STRUCTURES OF MEMORY

Understanding Urban Change
in Berlin and Beyond

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remain resolutely located within national borders, and they clearly need to expand beyond their traditional bounds. Memorial projects and historic preservation efforts, in Berlin and beyond, operate in an increasingly international context, one in which artists, donors, survivors, historians, political officials, and even the people who visit sites of memory are often aware of the actions of their counterparts in far-off places.

Blank Slates and Authentic Traces: Memorial Culture in Berlin After 1945

No city is ever a blank slate. No amount of bombing or bulldozing can fully eradicate the traces of what came before, either in the landscape itself or in the memories and habits of its residents. Even in the midst of dramatic political, economic, and material change, traces of the past persist in the urban topography, as well as in technocratic practices and individual and collective memory. Cellars, pipes, and subway tunnels still lurk beneath the surface of the most decimated city, encouraging reconstruction in patterns that reflect the remaining infrastructure. Memory also persists in the minds of residents, even when the traces of these memories have disappeared from the visible city. But the precise constellation of sites of memory—the imprint of individual and collective memory on the cityscape, and vice versa—changes over time, in ways that are sometimes subtle and sometimes dramatic. This process has occurred with particular intensity in post–World War II Berlin.

A city's stock of historical buildings and markers may feel permanent to passersby, but this permanence obscures the profound contingencies and extensive efforts behind the cultural landscapes we inhabit. How, then, did Berlin change from the smoldering ruins of 1945, fraught with what would later come to be called “authentic” sites, into a place renowned for its difficult and public confrontations with its Nazi past—a city whose “commemorative apparatus” has “become a rather well-oiled machine,” as Jeffrey Olick puts it? In James Young's words: "Holocaust memorial-work in Germany today remains a tortured, self-reflective, even paralyzing
preoccupation. Every monument, at every turn, is endlessly scrutinized, explicated, and debated. Artistic, ethical, and historical questions occupy design juries to an extent unknown in other countries." Young's and Olick's descriptions certainly apply to contemporary Berlin. But such a scenario would have been difficult to imagine in 1945, when there was little hint of the layers of memorial culture to come.

This chapter examines three kinds of changes in Germany's commemorative culture. First, not surprisingly, there have been substantial changes in the aesthetic forms of the memorials designed to mark resistance to or persecution by the Nazi regime, including a growing focus on "authentic" sites and nontraditional memorial forms. Second, the categories of events and individuals that count as worthy of memorialization have changed distinctly from one decade to the next. Third, the relationships between states, their residents, and their territories have changed as well. That is, there have been considerable changes in the ways in which states craft landscapes of memorials, and, in particular, in the political and bureaucratic routes through which they do this, and the degrees to which popular opinion and citizen activism figure in the construction of such landscapes. Taken together, these processes also offer a way to more precisely understand the overlaps and disjunctures between official landscapes of memory and a broader "collective memory."

As later chapters will show, each marker in the landscape comes about only through years of effort. The actions that lead to a marker include not only the initial acts of persecution or resistance but also years of work on the part of artists, politicians, survivors, activists, intellectuals, and local, national, and even international constituencies. A range of motives has driven these actors over the past five decades, among them, mourning, pedagogy, guilt, political calculation, and idealism. The landscape today is shaped by decades of decisions that cement official collective memory. These decisions, the way they are made, and the form and content of their imprint on the landscape changed throughout the postwar period. But they did so in uneven ways, mediated through decades of political wrangling, economic fluctuation, and artistic and historiographic processes. This kind of memory is rooted not only in the landscape but also in professional journals, high school and university curricula, museum studies, guidebooks, and an array of governmental and private organizations.

Here, then, I am concerned with how the East and West German states have created particular landscapes of (official) memory treating the city's Nazi past. Investigating these intersections opens a more nuanced way to talk about the relationship between a state, its landscape, and its subjects in terms of representations of official collective memory. No concentrated site of collective memory happens of its own accord. Every plaque, every engraved stone, and certainly every interpretive exhibition is the result of years of activity. Today this landscape of erasure and marking is shaped not by a unified vision of the city's past, but by decades of artistic activity, historical research, and public debate.

Terrains of memory create layers not identical with collective memory or with any official stance on the past at a given moment, for at least four reasons. First, in any political system, there is necessarily some degree of disjuncture between the representations of the past created by the state in the landscape and the broader popular understandings and interpretations of the past. Second, of course, there is also a lack of consensus among the people as well, under any political system, albeit to varying degrees (a fact not always captured in analyses of collective memory). Simply because the narrative is there does not guarantee that it is accepted by the population in uniform ways, or that a collection of monuments and plaques creates a homogeneous collective memory or national identity. Third, the layers of past remembrance often remain in place. It is rare that the traces of previous ways of treating the landscape are fully erased. Statues are pulled down in public displays of revolution or regime change, but, to varying degrees, the terrain of past political eras combines with new efforts to shape landscapes of memory to create a multiple and even conflicting narrative of different elements of the past. Finally, the channels for the creation of these imprints vary as well, ranging from the executive decree of one-party rule to a cacophony of citizens' groups and memorial entrepreneurs with a multiplicity of agendas and intentions.

Approaches to Memory

Not only does the content of memorial culture change over time; so do the political and bureaucratic channels through which memorial landscapes are created. Hence the importance both of a historical perspective in studies of collective memory and of studying the channels through which memory's various forms enter into and shape the material and social
work on collective memory opens the subject up to notions of conflict, which are especially visible when collective memory is viewed over time. Other approaches operate with a more unified notion of collective memory, and of the relationship between the complicated entity of memory and the tricky notion of the collective. In one recent analysis, Amy Adamczyk examines the collective memory and rituals surrounding Thanksgiving over a period of three centuries, focusing more on the symbols themselves and less on the changes in the factors shaping and transmitting these memories. Adamczyk draws on Halbwachs to assert that “collective memories change according to the needs and concerns of each generation,” and that “present interests and needs are the main source of change in collective memory and commemoration.” This approach seems to imply a more unified set of “needs and concerns of each generation” than might actually be present, reiterating Nora’s, Halbwachs’s, and Durkheim’s emphasis on the consensual roots of collective memory. Often such approaches may be exactly right, given that sometimes elements of collective memory do in fact become broadly consensual. But in these approaches, there is not as much talk of memory as a struggle over dominant narratives of the past, for example, or as a part of a contentious and layered project of national identity or state formation that may not overlap with the understandings that broad swathes of the population may have of the past.

Olick and Levy turn their attention to the role of conflict in producing elements of collective memory, asserting that, “collective memory...should be seen as an active process of sense-making through time.” Furthermore, Olick finds that states use aspects of memory for political legitimation, creating what he calls “legitimation profiles,” a concept “useful for appreciating the ways in which diverse symbolic elements and issues coalesce through time into relatively coherent yet dynamic systems.” Rudy Koshar also sets out to examine the contingent and layered elements of landscapes of memory, offering a three-point approach with relation to German memory and finding that framing strategies may be used by the state and its agencies or by social groups representing a variety of interests and ideologies. It is assumed, furthermore, that framing strategies themselves are “path-dependent”... because they get their legitimacy from past uses and articulations. When groups mobilize framing devices, they may establish social consensus, or they may promote or exacerbate conflict, depending on historical circumstances. Framing devices are rarely unilaterally imposed from above [in democracies]... but emerge from negotiation and conflict. This book [From Monuments to Traces] is about a triad, a three-cornered relationship among highly resonant parts of a memory landscape, individuals, and groups that struggle to invest that environment with meaning through the use of framing strategies, and the themes and symbols that are the raw material of the framing devices and meanings themselves.

Some outcroppings of official collective memory thus result from intense personal connections to past events, while others are stripped-down symbols that fit an official party line, and sometimes official memory (especially in the West after the 1970s and in unified Germany) responds to various grassroots pressures. But even in settings where citizen activism shapes a fair amount of the memorial landscape, there is neither a perfect match-up nor perfect opposition between official and unofficial memory.

Clearly, the project of officially remembering the resistance to and persecution by the Nazi regime in Germany changed significantly on both sides of the Iron Curtain in the years following World War II. I detail some of the key changes in post-1945 memorial culture here, in order to provide a context for the discussions of post-1989 memorial practice that will occupy the rest of the book. An interdisciplinary array of scholars has been involved in understanding these transformations of memorial culture, resulting in detailed analyses of the ways in which it has changed over time, and a general agreement that these changes fall loosely into four eras, discussed in greater detail below. (Not all analysts share the same conceptions of these periodizations, but many do overlap.) I build on these analyses and draw on newspaper articles, German- and English-language secondary sources, archival sources, and catalogs of monuments, combined with an analysis of the memorial landscape itself, to consider some of the theoretical implications for the study of collective memory and urban change. The intentions of those doing the memorializing are often apparent in the transcripts of public meetings, dedication speeches, op-ed pieces, or in the pamphlets or other interpretive information available on-site. These sources can illuminate the approaches of governments at various times and at various levels, as well as the intentions of citizens’ groups, district history.
museums, and history workshops involved in memorialization—revealing changes in aesthetics and in content, and in the relationships of states to their landscapes and citizens.

