

Memorial meshwork: The making of the commemorative space of the Hyde Park 7/7/ Memorial

Matthew Allen (University of Leicester)

Steven D. Brown (University of Leicester)

Abstract

How do memorials act to transmit memory through the organization of space? In this paper we contrast a 'preservation' model of the endurance of encoded memory with a 'meshwork' model which treats memory as emergent on the perdurance of the memorial site. Developing a theoretical framework from Tim Ingold's (2011; 2013) work, we describe how memorialization receives its spatial form through a collective work of braiding together multiple threads of activities and material flows. To illustrate, we examine the spatial and temporal organization of the Hyde Park 7/7 memorial from its initial designs, through to installation and contemporary use. We draw on interview data featuring various stakeholders in the 7/7 memorial project to analyse the relationship between memorial space and material relations. We develop an approach to organizational space as an unfinished meshwork that folds together wanted and unwanted memory, making the historical a matter of ongoing live concern but with the absence of a permanent guiding narrative.

Keywords: Materiality, meshwork, memorialization, 7/7 London bombings, Hyde Park, collective memory

Introduction

On 7 July 2005, four young British men detonated explosives they were carrying in rucksacks across the London underground network. 56 people were killed in three underground trains and a bus in Tavistock Square including the four perpetratorsⁱ. The 7/7 bombings were one of the most devastating terrorist incidents in post-war Britain in terms of loss of life and material destruction. On the fourth anniversary of 7/7 a permanent memorial fixture was officially

opened in Hyde Park. The installation comprises 52 separate steel pillars ('stelae') clustered into four groups that give an impression of the geographic distribution of the four bombings (see fig. 1). Each stele – one for every victim – is inscribed with the date and respective time of the explosion as well as the location of the attack. Adjacent to the memorial there is a plaque that bears the names of those who died.



Fig 1. 7 July Memorial in Hyde Park

Memorials are attempts to preserve a contemporary account of a past event, such as the 2005 bombings, in perpetuity. The decision to design and install a memorial demonstrates that there is a shared desire to inscribe the collective memory of the event into a material form. However, often there is neither consensus on the exact form the memorial should take, nor on the details of the account that ought to be preserved. Brian Conway (2010) describes at length the public disputes that marked the efforts to create the Bloody Sunday memorial in Derry as different parties engaged in an interpretative struggle over the then contemporary meaning of the 1972 event. Not least amongst the problems to be addressed in these commemorative processes is the intended community of

memory that the memorial is meant to serve. The Cenotaph memorial in Whitehall, London, for example, was designed primarily as a focal point for commemorative activities by the bereaved and demobilized soldiers from the First World War (see Gregory, 1994). Its status as a national symbol for marking all twentieth century conflicts involving the UK developed much later.

Memorial spaces are spaces of organizing where the staging and arrangement of collective memory is negotiated and contested. This can involve formal public processes for the commissioning and design of the commemorative site. Two of the best known examples of this are the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial in Washington DC, designed by Maya Lin, and the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe in Berlin, designed by Peter Eisenman. In both cases, the initial impetus for the memorials came from private groups of citizens, rather than state initiatives, and were only subsequently taken on as objects of governmental concern as the respective commissioning processes gathered pace (see Sturken, 1997; Parr 2008). As a consequence, both memorials attracted controversy on their inauguration because of concerns about whether the final material form of each memorial sufficiently incorporated the values and ambitions of all relevant stakeholders.

The organizing of commemorative spaces for collective memory involves more than simply recording an account of the past in stone or metal. It requires an ongoing practice of storytelling and reflection. As Ann Rigney observes:

It is evident that monuments reflect a communal desire to hold onto the memory of some person or event, and to give tangible expression to this desire in a particular location. But it can be argued that particular places, and the monuments located there, function as repositories of cultural memories only by virtue of the stories that are told about them. (2005: 21)

Memorials, Rigney suggests, only perform their commemorative function when they act as an anchor for live narratives of the past that have some significance for the present, and when there is an extant community left to tell those stories. Rigney (2008) points to the example of the National War Memorial in

Islandbridge, Dublin. This is a collection of memorial gardens, built in the 1930s, commemorating the Irish war dead from the First World War. Both the location (on the outskirts of the city) and the form of the memorial (gardens rather than stone structure) were chosen because of the sensitivity of commemorating Irish men who had fought with the British Army. In fact, until the late 1980s, the gardens were ill kept and overgrown. This was a memorial to a cultural memory that sat very awkwardly with the historical shifts in Irish national identity in the intervening sixty years, notably in relation to Northern Ireland troubles, and could not be formally revisited until tensions had lessened (Dolan 2006) and Ireland's sites of memory begun to draw international tourism (Conway 2010). The historian Jay Winter tells a similar story about a war memorial in Cambridge, UK:

For years, I asked my students at Cambridge what did they see at the first intersection into town from the railway station. Most answered that they saw nothing at all. What they did not see was the town war memorial, a victorious soldier striding back home, right at the first traffic light into town. They did not see it because it had no real meaning to them. It was simply white noise in stone. For them to see it, someone had to point it out, and others had to organize acts of remembrance around it. Without such an effort, sites of memory vanish into thin air and stay there. (2009: 267)

Winter's students failed to see the memorial because it had no meaning to them – it was just 'white noise in stone'. For it to regain significance, some form of organized activity would have been required to re-articulate the commemorative meanings. Winter's observation, that sites of memory require 'effort' to avoid oblivescence, is key to our understanding of the term memorialization. There is more to memorialization than decisions about fixing aesthetic and symbolic codes in matter and space. We gain purchase on the organizational dimensions of memorialization when we treat it as an ongoing process, requiring the efforts of diverse actors – from designers and town planners to maintenance workers and remembrance activists – wherein the threads of their mutual activity weave (or fail to weave) matter with lasting foci for lived experience.

