

Japan Studio 2013 Fall

Means of Remembering/ Means of Forgetting

MEMORY, MEMORIAL & MEMORIALIZATION

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Introduction

Though the country was devastated, still mountains and rivers remain. On Spring coming, the City was filled with trees and grasses. –Toho

On 3.11.2011, a magnitude 9 earthquake and the resulting 40-meter-high tsunami struck Northeastern Japan. Some 20,000 people were killed or reported missing; over 4,000 houses were lost. The enormous loss was compounded as hundreds of square miles of land disappeared under ocean water. Fields were salted and entire cities ravaged. Haunting memories of silent bodies, disrupted communities, and shattered homes reverberate.

Still, and perhaps most surprising, was the Japanese people's resilience: their robust ability to restore order, in silence. There were no riots or vandalism following 3.11. Lost purses were returned, and lost safes were recovered. Three months after the disaster, almost all of the region's roads and railways had been re-opened. In six months, the Shinkansen bullet railway, Japan's national pride—returned to full service, and the Sendai International Airport was cleaned and opened again. And, the local fishermen themselves salvaged nearly 200 years amount of underwater debris from the bays.

Traditionally the Japanese mourn for forty nine days by sharing their life with the lost spirit at home. Then, Japanese consecrate the ashes of the dead to tombs or temples, ceremonially declaring they will see the departed next Obon. This said, they return to life as usual.

After the crisis of 3/11, the Japanese mourned for one year, refraining strictly from all kinds of entertainments (including comedies on TV, end of the year happy party and festivals).

For the visitor today it is almost impossible to identify the scars of this disaster. The sadness of loss is augmented by the necessary erasure. One is overwhelmed by the sense of the loss of the real sadness. There is nothing really real about disaster, the power of nature, its random cruelty. Even the wrecked ship catapulted by the tsunami far inland, stands isolated in front of tourists' eyes, as a symbol of the event. One can remember the event, but can not recall the raw emotions of the day.

Yes. Tomorrow should be another day. Men/women need to forget to move forward. A memorial delineates the threshold between remembering and forgetting. We must negotiate remembering the tragedy and forgetting the immediate pain.

As a class, we will carefully examine the nature of memory. How can architecture treat loss and how to best accommodate the needs of individuals, whose loss is personal, along with the collective of communities members, of the region and Nation. We will visit the Kesennuma, Ishinomaki and Sendai to better understand and reconstruct the before and after. We will determine the course of events as they figured through the traces of debris, fragments and altered lives. We will design a repository for these memories and artifacts on a site now sacred to a community.

Memory, Memorial and Memorialization will be re-imagined by questioning a basic, fundamental motivation of architecture - to accommodate the ephemeral, eternal and spiritual. Our studio will ask you to respond.

Syllabus

MODULE ONE [WKS 1]: Analysis of personal memory:

We will ask each student to produce a memory piece. They will identify

an event of loss, change, or transformation that has particular resonance individually. They will represent this subjectively. The memory piece can take any form, in any media or medium.

MODULE TWO [WKS 2] Visiting Tradition : Urasenke Chanoyo(Tea ceremony) center.

This week will be devoted to exploration of traditions of mourning for Japanese culture. Students will also address specific characteristics of Japanese nature, culture, history, and people (with a focus on the Tohoku region).

MODULE THREE [WKS 2~4] What is collective memory, memorial, and memorialization?

Part A: The Theory of Loss

An analysis of how loss is remembered in our built environment will be conducted through the discussion topics, readings and films listed below.

Site of Disaster:

Kenzo Tange: Memorial for Perished Student War Workers, Awaji Island

Arata Isozaki: On Ruins

Kenzaburo Oe: Notes on Hiroshima

Resonance of Place

Alois Riegl: Modern Cult of Monuments

James Young: At Memory's Edge

Traditions around Death (comfort of mourners and prayer of spirits)

Aldo Rossi: Dal Co - Roman

Aldo Rossi: Carthage Tabula Rasa

Politics of Interpretation (event narratives - past and future)

Andreas Huyssens: Present Past

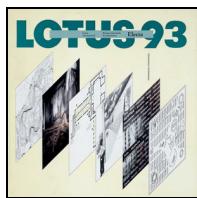
Michael Shulan: 9/11 Memorial

Films/Movies

Imamura Shohei: *Black Rain*

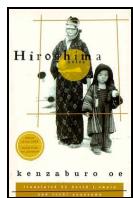
Alain Renais: *Hiroshima Mon Amour*

Yojiro Takita: *Departures*



On Ruins

Arata Isozaki



Notes on Hiroshima

Kenzaburo Oe



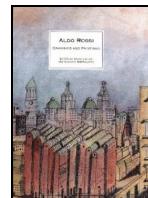
Cult of Monuments

Alois Riegel



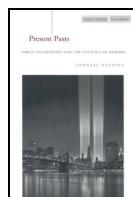
At Memory's Edge

James Young



Roman

Rossi & Dal Co



Present Past

Andreas Huyssens



9/11 Memorial

Michael Shulan



Hiroshima Mon Amour

Alain Renais



Black Rain

Imamura

Shohei



Carthage Tabula

Rasa

Aldo Rossi

Part B: Case Studies

Students are asked for graphic analysis of past memorials, and to improve their understanding of the 311 Tohoku specifics.