Immediate and Provisional Memory, 1945–1949

In the night of May 8, 1945, Germany officially surrendered to the Allies in the eastern Berlin neighborhood of Karlshorst. Despite the language of the Zero Hour, however, and the strong impulses to suppress detailed memory of the Nazi era, leaving no trace of the Nazi past in the landscape was simply never a viable option. Even in the summer of 1945, survivors and politicians were turning their attention to issues of how to remember resistance to and persecution by the Nazi regime. As much as the capitulation signaled the beginning of a new political era in Germany, there was also widespread continuity on many levels, including in the built environment. The physical, psychological, and social traces remained either fully exposed or hidden just beneath the surface. At the time of the capitulation, Hitler’s bunker lay partially exposed at the city center, and almost the entire population had firsthand memories of World War II. The city was in ruins, there was no state, and most memorial work appeared to be shaped by survivors. From the perspective of the individual, Berlin was never a blank slate, but rather a landscape layered with personal memory. There was obviously an immediacy of memory in May 1945 differing significantly from the kind of memory of the Nazi era circulating in Germany today.

Many of the places that became important locations of memorialization toward the end of the twentieth century were, in 1945, at least partial ruins and were not singled out for memorialization. Much of Berlin was destroyed or heavily damaged by Allied bombing and the Soviet advance, leaving behind fifty-five million cubic meters of rubble. Jeffry Diefendorf notes, but he argues that this is only part of the story, and that there was much structural continuity even in areas that were bombed most heavily or that experienced firestorms. Not only did many masonry walls remain standing even in heavily bombed areas, but most of the underground infrastructure also remained in place. The intact sewer systems and gas lines necessarily also shaped reconstruction. Bombing or burning do not necessarily level a building. Someone has to make a decision either to leave it a ruin, to tear it down completely, or to reconstruct it based on what is salvageable. Many salvageable buildings were torn down in both East and West to do away with politically fraught structures such as Hitler’s chancellery or the imperial palace, to make way for new city planning schemes, or to remove dangerous ruins. In rebuilding the city, sites that are now the subject of intensive archaeological investigation or widely publicized rediscovery were, in the years immediately following the war, simply parts of the topography of the city, steeped in the personal memories of perpetrators and those victims who survived, but not entrenched in a broader landscape of official collective remembrance and pedagogical practice. Such sites include synagogues damaged but not destroyed during the 1938 pogroms and the Gestapo headquarters, whose cellars were rediscovered in the 1980s. I should note that the language of “rediscovery” is somewhat problematic because it implies that the traces of these events vanished through some natural process, which obscures the active forgetting and demolition through which many people, officials and regular citizens alike, attempted to erase the Nazi past. Furthermore, as noted elsewhere, for eyewitnesses to past events (whether victims or perpetrators), the memory of what happened in a given place surely did not fade, so that “rediscovery” may be accurate in describing an arc of collective forgetting and remembering, but in no way conveys the continuity of individual memory, or the considerable lengths people went to (including demolishing salvageable buildings) to erase evidence of the sites that might later be rediscovered.

Some people certainly had a vested interest in suppressing memories, either as perpetrators or victims. Others pushed quite early on for public markers and ceremonies to remember the victims of persecution and the agents of resistance. During the occupation, from 1945 to 1949, there was as yet no clearly established official memorial culture. In these years, there was a memorial vacuum of sorts. Initially, victims’ organizations played key roles in memorialization, including the Hauptausschüsse für Opfer des Faschismus (Central Committee for Victims of Fascism), or Odf, and the Vereinigung der Verfolgten des NS-Regimes (Union of the Persecuted of the Nazi Regime), or VVN, as well as ethnic and religious groups, particularly Jewish communities, and the newly allowed German Communist Party (KPD) and Social Democratic Party (SPD). Photographs from September 1945 capture fleeting memorials set up in the city, hand-painted posters hung with garlands, calling on people to honor the victims of the
concentration camps, living or dead, and in particular to remember the heroism of anti-fascist resistance fighters. Stefanie Endlich and others have found that at this point, the public remembrance of the Nazi past entailed a comparatively diverse grassroots set of efforts to create sites marking persecution and resistance, often in forms that allowed for public ceremonies. “The first memory signs [Erinnerungszeichen], remembrance stones, and gravestones originate in the first weeks and months directly after the end of the war, and from the early postwar years,” Ulrike Puvogel notes. Wreath-laying, the erection of pillars or urns, reburials, large public ceremonies, and countless acts of personal remembrance took place. One account also describes memorials made of “plaster, wood, papier-mâché, flag cloth,” and other relatively temporary materials.

In his analysis of memory on both sides of the Iron Curtain in Germany, Jeffrey Herf found that “[a]mong the Communists returning to East Berlin, those who had been political prisoners in German concentration camps attempted, with some success, to shape the form and content of political memory. In so doing, they displayed a generosity and compassion which became rare following the codification of East German anti-fascism.” This local and individual nature of memorialization differed significantly from the more centralized and official memory that developed just a few years later, when the two Germanys were founded. In the late 1940s and early 1950s, there were a few markers for Jews who had been killed throughout Germany. These were often on a relatively small scale and erected on local initiative, marking cemeteries, the sites of mass murders, and death marches. Even so, given the magnitude of the Holocaust, there were relatively few markers or ceremonies devoted explicitly to recalling the murder and persecution of Jews, and this would remain the case in both halves of Berlin until the 1970s in the West, and the late 1980s in the East. At this point there was also no hint of the more elaborate kinds of memorialization that would become prevalent in later decades. Some memory work did happen, but most authentic sites vanished into the landscape, some to be rediscovered later.

State Formation and the Cold War, 1949–1968

Once the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany were founded, issues of state formation and political legitimacy came to the fore alongside the pressing problems of economic recovery and physical reconstruction. Both sides began officially to mark certain sites connected to resistance to Nazi power. At the same time, polarization and simplification characterized much official memory of the Nazi era. Herf finds, for example, that “the public language of memory was related to occupation-era policies of denazification and judicial procedure,” so that memory was mediated through these broader political and institutional processes. At the time the two German states were founded, in 1949, people were still navigating the especially treacherous waters of personal memory and national politics in the midst of this bombed-out landscape. There was a mixture of centralized and selective remembering, on the one hand, and widespread erasure and forgetting, on the other, in both halves of Berlin. As early as 1948, with the increasing division of the city, official representations of the Nazi past became more ideological and more divided, and linked more to the Cold War. Thus even before 1949, East and West had already embarked on different paths of remembering the Nazi era. “Each nation had perceived and publicly proclaimed that the other was the continuation of a totalitarian, whether fascist or communist, state while each was itself a rebirth of German democratic traditions.”

Authorities, artists, survivors, and enthusiastic Communist Party members made this antagonism quite plain in the memorial landscape. Both sides sought a tradition of resistance (whether military or communist) in which to root the origins of their respective states. In the West, the quest for a legitimate, and usable, national past took the form primarily of honoring “conservative, military, Church, and social democratic” resistance. In the East, the focus was on socialist and communist resistance to the Nazi regime, and these public markers centered on what were officially referred to (until 1989) as “anti-fascist resistance fighters.” Official memorialization took place in ways that coincided with and bolstered the ideological position and political legitimacy of each side of the Cold War. Memorialization, both in physical monuments and at public ceremonies, quickly became tangled up with Cold War politics.

As in the West, in East Berlin and East Germany in the 1950s and 1960s, memorial culture emphasized public ritual and the marking of sites connected to officially recognized “anti-fascist resistance fighters.” In 1948 and 1949, the foundation of the German Democratic Republic and the “Stalinization” of the ruling Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands
(SED) "led to a growing narrowing, simplification, abstraction, and ritualization of official remembrance." This process included the disbanding of victims' organizations and increasing official reliance on the red triangle as the sole symbol of anti-fascist/communist (and thus officially recognized) resistance. At this point, the red triangle—the symbol used in concentration camps to indicate political prisoners, particularly socialists and communists, and which had been used spontaneously after 1945 as a symbol of persecution and resistance—also became a more official symbol.

The SED also transferred responsibility for the documentation of anti-fascist resistance from the Union of the Persecuted (VVN) to the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute. There were clear efforts to concentrate control of memorialization in the hands of the SED, and this included the exclusion of communist concentration camp internees from discussions about memorials and the dismantling of the VVN, although former members of the VVN continued to be individually active, volunteering their time for smaller projects.

While there was more memorialization in the East early on, including centralized and decentralized memorials, public ceremonies, and memorial plaques, these projects quickly became the work of the state and not of independent individuals or groups. Throughout the history of the GDR, memorial construction was largely a top-down process, and this remembering generally took the form of heroic portrayals of anti-fascist resistance fighters, an important element of establishing East German national identity. In an account of East German monuments published in 1970, Volker Frank wrote:

The aim of antifascist monuments is to recall the years of the fascist dictatorship, to honour the dead and to express vividly in the eyes of the artist the moral qualities which the resistance fighters displayed, their steadfastness and their unflinching valour. But the antifascist monument should at the same time produce in the observer a negative reaction to all forms of neofascism and should help to develop an awareness of past events. This includes as prerequisites of our present-day socialist life, the struggle against fascism and the unity of the working class which was prepared during the resistance.