The potency of a given memorial to commemorate the past depends upon an interaction between the design and material form of the memorial site, which serves as the means of transmission of an account of past events and persons, with the community of memory who are drawn towards and make meaning from their use of the space. In this sense, the organization of memorial space has much in common with other sites of memory, such as corporate museums (see Nissley & Casey, 2002) and heritage sites (Samuel, 1998), where an ‘authorised’ storyline is imposed on events through the architectural and narrative ordering of the site (van der Wetering, 2012). But there are also important differences. Museums and heritage sites are traditionally closed spaces, where visitors are instructed on both *when* and *how* they can interact with features of the place, through control over the flow of movement and touch, along with extensive narrative guiding by means of captioning and displays (MacLeod, 2005). Memorials, by contrast, are normally open spaces, with few restrictions on movement, and greater emphasis placed on visitors bringing their own personal meanings to bear. It has become a common, albeit unexpected, practice for visitors to the Vietnam Veteran’s Memorial to leave personal objects at the site, such as military memorabilia and former possessions of the dead, included such diverse things as letters, medals, wartime combs, razors, clothes, jewellery, and (reportedly) a Harley Davidson (Sturken, 1997). Crucially, in many cases, the identity, meaning, purpose and use of a memorial – what it is, what it means, what and who it is for – does not seem to be fixed by the design process, but rather emerges and fluctuates over time.

In this paper we will explore the spatial and temporal organization of the Hyde Park 7/7 memorial from its initial designs, through to installation and contemporary use. Drawing on insights from key stakeholders in the Hyde Park project, we will treat the memorial site as a relatively ‘open’ space of commemoration, where the memorial itself remains ‘unfinished’. That is to say, that the material form and ordering of the site does not – and was never intended to – fix and foreclose upon the future meaning and significance of the 2005 bombings. The memorial is not then a thing that simply endures in time, and whose physical attributes determine the transmission of memory. It is instead a site whose material *perdurance* (cf. Ingold, 2013) serves as an attractor

for *flows of memorial activities* that become knotted together through the commemorative space.

We begin by situating our approach to the memorial and the memorialization process with respect to recent work in organization studies, memory studies and anthropology on lived and relational spaces. We then turn to the work of the anthropologist Tim Ingold (2000; 2013) to develop the idea of commemorative space as spatio-temporal 'meshwork'. On this basis we briefly discuss the move towards the kind of 'counter-monumental' architecture that informed, in part, the design of the Hyde Park memorial. Drawing on interview material with key stakeholders in the consultation and design process, we then describe how the material properties of the commemorative space are brought into correspondence with a number of distinct memorial flows. Finally, we conclude with some reflections on the need to see spaces of commemoration as meshworks that are weave together uncertain arrangements of materials and activities.

Against Dead Memorial Space

In their survey of approaches to organizational space, Taylor & Spicer (2007) approvingly cite a remark of Foucault's (1980) on the unfortunate tendency to cede notions of change and vibrancy to time, whilst space is treated as fixed and immobile. By contrast, contemporary work in organizational studies informed by the broader 'spatial turn' in the Anglophone social sciences (Sheller and Urry, 2006), argues that organizational space is more than a 'vast emptiness' defined by its 'absence of presence', rather that space is always 'filled with meanings and presences' (Kornberger and Clegg, 2004: 1096). The idea that space is not a neutral container but is, in some sense, always socially produced now passes as uncontroversial in studies of organization. This attests to the influence of Henri Lefebvre's (1991) unitary theory of space, in particular his spatial triad of space as conceived, perceived and lived (for detailed discussions of Lefebvre's triadic framework see, Watkins 2005; Spicer & Hancock 2008; Wasserman & Frenkel 2011).

The Lefebvrian framework has drawn considerable attention to the spatial aspects of organizational control (Hancock 2006; Dale and Burrell 2008) and resistance (Baldry 1999; Fleming and Spicer 2004). It further resonates with the formative work of Maurice Halbwachs (1980; 1992) on collective memory, which was similarly concerned with the reciprocal shaping of social relations with the material features of place. As Halbwachs conceived it:

The group not only transforms the space into which it has been inserted, but also yields and adapts to its physical surroundings. It becomes enclosed within the framework it has built. The group's image of its external milieu and its stable relationships with this environment becomes paramount in the idea it forms of itself, permeating every element of its consciousness, moderating and governing its evolution. (1980: 130)

For Halbwachs, like Lefebvre, the enactment of sociality is interdependent with a lived experience of space. The collective frameworks of memory that Halbwachs saw as defining groups and communities become spatially 'engraved' or 'implaced' on the local environment, in such a way that they give rise to specific forms of thought and action (see Middleton & Brown, 2005: 46-48). This has led to an interest within 'cultural memory studies' around spatial mnemonic practices such as fostering localities with a sense of community (Augé 1995), inscribing landscapes with mnemonic importance (Zerubavel 2003), habituating embodied practices (Connerton 1989), urban planning (Yoneyama, 1999) and tourism at atrocity sites (Sturken, 2007), curating objects in care settings (Bendien et al., 2010), and social practices of remembering and forgetting in post-colonial spaces (Cole, 2001).

