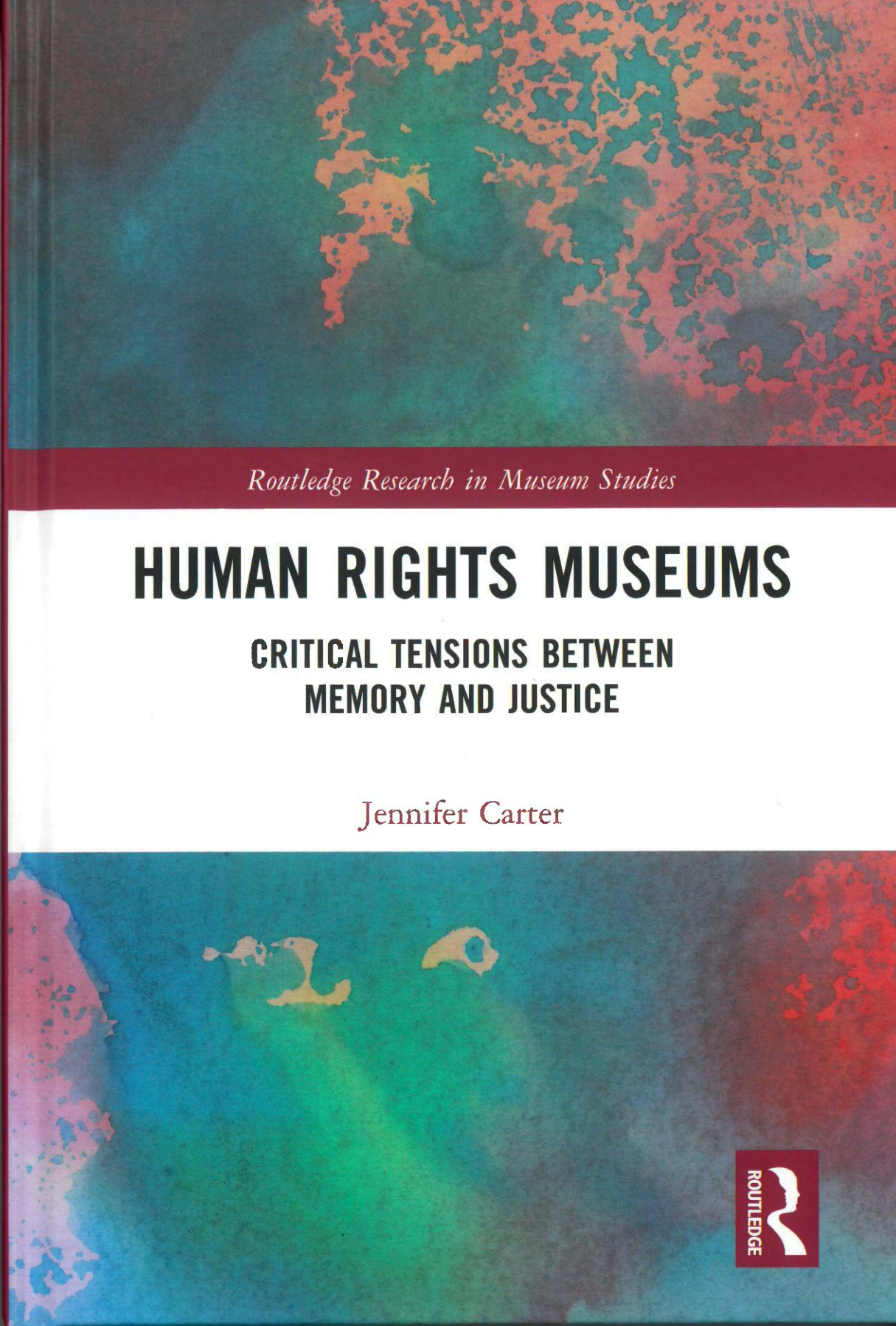




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HUMAN RIGHTS MUSEUMS

**CRITICAL TENSIONS BETWEEN
MEMORY AND JUSTICE**

Jennifer Carter



Human Rights Museums

Human Rights Museums presents case studies that trace how calls for historical and social justice, and the commensurate rise of a rights regime have led to the emergence of a new museological genre: the human rights museum.

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Human Rights Museums will appeal to academics, scholars and students of museum studies and related disciplines, and to museum professionals seeking to know more about the diverse and evolving roles of museums in contemporary society.

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Human Rights Museums

Critical Tensions Between Memory and Justice

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Human Rights Museums

Critical Tensions Between Memory and Justice

Jennifer Carter

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Figures

1.1	Installation view of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum in Hiroshima, Japan, c. 1955	24
1.2	Diorama of wax figures installed at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum between 1973 and 1990	25
1.3	Examples of the human rights work performed by the Montreal Holocaust Memorial Centre (now the Montreal Holocaust Museum) in Québec, Canada	27
1.4	View of the entrance to the 'From Memory to Action' suite of galleries at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC	28
1.5	View of the visitor-signed pledge cards transposed onto a screen in the 'From Memory to Action' galleries at the USHMM	29
1.6	View of the 'Canadian Journeys' Hall at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights in Winnipeg, Manitoba, featuring a selection of the gallery's themed niches	33
1.7	View of the Residential School niche in the 'Canadian Journeys' Gallery at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights	34
1.8	View of the 'I imagine ...' visitor comment card at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights	36
2.1	View of the entrance to Liberty Osaka in Osaka, Japan	62
2.2	View of a sculpture of Okinawan drummers on a fieldwork tour of Liberty Osaka's neighbouring Naniwa district	64
2.3	View of an installation at Liberty Osaka	66
2.4	View of the entrance to the permanent exhibition, 'Our Life, Society and Future' at Liberty Osaka in 2013	68
2.5	Exhibit view from Section 1 of 'Our Life, Society and Future' at Liberty Osaka in 2013	69
2.6	Exhibit view from Section 1 of 'Our Life, Society and Future' at Liberty Osaka in 2013	69
2.7	View of an interactive exhibit addressing visual impairment at Liberty Osaka in 2013	71
2.8	View of an interactive exhibit with clothing and musical instruments at Liberty Osaka in 2013	71