The focus on anti-fascist resistance fighters thus provided the German Democratic Republic with an account of the Nazi era that allowed them to claim a proud anti-fascist heritage.

Most memorialization in this period also followed traditional representational forms in both East and West, including statues, plaques, engraved stones, and courtyards—which is clear in the landscape even today. Peter Reichel finds "crosses, crypts and churches, inscribed walls, gravestones and columns, as well as . . . the figurative representations of victims of violence and war." Many sites had more a ritual than a pedagogical function and emphasized the possibility of public ceremony rather than the preservation of original structures or sites of persecution and resistance. Outside of Berlin, one set of authentic sites that received more attention was the concentration camps. The East German government began to turn concentration camps into memorial sites and educational centers earlier than the West did. In the West, no large-scale memorials were established at the concentration camps until the 1960s. In the late 1950s, the East German government began building Nationale Mahn- und Gedenkstätten ("National Sites for Commemoration and Admonition") at the sites of former concentration camps, dedicating memorials at Buchenwald in 1958, at Ravensbrück in 1959, and at Sachsenhausen in 1961. The dedications of these memorials clearly served a larger political and ideological project, according to Herf. "Both Otto Grotewohl at Buchenwald in 1958 and Walter Ulbricht at Sachsenhausen in 1961 delivered speeches that drew political significance from past suffering. Both came to praise fallen soldiers more than to mourn innocent victims. The texts were major statements of official antifascist memory in East Germany."

At the concentration camps in East Germany, through the 1980s, the exhibits and ceremonies gave little or no recognition to the Jewish victims of the Holocaust, or to anyone who was not a communist or socialist. This phenomenon persisted well into the 1990s, either intentionally or due to a lack of funds for new exhibits. At Sachsenhausen, outside of Berlin, the original state socialist exhibits still occupied the bulk of exhibition space at the end of the 1990s, and decades-old concrete memorial structures were crumbling over the crematoria. Similarly, until its complete redesign after the fall of the Wall, the German History Museum in East Berlin, largely a product of the 1950s and 1960s, failed to mention "German national participation in the events of the Third Reich." In these representations, and in official GDR history, fascism was a product of capitalism, and "Jewish victims seem[ed] an embarrassment." In the process of building the Buchenwald memorial, for example, many of the original
buildings were also actually torn down, a stark contrast with the attention given to “authentic” sites like the Gestapo Headquarters and the House of the Wannsee Conference in the 1980s and 1990s. With only a few exceptions, detailed below, this style of memorialization continued in the East until 1989.

Despite its close connections to the government and to the commemoration of military resistance, official memorialization in the West was still more democratic and more dependent on some degree of civil society and activism than memorialization in the East. But at this point, it bore little resemblance to the later scale of citizen activism, with none of the kinds of history workshops, school projects, and pedagogical work on the scale seen by the 1980s. The earliest official and large-scale memorial sites in West Berlin were Plötzensee, dedicated in 1952, and Stauffenbergstraße, where the central courtyard was fashioned into a monument in 1953 (part of this building has now been turned into the Gedenkstätte Deutscher Widerstand, a museum dedicated to the history of German resistance to the Nazis). The West Berlin Senate sponsored the Plötzensee project after being pressured by relatives of members of resistance groups, particularly military officers who had attempted a coup against Hitler. Between 1933 and 1945, more than 2,500 people were executed in the Plötzensee prison. Many of them were political opponents of the Nazi regime and were sentenced to death at the Volksgerichtshof in the city center. Parts of the complex were destroyed near the end of the war, but the area was put to use once again as a prison after the war’s end. The execution room was left unused, however, and was made into one of West Berlin’s first official markers relating to the Nazi past, which honored military and elite resistance to the Nazis and, like other projects of the era, was rooted in part in an effort to found a tradition of German resistance on which the new West German government could construct a legitimate national identity.

Overall, fewer markers of resistance or persecution during Nazi era appeared in the West than in the East during the 1950s and 1960s. Holger Hübner, a local author who wrote one of the more exhaustive accounts of Berlin’s memorial plaques, credits the East with having a much more extensive memorial culture treating the Nazi past much earlier than the West. He recalls visiting East Berlin in the 1970s (from his home in the West) and being surprised by the extent to which the East had engaged in the marking of the Nazi past in the landscape, particularly in the form of memorial plaques dedicated to anti-fascist resistance fighters. In the 1950s, plaques adorned with red triangles were mounted throughout East Berlin, with texts like the following: “In this building lived the anti-fascist resistance fighter Werner Seelenbinder, born on August 2, 1904, murdered on October 24, 1944, in Brandenburg. Honor his memory.” Even into the 1980s, however, when these communists and socialists were also Jewish, official representations generally ignored that fact.

The two sides shared much in terms of memorial culture, especially an emphasis on palatable foundational narratives. Both sides also continued to omit any significant acknowledgment of the murder of Jews as well as Sinti and Roma (Gypsies), gays, and other “forgotten” groups. In the 1950s, the East differed little in this respect from the West. Neither German state marked the sites of deportations or destroyed synagogues to any significant extent; both commemorated individual social democratic or communist resistance by Jews, but rarely mentioning that they were Jewish. In Reichel’s opinion, this “was probably no oversight, but rather a historical-political calculation.”

During this period there was also a widespread willingness to tear down or build over sites deeply intertwined with resistance and persecution during the Nazi era. Authenticity had not yet become a predominant category of memorialization. The repair and reconstruction of damaged structures also began to erase places that would later be considered authentic sites of memory. In the West, the “Economic Miracle” and early, widespread construction and reconstruction also resulted in the disappearance of many authentic sites. Extensive urban reconstruction erased authenticity, not only of sites tied to resistance and persecution during the Nazi era, but also in terms of historical preservation and the aesthetics of façades. Thus in the East the lack of resources for renovation meant that crumbling but beautiful building façades remained in place, while such façades were systematically stripped and plastered over in the West. In many cases, synagogues, deportation centers, and other sites that later became the objects of archaeological excavation, careful preservation, extensive research, and public memorialization were torn down as the city was rebuilt.

One of the most striking examples of the erasure taking place throughout Berlin was the removal of most traces of once-robust Jewish communities from the landscape in both East and West. On November 9, 1938, most of the prominent synagogues in Berlin were severely damaged, most
of the interiors destroyed and many of the buildings set on fire by the SS and others. Bombing during World War II damaged many of the structures further. Many synagogues survived the war, even if they were damaged in the 1938 pogroms or in the early 1940s, only to be leveled in the 1950s, not just in Berlin but throughout Europe. In the years following the war, Berliners walked past ruins every day. As the economy improved, particularly in the West, resources for rebuilding became increasingly available, which also meant that it became possible to remove existing ruins to make way for new construction. Jackhammers, dynamite, and bulldozers have all contributed to the shape of the memorial landscape.

Demolition orders were followed, in some cases (and much later), by excavations both in the cityscape and in the archives, which led in turn to a new landscape of plaques and sculptures. The synagogue at Behaimstraße in the western district of Charlottenburg, for example, was damaged in 1938 and again in 1941, demolished in 1957, and then marked with a memorial plaque decades later, in 1994. According to Sabine Ofle, the demolition of synagogues, or their reuse as fire stations, a building housing an electrical transformer, even a fish smokehouse, were not simply the result of “forgetting . . . rather [they were] consciously and intentionally removed.”

These vastly different approaches to the built environment reflect two very distinct political, cultural, economic, and urban planning eras. During the first, the people making decisions about city planning and historic preservation placed far less emphasis on authentic traces of the city’s decimated Jewish population. During the second, beginning in the late 1970s, such traces played greater (if not always consistent) roles in planning, preservation, and memorialization. Indeed, the demolitions essentially created work for later archaeologists and historians.

Memorial Trends in the 1970s and 1980s:
Change in the West, Continuity in the East

With a new generation assuming power, and World War II increasingly receding into the past, official memorial practices changed throughout both Germanys. Both sides saw a decentralization of the responsibilities for commemorative activities, including memorials, plaques, publications, and events. The categories of memorialization also broadened in this period, albeit far more in the West than in the East. In the East, the SED funded more decentralized projects by assigning more responsibility to lower levels of the party, increasingly delegating responsibility for plaques and publications to local committees and councils. But the overall aesthetic form and content stayed largely the same, as did the broader techniques employed by the state to create these landscapes of official memory. In the West, the overall aesthetic forms changed (including more extensive use of conceptual memorials and “authentic” places) and categories of memorialization began to be more inclusive, unintentionally laying the foundations for contemporary memorial culture in Berlin. The memorial landscape became more heterogeneous, and what was officially remembered also varied, in part because of grassroots involvement and the decentralization of memorial responsibilities to lower levels of government. The overall number of memorial projects also increased, especially leading up to 1987, the year of Berlin’s 750th anniversary, which was celebrated with great fervor on both sides of the Wall as the memorial landscape became another site in which to wage the Cold War.