This conceptualization of spatial mnemonic practices encourages what we might call a 'preservation' view of memory. Our capacity to project some version of past events into the future appears to depend upon how successfully that account may be either rendered into material form or transmitted through the ongoing survival of a community of memory. Halbwachs (1980) astutely noted cases in which collective memory could persist beyond the destruction of local environments (e.g. urban clearance) and the dwindling of group membership

through a kind of back-and-forth between storytelling and material emplacement. He also noted the importance of processes of active forgetting or disposal of the past, in order for communities not to feel overwhelmed by the burden of the past – ‘society is like the woman from Ephesus who hangs the dead in order to save the living’ (Halbwachs, 1992: 74).

But this view of memory as a kind of preservation encourages us to see the past as something that can be clearly articulated, coded and packaged into defined mnemonic forms such that it can become narrated at a later date (i.e. as encoded in representations of space, to use Lefebvre’s 1991 terms). Rowlinson et al (2014) argue that such a narrative approach to organizational memory overcomes the problems with an information driven notion of memory as storage and retrieval (e.g. Walsh & Ungson, 1991) by emphasizing how storytelling draws on various mnemonic resources to reconstruct and recreate the past in the present. Yet much of what we call memory consists of scattered images, fragments of narrative and inchoate feelings and sensations, which are loosely held together by objects and places. Moreover, the past is rarely ‘over’, in the sense of being a settled matter that is revisited in the present for some clearly defined current purpose (see Brown & Reavey, 2015). Rather, traces of the past inhere in the present, seeping into our daily affairs in a way that disrupts any neat division between now and then. In short, remembering is not the picking up again of past matters that have been preserved awaiting future narration, but rather an attention to the ongoing, living persistence of past persons and events that inheres in our experience of space and place, and which defies ready interpretative resolution.

The anthropologist Tim Ingold (2013) proposes that we approach the persistence of the past in the present through the *perdurance* rather than the *endurance* of things. An endurantist approach defines the identity of a thing as the preservation of its spatially defined properties over time (i.e. things remain what they are through the stability of their properties over the course of their existence). By contrast, a perdurantist approach sees a thing as defined by unfolding temporal phases, during which its properties may be transformed, with the totality of these changes characterizing its particular identity (i.e. things

are become what they are through the manner in which they change over the course of their existence). Ingold illustrates the difference through the example of round mounds, which are commonly found in Northern Europe, especially Scandinavia. Archaeologists have commonly assumed that these sites must have had some monumental importance to ancient communities, and can then be excavated as 'capsules of the past' which contain 'some kernel of meaning that the original mound builders left inside as an enduring record of their lives and deeds' (Ingold, 2013: 80). However, investigations typically find little by way of interesting artifacts or materials with obvious mnemonic significance. The error, Ingold claims, lies in the assumption that a given mound was constructed with memorial significance at some discrete moment, at which point meaning was 'fixed' into its material form, where it has subsequently endured awaiting future interpretation and reconstruction. But what if there was no clear point of origin? What if instead the mound has served for many millennia as a puzzle over which numerous successive communities have sought meaning in different ways? And in so doing, the mound has formed over time as an ongoing patchwork of memory without clear beginning and end. In this sense, it would be the 'temporal trajectories from past to present' which defines the memorial significance of the mound. The mound perdures, it 'carries on in its own way, and ... has – or rather is – its own record, of the processes and occurrences that went into its formation' (Ingold, 2013: 81).

What holds for the mound may also be said of other organized memorial spaces. A monument like the Cambridge War Memorial (called 'The Homecoming' by its designer Robert Tait McKenzie) discussed by Winter (2009) perdures rather than endures. Whilst we can note the date of its installation in 1922, the origin of the monument stretches backwards through its design, the casting of the figurative aspects in bronze, the materials out of which it was forged along with the architectural codes that were drawn upon, and the pre-history of the site where it was erected. The memorial site gathers up within itself a bundle of temporal trajectories that become knotted together through its continuing perdurance. Ingold uses the phrase 'meshwork' to describe how sites are produced through this tying together of trajectoriesⁱⁱ:

Places ... are like knots, and the threads from which they are tied are lines of wayfaring. A house, for example, is a place where the lines of its residents are tightly knotted together. But these lines are no more contained within the house than are threads contained within a knot. Rather, they trail beyond it, only to become caught up with other lines in other places, as are threads in other knots. Together they make up what I have called the *meshwork*. (Ingold, 2011: 149)

There are links to be drawn here with the approach to spatial arrangements as a contingent 'assemblage of flows' developed by Knox et al (2008) and with Kornberger & Clegg's (2004) notion of the ordering of 'spatial material ensembles'. What is shared across these works is the idea of spatial-temporal organization as the provisional and ongoing arrangement of continuous varying movements, or what Deleuze & Guattari (1988) famously term 'lines of becoming'. The specific contribution Ingold makes to this mix of ideas is to draw attention to the correspondence of trajectories or 'flows' that are established in the work of tying them together. For example, when a potter throws clay, their ongoing flow of kinaesthetic awareness and skill is converted or 'transduced' into the material flow of the clay through the mediation of the potter's wheel (Ingold, 2013: 97-104). Likewise, in erecting the Cambridge War Memorial, the ongoing collective affects and concerns of the bereaved and demobilized soldiers were transduced into material flows of bronze and stone via the design and casting process.

Considered as meshworks, memorial spaces draw together lines of collective thought and feeling into correspondence with material flows. This is particularly evident in the memorial designs that James Young (2000) refers to as 'counter-monuments'. These are typically open sites that reject clear narrative coding and instead invite exploration. Young offers the example of the *Monument Against Fascism* in Hamburg, Germany designed by Jochen Gerz and Esther Shalev-Gerz. This consists of a forty-foot column without any kind of inscription. The column was covered in soft lead, and visitors were invited to mark their names on the site, using metal styluses. Inevitably this resulted in all kinds of graffiti, including names, slogans and symbols (both Stars of David and swastikas). Gradually, over

a period of six years, the column was slowly lowered into a specially prepared space underneath until eventually the memorial 'disappeared', along with all the varied expressions of identity inscribed upon it. The echo with the disappearance of the victims of European fascism was deliberate.