2.9	Entrance wall to the 'Room of Testimonies' at Liberty Osaka in 2013	73
2.10	View of the 'Room of Testimonies' and seating niches at Liberty Osaka in 2013	74
2.11	Installation view of Eugene Smith's and Aileen Mioko Smith's 1970s photographs of victims of Minamata Disease, positioned between Zones 3 and the 'Room of Testimonies' at Liberty Osaka in 2013	76
3.1	View of the entrance to the Jingmei White Terror Memorial Park and National Human Rights Museum in Xindian District, New Taipei City, Taiwan	98
3.2	View to the entrance to New Life Correction Center on Green Island, Taiwan, with a bust of Chiang Kai-shek in the distance	99
3.3	View of the large site model of the Green Island correctional facility produced by the photographer and former political prisoner, Mr Chen Meng-ho, and installed in the exhibition hall at the Green Island site	101
3.4	Mr Fred Chen, former political prisoner and now guide at the National Human Rights Museum, standing before a model of the Green Island correctional facility at the Jingmei site	105
3.5	View of wax figures in various positions in a reconstructed prisoner cell at New Life Correction Center on Green Island	107
3.6	View of propaganda painted on a large rock facing the New Life correctional facility on Green Island	107
3.7	View of the canteen at the Jingmei site	108
3.8	View of the Human Rights Memorial Monument installed at the Jingmei site	115
3.9	Plan of the Human Rights Memorial Monument showing the different elements of the site, including the Victim Directory and an explanation of the information included on the individual plaques, as well as the layout of the memorial tablet	115
3.10	View from the upper level of the Human Rights Memorial and Monument at the Green Island White Terror Memorial Park	116
4.1	Entrance to the Museo de la Justicia, Centro de Documentación y Archivo para la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos in Asunción, Paraguay	136
4.2	Exhibit space and view of didactic panels and site models at the Museo de la Justicia, Centro de Documentación y Archivo para la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos	136

4.3	View of the work space inside the Centro de Documentación y Archivo	137
4.4	View of the Museo de las Memorias: Dictadura y Derechos Humanos in Asunción, Paraguay, with a red Chevrolet [known as <i>Caperucita Roja</i> (little Red Riding Hood)], now part of the Museo's collection	141
4.5	At the Museo de las Memorias, a reconstructed office of the former clandestine bureau of intelligence where political prisoners were detained and tortured under General Stroessner's dictatorial regime	143
4.6	Reconstruction of a torture chamber located in the rear courtyard of the Museo de las Memorias	144
4.7	View of a coca leaf plant installation in the section titled 'Puerto Guzman, Putumayo. Living beyond the fumigation and other evils' at the exhibition 'Voces para Transformar a Colombia' ('Voices for transforming Colombia'), curated by staff of the (still in planning) Museum of Memory in Bogotá, Colombia, in 2018	149
4.8	The 'Living memories' workshop organized by the AgroArte Collective from Medellín's Comuna 13 at the exhibition 'Voces para Transformar a Colombia' in Bogotá	150
4.9	View of 'The Gallery of Resistance' installation at the exhibition 'Voces para Transformar a Colombia' in Bogotá	151
5.1	View of an installation about the Atrato River in 'Voces para Transformar a Colombia' ('Voices for transforming Colombia'), the itinerant exhibition curated by staff of the (still in planning) Museum of Memory in Bogotá, Colombia, in 2018	178
5.2	Diptych created by Maria Benitez and depicting a segment of the Magdalena River – Colombia's principal waterway – in 'Voces para Transformar a Colombia,' in 2018	178
5.3	Installation view of the 'Voices from the Arctic' exhibition at the Museum of World Culture in Gothenburg, Sweden, in 2019	182
5.4	Installation view of the 'Human Nature' exhibition at the Museum of World Culture in Gothenburg, Sweden, in 2019	182
5.5	Installation view of the 'Human Nature' exhibition at the Museum of World Culture in Gothenburg, Sweden, in 2019	183
C.1	Sign on the construction site of the (then) future Canadian Museum for Human Rights in Winnipeg, Manitoba	196

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Jennifer Carter

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Introduction

Tracing the trajectory of rights in museums

Jennifer Carter

There are many ways to consider the conjuncture between museums and rights. Historically, museums have been imbricated in the project of state-formation and citizenship, their architecture – both physical and metaphoric – the space in which ideal behaviors were to be modelled and emulated. As of the late eighteenth century, national museums in Europe's state capitals epitomized this relationship: from Tony Bennett's Foucaultian analysis of nineteenth- and twentieth-century museums as the 'reformatory of manners'¹ and Carol Duncan's study of the ideological construction of civic 'ritual structures' of nascent nation-states² to Eilean Hooper-Greenhill's theorization of 'disciplinary technologies' and the production of 'docile bodies' in museums of the modern era,³ questions of citizenship and belonging occupied the minds of government and colonized the cultural spaces of the public sphere.