Memorial Projects in the East

Memorial practice changed far less in the East than in the West during this period, for at least two reasons: East Germany did not experience the same kind of generational upheaval as the West, and international changes in memorial practices, historical analysis, and artistic approaches to representations of the past were not taken up to the same extent that they were in the West. In many respects, the commemorative practices that had developed in the 1950s and 1960s continued into this era in the East. The GDR continued to build monuments to the memory of persecution (Verfolgung), extermination (Vendichtung), and anti-fascist resistance, language exemplified by a large column in the eastern district of Friedrichshain built in 1975, which lists the names of seven people and proclaims: “They were murdered / In remembrance of the heroic resistance fighters / against fascist barbarism / their legacy has been fulfilled / in the socialist GDR.” In the eastern district of Köpenick, a large fist reaches up toward the sky atop a column covered in socialist realist bas-relief, part of a larger ensemble built in 1969 to commemorate those killed in 1933 in the “Köpenick Blood Week.”
The plaques put up in the 1950s resemble those put up in the 1970s and even the 1980s—the language of anti-fascist resistance fighters and memorial plaques emblazoned with the red triangle continued to be used throughout the GDR’s existence. For the most part, these projects continued to omit Jews and other persecuted groups who were not necessarily socialists or communists. In the 1980s, these representations did show slight indications of turning toward other forms of resistance, but essentially, through 1989, official East German treatment of the Nazi past in the landscape focused on the socialist realist commemoration of anti-fascist resistance. (See Figure 2.1.)

While the East German Culture Ministry continued to link memorial projects to Cold War politics, it also began to delegate increasing amounts of memorial work to the local level. This was a period when monuments of “national significance,” including the former concentration camps, were in the charge of the national council of ministers, while city district councils handled more local monuments of “territorial significance.” A hierarchy of historical commissions and tradition commissions developed, overseen by various levels of SED leadership. The SED began charging city districts with the task of marking anti-fascist resistance, both in written form and in the imagery and language of plaques and monuments. During this period, there was also a profusion of published sources relating to memorials and to this history in general. Hans Maur, for example, published detailed accounts of sites connected to the “workers’ movement” in each district of East Berlin, including sites associated with resistance and persecution during the Nazi era. (Maur has also continued to be active in memorial projects since 1989.) Certainly, memorial culture in East Germany was shaped predominantly by a relatively uniform party line; there were no set conduits for an array of citizens to shape official memorial culture, and the content remained largely limited to anti-fascist, socialist, and communist resistance. But individual East Germans engaged with the Nazi past in a multitude of ways, and many of the people who became actively involved in grassroots or local memorial work after the Wall fell were also eastern Germans.

In part in response to the decentralization efforts in the 1970s and 1980s, guidelines for local officials and researchers were developed. In 1981, the East German Institut für Denkmalpflege (Institute for Historical Preservation) and Culture Ministry published a handbook on political memorials aimed at local governments charged with overseeing a wide range of sites, from small memorial plaques to large ensembles. The introduction made clear the political and pedagogical intentions behind political monuments, including those (the majority of recent memorial projects) marking the sites of anti-fascist resistance. “Monuments of political development are important testimony of the history of our people. They are of great worth for political education, particularly of young people. They deliver authentic impressions of historical events and speak directly to emotions and imagination.” Furthermore, “they are well-suited to convey that our society, our state, arose out of the work and the struggle of many generations of the revolutionary proletariat,” and “the monuments of political history serve the development of a socialist patriotism and proletarian internationalism.” This spirit manifested itself in the copious plaques around the city emblazoned with red triangles, and in a range of memorial stories placed around the city. How well this approach reflected a more broadly shared collective memory is another question, bringing up the complex issue of who such a “collective” would be in the first place.

In 1983, the secretariat of the Central Committee of the SED developed a program for refurbishing the “Museums of the Anti-fascist Resistance in the National Warning- and Memorial Sites Buchenwald and
While this project was an acknowledgement that the memorials constructed in the 1950s needed to be updated, the tone of the refurbishing reiterated East Germany’s claim to a proud history of anti-fascist resistance and continued the widespread omission of any mention of the treatment of Jews from the official narratives of the concentration camps. The remodeling of the exhibits was clearly linked to a larger national and political project, and not necessarily to a widely shared “collective memory” among East Germans. “That which is represented in the museum should inspire hate and condemnation of the crimes of the fascist German imperialists . . . and, at the same time, should motivate the museum visitor for the struggle against the aggressive misanthropic politics and imperialism today and the struggle for the preservation and securing of peace and societal progress.” This was also a statement clearly aimed at the enemy on the other side of the Wall.

Memorial work reached a fever pitch throughout the city in the 1980s, in preparation for Berlin’s anniversary in 1987, which provided an occasion, not only to reflect on the city’s 750 years of history, but also to engage in a multitude of projects, ranging from small picture books to fully reconstructed neighborhoods. The anniversary created a “pressing deadline” for the construction of memorials and the mounting of plaques. Guidebooks, lecture series, public ceremonies, and other commemorative projects left their mark on the physical and social landscape of the city. These projects continued the battle over who could legitimately claim the history of Berlin, including the history of resistance to the Nazi regime (although by no means limited to that). They became, in part, a kind of competition to see which side of Berlin could more proudly and thoroughly claim the city’s past, and interpretations of that past, as important pieces in the larger puzzle of postwar German national identity. In 1987, the Council of Ministers of the GDR issued regulations for the “Production of Sculptural Monuments.” Public monument sculpture was to honor some element of socialism, ranging from “warning remembrance of the warriors against fascism and war” to “important events of the international class struggle.”

The anniversary involved a clear symbolic waging of the Cold War, an episode in a generally understated battle of housing construction, urban renewal, and historic preservation that continued for almost half a century. But the war of words and historic buildings escalated in the mid 1980s, leading up to the year 1987. In both Berlins, anniversary projects were not only part of a fierce competition with the city’s other half, but also an effort to draw in tourists from other parts of both Germanys. These commemorations covered far more than simply the recent past, reaching back to the fishing village that Berlin had been more than seven centuries before.

This flurry of activity in preparation for 1987 illustrates the material effects of anniversaries and commemorations on cultural memory and material landscapes. For the East, the predominant message was the proud origins of the East German state in resistance to fascism, a refrain echoed from the earliest years of the GDR. At least superficially, 1987 solidified the anti-fascist tradition in East Germany and was closely connected to official party doctrine. In June 1987, the SED declared that “on the basis of the resolution of the Eleventh Party Convention of the German Socialist Unity Party [the SED], the connection of the anti-fascist heritage and the revolutionary traditions linked to the development and growth of our worker and farmer state is to be strengthened.”

This approach was prevalent essentially until the Wall fell, although in the late 1980s memorial culture in the East did begin to open up very slightly to broader understandings of victims and of appropriate representational forms. Reichel notes:

Only very late did they [the East German government] begin to differentiate their one-dimensional victim definition and to open up to Jewish victims. Since the 1980s, around a dozen places in East Berlin have commemorated the deported and murdered Jews: at several sites in the district of Weißensee, at the Jewish Cemetery in Schönhauser Allee, and at the deportation center in Große Hamburger Straße. But even in this period, the relationship of victims of the Nazis to the workers’ movement was still ranked higher than their Jewish background.

Caroline Wiedmer finds that “in East Germany official memory of the war was legislated throughout the Democratic Republic’s forty years of existence by the myth of anti-fascism. . . . [although] the late 1980s had ushered in a more avid interest in the war-time persecution of Jewish victims of the Holocaust.” Renovation of the New Synagogue in East Berlin also began at this point, and a competition was held to erect a small neighborhood monument in an area that had once been home to many of Berlin’s Jewish residents. A handful of residents, activists, artists, and government
officials were also beginning to steer away from socialist realism as the predominant aesthetic memorial form and starting to incorporate broader categories of resisters and victims.

**Memorial Projects in the West**

While memorial culture in the East during the 1970s and 1980s largely continued the trajectory set in the 1950s and 1960s (with small changes toward the end of the 1980s), a different set of conditions was at work in the West. While the East decentralized but essentially stayed the course, in the West, there was a sea change, resulting from a multitude of factors. The generational upheaval of 1968, as well as an international turn toward social history or history from below shifted the focus and form of official memorial culture in the 1970s and 1980s. Officials, artists, activists, and others also began to pay increasing attention to the sites of perpetrators, and to sites with an authentic connection to the Nazi past. Memorial work was increasingly decentralized and democratized and became more pluralistic. The categories of memorialization began to include a broader range of victims and resistance, including not only Jews but also other persecuted groups such as gays, Roma and Sinti, and communists. These changes became the groundwork for the shape of memorial culture after the fall of the Wall. "Beginning in the 1970s, a multiplicity of initiatives arose that—along with survivors, for whom the historical locations had always remained present—committed themselves to the creation of monuments [Denkmäler] and concrete memory work [not only] at central locations, but also in many out-of-the-way places," Endlich writes. "Since the mid 1980s a regular 'monument boom' had begun to spread in the western half of the city, rooted in grassroots initiatives of 'trace-searching' [Spurensuche], through which the monument topography developed in the 1950s and 1960s was decidedly expanded and locally made more precise." There was a convergence of factors that lay the groundwork for an increase in citizen involvement in memorialization. Various levels of government had to respond to these projects, granting or withholding funding and planning permission, and organizing competitions for new memorial designs. Activities at the federal level at times differed from those at the local level, and the terrain of memorials could look quite different from one district of West Berlin to the next, depending on the interests and actions of local district officials and activists. Thus a somewhat heterogeneous landscape developed, juxtaposed with the markers that had been put in place in previous decades.