The perdurance of counter-monuments – the way they draw attention to their temporal trajectory instead of encoding a clear point of origin – invites visitors into a work of memory. Young (2000) also discusses a remarkable design by Horst Hoheisel installed in Kassel, Germany. In 1908, a large fountain with reflective pool was built in the city's main square, funded by a local Jewish businessman, Sigmund Aschrott. In 1939, members of the Nazi party demolished the fountain, and set about removing all trace of its existence. Over forty years later, a proposal to restore the fountain was made. Hoheisel's bold design was to construct the fountain 'upside down', as a hollow shape in the same form as the original fountain, but now sunk into the soil, with water running down into the darkness rather spouting up into the light. The reasoning behind this was that to restore the fountain as it had been would, in effect, suggest that the crimes of Nazism were now overcome, that a line could be drawn under the past. The finished work, as Hoheisel describes it 'is not the memorial at all ... it is only history turned into a pedestal, an invitation to passersby who stand on it to search for the memorial in their own heads. For only there is the memorial to be found' (Hoheisel, cited in Young, 2000: 100).

The 'inverted fountain', like the Gerz's Hamburg monument, refuses to offer a closed narrative of the past – instead it draws visitors into its meshwork. In some cases, this can take the form of actively contesting the memorial itself. In 1998, neo-Nazi demonstrators took over the memorial site, attempting to 'reclaim' the space. But for Hoheisel, this demonstration affirmed rather than defaced the nature of the memorial. As Young puts it, 'their triumphal striding atop the ruins of the fountain that their predecessors had destroyed in 1939, seemed to bear out his [Hoheisel's] dark hope that this would become a negative centre of gravity around which all memory – wanted and unwanted – would now congeal' (2000: 102).

Ingold's notion of meshwork provides us with a different agenda for studying the organization of memorial space. It directs attention to the weaving together of flows of materials and activities. In the following sections we will explore the manner in which the Hyde Park memorial perdures, the sorts of flows that become knotted together - along with those which are excluded - and how the emergent meshwork folds together both 'wanted' and 'unwanted' memory.

Conflicts of Memory: Methodological details

The following discussion draws on data collected for the research project *Conflicts of Memory* (see AUTHOR, 2015; AUTHORS, 2015). The project team gathered two datasets: one corpus comprised news reporting of the bombings during the immediate aftermath and later commemorative activity; the other collected qualitative primary material including interviews and focus groups conducted with people of varying degrees of affectedness by the attacks. The data that we will discuss in this article presents the accounts of people who were involved in organizing the memorial response to the London bombings. Although accounts were mostly captured during interviews, we will also draw attention to news reporting when we seek to explore how the memorial was received and represented. To guide participant recruitment, in 2008 we undertook a situational analysis (Clarke, 2005), which involved a comprehensive survey and analysis of the media coverage of 7/7 over a twelve month period (cf. Lorenzo-Dus and Bryan, 2011) in order to map key 'memory choreographers' (Conway 2010) associated with commemorative responses to the bombings. We approached twenty-five individuals for interview using publically available contact information. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with survivors, bereaved relatives, activists, emergency and psychological service personnel and the Hyde Park memorial designer.

Kansteiner and Weilnböck (2008: 234) alert us to the risks of conducting interviews with participants that have been directly and indirectly affected by terrorist events, including reanimating their psychological trauma and emotional distress. John Tulloch, himself a survivor of 7/7, has written reflexively about how, in the wake of the attacks, interviews presented him with occasions that 'called out' from him different subjective responses (Tulloch, 2008a: 454), with

some interviews opening up a greater degree to 'engage' with his emerging 'multiple identities' as survivor, victim and media professor (Tulloch, 2008b: 34). Interviews call up an emotional demand but they can also lend occasions for performing subjectivities. With this in mind, we approached participants that had already discussed the bombings in public interviews. This mattered because, while it is unhelpful for researchers to speculate on participant motivations, prior participation in public interviews at least signaled that a prospective participant had deemed engaging with 'interview culture' (Cameron, 2000) something that they were emotionally, and perhaps politically, ready to do. The potentially demanding nature of interviews motivated us to open up the fieldwork as far as possible to allow participants to engage, in their own ways, with what they may also be experiencing as emerging multiple identities. Interviews typically lasted around one hour, though some ran longer where the participant indicated their willingness to continue. All interviews were recorded and transcribed. For the interests of the broader project a peer-reviewed coding framework was established after an initial reading of the data corpus. The transcripts were then coded using NVivo 8 following conventions in conversation and discourse analysis (Willig, 1999; Wooffitt, 2005).

For our purposes here, rather than present a systematic analysis of themes or discursive resources, we have organized the data to correspond to three phases of the memorialization process: initial consultation, the design process itself and then the reception to the memorial following its inauguration. We do so not with the intention of representing these phases as discrete organizational processes that were carried out by individuals or groups working in isolation; our empirical material makes it clear that this was never the case. Rather, by ordering and presenting the data in this way we hope readers will follow us through the details, identified by participants, of a series of contestations and negotiations that were knotted together to become what we identify as the meshwork of the memorial. To paraphrase Ingold's point about knots noted above, our analysis proceeds to show how three lines of organized activity, that are no more contained within the memorial than are threads contained within a knot, produced social entanglements that transformed a lived space in Hyde Park into a lasting memorial to the 2005 London bombings.

