial (which included Maya Lin) notes that "It's clear that together with the mandate to articulate the towers' footprints, a corollary mandate to memorialize the towers' sheer monumentality was established as well . . ." (p. 75).

The lynching memorial is also massive, its overall pavilion design evoking the expansive space of the Parthenon. There is a monumentality to the relentlessness of the counting of the thousands who were killed. Here, it is quantification that constitutes the primary sense of massive scale. In this effect, the memorial is aligned with the Monument to the Murdered Jews of Europe in Berlin, commonly known as the Berlin Holocaust memorial, designed by architect Peter Eisenman. An enormous field of over 2700 stone stelae of differing sizes that creates the effect of waves, the Holocaust memorial gains its signification from the sheer numbers of the columns and the trajectory of visitors through the long passages between the stelae. Cheng (2019) notes that this is a trend of contemporary memorials, the use of "a field of identical or near-identical objects to represent individual lives lost, thus engaging in a kind of spatialization of quantity." This strategy deploys "abstraction and quantification to impress on spectators the horror of the historic events being evoked."

The effect of this quantification in the lynching memorial is an evocation of the vast numbers of those killed by lynching, whose names have not been a part of history. The markers of the memorial seem to be infinite, an endless stacking of columns that then have upon them lengthy lists of names. The effect of this counting is reinforced by the uniformity of the markers, so that they appear to be replicating, an effect heightened by the fact that they already have duplicates in the field. All of this combines to convey the deeper sense that lynching was a terrorist practice with elimination at its heart, to kill as many blacks as possible and then to ensure that all the others fled in fear.

Bodies in public space

Among the modernist, architect-designed memorials over the last few decades, there is a strong emphasis on the movement of visitors through the space of the memorial. This is distinct from the designs for figurative memorials, which are designed to be gazed upon and perhaps (at most) walked around. As Cheng (2019) notes, this new design strategy aims to "produce not just encounters with an object but a more comprehensive 'experience' or, to use a rather cliched term, a 'journey,' often correlated with an elevational change—hence the preponderance of ramps in contemporary spatial memorials."

The lynching memorial's design is explicitly set up as a journey. The journey of the memorial experience, as designed by MASS with EJI, guides visitors through a narrative sequence inspired by what Stevenson and EJI refer to as the "stages of transformation": Identity, Discomfort, Proximity, Transformation, and finally, Hope (Murphy, 2016). The descending ramp means that visitors first are at eye level with the markers, and then standing below them looking up at them, and then the ramp leads them up to a central elevated space, creating the sense that visitors are going through a kind of transformational passage.

As part of that journey, the memorial also actively creates subject positions for viewers that demand a position of complicity. As the markers rise over visitors, they encourage them to look up at the forms. This has a dual effect of making visitors feel threatened or vulnerable, and also placing them in the position of the lynching spectator, looking up. Lynchings were spectacles, designed

to attract large crowds. Victims were hung high in trees or platforms even after they were dead so that their brutalization could be seen. As Stevenson states, "The people who carried out this violence . . . actually lifted up the bodies because they wanted to terrorize. They wanted the entire community to see it" (Kennicott, 2018). In this sense, when visitors to the memorial are guided by the design to look up at the hanging markers, they are asked to feel themselves in the position of spectators, to experience complicity. This journey thus by design aims to create discomfort in visitors that they will (hopefully) then reflect on and move through.

While the abstract markers of the memorial evoke bodies without directly representing them, there are two other features of the EJI memorial project that aim to render present the bodies of lynching victims and of enslaved people—through collections of dirt and figurative statues. Within the memorial there is a long box of dirt that has been gathered from the sites of many lynchings, and at the Legacy Museum and in the Memorial Center next to the memorial there are numerous jars of dirt on display, each with the name of the person lynched and the place where the dirt was gathered from. This collection of dirt, an EJI project that preceded the design of the memorial, stands out as a powerful material means to situate this history in place. The dirt is highly evocative—it ranges widely in color, from dark red hues to different shades of brown from light to dark. The soil embodies the fact that the bodies of victims of lynchings were usually left on display for days as a form of terrorism, thus the soil in the jars is narrated as the blood-soaked ground beneath hanging bodies. In this sense, the soil project claims that dirt belongs to the victims whose sweat and blood soaked it. It defines the dirt as a witness, a material that has held the memory of these lynchings when they were "forgotten" at these sites. By gathering the dirt and naming it, the project honors the *soil as memory*.