In the late twentieth century, as museums came of age⁴ and notions of State citizenship gave way to questions of identity-making and cultural citizenship, an ascendant literature in heritage began to define larger parameters within the cultural sector. The concept of right came to be associated with the protection and preservation of heritage and cultural diversity, revealing tensions between national and local expressions of identity and values.⁵ Scholars delineated new rights-related territories of enquiry that the interrelated concepts of cultural heritage, cultural diversity and human rights brought to light in the post-establishment of a UNESCO (1945) and Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR; 1948) world. In 2010, Michele Langfield, William Logan and Máiréad Craith devoted an entire anthology to tracing such intersections in theory and practice, highlighting the complicated relationship between individual human rights and the collective rights claimed by minoritized groups in the name of cultural diversity, as evidenced by UNESCO's 2001 Declaration on Cultural Diversity or 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.

The question of rights interpolated the museum world and its practices in still new and different ways as a result of the civil and political rights movements in the 1960s, highlighting a multitude of social justice issues: the need

for equity and diversity not only in staff hiring policies but across collecting and exhibition policies was brought to the fore. So too were museum discourses and their hegemonic 'othering' of non-Western cultures questioned and challenged. The rise of multiculturalism as governmental policy and the Culture Wars of the late 1980s and 1990s brought increased attention to the politics of exhibitions, leading Ivan Karp and Steven Lavine to observe in their timely *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display* anthology (1991) that 'Groups attempting to establish and maintain a sense of community and to assert their social, political, and economic claims in the larger world challenge the right of established institutions to control the presentation of their cultures.'⁶

What began as interrogations of culture and its representation in the public realm of exhibitions soon expanded to whole-hearted demands for institutional decolonization. Today, this movement has grown into a fully-fledged activist culture in the museum sector. As sites where 'the relationship between social and political protest' (Kylie Message 2014 and 2018) and political action (Kirsty Robertson 2019) are explored, where enacting 'curatorial activism' and 'strategies of resistance' from within (Maura Reilly 2018) are advocated if not urged, and where equality and social justice (Richard Sandell and Eithne Nightingale 2012) are centered within museum discourses as a means to reconsider 'the ways in which museums, galleries and heritage organizations might acknowledge and act upon inequalities within and outside of the cultural domain,'⁷ we are now witnessing, in the prescient words of these same authors, rights and social justice 'move from the margins ... to the core.'⁸ More recently still, Richard Sandell and Robert Janes have observed that 'there is a growing and irresistible imperative to redefine the contemporary museum as an active agent in shaping the world around us and making it a better place for all' in their preface to the aptly titled anthology, *Museum Activism* (2019). The latter is a 'necessary emergence' and a 'museum practice, shaped out of ethically-informed values, (that is) intended to bring about political, social and environmental change.'⁹

All of these important conjunctures have a longer history than the approach taken in this book. Notwithstanding the historical trajectory I have briefly traced in which questions of social inequity and a politics of representation introduced a new and different conception of 'right' into museums in the 1980s and 1990s than what had come before, my focus is deliberately far narrower than even these museological incursions into social justice. While many museums of the recent era have broached the subject of rights when they were founded to address peoples' experience of, for example, forced removal at Cape Town's District Six Museum in South Africa, or when they confronted racism, in the manner of America's Black Holocaust Museum (in Milwaukee, Wisconsin), what interested me was the appearance of 'right' as a subject in and of itself. The self-consciousness of the self-described intrigued me.

I have therefore chosen to analyse museums that self-identify as a 'human rights museum' or human rights institution – either in their official title or

their official discourses – in order to better understand the logic and intentions underlying this new museological genre. Would the invocation of the term ‘human right’ change the way these institutions engaged in their museological functions? To what ends was the concept invoked? The case studies in this book were chosen to further pursue such a line of questioning, and selected from museums I had located that identified as such. When compared to other museological genres such as history or art museums, the number of dedicated human rights museums (as distinct from those museums that address human rights implicitly or amongst other themes more broadly) is relatively modest but what unites them in this shared nomenclature is their recent appearance in a diversity of political locations and contexts, indiscriminate of these countries’ global museological influence.

I would be wise to define precisely how I am using the term ‘human right’ throughout this book. A touchstone and conceptual reference point of the discussion is the foundational United Nations’ UDHR, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1948.¹⁰ As an articulation of an important number of ‘rights’ and ‘freedoms’ – such as the right to life, liberty and recognition – themselves considered to be universal, inalienable, indivisible and fundamental, the UDHR breathes life into the very idea of human right, even if the concept of ‘universal right’ (whatever that might mean) had eighteenth-century precursors in such documents as the US Declaration of Independence, crafted in 1776, and France’s *Déclaration des droits de l’homme et du citoyen*, of 1789.¹¹ Although legally non-binding, the importance of the UDHR is that it announces minimum standards while providing a roadmap for respecting what are largely considered to be basic human rights for all of humankind. Written by delegates from all over the world, in theory, the Declaration articulates common aspirations and ideals, and a shared language across humanity. As the first international document of its kind, the UDHR has inspired the creation of subsequent international human rights instruments: more recent conventions, covenants and declarations have importantly expanded the already broad purview of the UDHR’s 30 articles to include protection against racial discrimination (1965), in favour of social, economic and cultural rights (1966) as well as civil and political rights (1966), against discrimination against women (1979) and torture (1984), in favour of the rights of the child (1989) and migrant workers and their families (1990), and in support of persons with disabilities (2006) and the rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP 2007).¹² Despite these important gains (in theory) and the ongoing need to realize and protect them (in practice), still other rights are yet to be recognized: the right to the life-sustaining source that is water, the right to living on a healthy planet, the right to food and to adequate housing, nature’s rights and the rights of future generations are just some of these important domains.