Consultation

The process of memorializing the London bombings in Hyde Park involved a range of participants. Andy Groarke and Kevin Carmody were the designers commissioned to work on the Hyde Park memorial project after their firm tendered a successful proposal to an open competition. Together they worked closely with bereaved relatives, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, The Royal Parks' management board and public stakeholders throughout the design process. In the first extract Andy Groarke invites us to consider the finished memorial as still involved in an ongoing process of memorialization:

The memorial in broad conclusion is having to reconcile fundamental opposites all the time, between singular, collective, between lots of diametrically opposed emotions and between the familiar and the unfamiliar as well. (AG)

Andy Groarke here presents the work of memorialization that is materially realized by the Hyde Park installation as both completed and ongoing. The description of the memorial as “*having to reconcile fundamental opposites all the time*” suggests that the opening ceremony in 2009 was neither the start nor the completion, but rather one moment in the ongoing perdurance of the memorial. Moreover, Andy Groarke characterizes the ‘energies’ that are gathered around the memorial as “fundamental opposites”. This is clarified when he describes the consultation process:

The character of the memorial came about through some very emotionally difficult conversations about what they thought the memorial should be and we also produced quite a lot of research that was presented back to the families in terms of figurative and representational memorials versus abstract memorials and the differences between civilian disaster memorials, of which there are not that many, compared to war memorials, of which there are many (AG)

Groarke here introduces a dilemma arising from the meshworking of this site: whether to adopt the architectural codes of a memorial to civilian disasters or that of war memorials. Whilst civilian disasters often involve great heroism on

the part of the victims, the overall narrative is one of misfortune and ill fate. By contrast, war memorials have greater semiotic complexity, and typically embed codes of sacrifice, national identity and loss in the service of a greater cause. War memorials also classically use figurative architecture, with representations of the dead, whilst memorials of civilian disasters tend towards abstraction (such as with the 'Stairway to Heaven' memorial to the 1943 Bethnal Green Tube disaster in London). The question for the designers and other stakeholders was then how the choice of codes would serve to gather up different kinds of temporal trajectories, which would knot the 7/7 bombings within a history of civic misfortune or that of national conflict.

From a different perspective, that of the families involved in consultations, we find another "struggle" taking priority over resolving the memorial's aesthetic codes, namely bringing different hopes and desires for the memorial into the same space. Julie Nicholson's daughter, Jenny, was killed in the blast at Edgware Road. In the following extract she describes how the families that participated in the consultation process contributed their own ideas of what constituted a fitting memorial:

You have 52 families being represented and from the outset, once the team were appointed, they engaged with the wider family group as well as the representatives on the board, but you can imagine if there were 52 families, there were probably 52 different ideas of what an appropriate memorial might be. So we were all in touch with different people, so we were getting different hopes, desires and aspirations, so I would say the first struggle was actually bringing everybody's hopes, desires and aspirations into the space and working with all of that in a realistic way.
(JN)

At the beginning of the process, there was a bringing together of the fifty two families, through their representatives, whose individual concerns around how best to take forward the memory of their relative were channeled through the designers. As Julie describes it, this involved a gathering up of diverse 'hopes, desires and aspirations' into a collective 'space'. At this point, the meshwork consisted of a loose assembly of anticipated memorial trajectories. We might

describe this as akin to a set of threads that have been placed together, like the strands of a rope in the initial stages of its making, before force has been applied to bind them together. Esther Hyman, who lost her sister Miriam Hyman in the Tavistock Square explosion, recalls the process in the following terms:

There was consultation as to the most appropriate format and so on. Personally, and I don't want to officially speak for my parents, but I think in this context it's alright to say to you that we would have preferred a different format for a public memorial. My preference would have been for a garden of some sort, a place where people could go. So nature for me is the great therapist and, so we would have preferred something more functional in that way. So the majority view was taken into consideration when they came up with this memorial. (EH)

Esther and her family had different aspirations for the site. They would have preferred memorial gardens rather than an installation. The eventual design that emerged from the process reflected the effort to braid together different ongoing flows of attention and concern, through the placing of a built structure in the green space of Hyde Park. But whilst the channeling of different memorial desires held together the bereaved families, it also performed a work of exclusion. Susan Harrison, who survived the Piccadilly Line blast with severe injuries, relates to the Hyde Park memorial in a very particular way:

I don't think [the memorial] is to do with anyone else but the people that have lost family to be honest. It is absolutely nothing to do with anyone else. It is about them and what they wanted. They were involved from the beginning, they chose that place, they requested that place, they worked with designers, they did exactly what they wanted to do and I think it's lovely to have somewhere to go. (SH)

One set of temporal trajectories around 7/7 that remained loose in the gradual winding together of the Hyde Park memorial process was survivor memories of the bombings. It is common for national memorials to be primarily concerned with the needs and wishes of the living (i.e. the bereaved families), secondarily with marking the loss of the dead, and then in a tertiary sense with the

experiences of survivors. This can clearly be seen in this history of formal commemorative activities such as Armistice Day/Remembrance Day (Gregory, 1994). The relationship between bereaved families and survivors of 7/7 is complex (see AUTHORS, 2015). Survivors are witnesses to final moments of the lost family members. They often feel obligations towards bereaved family members to recall what happened, but also to exercise care in how they frame their accounts (see AUTHORS 2015b). Bereaved family members can, for their part, have complex and unsettled feelings towards those who have survived when their relatives have not. Weaving the meshwork around a central core of survivor memories might have acted to undo the delicate weave of family memorial trajectories as it began to pull together.