Students will choose one of the following to analyze:

1. Louis Kahn, Holocaust Memorial at Roosevelt Island (original version vs built one)
2. Ise Shrine
4. World Trade Center 911Memorial
5. Maya Lin, Vietnam War Memorial
6. Kenzo Tange, Hiroshima Peace Memorial

7. Kenzo Tange, Minami Awaji-shi Student Memorial
8. Kobe Human Disaster Reduction Facility
9. Aldo Rossi, San Cataldo Cemetery
10. Terragni, Danteum
11. Carlo Scarpa, Brion Tomb and Sanctuary
12. Mies van der Rohe, Rosa Luxenbourg Memorial
13. Malraux Memorial to WW II (base of Notre Dame)
14. Boltanski Room: Holocaust Museum, DC
15. Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Hall
16. Tada Ando, Yumenbutai Project: Awaji



Holocaust Memorial

Louis Kahn

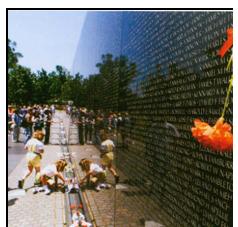


Ise Shrine

Itukushima Shrine



911 Memorial



Vietnam War Memorial

Maya Lin



Awaji Student Memorial

Kenzo Tange



Kobe Disaster Reduction



Hiroshima Peace Memorial

Kenzo Tange



San Cataldo Cemetery

Aldo Rossi



Danteum

Terragni



Brion Tomb and Sanctuary
Carlo Scarpa



Rosa Luxembourg
Mies van der Rohe



Holocaust Museum, DC
Boltanski Room



Malraux WWII
Memorial



Yumenbutai
Tadao Ando

Notre Dame

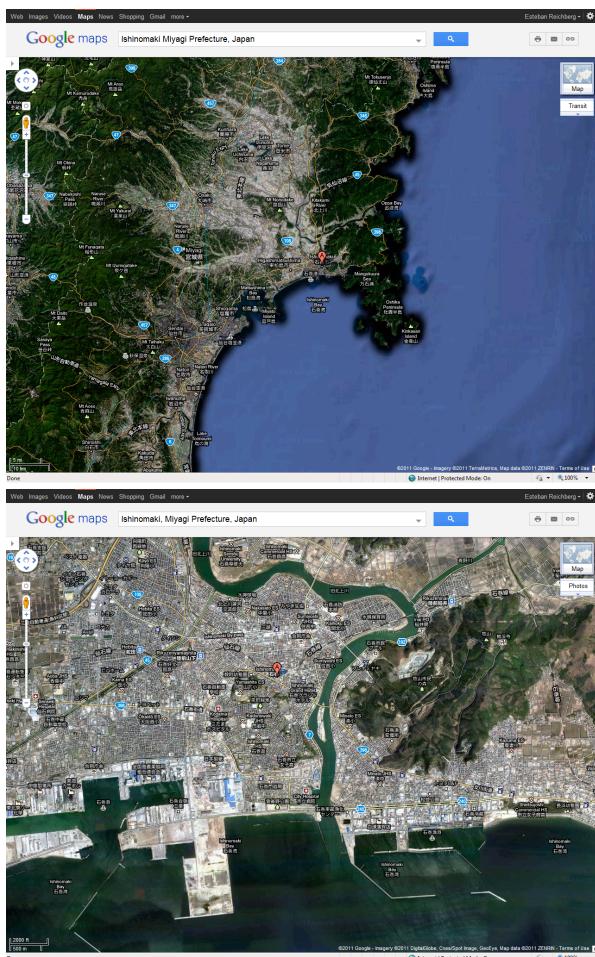
Part C: The Yurigami Primary School in Natori, Miyagi Prefecture:

Understanding a spontaneous memorial and the needs of communities to memorialize. We will examine one such spontaneous memorial created by the inhabitants of the community.

The school and surrounding area were devastated by the tsunami. Most of the adjacent homes were wrecked and farmlands wiped out by waves of water from nearly 2 km away. Many children and teachers survived by climbing to the top of the building. The gymnasium has become a de-facto receptacle for photographs, family deities and memorabilia found in the surrounding debris. This collection and the surviving building has become the focus of memory for the village. The first floor of the building records the initial moment of chaos; book bags are left in cubbies along with outdoor shoes; jackets are scattered and trampled on the floors; books, furniture and mud are in varying degrees of wreckage. Photos hang drying in the gymnasium while bookcases, trophies and soggy wedding albums are waiting to be claimed.

MODULE FIVE [WKS 5-9]: Schematic Design including Site and Program Development.

Mid-term Site Visit (Miyagi) and Review at Studio-X Tokyo



Site: Kesenuma, Miyagi Prefecture, Japan.

Program:

[A]. Memorial Hall: ~3,110m² total

A space to evoke the event and the loss. This will initially function as a temporary “collective public living room” for those who lost their homes. When there is no longer a need this hall will function a permanent memorial.

[B]. Convention Center: ~ TBDm²

An assembly space large enough to house 1,000 people in the case of any future disaster relief - (including nuclear) with first aid accommodations.. Reserves of portable water tanks, power generators, communal kitchens, male & female restrooms, shower rooms, etc. must be provided.

[C]. Disaster Museum & Library: ~ 9,330m² total

ARCHIVE: public and private remains (e.g. photos, videos, albums, diaries). ~ 3,110m²

RESEARCH: disaster data collection and documentation tools. ~ 3,110m²

LECTURE HALL: data distribution and broadcast methods ~ 3,110m²

[D]. Sea Garden Overlooking the Bay: ~ 30,000m² total

MODULE THREE [WKS 10-14]: Design Development

Semantics: Sequence and Organization of Elements

Semiotics: Meanings of Details and Materials

Students may design site non-specific/ program non-specific, with a written proposal and permission from critics.