The modernist aesthetic of the memorial is also mediated by the presence of several figurative sculptures on the surrounding grounds. The first, which greets visitors upon entrance to the memorial, depicts a group of slaves, chained together in leg and wrist irons, by Ghanaian artist Kwame Akoto-Bamfo. The second, *Guided by Justice*, by Dana King, is a tribute to the ordinary black women who were central to the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Finally, the sculpture *Raise Up*, by Hank Willis Thomas, in which black figures with their arms raised as their bodies appear to be encased in a rising tide of bronze. EJI felt it was important to represent actual bodies in the memorial, though inevitably these statues cannot avoid many of the representational dilemmas of figurative representation. In particular the Akoto Bamfo sculpture positions viewers in a potentially voyeuristic relation to pain and suffering. The history of lynching is one in which the voyeuristic gaze created a dehumanizing spectacle of death, with the circulation of numerous photographs and postcards of the crowds watching with fascination. Gazing upon the black body in pain has thus been coded in the context of this history as a violent act itself. For EJI and Stevenson, however, it was important to the narrative of the memorial that the mourning of those who were lynched be situated in relation to the history of slavery.

In many ways, the 9/11 memorial creates a very different kind of relationship to bodies and to the idea of a journey. The memorial presents a kind of circular journey. There are two pools, precisely because there were two towers that once stood at the site. One can surmise that there have never been two pools in the memorial design if the footprints of the towers not been designated as special and sacred, a decision that was contested in the debate over the design. This means that visitors to the memorial tend to spend more time at the first pool they see, and less at the second, because, with the exception of the names, they are identical. The journey of visitors is thus not about walking through the memorial on a meaningful trajectory, but rather walking to the pools and looking into them, as a kind of vista. One of the consequences of this vista-focus of the design is that the plaza itself becomes a kind of a no man's land, where tourists wander but have few places to sit, a space largely designed for looking into the pools or waiting to enter the museum. Originally,

the memorial's designer Michael Arad had wanted the memorial to have underground chambers, where the names would be listed with the water behind them, which would have created a journey experience down a ramp into a more solemn and quiet space. This part of the design was ruled out because of cost overruns and the concerns of security consultants who said that it would require a security checkpoint before entering. Indeed, the entire experience of the 9/11 memorial is shaped by security measures, from security bollards on its periphery to constant surveillance in ways that are unusual for a US memorial. They reflect the fact that the Ground Zero is still considered to be a site for potential attack. Activity at the memorial is restricted by numerous rules—no loitering, no food carts or vendors, no rallies, no animals—that make it less of a public urban space. This is ironic given that Arad was inspired in his design to create a public space that evoked the grass roots gatherings at Union Square in the days after 9/11.

Because its design is less about a journey and more about looking, the 9/11 memorial is the site of a proliferation of picture-taking. The memorial is highly conducive to picture taking (not all memorials are) in its spectacular form and in its viewpoints for gazing into the pools. In the complex world of social media photographic practices this means that it is a favored place for Instagram and Facebook posts. It is a place where a broad range of emotions are expressed and where practices such as tourism and grieving coexist. It is inevitable that selfies taken at the memorial have circulated and that they have become the subject of a moral debate about what constitutes acceptable behavior at a memorial (similar debates have emerged at the Holocaust memorial in Berlin).

By contrast, when visitors enter the grounds of the lynching memorial, they are told that they may take pictures *of* the sculptures (such as the Akoto-Bamfo sculpture of an enslaved family), but not *with* them. This is a revealing restriction that conjures up potentially offensive picture-taking practices—no taking selfies with the statues of the slaves or of men with their arms up, no posing with these representations of black bodies, as those crowds once did. It is worth noting that in much of the media coverage of the memorial, photographs of the slave statues have been heavily featured, mostly likely because they produce more striking images than the hanging markers.

Gravity

Ultimately both of these memorials are grave and somber in tone and share a sense of weightiness. They are deep—they pull downward toward the ground with gravitational force. In doing so, they exert a pull upon the bodies of those who visit them, shaping their movements and drawing their gazes downward.