Design

Another dilemma related to the location of the memorial. The Cenotaph, for example, is placed in the administrative and symbolic heart of the capitol, near to the Houses of Parliament. This renders its status as a semi-fixed marker of ongoing debate around national identity and conflict. If the 7/7 memorial had been similarly located, it would have suggested that memories of the bombing belonged within the 'line' of national politics. However, there was no question at the time that the memorial needed to be in London, in rough proximity to where the bombings occurred. In fact, in 2006 five memorial plaques were unveiled as nearby to the explosion sites as physically achievable while remaining publically on display. But these are not objects that support reflective commemoration, as they are embedded in spaces of transit, and thus only really visible to those who either unintentionally notice them or else deliberately seek them out.

The choice of the Hyde Park site can be seen as an attempt to broaden the weave of its meshwork: in London, but just outside its political centre; a national memorial, but in a garden space. According to Andy Groarke, the selection of place became the means to resolve issues of conceived space that were otherwise frustrating the form that the memorial would eventually take:

We researched the history of Hyde Park. With an attempt to ground any proposals into the network of activity and environmental setting of the park before we even decided what the character of the memorial was.

(AG)

Mapping out the patterns of activity and the features of the space became a way of anticipating the range of potential trajectories that might become woven into the memorial. As a significant green space within central London, Hyde Park attracts a broad mixture of tourists, workers on lunchtime breaks, dating couples, parents and children, open air concert goers and – on many notable occasions – demonstrators and protestors.

When Andy Groarke speaks of ‘grounding’ the memorial, he is articulating how the designs drew together the already existing flows of activity through the park, to which the memorial added its particular torque. The site is off one of the main paths in the park, in an open space ringed by trees. The steel stelae appear to both blend with the trees, since they resemble poles supporting saplings from a distance, and contrast with them due to their tightly packed number. Visitors to the park then have to go out their way to experience the memorial as ‘perceived space’ (Lefebvre, 1991). When they do so, it becomes apparent that it is possible to walk amongst the stelae, which are irregularly spaced. Their height leads the eye upwards, where the massed stelae give the impression of pointing together towards the sky. The cast steel of each individual stele is uniquely dimpled, with no two exactly alike. This draws the hand to trace its irregular surface.



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Whilst the finished design tends towards abstraction, this layering of one set of material flows upon another offers up specific kinds of experiences. For example, visitors to the park typically walk at a leisurely pace, often without fixed destination. If they are drawn away from the path by the memorial, then the irregular packing together of the stelae slows that pace even further. The space of the memorial acts as a kind of puzzle, requiring exploration and contemplation. Furthermore, the material features of the space point outward to other kinds of experience:

I think that it was very important for us that when you first come to this part of Hyde Park there are certain ciphers of this thing that causes resonances to other things that you've experienced previously (AG)

A classically designed memorial deploys a range of symbolic registers – flags, figures, flowers, Greco-Roman architectural pillars and curves, commemorative texts and quotations – to constitute a clear narrative of remembrance and loss. These devices are almost entirely absent from the 7/7 memorial. Instead Andy Groarke speaks of ‘ciphers’ that ‘resonate’ with other kinds of experience. Although the memorial does not use figurative architectural codes, there is personalization, since there is one stele for every victim, each different from

every other. In this sense it echoes the religious commemorative practice of having a single candle for each loved one without referencing any particular religion. These ciphers extend to the text used throughout the memorial. The lettering was inscribed in a font specially designed for the memorial based upon early London Transport typefaces. In this way, The 7/7 memorial specifically references and speaks to an experience of London without the need for explicit narrative direction. However the particular kind of 'London-ness' that is invoked is deliberately chosen. It is not the London of the 'Blitz spirit', which was much cited in the immediate wake of the 2005 Bombings (see Brown and Hoskins, 2010). Nor is it London as the seat of government and political decision-making (although the proximity of the memorial to Speaker's Corner, along with the site of the 1982 Hyde Park Irish Republican bombing, and the start point for the 2002 Stop the War coalition march, references the complex political history of the capitol). It is instead the London of the quotidian, the everyday movement of it's people through the transport network and streets – or the 'lived experience' of space, as Lefebvre (1991) would have it. The bombings could have been represented in the memorial as a dramatic interruption, a sign of an irrevocable change in national and international relations. But instead they are recuperated and woven back into the daily fabric of the city.

Designs for the original font by Professor Phil Baines. Image reproduced here with author's permission

Reception

Nafeez Ahmed has written extensively on the “War on Terror” in academic and journalistic contexts. At the time of the London bombings he was living in London conducting doctoral research. In the following extract, Nafeez contrasts the Hyde Park memorial with the commemorative plaque at Kings Cross station:

People had flowers and all this kind of stuff and they'd been calling for a memorial there [Hyde Park] and in Kings Cross, you know, you've got the Kings Cross plaque, but in Hyde Park there is this sense of this mosaic of multiple victims. (NA)

The Hyde Park memorial is distinct, according to Nafeez, because it offers a distinct feeling or ‘sense’ that is not found with the Kings Cross plaque. That sense is of a patchwork of differences, a ‘mosaic’, which preserves the diversity of the victims. The Kings Cross plaque is simply designed, listing the names of the victims, along with a brief introduction and the postscript – ‘London will not forget them and all those who suffered that day’. In interactional terms, this

affords very little for commemorative work. Should one lay flowers at this plaque, which is inconveniently placed at the bottom of a flight of stairs in the main thoroughfare of the Kings Cross/St Pancras link building? On what might one reflect as one reads the text (whilst avoiding blocking the way of travelers exiting from the nearby Eurostar train platform)? Some sense of the difference between the two memorials is provided by the following description of the Hyde Park site, as Julie Nicholson has it, the Hyde Park memorial:

honours the dead, it's..... as a work of art it would stand alone, it has the ability to reflect light and absorb light, it casts long shadows, but it glistens..... and as people approach it and walk through it, I think it's difficult not to have a sense of well, this could have been me..... and I think it provides a narrative for people as they move through and people can stand in amidst and pause for a moment to remember, but equally, children can play amongst columns, people can picnic alongside and..... it's a thing of beauty, it represents great sorrow, but honours wonderful people, so that's why I think it's complete and holistic (JN)

