Archives
15. Truths, Memories and Histories in the Archives of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia

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1. Introduction

In 1993, the United Nations (hereinafter UN) Security Council established the International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991 (hereinafter ICTY) “for the sole purpose of prosecuting persons responsible for serious violations of international humanitarian law committed in the territory of the former Yugoslavia.” The central purpose of the ICTY, as of any criminal court, is the deterrence of, and retribution for serious wrongdoing. But from the start, expectations of what the Tribunal could achieve went beyond the primary judicial goal of establishing the truth about and a historical record of what happened, contributing to healing individuals’ and communities’

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1 This is a slightly different version of my paper, “Truths, Memories, and Histories in the Archives of the ICTR and the ICTY,” presented at the conference “60 Years Genocide Convention,” organized by the Amsterdam Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies, the Amsterdam Center for International Law and the Peace Palace Library, The Hague, 8 December 2008. Another version was published as E. Ketelaar, “A living archive, shared by communities of records”, in Community archives. The shaping of memory, eds. J. A. Bastian and B. Alexander (London, Facet 2009) 109-132.


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