Yet while rights imagined and affirmed constitute the conceptual departure point for this book, I nevertheless seek to transcend a legal or executive use of the term. Rather, I consider how culture and rights coalesce in museums, and in this respect, the nature of the ‘right’ or ‘rights’ discussed is

necessarily determined in relation to the political situation and discourses in the countries in which human rights museums have been developed. These may be as fundamental as the right to life, or as particular as the right to non-discrimination.

Beginnings

When I began the research for this book in 2013, I had identified approximately a dozen museums on four continents that corresponded in some way to the descriptor of human rights museum, from which I was able to visit several examples in Asia and the Americas. My research also comprised visits to other related museums (social justice, memorial, history) that in various ways also advanced or took up the idea of human rights, and this, within a broader geography (notably in Australasia and Europe). My ambition to produce a global account (an early working title included the subtitle 'new museums around the globe' and was critiqued for good reason) remains indeed this, an ambition: research in museums in Africa among other important locales is yet to be undertaken and thus more global attention to this subject is still necessary and pertinent for inspiring and informing contemporary praxis. Despite the near decade since beginning this research, its relevance remains clear: if in the early 2010s most of the human rights museums of the first variety had only recently opened their doors, or would be doing so soon, still more dedicated human rights museums have continued to develop since this time (for example, the Museo de la Libertad y los Derechos Humanos, Panama City), and the opportunity to broadly share insights and practice is well overdue.

In approaching the subject as I do, I do not wish to essentialize these museums as exemplars of what a human rights museum is or should be (especially as this movement is expanding in important ways), rather I seek to analyse this recent phenomenon of museums in terms of the variances within the genre's museological work and this work's resonances and relationship with broader social movements. Preliminary discussions with colleagues in these museums led me to conclude that in those early days in my research, little had yet been written about the specificities of the genre. The Federation of International Human Rights Museums (FIHRM) – now an affiliate of the International Council of Museums (ICOM) – had only existed since 2010, and was specifically founded to provide an international platform for museums around the world dedicated to social justice. The Federation defines its relationship with human rights broadly, as the following passage about the network's aims demonstrates:

To establish a permanent international specialist network for museums and related institutions to work together and share new thinking and initiatives. The network addresses issues of human and civil rights in themes such as exhibiting sensitive histories, museums and politics,

ethical concerns, museums and partnership work and the role of museums as active campaigners and their changing roles to becoming socially responsible institutions.

The goal of FIHRM is to create museum spaces that are innovative, challenging and deliver public value to the whole of society by addressing local, national and international issues of social justice.¹³

The idea that museums name themselves human rights museums (or in some cases, a variant therein) is relatively new to the third millennium, and with the important exception of Japan – which has several city museums that fit this criterion, all of which were founded in the 1980s and 1990s – the case studies I study in South America and Asia were all inaugurated post-millennium. My intention is not only to analyse these museums in terms of their cultural and political specificity, but also in light of their institutional mission, their museography and with regards to how these cultural institutions take up human rights in their institutional articulations. Some of these museums have as their focal point a historical subject (for example Liberty Osaka, originally named the Osaka Human Rights History Museum) but do not address their founding subjects strictly in historical ways (i.e. with chronology as a structuring device). The mission of Liberty Osaka, for example, extends beyond a representation of historical subject matter in order to address the Museum's evolving and expanding subject matter through a thematic, human rights lens. This frame undoubtedly says something about the moment in which this museum was conceived.

For several reasons, I ultimately chose not to use the descriptor 'human rights culture' in the subtitle of this book. But I do wish to expand upon legal and political definitions of human rights in order to argue that there is a broader human rights phenomenon that is at play in contemporary society – what Andreas Huyssen has referred to as a 'transnational social movement' of human rights.¹⁴ This movement can be seen to intersect in the curriculum of schools, in the work of cultural institutions and in the activism of citizen-based movements. A key intention of this book, then, is to relate the case studies to the multiple human rights discourses that are generated at international levels (such as Human Rights Education issued by the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights) as well as local ones (the Occupy movement, the Arab Spring and more recently the Black Lives Matter movement, as well as other grass-roots initiatives), and to assess to what extent these discourses are shaping cultural institutions as manifestations of a culture of human rights and globalization.

In tracing this specific trajectory, my intention has been in no way to disregard the important work achieved by scholars, practitioners and scholar-practitioners within the museum field with respect to advances in rights widely construed. As a larger and growing number of museums outside of this dedicated human rights museum purview began to take up the subject of rights as the basis of their work – the gains of civil rights at the National

Civil Rights Museum in Memphis, Tennessee, the violation of human rights addressed in memorial and history museums around the world, and the promotion of new forms of rights gained as the result of ongoing social and political struggles in themed human rights exhibitions – they have collectively introduced important new strategies for museum practice, new roles and functions for these civil society institutions, and new potential benefits for society at large. Owing to various limitations that are inevitably apparent in any research project, my narrow purview has also neglected the important context of African museums, for no other reasons than those of limitations of time. The subject would benefit from further research into human rights museums across the continent, including the renowned South African examples of District Six in Cape Town and the Apartheid Museum in Johannesburg.