The 9/11 memorial explicitly accomplishes this sense of gravity through the design feature of the void. The void has been a trend of contemporary architecture, in particular through the influence of Daniel Libeskind, who deployed it as a motif of his much-lauded Jewish Museum in Berlin. The architectural design of the void conveys a sense of loss through negative space that physically appears empty. The voids pull the gaze of the viewer down into their centers where the water vanishes from our view in its depth. These voids are somber spaces. As Witold Rybczynski (2011) writes, "there is nothing comforting about gazing into the vast pit—or, rather, two pits—of the 9/11 memorial, the water endlessly falling and disappearing into a bottomless black hole. The strongest sense I came away with was of hopelessness." These voids produce a negative space in all senses of the word.

Downward movement at Ground Zero has an inescapable set of associations attached to it. Not only did the buildings fall downward, but some of the most harrowing images of the day, that shocked our sense of humanity, were of people jumping from the buildings downward, downward toward the plaza. In this moment, we witnessed, via videos and photographs, their desperate attempts to retain humanity in the face of death (a woman holding down her skirt, two people

holding hands, people with their limbs extended outward to brace the fall). Diego Cagüeñas (2018) writes hauntingly of seeing the memorial voids in relation to those who jumped to their deaths that day:

> It looked to me that, unintendedly, the memorial made their fall longer, if not endless. Indeed, no matter where one stands, it is not possible to see the bottom of the pools, as if signifying that once in the grip of their gravitational pull a body will fall forever without ever hitting the ground. (p. 475)

The memorial can thus be seen as creating a suspended time, in which the bodies keep falling.

The lynching memorial pulls downward in a different yet no less effective way. When we enter the initial rows, we are at their height, walking among them, and then as the walkway descends, they begin to rise around us. As we enter the central sections of the memorial, row upon row of markers hangs over our heads. There is a tension here, a kind of spatial dynamism, because the columns are hanging down toward us in ways that can feel threatening. One cannot help but imagine them falling. Because the markers are suspended, they are never at rest. In this, they seem to convey something out of place. Like the body of the lynching victim, they should not be hanging. One wants to bring them gently to the ground, to put them at ease.

This spatial tension also extends to the replicas of the markers that are lined up in a field next to the memorial. Here too, time is suspended—the markers are often described as "waiting to be claimed." Time waits, the markers hang, gravity pulls downward, gestures wait for answers. In this design, suspension is a primary strategy that allows the memorial to refuse closure. This refusal of closure is the means through which the memorial demands something of the present, and by extension, the nation. This is memory activated in the present.

In this sense, we can see that these two memorials deploy memory to present very different engagements with the story of the nation. Both are sites of tourism, with the 9/11 memorial now a primary tourist site in New York City, and the lynching memorial drawing significant numbers of visitors to Montgomery. Both these memorials are accompanied by museums that narrativize the events that they mourn. Yet within the designs alone, these memorials can be said to speak to the nation. The epic scale of the 9/11 memorial ascribes to a story of 9/11 exceptionalism, the idea that 9/11 was unparalleled as an event of history, one that created a before and after, that justified all that followed in its wake including not only the changing of national legal and moral norms but also two wars that came at extraordinary human, political, and economic costs. The memorial cannot help but allow for the story of terrorism as a force that attacks the innocent and unprovoked nation to stand.

The National Memorial of Peace and Justice is, by contrast, inherently a condemnation of the nation, a nation that allowed these lynchings to take place for decades with no impunity, a nation that implicitly condoned terrorism in its own land. The markers of the memorial hover over visitors, deliberately producing discomfort, and more importantly, creating a spatial suspension that never comes to rest. The columns will keep hanging; by extension, the bodies are still hanging, as reminders that what was done cannot be resolved, and a reminder that the killings still continue. This memorial intervenes into national narratives to state that the nation must change to move forward, it must reckon with its terrorist past. In this, the lynching memorial is an indicator of a shift in US cultural memory, an indicator, along with the movement within the United States to dismantle monuments to the Confederacy and white supremacy, that cultural memory is now a site of activism, an active questioning of historical narratives. That movement is met with significant resistance but it still indicates that the politics of cultural memory in the United States is moving away from nationalistic memory and toward memory activism. And this change is embodied in the contrast of these two memorials: the 9/11 memorial can be said to affirm the nation, the lynching memorial asks it to change.

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