Julie, whose daughter was killed during the attacks, points to the way in which the memorial space is not static, but rather changes according to the time of day. It is, in effect, not a single thing with a fixed set of attributes, but a set of materials whose properties are variable, depending on when it is viewed. It also affords multiple forms of interaction. If visitors wish, they can pass through the stelae and pick out the four groups of victims, since the arrangement of the steel pillars loosely gathers each group together, creating distinct routes through the installation for visitors to discover. But equally, the stelae work well for children's games, or as a focal point for sitting or picnicking. The interactional 'cost' – what visitors have to do in order to participate in commemoration – is low. As a consequence, a diverse range of visitors and desires can be drawn together around the memorial. This reflects, in turn, precisely the mosaic of multiple victims that Nafeez describes. The memorial is a meshwork that perdures, or transforms over time, not a static site that endures.

Treating the memorial as a meshwork allows us to see that the site is considerably more open, in both a narrative and an interactional sense, than

both the Kings Cross plaque and traditional form of memorial installation. It is useful to think of the mnemonic constitution of the Hyde Park memorial as relational, rather than fixed. Rigney offers a relational understanding of memory, and its matter, where she explains the 'ongoing circulation of acts of remembrance across different media, including monuments, whereby memories are continuously being refigured' (Rigney, 2008: 94). Remembrance and the memorial simultaneously and mutually reconfigure each other as discourse and matter settle through the process of memorialisation. The Hyde Park memorial acts to 'collect' lines of movement – it draws together diverse persons and narratives of 7/7 and allows them to cohere, but not assimilate. We might say that the work the memorial does is to weave together social relations, to entangle them without enforcing a dominant narrative.

There are, however, risks to such a commemorative strategy. In July 2009 reports circulated that graffiti had appeared on the memorial in the form of 'a couple of words... written with a black marker pen' (BBC, 2009). The graffiti appeared less than two weeks after the official opening of the memorial and its specific contents were not publically disclosed. Subsequently, in July 2014, on the eve of the ninth anniversary of the bombings, the words 'Blair lied thousands died' and '4 innocent Muslims' were written in red and black ink (BBC, 2014). In their coverage of the 2009 incident *BBC News* featured the reaction of a bereaved relative. Dania Gorodi's sister, Mihaela Otto, was killed on 7 July 2005 as a result of the explosion on the train travelling between Kings Cross and Russell Square. A news article quoted her saying:

If [the graffitists] are capable of vandalising a memorial, which is the symbol of a tragic event and respect for the dead, then the vandalism is a symbolic act of terrorism. I don't find it just sad but outrageous that somebody would do this. They don't give a damn about what we believe in. (Gorodi cited in BBC News, 2009)

For Dania Gorodi, the graffiti is a symbolic re-enactment of the initial violence of the bombings. Understandably, as a relative of one the victims, she treats the act as demeaning the memory of the victims and 'respect' which the memorial renders into material form. To deface or seek to alter the material form is, for

her, a challenge to the commemorative settlement of what the loss of life on 7/7 means.

What we see here are the stakes of designing a space that is capable of collecting together a mosaic of social relations. Some of those relations 'stick together' in ways that are antagonistic, potentially violent, either symbolically or literally. The risk of ensuring that a memorial does a lasting work of making the past relevant, unlike the Cambridge war memorial or the Islandbridge gardens, is that both wanted and unwanted orientations to the past are rendered possible. Keeping the past going means keeping it open, a live matter of concern. From this perspective, whilst the graffiti was clearly distressing for many parties, it can be treated as evidence that the 7/7 memorial 'works'. In the following long quote, Andy Groarke grapples with this problematic:

If [the memorial] is defaced, and it has been defaced once, it can be returned to the original finish by just simple ice blasting. Now that raises interesting questions in its own right. Once we, as designers, have done a responsible job in giving the client, the custodians of the memorial, a way of maintaining it, it begs the question should this memorial be maintained, or should it let it register what people want to do with it. That's a kind of relativist argument. Whether you think that vandalism or the act of leaving a register or a mark is a good or a bad thing, or it's just recording what people feel, or do, in public space. I think, if I'm honest, I don't think that's our responsibility to define that. I think our responsibility is to say this is about as indestructible as you could possibly make it, so the form of these things will remain the same whatever you do to them. Its not like a stone obelisk, which would be changed by striking it, or even spraying it and sandblasting it back, it would change the integrity, the singularity of the original state of this thing and we wanted the original state to be. (AG)

As we have seen earlier, Andy Groarke viewed his role as a designer as facilitating 'difficult conversations' to arrive at a final form that could 'reconcile fundamental opposites'. Not only the shape and construction of the memorial, but the way it related to the material properties of the space within Hyde Park, were the material realization of that process. The actual installation marked the

completion of Groarke's work on the memorial, but not of the ongoing commemorative labour of weaving together of social relations and memorial flows. Groarke here asserts, at that point, it was no longer his role to steer the direction that commemorative labour might take. He does, however, state that offering the possibility for the memorial to be returned to its initial state (through ice blasting), such that its material integrity can be preserved, was a part of what he considered doing a 'responsible job'.