The recent emergence of a generation of museums that not only address human rights through their work, but invoke the concept as the *raison d'être* of their institutions, invites critical analysis. Human rights museums of this configuration are a relatively new phenomenon in the cultural sphere. If, by their nomenclature, human rights museums suggest a 'universalizing' (more aptly, Western/Euro-American) logic, individually, they are the products of their socio-political contexts, underscoring the observation that many within this evolving museological genre have been founded to address (and often, redress) their own national or local violations of human rights. A number of human rights museums also share conceptual similarities with the generation of memorial museums that preceded them throughout the second half of the twentieth century, and have developed as hybrid institutions in the manner they combine a focus on both memorialization and activism (and in some cases, advocacy) in their mission, curation and programming. When viewed collectively, the close study of this new genre is instructive for how it reveals the shifting landscape of identity and memory politics that is at play within museums addressing the difficult histories arising from genocide, enslavement, discrimination and the mass violations committed by dictatorial regimes. At the heart of this difference, as Andreas Huyssen has argued more generally, is a fundamental tension between a discourse that is moral, highly informed by locality and human experience, and looks to the past for its formulation (memory), and a newer one that is both legal and moral, universalizing and future-oriented (human rights).¹⁵ At the heart of this difference is also what scholars Steve Stern and Scott Straus have referred to as the 'human rights paradox,' that is, the idea that human rights are universal and unequivocally transcendent – in theory belonging to *all* people *everywhere* – and yet subject to the will of the State and the localized application of mechanisms to uphold these rights: in the absence of such mechanisms, human rights remain an ideal.¹⁶

This tension and its ensuing paradox have been exemplified in the transition from memorial museums of the late twentieth century to museums of human rights of the third millennium. The former are museums that have

developed a particular memorial museography and that generally (1) accord a large emphasis on victims and survivor testimony as a form of public record of rights-related infringements; and (2) carefully consider the positioning of visitors as *witnesses* to these accounts. Museums informed by the latter variety, whose curation and exhibition design are premised upon a codification and juridical framework of human rights, may well continue in the memorial tradition. However, in addition to addressing subjects stemming from the violation of rights from a memorializing perspective, these museums have also begun to elicit the real-time visitor enactment of rights through various forms of *embodied* and *memorial activism*, be this through interactive, programmatic or discursive strategies.¹⁷

Contextualizing the emergence and rise of human rights discourses and practices within a new generation of museums positioned at the convergence of memory, justice and human rights, I propose three phases to this development (discussed more fully in Chapter 1), beginning in memorial museums in the late 1940s, early 1950s and unfolding to this day in dedicated human rights museums. Drawing widely on ethnographic research and study visits conducted at human rights, history, social justice and memorial museums in Asia, Europe, Australasia and North and South America, this book provides a comparative analysis of the multi-pronged nature of this evolving field of praxis by focusing on the cultural rise of human rights in contemporary society, particularly as the subject of rights has been manifest in museums that have as their specific remit to address historical injustice in a range of geo-political contexts around the globe. While neither exhaustive nor global in its approach to identifying museums that address human rights as the core of their functions in the twenty-first century, the case studies in this book rather consider a range of connective¹⁸ concerns by which a growing number of museums are engaging with human rights violations – via memorial activism, transitional justice, historical justice, collective memory and human rights education – as well as how visitors and visitor subjectivities are implicated differently within such contexts. It is towards a more nuanced understanding of the possibilities and potential limitations of this tripartite memorializing–justice–activist framework, which arises when the universalization of human rights on one hand, and the highly contingent nature of individual and ‘collective’ memory (as problematic a category as this may be) on the other, are materialized through museums dedicated to redress historical injustices caused by the violations of human rights, that this book aims to contribute.

This leaves one to reflect on precisely what an emphasis on human rights means within an evolving museological and museographical practice, and how, ultimately, institutions that identify as human rights museums differ from a slightly earlier generation of memorial museums with their more recent forays into the human rights field, if they do at all. The idea that new ways of thinking about rights can transcend a legal paradigm and affect social and political change through the work of museums¹⁹ has opened up

innovative and important avenues for research and praxis, notably with respect to exploring the convergence of human rights and the related fields of transitional justice, historical memory, identity politics, social justice, decolonization and climate justice, and in regards to developing new forms of agency and civic engagement. It also invites more attention to the inherent need for human rights museums – and for *all* and *any* public institution – to uphold rights in their practices and their output.

The research trajectory

I began my work in human rights museology in the playground of my children's primary school, over a conversation with a colleague and now friend who is a human rights and humanitarian lawyer and scholar. As the most recent – and first in over 40 years – national museum was then being conceptualized, debated and planned in Canada – today the Canadian Museum for Human Rights (CMHR) – we wondered aloud what a museum of human rights might be, how it would engage with the very concept of rights (with *which* concepts of rights?) and reconcile the important need to address not only human rights' accomplishments, but also rights-related violations, especially when such museographical content might risk jeopardizing the Museum's core sources of funding as a national institution.