The West was particularly affected by the social conflicts of 1968, which contributed to (among other changes) a new type of confrontation with the Nazi past and an expansion of categories, actors, and sites of memory, including previously excluded groups. The student movements themselves, and the broader meaning of this year as a generational changing of the guard, constituted a turning point in many aspects of West German society. Many members of a younger generation, with little or no firsthand memory of World War II, rejected the widespread silence about the Nazi era and contributed to the expansion of categories and forms of memorial culture. In subsequent years, West Germany began a more explicit process of Vergangenheitsbewältigung or confrontation of its Nazi past. In particular, Christhard Hoffmann writes, "the memory of the Holocaust was also politically instrumentalized, above all by a younger generation molded through the student movement. This can be seen particularly clearly in the Federal Republic in the 1980s, when hardly a single major political conflict—from the armament debates to controversies over immigration—was discussed without mention of the Holocaust as both an exemplary lesson and moral legitimation for a particular position." At the same time, in Germany and elsewhere, there was also a growing attention to "history from below." More people became interested in more aspects of Germany's recent history, engaging in research, organizing, and pressing for new and different kinds of memorials, pressure to which various levels of government frequently responded. Local history workshops also emerged, with their members leading walking tours of the city and producing their own publications. University professors and high school teachers also began encouraging their students to investigate the material remains of the Nazi past in the cityscape.

A report on monuments commissioned by the Senatsverwaltung für Bau- und Wohnungswesen (the Senate Administration for Construction and Housing) for example, captures the following key trends in memorial culture throughout West Germany in the 1980s:

1. Political confrontations and debates are conducted with monuments.
2. The circle of monument makers and the groups to whom the monuments are dedicated is broader and more differentiated.
3. The places of the historical events are rediscovered and acquire a great, almost magical meaning.

4. New artistic forms of remembrance are diligently sought simultaneously with the acknowledgment of the impossibility of a total comprehension.

5. Sites of learning and memorials [Lernorte and Gedenkstätten] appear—increasing pedagogical measures accompany and supplement the monuments.

6. The process of confronting [these issues] is more important than the end result.

Ultimately, a diverse array of projects found their way through the bureaucratic channels of city planning departments and various combinations of state and private funding.

These local, on-the-ground practices also happened in the context of new international trends in both art and historiography. Art schools, history conferences, and, of course, publications all helped to circulate new ideas about ways of representing and interpreting elements of the past and became increasingly important in the 1970s and 1980s. The forms of memorializing the past became not only more pedagogical and more focused on authentic sites, but also increasingly conceptual, rather than directly representational, in part as a rejection of previous aesthetic styles that supposedly closed rather than opened debate and offered viewers an easy answer rather than provoking them to critical reflection. Many memorial projects throughout Germany in the 1980s took the form of what James Young and others call “counter-monuments”: “brazen, painfully self-conscious memorial spaces conceived to challenge the very premises of their being.” In the words of John Czaplicka, the new conceptual monuments, not only in the 1970s and 1980s, but in the 1990s as well, “effectively conjoin an aesthetic and therefore sensual representation with a mediation of historical facts that may lead to a contemplative and enlightening involvement of the visitor.”

A particularly striking component of these memorial activities in the 1970s and especially in the 1980s was the widely shared belief in the importance and pedagogical power of so-called authentic sites. Activists, educators, and officials all turned their attention to authentic sites in the cityscape, rather than to simply ceremonial sites not directly connected to historical events. Stefanie Endlich, an active participant and prolific analyst of many of these efforts, points to the increasing involvement of many different citizens’ groups who actively insisted on the pedagogical power of “authentic” sites. The key terms that arose out of this turn toward social history and the generational upheaval were the “search for traces” (Spuren-suche) and “the securing of those traces” (Spurensicherung). This way of remembering emerged in the late 1970s, as “little by little concrete crime sites (Verbrechensorte) were ‘rediscovered’ in all of their variety. . . . The impulse for the confrontation with Nazi events and crimes in ‘forgotten places’ came primarily from groups, clubs, history workshops, and initiatives that concerned themselves with ‘history from below.’” Likewise, Sabine Offe found the 1970s to be a time of the rediscovery of authentic Jewish sites in the German landscape. The focus on authentic sites was intended in part to help reduce the abstraction of evil and eliminate some of the distance caused by the passing of time and the inevitable decline in the numbers of people with firsthand memory of the Nazi era. This shift in focus also contributed to an increasing emphasis on “authentic” sites connected to perpetrators, including the former Gestapo headquarters and the villa where the Wannsee Conference took place. This shift applied to a far broader range of historical sites and historic preservation practices than those treated here. As Rudy Kosshar points out, “For more than two decades after World War II, reconstructed buildings and landscapes were the paradigmatic expressions of political community on both sides of the German-German border. And finally, in the period from roughly 1970 until the reunification of Germany, historical traces captured either in archaeological remains or in metaphorical renderings of the memory landscape as a topography of commemorative signs and markers, crystallized and framed meaning.” And this attention to traces continues today.

For the West, public memory in the 1980s increasingly entailed a close examination of German responsibility and guilt, and there was a widespread sense that remembering could help to prevent future atrocities. The people behind these increasingly grassroots projects aimed to transform the cityscape into a place of learning and instruction, and to spread a moral message by educating school groups, tourists, and pedestrians in general about the Nazi past. Sometimes they staged impromptu ceremonies or mounted unofficial plaques, but ultimately a diverse array of projects found their way through the bureaucratic channels of city planning.
departments and various combinations of state and private funding. Places like the Topographie des Terrors (Topography of Terror) outdoor museum on the site of the former Gestapo headquarters, for example, were supposed to disrupt the urban fabric, and confront people with the reality of the city's Nazi past. Such commemorations were very different from the heroic statuary in large open squares that characterized official memorialization in both halves of Berlin in the 1950s and 1960s, and very different also from the more fleeting memorial activity of the immediate postwar era.

Changes in conceptions of history in general and German history in particular contributed to the expansion of the categories of victims and resistance remembered in the landscape. A variety of citizens' groups and individuals became increasingly involved in memorialization, among them those I call memorial entrepreneurs, whose role in determining whether a given site actually became a memorial expanded as the processes of memorialization were decentralized and democratized. Other groups increasingly involved in memorial work included local district museums (Heimatmuseen) (particularly active in the western district of Kreuzberg) and history workshops. This diversity of actors and projects led both to more memorial sites, commemorating a wider range of persecution and resistance, and to networks and memorialization practices that have continued to shape the memorial landscape of Berlin into the twenty-first century.

As in the East, Berlin's 750th anniversary in 1987 spurred new programs in the West to build memorials of all kinds, some more traditional (such as porcelain memorial plaques) and others more conceptual or confrontational. During this period, there was an overall expansion in the number of sites, including memorial plaques, marking the Nazi past in West Berlin. A West Berlin bank sponsored a Berliner Gedenktafel (Berlin memorial plaques) program that mounted 211 plaques manufactured by the State Porcelain Manufacturer (originally the KPM, or Royal Porcelain Manufacturer) in West Berlin between 1985 and 1988. The program commemorated a broad range of historical figures and events, including but in no way limited to those persecuted by and/or resisting the Nazi regime. In part in response to this program, which created distinctly uniform and state-sanctioned plaques, which many activists felt to be incomplete and too narrowly focused on elites, the Kreuzberg art administration (Kunstamt) began its own plaque program. The programs in Kreuzberg and the neighboring district of Neukölln focused exclusively on persecu-

tion by the Nazis and drew on a variety of artistic styles designed to provoke more interest than the standard memorial plaque form.

The Topography of Terror

The anniversary also offered an incentive to set up a more permanent exhibit on the site of the former Gestapo headquarters, rediscovered and excavated in the late 1970s and 1980s. Once the Topography of Terror was more clearly marked, this site had tremendous power to evoke the horror of the Gestapo and the SS for people who had not been eyewitnesses to them, in part because visitors realize they are standing near (if not in) the cells used to torture prisoners. Today, the Topography of Terror is an unusual outdoor exhibition, combined with archaeological excavations and the site of a planned documentation center, in the heart of Berlin (Figure 2.2). Ulrich Eckhardt and Andreas Nachama suggest that this is a saving of honor for the city whose name could be read in the return address of countless death sentences in all of Europe. This “thinking place” [Denkort] is better able than any monument to sharpen consciousness and memory; it explains in a comprehensible way how the unimaginable could arise, who the perpetrators were, and what the victims suffered. At the very center of the city, in the heart of the future government quarter, there, where in the [Nazi] imperial capital, the desks of the perpetrators once stood and a gigantic machinery of surveillance and extermination encompassing all of Europe was installed, there the questioning empty urban space works like a wound in the cityscape or a disturbance in the brave new world.