The Hyde Park memorial perdures: the range of meanings it can support are not somehow 'written into' its design, but rather depend upon the interactions which take place around it, and which may indeed modify, transform or degrade its overall form. The ontological stability of the memorial – its persistence in place as a particular kind of thing – is not secured solely by its material embeddedness. Instead it is *achieved* through a dialectical interplay of process and permanence. The social relations it collects can 'make their mark' on the memorial, either through their actions (as with the Horheisel monument) or through efforts to engrave their narratives and constructions of the past on the site itself (as with the graffiti). What Groarke is suggesting is that the design of the 7/7 memorial allows 'custodians of memory' to decide whether they want to interrupt this dialectic, to reset the process, if you like, in such a way that it might begin again. So whilst the 'form of this thing' might be, to a degree, indestructible, what it actually is, its identity as a way of mobilizing the past in the present, is in principle an open matter.

Meshworks as Conditional Weaves of Time and Space

We have sought to explore the organization of a very specific commemorative site, the Hyde Park 7/7 memorial. This site has much in common with other major contemporary commemorative projects (e.g. the 9/11 memorial in New York; the Atocha station memorial to the 2004 Madrid bombings), in that it involved prolonged consultation and negotiation between a wide range of stakeholders. But what makes the Hyde Park memorial distinctive is its deliberately 'unfinished' and 'open' properties. Although it shares features with counter-monuments such as the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe in

Berlin, the absence of any clear guiding narrative around what is being commemorated and the meaning that ought to be accorded to the event is highly unusual (the abstraction of the Eisenman designed memorial, for example, is counter-balanced by a museum to the Holocaust built below the installation). The commemorative space of the Hyde Park memorial is not complete, despite the inauguration of the site, but is rather continuously changing as flows of activity are woven together with the material arrangement of the site.

Ingold's (2011; 2013) notion of meshwork is valuable for both our argument and for organization studies more generally because it draws attention to the conditional weaving of spatial and temporal complexity. The memorial site is constituted out a range of materials, whose positioning interacts with the flows and rhythms of the environmental setting in Hyde Park in a highly contingent manner. There are very different kinds of memorial experiences to be had, for instance, when the site is enveloped by the activities of casual visitors, with children running between the steel pillars, from the annual occasions when the anniversary of the bombings is formally marked, and again from the late nights and early mornings when groups of homeless people make overnight camps on the site. The memorial draws together a wide range of different activities and memorial desires and wishes, including those that would be seen as 'unwanted' by the many of the stakeholders involved in the commissioning and design process. Memory then emerges not as directly encoded into the physical design of the site, but rather through the ongoing weaving together of lines of activity with the emerging interactional properties of the installation. What this space 'is', what it means, and who it is for, will doubtless fluctuate during the course of the memorial's perdurance.

A meshwork is an artfully crafted assembling of skills, forces, materials and knowledge that are intricately knotted together rather than fixed in place. The reciprocal movements and tension between the 'parts' are pivotal to what the meshwork does, hence it continuously risks collapsing through becoming too tightly or too loosely arranged. Crucially, the meshwork has a collective character, wherein it cannot be reduced to any constitutive elements or to a given creative impulse. When, as Ingold (2013: 98-99) describes, a kite takes to

the air, it does not do so entirely through the intentional will of the human who launches it, but rather through ‘a dance of animacy’ where the propensities of wind, kite, string and hand engage with one another, passing movements and forces back and forth between them. In a similar fashion, whilst we have given quite a lot space to the contribution made to the 7/7 memorial by the designer Andy Groarke, as he himself makes clear, the memorial is not a finished product that directly expresses his efforts, nor the desires of the families (or any other stakeholder), but rather an ongoing and incomplete assembling of memorial activities and materials – a meshwork – whose character and function emerges through the continuous movements that vibrate through its loose arrangement.

Meshworks also maintain complex and deep historical relations. The life of the Hyde Park memorial goes far beyond small period between the initial commissioning (2006) and the opening (2009). The materials, desires and activities that are woven together have their own historicity. These include, but are not limited to, matters such as the architectural styles informing commemoration of the past thirty years, the urban history of Hyde Park as a site of protest and debate, the way that the London Transport system has been the scene of conflict and violence dating back to the nineteenth century and the memorial fabric of London itself. These historical trajectories do not form a simple backdrop, but are instead matters of direct relevance within the meshwork, mediated through the lettering, steel, earth, trees and visitors that participate in the ongoing making of the site.

The materials that are woven together in memorial meshwork transduce the desire to remember and commemorate, and in so doing allow for its ongoing persistence and transformation. We would argue that the openness and provisional character of the Hyde Park memorial are precisely its strengths. It works as a commemorative space because it can weave together different and unanticipated flows of memorial concern. This necessarily involves ‘keeping loose’ certain unwanted threads, such as survivor testimonies, that have the potential to overstretch the braid of the memorial. But it also enables a capacity to tolerate unexpected and potentially unwelcome activities – such as graffiti or homeless camps – that bring their own historical trajectories into the meshwork.

Because these other unanticipated flows are what will ultimately ensure that the site and the event that it seeks to commemorate, will to some degree remain a live object of concern, whatever form that might take, rather than disappear into the unnoticed world of commemorations which fail to matter to the communities around them.

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ⁱ The victims were a diverse range of people, from a range of ethnic and social backgrounds, a number of whom were born outside the UK. Most of the victims were either working in London or visiting for work.

ⁱⁱ Ingold (2011) cites Lefebvre (1991) as one of his sources for the term, where it associated with the spatial practices or lived experience of space in the triadic model. However, the terms also appears in Manuel DeLanda's Deleuzian inspired social theory (2006). The probable route source of all these uses is within architectural and artistic discourse, where it refers to the weaving together of varied materials.