My colleague, Jennifer Orange, and I pursued these questions as we co-authored the first of several articles together, working to articulate what appeared to be on the cusp of museological development, referring to the practices that we observed across a spectrum of recent initiatives as 'human rights museology'.²⁰ Our curiosity about our own national museum grew, as did our knowledge that a number of human rights museums in different socio- and political contexts around the globe had also recently begun to take shape.

As our research progressed, we were attentive to how the very real concerns we had articulated about the politics of human rights – and how these play out in the public sphere – would materialize in relation to different human rights museums under our purview. In the concrete instance of Canada's own human rights museum, two examples are notable. The first concerns the Government's systematic violations of Canada's First Peoples. Not insignificantly, the timeline of the development of the Canadian Museum for Human Rights on ancestral, Treaty 1 Territory in Winnipeg, Manitoba, coincided with a national Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) that was held across Canada between 2008 and 2015. The Commission was appointed to investigate and create a historical record²¹ of the legacies of the Indian Residential School system which operated in Canada for well over a century, and which housed Indigenous children who were forcibly removed from their families and communities, divested of their identity, suppressed of their culture (language, traditions, spirituality) and knowledge, and violently forced to assimilate to dominant Euro-Canadian culture and

values. The Commissioners heard how students suffered physical, psychological and sexual abuse in these schools, and learned how these experiences and their legacies have not only caused devastating individual and familial, but also intergenerational, trauma and harm. Their findings resulted in the CMHR acknowledging, as had the Commissioners at the term of the TRC, that as a result of the Residential School system, cultural genocide had occurred to First Peoples in Canada.²² Prior to the release of the Final Report, the CMHR had taken at best a mitigated approach to using the term genocide in its description of residential schools – claiming only that ‘Many Indigenous and non-Indigenous people argue that this school system was a form of genocide’ (CMHR exhibition label, 2015) until the Government itself had endorsed the term.²³ In 2019, the CMHR would change this text to the following: ‘The TRC is just the beginning of the reconciliation process. Recognition that Canada enacted genocidal policies against Indigenous peoples is essential to moving forward.’²⁴ As important and as overdue this change of positioning clearly was, it also unequivocally demonstrates the inherent political dimensions of museum institutions that have long argued their neutrality. Museum neutrality cannot be farther from the truth.

The second example, arising from violations effected by and within internal management, occurred in the summer–fall of 2020 with the very public exposure of systemic racism, bias and discrimination occurring within the working environment of the CMHR, and faced by then current and former Museum employees. Much can be said about these violations, but following the alarming situation of the CMHR, their import here is in regards to how museums dedicated to the subject of rights and rights violations – all museums, for that matter – themselves are governed and conduct their affairs.

The need for a critical examination of the new field that human rights museums are carving out, and of what constitutes an ethics of representation and praxis within these museums, became apparent as an important number of human rights museums opened their doors during the first two decades of the third millennium. With the dual aims of examining the epistemological underpinnings of the emerging genre of human rights museums, and of developing a more nuanced understanding of how these museums engage with the very concept of ‘right’ curatorially and pedagogically, I have undertaken a comparative analysis of human rights museums in different socio- and political and cultural contexts around the globe. The goal has been to tease out similarities and differences, and to build connective knowledge and relationships amongst individuals and practitioners as a means to advance this nascent field. This research has considered how the subject of rights has been taken up and communicated by museums that self-identify as human rights museums, and to what ends. It has questioned the valences of curatorial and expographic praxes of these different museums in light of the contexts in which they were developed, and the ethical and reflexive postures their architectures encourage. How has the subject of human rights been translated into museographic form, that is, into the conceptual language

and interpretive strategies of these museums, and how have the subjectivities of visitors been imagined? In the instance of difficult histories that were the catalysts for the creation of several human rights museums I visited, analyses focused on the narratives, design strategies and modes of engagement incorporated in curatorial strategies situated at the conjuncture of memory and human rights. If the larger question underlying this research seeks to determine to what social, cultural and political ends these museums are engaging in the field of human rights, it seems all the more prescient to be asking how these museums are advancing awareness not only about rights, but about responsibilities to safeguard these rights.²⁵

The foundational research for this book was made possible by the generous support of two grants awarded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and the Fonds de recherche du Québec – Société et Culture respectively. Although my initial interest in human rights museums was piqued by the discussions surrounding the CMHR in 2010, as my knowledge of the field expanded alongside my purview of a handful of other similarly themed museums (some still at the stage of planning or perhaps since abandoned) that were appearing more or less synchronically around the globe – in Banda Aceh, Santiago, Karachi, Mechelen, Asunción, Taipei and Osaka, to name but these – it seemed feasible to incorporate many of these sites into my fieldwork, and to analyse what interpretation each was making of the human-rights turn in matters of curation, exhibitions and programming. Over the decade that has ensued, I have been extremely privileged to visit many, though not all, of the human rights museums I had initially identified in Asia and throughout the Americas. I have been humbled by the courage I have encountered in the people associated with these museums – either in their capacity as Survivors of some of the worst human atrocities and infringements of fundamental human rights imaginable, or in their commitment as museum professionals dedicated to making the stories of these human rights violations known. But the subject of these museums invites challenge: museums are not only social and cultural institutions, they are part of a larger political landscape and ecosystem whose influence may and can be felt on museological processes, to a lesser or greater degree, as the example of the CMHR's changing stance on using the term cultural genocide makes clear.