Although it lies in the West Berlin district of Kreuzberg, the Topography of Terror site was directly affected by the fall of the Wall because its northern boundary was also the border of East Berlin and the district of Mitte. Moreover, the exhibition today uses a potentially very valuable piece of real estate to tell its historical and moral story. Only a block from the Topography of Terror and two blocks from the Holocaust Memorial, for example, the state government of Berlin and the federal government were fighting each other in 1993 for a site (approximately 20,000 m²) estimated at the time to be worth more than DM 100 million. But for decades the site sparked little interest, and had little commercial value. The Gestapo and SS buildings there were damaged by bombing during the war and
eventually torn down, and the site was put to mundane uses for decades after the war, until a handful of people began to literally scratch beneath the surface of this odd vacant lot. For decades after the war, the land was used as a dumping ground for construction rubble and as an area where student drivers could practice their skills. Other proposed uses for the lot included a helicopter landing pad and a six-lane expressway. In 1962, the state contracted with a construction firm to level the lot.6

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, however, the site was called back into public awareness through a series of events. Dieter Hoffman-Axthelm, a Berlin historian, contributed to the initial impetus to mark the site by leading a tour of it and writing an article about it, and others took up the cause as well.94 “The buildings, fully destroyed near the end of the war, were hauled away in 1949; only in 1986, after massive public pressure, were the bloody traces of history made visible again, and the rest of the Gestapo torture cells uncovered,” Peter Neumann writes in a guidebook to Berlin’s historical sites.95 Popular and official recognition of the site followed, in large part because the discovery occurred at a time in which it resonated with broader cultural and academic movements. “That this situation was recognized as inappropriate at the end of the 1970s is connected to the upheaval in historical study,” Bernd Matthies notes. “[S]uddenly slogans like ‘Dig where you stand’ arrived from abroad, [and] so-called history workshops competed with academics. . . . In Berlin, [over and] above the victims’ leagues, civil rights organizations and the aspiring Alternative List [the Berlin branch of the Green Party at the time] began to move for a rediscovery of the site.”96 The site also had the distinct advantage that, at the time of its designation as a site of memory, it had little commercial value, located as it was with its back (or front) up against the Berlin Wall. Through a series of actions in the 1980s, including the laying of wreathes on the excavated foundations, the clear marking of the Gestapo history of the area began, as did the excluding of other uses. Reinhard Rüüp, a historian charged with the task of documenting the site, recalls how quickly it became apparent that researchers had in front of them not only the Gestapo headquarters, but also the headquarters of the SS and the Reichssicherheitshauptamt: “With that it was clear that we were dealing not just with history, but with world history.”97 (See Figure 2.3.)

A temporary exhibition was installed in time for the 1987 city anniversary, which was intended to be taken down at the end of the celebrations.
But, writes a reporter for the *Tagespiegel*, "the enormous international resonance made that appear fully unthinkable." By June 1989, the West Berlin culture ministry had established a committee to determine the future use of the land, with the plan being to "secure the remaining traces and to interview the remaining eyewitnesses." In its interim report, the Berlin Senate emphasized that the site was "not only a place of Berlin, nor only of German, but rather of European history. Such a place should not be handled simply in the context of the tasks of local politics, but rather must have the rank of an international institution." This vacant lot on the edge of West Berlin began to resonate far beyond its ragged borders.

A first competition to symbolically mark the site was held in 1983, but the results were abandoned, "because the disparate planning concept demanded that the "historical depth of the place" be brought into agreement with profane uses like a parking lot, playground, and paths." The first competition envisioned a monument built on the land. The winning entry was abandoned after very vocal objections were made to covering over the authentic, original site, and the "open wound" in the cityscape. When discussions about a central memorial for the murdered Jews of Europe emerged in the late 1980s, this site was also suggested as a possible location—a proposal that met with many objections. The Active Museum and a number of victims' organizations immediately objected to this site, in part because it is a place of the perpetrators (Täter) and should be remembered as such. As late as 1994, a member of the Free Democrats fraction in the state assembly wanted to know what arguments there were against locating the Holocaust Monument on the former Gestapo land. On August 9, 1994, Minister Wolfgang Nagel replied: "In the land of the perpetrators, the Monument for the Murdered Jews of Europe is necessary in addition to [sites like the Topography of Terror, but]. . . . to plan it on this site would be inappropriate and, particularly, incompatible with the goal of keeping this place as a visible sign as much as possible." Thus the argument about the authenticity of the site, and its effectiveness as an "open wound," appears to have prevailed; the state has determined that, for now, it will not become an inauthentic, monumental monument, but will remain a *Denkort*.

In November 1989, this plot of land suddenly found itself in the very center of the city. "The lot doesn't simply lie 'behind' the Gropius building now, but rather it has a weight of its own. From being on the outskirts of West Berlin, it has once again become a place in the center of Berlin," a Senate commission charged with the task of discussing the future of this area concluded.\(^6\) Over the next few months, the area experienced dramatic changes in both symbolic and financial value. In 1990, the Senate called in the federal government to participate in the planning for this site, in light of its "extraordinary national and international significance," with the intention of shifting some of the cost of the site onto the federal budget.\(^7\) In 1992, the land was handed over to the Topography of Terror Foundation. At this point, the site's future appeared to be secure. It seemed to have become untouchable. All around it, new office buildings, apartments, shops, and government buildings sprang up. But the only construction planned on this lot is some kind of documentation center, the first competition for which was held in 1993.\(^8\) Originally, the Topography of Terror had no permanent exhibition or research space, but there was growing need for such structures. Between 1987 and 1997, 1.5 million people saw the Topography of Terror exhibition.\(^9\) Given the prices of neighboring property, a permanent Topography of Terror building could only be built on the site itself.\(^10\) The design competitions eventually led to the selection of a design by the Swiss architect Peter Zumthor, but the project stalled, and then fell apart in the face of mounting costs and other controversies. By 2005, the project had been abandoned, Zumthor had quit it, and the foundation and the federal government started from scratch to develop plans for a new documentation and exhibition center.\(^11\) There is no question that the site itself will remain some form of marked site for now, even if it is unclear who will fund the documentation center, or if it will ever be built.\(^12\)

This site itself (if not the unbuilt documentation center) is the "result of consensus building among initiatives, organizations and victims' leagues, [and] international memorial/museum experts and specialists, [the] result of an often also painful learning process around the question, what content profile and what physical form this place of the former Nazi terror headquarters should take."\(^13\) This phenomenon may be explained in part by the presence of entrenched and vocal advocates for the site, but also by the fact that its symbolic value had been securely established before the Wall fell and the price of neighboring land began to shoot up.\(^14\) It became a key node in the network of memory sites, and a site of the intersection of citizen activism with state-sanctioned memory. The Topography of Terror provided a central site where authenticity and pedagogy were linked together. The conceptions and networks developed during the process
of establishing this as an officially recognized site have also left a lasting impression, not only on the urban landscape, but also on the social landscape of memorial projects and memorial entrepreneurs, in part because "the discussion about the design and future of the former Gestapo Headquarters, or Topography of Terror . . . , served to sharpen the public awareness of the meaning of authentic places." This project has been central to contemporary memorial culture in Berlin. The history of the Topography of Terror is well documented, and its status as an active memory site seems to be secure. In part because of the transfer of ownership to the Topography of Terror Foundation, but also because of powerful arguments about the authenticity of the site, the land remains largely what it was supposed to be—an open wound in the cityscape.

By the end of the 1980s, then, an entrenched memorial culture had developed in the West, based to a large extent on grassroots efforts interacting with various levels of government. Increasingly, the anguish of personal memory was giving way to more abstract representations of the Nazi past, fewer and fewer eyewitnesses remained, and the scars of war were disappearing from the urban landscape. During this period, so different from the years immediately after the war, the memorial landscape was also opened up, at least in comparison to the 1950s and 1960s, to more inclusive categories of remembrance, a wider variety of participants in memorialization, and a broader spectrum of forms of memorials, including the preservation of "authentic" sites and the use of conceptual approaches to marking the Nazi past. New avenues for the production of officially recognized symbolic landscapes were created as well, including history workshops, district programs, and Heimatmuseen, many of which collected materials and organized exhibits around their district's history of resistance and persecution in the Nazi era. At the same time, even when memorial work seems to become more pluralistic and democratic, it does not necessarily reflect consensually held recollections of the past, but rather the kind of negotiated and partial representations discussed by Olick, Kosch, and others.