Positioned at the nexus of human rights and historical memory, the cultural rise of human rights museums in contemporary society has intersected with practices of transitional justice, testimony and activism, and experiences of intergenerational trauma and reconciliation, leading to new forms of museological work and new possibilities for engaging productively with what may be non-consensual histories and highly sensitive memories of the past. In their museological redress of violations of human rights, this new generation of museums may well be considered monuments to those who have defended human rights principles and participated in social and political

struggles of the past, however the reverse side of the monument is the dark side of history: the stories these museums tell require an ethics of care and the (political) freedom to be expressed in their integral form. What we say, and do, matters deeply, and this work must drive us to continue to uncover truths, to confront discrimination and to work to bring societal justice and individual healing within contexts that may well still be unresolved, in order to contribute to the important work of transitional justice mechanisms, individual and societal healing and for some, potentially reconciliation.

Collectively, we have invested in museums our hopes that through their work they will bring about change where change is needed. We *do* this in order to have societal impact. We *do* this to make change. If the subject of human rights has evolved to the status that it has in many museums around the globe, it is because we as museum professionals, publics and scholars believe in these museums' institutional ability to not only engender political engagement in the present, but to stimulate historical consciousness and critical engagement with the past, especially when this past involves historical injustice.

Structure of the book

This book is primarily built on case study analyses, many of which I have co-authored with colleagues and specialists from the countries in which the museum under investigation is located. Chapter 1 provides an historical overview of the rise of human rights museums as a new museological genre. It considers this rise in light of the precedent of memorial museums and their emergence in the post-Holocaust, post-World War II context, but also in relation to the concept of human rights and their evolving and expanding place in society more broadly.

Written with my co-author, Jennifer Orange, Chapter 2 examines and analyses the emergence of what we believe to be the first, self-identified human rights museum in the world: the Osaka Human Rights History Museum (now known as Liberty Osaka) in Osaka, Japan, in 1985. This particular museum is unlike any of the other human rights museums examined within this study, as its inception arose out of a history and legacy of domestic social discrimination and was intended as a means of educating about, and ultimately countering, this and other forms of social and cultural discrimination in Japan. Most other human rights museums that have evolved thus far have arisen as responses to situations of rights violations perpetuated against society at large (such as under dictatorships [Chile, Paraguay], in armed conflict [Colombia], during the Holocaust [Belgium]), or in regards to the development of human rights in relation to a country's past and the world's present and future (Canada, Panama). In addition to becoming the first museum of this genre, Liberty Osaka's focus on social discrimination and identity politics also positions it as a unique example within the range of human rights museum I have analysed and studied.

Moreover, as a community initiative undertaken with the support of city funding, Liberty Osaka pioneered the idea of the human rights museum in Japan, and was followed shortly thereafter by several other human rights museums in the country. This in itself is unusual, as many recent examples of human rights museums have either been founded as national museums with State funding (Chile, Canada, Colombia, Taiwan) or as private initiatives (the first of two in Asunción, Paraguay and the Ama Museum in Taipei, Taiwan, to name but these).

Chapter 3 tells the story of the creation of the National Human Rights Museum (NHRM) in Taiwan (inaugurated in 2018), and was co-authored with my colleague Chia-Li Chen. This museum is not only an example of a national initiative in post-dictatorship Taiwan created on two historic sites in Taipei and on Green Island in eastern Taiwan, it is also an example of a museological institution dedicated to supporting and furthering the country's recent implementation of transitional justice mechanisms. Our analysis of these two sites focuses on questions of memorialization and historical justice, and how the NHRM engages museographically and through specific cultural programming with Taiwan's *Act on Promoting Transitional Justice*, promulgated in December 2017, and this Act's focus on authoritarian symbols, historical truth and social reconciliation. As a growing number of countries around the world engage in transitional justice mechanisms such as truth and justice, or truth and reconciliation commissions, we consider the possibilities for the work of museums within this framework, as well as their potential judicial and pedagogical legacies.

The next chapter, Chapter 4, continues the investigation of human rights museums created in post-dictatorship society (Paraguay) or within an ongoing armed conflict (Colombia) and provides a comparative analysis of museological initiatives in South America. Co-authored with doctoral student María Juliana Angarita, this chapter specifically examines historical memory through a constellation of museographical approaches undertaken in three different human rights museums and institutions: the Museo de la Justicia, Centro de Documentación y Archivo para la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos and the Museo de las Memorias: Dictadura y Derechos Humanos in Asunción, Paraguay, and in the itinerant exhibition, 'Voces para Transformar a Colombia,' planned by the team of the Museum of Memory of Colombia (a national museum still at the planning stages) in Bogotá. These case studies reveal the multiple and synchronic registers in which historical memory and justice operate, and in which new forms of museum activism occur.

In Chapter 5, I expand the case study purview from a specific political context to a planetary one, by discussing the concept of climate justice and how this has been taken up by museums in different ways around the world, while suggesting a way forward for meaningful engagement with the climate emergency. In this chapter I observe how the rise of global environmental and social justice movements has had a profound effect on the nature of museum

work, not only with respect to traditional museum functions but in terms of newer museological roles such as through advocacy, activism and coalitions. From dedicated climate change museums to thematic exhibitions, we are witnessing new forms of rights pertaining to the human and non-human world emerge and imbricate with museum discourses, as well as the integration of Indigenous ontologies and non-Western worldviews. These approaches are welcome challenges to the long-standing nature–culture divide that has shaped museum development since its emergence as an instrument and institution of the modern era, and bring promising new direction to contemporary museological praxis.

The conclusion returns to the idea of duty, introduced in a previous chapter in the book, to suggest that two facets of duty are relevant when thinking about human rights museums: the duty to protect and the duty to do justice. Linking these related concepts to two examples in the museum world – one in Japan, the other Colombia – bookends the chronological discussion of human rights museums undertaken in this monograph.

Notes

- 1 Tony Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum* (London: Routledge, 1995).
- 2 Carol Duncan, *Civilizing Rituals: Inside Public Art Museums* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 21.
- 3 Eileen Hooper-Greenhill, *Museums and the Shaping of Knowledge* (London: Routledge, 1992).
- 4 Sharon Macdonald, 'Expanding Museum Studies: An Introduction,' in *A Companion to Museum Studies*, ed. S. Macdonald (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), 1.
- 5 Michele Langfield, William Logan and Máiréad Nic Craith, eds., *Cultural Diversity, Heritage and Human Rights: Intersections in Theory and Practice* (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2010).
- 6 Steven D. Lavine and Ivan Karp, 'Introduction: Museums and Multiculturalism,' in *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display*, ed. I. Karp and S.D. Lavine (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991), 1.
- 7 Eithne Nightingale and Richard Sandell, 'Introduction,' in *Museums, Equality and Social Justice*, ed. R. Sandell and E. Nightingale (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2012), 3.
- 8 Nightingale and Sandell, *Museums, Equality and Social Justice*, 1. See also Kylie Message, *Museums and Social Activism* (London: Routledge, 2014) and *Museums and Racism* (London: Routledge, 2018), Kirsty Robertson, *Tear Gas Epiphanies: Protest, Culture, Museums* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2019) and Maura Reilly, *Curatorial Activism: Towards and Ethics of Curating* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2018).
- 9 Richard Sandell and Robert R. Janes, 'Preface,' *Museum Activism*, ed. R.R. Janes and R. Sandell (London: Routledge, 2019), xxviii. The term 'necessary emergence' is drawn from the subtitle of the chapter they co-authored, 'Posterity Has Arrived: The Necessary Emergence of Museum Activism,' 1–21, 1.
- 10 United Nations, 'Universal Declaration of Human Rights,' www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights.
- 11 Lynn Hunt, *Inventing Human Rights: A History* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 2007).

- 12 United Nations, 'The Core International Human Rights Instruments and their Monitoring Bodies,' www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CoreInstruments.aspx.
- 13 ICOM, 'Federation of International Human Rights Museums,' <https://icom.museum/en/committee/federation-of-international-human-rights-museums/>. FIHRM was created in 2010 under the leadership of founding director David Fleming, formerly Director of National Museums Liverpool, UK.
- 14 Andreas Huyssen, 'International Human Rights and the Politics of Memory: Limits and Challenges,' *Criticism* Volume 53, No. 4 (2011): 607–624.
- 15 Huyssen has brilliantly explored the distinctions inherent in memory and human rights discourses, arguing that their 'mutual recognition' is not only necessary but beneficial. Please see Andreas Huyssen, 'Memory Culture and Human Rights: A New Constellation,' in *Historical Justice and Memory*, ed. Klaus Neumann and Janna Thompson (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2015), 27–44, and 'International Human Rights and the Politics of Memory.'
- 16 Steve Stern and Scott Straus, 'Embracing Paradox: Human Rights in the Global Age,' in *The Human Rights Paradox: Universality and Its Discontents*, ed. S. Stern and S. Straus (Madison, WI: Wisconsin University Press, 2014), 3–28.
- 17 Louise Purbrick writes about embodiment in a slightly different way in her article 'Museums and the Embodiment of Human Rights,' *Museum and Society* Volume 9, No. 3 (2011): 166–189.
- 18 Inspired by, but not limited to, the use made by Marianne Hirsch in *The Generation of Postmemory: Writing and Visual Culture After the Holocaust* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), 21–22.
- 19 Referring to the 'work' of museums is an inspiration from the writing of Lois Silverman and her book, *The Social Work of Museums* (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2010).
- 20 Jennifer Carter and Jennifer Orange, 'Contentious Terrain: Developing a Human Rights Museology,' *Museum Management and Curatorship* Volume 27, No. 2 (May 2012): 111–127.
- 21 Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/en/g/1450124405592/1529106060525.
- 22 See the introduction to the Final Report, written by the Chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Justice Murray Sinclair, in *Canada's Residential Schools: The History, Part 1 Origins to 1939. The Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*, Volume 1 (Montreal and Kingston: Truth and Reconciliation Commission, McGill-Queen's University Press, 2015), VII, http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2015/trc/IR4-9-1-1-2015-eng.pdf.
- 23 CBC News, 'CMHR Waiting for Residential School System to be Labelled "Genocide,"' 4 June 2015, www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/cmhr-waiting-for-residential-school-system-to-be-labelled-genocide-1.3101530.
- 24 CBC News, 'Genocide Against Indigenous Peoples Recognized by Canadian Museum for Human Rights,' 17 May 2019, www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/cmhr-colonialism-genocide-indigenous-peoples-1.5141078.
- 25 Kathryn Sikkink, *The Hidden Face of Rights: Toward a Politics of Responsibilities* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2020).

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