Memorials After 1989

By the time the Wall fell, there was a deeply rooted approach to the memorialization of the Nazi past in both East and West Berlin. As a result of memorial practice and, of course, broader political and economic changes, Berlin's memorial landscape has changed dramatically in the intervening years. The landscape is now a patchwork of sweeping new commercial and governmental developments, as well as concentrated pockets of official collective memory of the Nazi past (and a host of other pasts as well). Overall, the democratization and decentralization of memorialization in West Germany in the 1970s and 1980s helped to set the stage for memorial practice in the 1990s. The fall of the Wall revealed, among other things, two different landscapes of memory. Many of the memorial practices prevalent in the East, including socialist realism, an emphasis on the language of anti-fascism, and the use of the red triangle, were abandoned as the Wall fell. Most of the old markers remain in place, however, and are juxtaposed with new markers erected after 1989. There is a tremendous range in the scope of the new sites, from the central Holocaust Memorial to the tiny "stumbling stones" placed in the cobblestone sidewalks in front of houses from which people were sent to concentration camps. Some memorial projects have become places where Germany as a whole seems to engage in monumental debates about its relationship to its Nazi past, while others are local projects whose audience is really only people in the local neighborhood.

Many eastern Germans took up the "new" forms of memorialization described in the previous section as well, evident in so many district-level projects and in the work of activists in the eastern districts. After 1989, memorializing was more subject to the vagaries of financing, and districts in East and West alike assumed increasing administrative and financial responsibility for local projects. Anyone hoping to put up a plaque, for example, has had to rely largely on private donors, however, because subsidies for cultural projects in both East and West have dried up considerably. This growing reliance on private funding arguably makes memorial projects more heterogeneous, and perhaps even less representative of some kind of overarching collective memory. The return of private property to eastern Berlin also means that owners now have the final say as to whether their property is to be used for memorial purposes.

While official East German memorial practices ceased immediately after the Wall fell, the landscape of Berlin was not actually purged of all traces of East German collective memory of the Nazi past. The state and district governments of Berlin took a relatively cautious approach to East German monuments in general, and, not surprisingly, few officials were
interested in tearing down sites that dealt specifically with the Nazi past. Overall, there was relatively little of the kind of spontaneous destruction of monuments that occurred in other eastern European countries: “the demolition of monuments by the citizens of the GDR never happened. No Lenin, no Thälmann, and no Marx was hauled down from his pedestal.”

People did surreptitiously remove plaques bearing Honecker’s name, but a few days later, they handed them over anonymously to the city museum. Eventually, Lenin did fall, but Marx remained. The predominance of western memorial practices combined with a relatively cautious treatment of the existing memorial landscape, so that unification did not entirely eradicate the physical remnants of the eastern version of history. This caution was due in part to the efforts of groups of students and activists, and later politicians and experts. One group, the “Initiative on Political Monuments of the GDR,” took a particularly active role in trying to prevent the wholesale removal of East German markers from the landscape. Consisting primarily of art history students from all of the Berlin universities, eastern and western alike, it began in the spring of 1990 as a working group of the Active Museum of Fascism and Resistance (founded in 1983, with the claim that Berlin “needed an institution that, as an active museum, constructively confronts recent German history between 1933 and 1945, as well as neofascist resurgence in the present”). Noting that “the point of departure of our work was the observation that the Berlin Wall was being torn down with great speed, the symbols of power of the GDR were being removed, and as a consequence also the political monuments of the former East Berlin were being taken down,” members of the Initiative organized tours of the city, as well as a public discussion with the cultural administration of the eastern district of Prenzlauer Berg, and even mounted a replacement memorial plaque for one that had been stolen.

East German memorial culture was officially abandoned, but not entirely removed. One reason why it was largely accepted by both the public and its elected representatives that relatively few socialist sites be torn down is that the ideology behind these sites ceased, nearly overnight, to be a possible threat to the post-1989 political, economic, and symbolic order.

Furthermore, many of the people who were actively engaged in memorial projects in East Germany continued to play central roles in memorialization after 1989 as well. Many of the politicians and bureaucrats involved were trying, to some extent, to create a memorial landscape that would provoke a kind of confrontation with and rethinking of the past, rather than erasing all remnants of the fallen regime. The question was “how to treat monuments . . . perceived as outdated [uminzeitgemäß] . . . neither letting them remain without comment [unkommentierte Verbleiben] nor removing monuments from the urban landscape was envisioned; rather, an active confrontation with monuments and history was called for.”

While memorial plaques were the responsibility of each individual district, monuments (Denkmäler) were the responsibility of the state government. The Senate established a ten-person commission to review the existing political monuments in the eastern half of the city, following the recommendation of Culture Senator Ulrich Roloff-Momin. They were not responsible for the Soviet monuments, because a treaty with Russia guaranteed that those would remain. All in all, the commission’s recommendations tended to “a cautious, carefully considered treatment” of the monuments. At the same time, there was criticism of the fact that the commission only dealt with the eastern half of the city. Critics emphasized that, if there was going to be a reconsideration of the postwar monuments in the East, then a similar reconsideration should take place in the West. Wolfgang Kil and others pointed out that the work of the monument commission was “here, not to evaluate the Berlin monuments of the postwar era, but rather exclusively those monuments in the eastern part of the city,” criticizing the commission, and the authorities who had established it, for only focusing on and reconsidering eastern monuments, rather than reevaluating the memorial landscape of both Berlins.

The new political system meant, among other things, a new way of producing memorials. There are also new discussions in this era of the relationship between tourism and the memory of resistance to and persecution by the Nazi regime. In addition, the existing terrain and the approaches generated in the West were now confronted with the singularly new setting of unification. Now that the two Germanys had been united, and Berlin was on its way to becoming the capital again, there was also increased international scrutiny both of Germany’s treatment of its Nazi past and of the new “Berlin Republic.” As James Young writes, “no other nation has ever attempted to re-unite itself on the bedrock memory of its crimes or to make commemoration of its crimes the topographical center of gravity in its capital.” Furthermore, “in suggesting themselves as indigenous, even geological outcroppings in a national landscape, monuments
Chapter 2

... What then of Germany, a nation justly forced to remember the suffering and devastation it once caused in the name of its people? ... Under what memorial aegis, whose rules, does a nation remember its own barbarity? This relationship takes on a particular intensity in the wake of unification and in the midst of the increasing consolidation of the European Union. Controversy about the Holocaust in the 1990s "has revolved primarily around questions of how to anchor Holocaust commemoration in the national historical consciousness of a unified Germany and how to choose forms of cultural memory that best suit this end in the 'nation of the guilty.'" Olick and Levy find that

the effects of German unification and Germany's central role in the European Community will create (and already have created) new challenges to the way the past is remembered and how it works as collective memory. These challenges, however, have a long and varied history; the accumulation and transformations of this history lie at the center of Germany's ongoing work to define who it is, what it can do, and what it should do. The analysis of political culture, as newly conceived, helps us to appreciate and untangle the complexities of that work, which involves a continuous negotiation between past and present. Collective memory is this negotiation, rather than pure constraint by, or contemporary strategic manipulation of, the past.

Within these negotiations that constitute collective memory, a certain skepticism has developed concerning the direct effects of such memorializing. In their 1995 guide to Berlin's memorials, Gedenken und Lernen an historischen Orten, Thomas Lutz (a former director of the activist group Aktion Sühnezeichen who has since 1993 been with the foundation set up to run the Topography of Terror) and Stefanie Endlich (who is also involved in the Topography of Terror Foundation) express some of this caution, knowing that memorial sites do not necessarily result in the planned-for transformations in people's awareness of the past. Debates over memorial excesses, as well as the well-established institutions of memorialization, would have been difficult to predict in 1945 and even in subsequent decades. A given memorial's effects are indeterminate and do not necessarily correspond to the intentions of its creators. What do sculptors, politicians, and advocates hope for as they create these memorials—and what do preservationists or teachers or tour guides expect from them later on, months or decades after their original dedication? These efforts are, on many levels, not only representations of the past, but also concentrated visions of the future. That is, memorials—and not only in Berlin—frequently serve to recall versions of what has happened in the past and attempt to shape the future behavior of those who see these memorials. But this effect is not guaranteed. The audience for any of these memorial sites (and indeed for memorial sites in general) is also very heterogeneous. The controversy, the arguments, and the layers of interpretation and debate are difficult to see in the memorial landscape itself, even in countermonuments and conceptual projects that are intended to more actively engage the viewer.

Conclusion

Compare the landscape of 1945 to that of today, when there is an expansive and well-developed memorial culture, and when issues of marking the Nazi past appear frequently not just in local papers but in papers around the world. The Berlin landscape is now punctuated with barely visible memorial plaques, gleaming new educational centers, overgrown memorial stones, and controversial new memorial sites. Acts of remembrance are necessarily coupled with processes of forgetting, and any landscape of memory also exists with a shadow landscape of forgetting. This pairing is not in itself an indictment of the acts of forgetting, but rather a recognition of the necessarily selective and incomplete foundations of memory. Berlin's memorial terrain is clearly both dynamic and the product of a heterogeneous collection of institutions, policies, citizens' groups, academic and artistic sea changes, and local, state, and federal government agencies and elected bodies.

Their creators may have intended these commemorative projects to serve many purposes: to teach history and morality, to help to prevent a recurrence of fascism, to honor a favorite heroic figure, to construct an acceptable past, or even to serve a project of atonement and moral culpability that contributes to contemporary German political identity. These memorials and plaques are moral tales inscribed in the landscape, even if those narratives are not always immediately apparent to the passerby. Memorialization on both sides of the "German-German" border was meant by its supporters not only to promote remembrance but also to instruct and to warn. There is a clear pedagogical content to memorials, in the East as well as the West. Even if the content and message of memorials differed...
on either side of the Wall, both regimes started with a belief in the moral
instructive power of these symbolically and historically charged places and
the political necessity (both domestic and international) of such commemora-
tion. This belief only increased in the 1970s and 1980s, particularly in the West, and has lasted to this day. At the same time, as powerful as the
arguments about authenticity may be, authentic sites do go unmarked.
The shifting approaches to memorialization have tangible consequences
for the physical, social, and political landscapes of the city.

In the course of the past few decades, Berlin's landscape has become
a potent mix of erasure and concentrated official collective memory, result-
ing from the interaction of local, state, and international factors, as well as
personal and collective memories. These changes help to explain how Ber-
lin has arrived at its particular combination of remembering and forget-
ting, with its mixture of concentrated pockets of collective memory hinged
to messages of warning and remorse, side by side with the legacies of post-
war urban planning and the post-1989 real estate market. The meanings
attached to these pockets of memory are constructed in a variety of ways,
but they are neither flimsy nor inevitable. They emerge as mixtures of hap-
penstance and intention, as the urban landscape holds onto the imprints of
past actions, slogans, trends, and convictions, albeit in uneven ways, and
through a wide array of bureaucratic, political, artistic, and material chan-
nels. What counts as worthy of commemoration changes over time, as do
the accepted techniques of commemoration. Furthermore, particularly in
democratic settings like the Federal Republic of Germany, representations
of the past are not necessarily monolithic or direct reflections of official
policy, both because layers of memorials accrue over time and because the
processes of memorial production involve a range of groups interacting
with the state. The contours of the relationship between the state, its land-
scape, and its residents are transformed as well, and as the political, eco-
nomic, and social contexts shift, they leave their imprints in the terrain of
the city, and alter the experience and perception of previously constructed
memorials. When any of us visit these sites, the often contentious condi-
tions of their creation have generally disappeared behind the smooth sur-
face of educational exhibits or bronze plaques.

Persistent Memory:
Pre-1989 Memorials After the Fall
of the Wall

When the Wall came down, a range of markers treating the city's
Nazi past already dotted the eastern half of Berlin, running the spectrum
from inconspicuous plaques to large-scale sculptural ensembles. These
stones and statues embodied four decades of official East German mark-
ing of the Nazi past in the urban landscape. But what happened to these
sites in the wake of the introduction of a new political system, new urban
planning schemes, and the other major transformations that followed the
events of 1989? In October 1990, less than a year after the fall of the Wall,
the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung reported that Berlin had "become the
leading metropolis for real estate investment in all of Europe." After years
of division, the city was now experiencing "an unprecedented investment
boom." Between 1990 and 1992, average rental prices for office space in
the Berlin region doubled, while rents in top locations tripled or even quadru-
pled.4

Despite the collapse of the East German regime and the creation of
a real estate market nearly overnight, GDR monuments dealing with the
Nazi past remained in place in the early 1990s at more than sixty sites in
the eastern half of Berlin, not counting plaques.5 But the world around
them had changed. The fact that these markers still stand does not mean
that they are salient in official collective memory or in tourists' or res-
idents' experiences of the city. Many pre-1989 sites, even though they
remain physically in the landscape, have slipped out of public awareness
and faded from the public view.
cational prisoners were held and reportedly tortured; the Stasi headquarters at Normannenstraße; and an installation monument for the uprising on June 17, 1953. To date, little has been written about this, particularly in English and within sociology. See Annette Kaminsky, ed., Orte des Erinnerns. Gedenkzeichen, Gedenkstätten und Museen zur Diktatur in SBZ und DDR (Leipzig: Forum, 2004).

CHAPTER 2: BLANK SLATES AND AUTHENTIC TRACES


3. These efforts have also arguably contributed to a particular kind of contemporary German national identity, one rooted to some extent in the public confrontation with the Nazi past. States have a long history of employing the landscape in the service of symbolic and material projects of legitimacy, representation, and control. For just a few examples, see the following: John Bodnar, Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1991); M. Christine Boyer, The City of Collective Memory: Its Historical Imagery and Architectural Entertainments (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1994); David Jordan, Transforming Paris: The Life and Labors of Baron Haussmann (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999); Chandra Mukerji, Territorial Ambitions and the Gardens of Versailles (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Robert Rotenberg, Landscape and Power in Vienna (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995); Vera Zolberg, “Museums as Contested Sites of Remembrance: The Enola Gay Affair,” in Theorizing Museums: Representing Identity and Diversity in a Changing World, ed. Gordon Frye and Sharon Macdonald (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996). Mukerji, Territorial Ambitions, argues that in Louis XIV’s France the landscape of Versailles (and indeed much of France’s landscape) was shaped from above—albeit meticulously on the ground—as one element of the consolidation of centralized state power.

4. Jeffrey Herf’s discussion in Divided Memory: The Nazi Past in the Two Germanys (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997) of the various eras of postwar German memory on both sides of the Iron Curtain provides a particularly in-depth examination of the political aspects of negotiating postwar memory of the Nazi era, tying the different eras more directly to political processes than specifically to memorial practice. Herf finds, for example, that “the public language of memory was related to occupation-era policies of denazification and judicial procedure” (72), so that memory was mediated through these broader political and institutional processes.


8. Ibid., 350, 361.


10. In his study of public memory in the United States, Remaking America, John Bodnar takes an approach more focused on the confictual elements of collective memory, asserting that the Vietnam Veterans Memorial results from two conflicting visions. He sets vernacular memory against official memory and asserts that official memory is inherently “distorted” and “ideological” (which might imply an “undistorted” source of memory somewhere else), asserting that “[p]ublic memory emerges from the intersection of official and vernacular cultural expressions” (13). Bodnar defines public memory as “a body of beliefs and ideas about the past that help a public or society understand both its past, present, and by implication, its future. It is fashioned ideally in a public sphere in which various parts of the social structure exchange views” (ibid., 15). For Bodnar, the three primary forces shaping this public memory are “elite manipulation, symbolic interaction, and contested discourse” (ibid., 20). He concludes by claiming that the three forces shaping public memory are the official, the vernacular, and a new force, the commercial (ibid., 234).

12. Olick, “What Does it Mean to Normalize the Past?” 350. In addition, “it is not just new constellations of interests that produce new images of the past, but new images of the past that allow new power positions.”


14. Other commentators on Berlin develop similar periodizations, including Stefanie Endlich and Thomas Lutz, Gedenken und Lernen an historischen Orten: Ein Wegweiser zu Gedenkstätten für die Opfer des Nationalsozialismus in Berlin (Berlin: Henrich, 1995), 152; Stobhan Kattago, Ambiguous Memory: The Nazi Past and German National Identity (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2001); Koshar, From Monuments to Traces; Bill Niven, Facing the Nazi Past: United Germany and the Legacy of the Third Reich (New York: Routledge, 2002); Peter Reichel, Politik mit der Erinnerung: Gedächtnisorte im Streit um die nationalsozialistische Vergangenheit (1999; Frankfurt a/M: Fischer, 1999); and Jochen Spielmann, “Gedenken und Denkmal,” in Gedenken und Denkmal, ed. Helmut Geisert, Jochen Spielmann and Peter Ostendorff (Berlin: Berlinische Galerie, 1988), 9. Gavriel Rosenfeld’s useful periodization of memorial culture in Munich and Memory: Architecture, Monuments, and the Legacy of the Third Reich (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000) differs somewhat, reminding us both that there are multiple alternatives when attempting to develop a schematic overview of a period of social change, and that memorial culture was not necessarily changing uniformly, particularly in western Germany.

15. A museum was established in the building in 1967, called the “Museum of the Unconditional Capitulation” until 1994. Since 1995, the building has housed the Russian-German Museum Berlin-Karlshorst, with an exhibition created by German and Russian historians.


18. Diepholz, In the Wake of War, 15. The skills of architects and urban planners that had been focused on reconstructing bombed-out cities in 1944 and early 1945 were also simply redirected to guide reconstruction after the fall of the Nazi regime.


20. See, e.g., “Berliners view a makeshift memorial honoring anti-fascist heroes and victims,” Desig. #535.4710, W/S #11445, CD #0248; “A German woman reads a sign announcing a memorial service for ‘Victims of Fascism,’” Desig. #535.4710, W/S #11449, CD #0248; and “A German pedestrian stands in front of a row of billboards on which orders from the military government of occupation are posted. Above them is a sign put up by the German Communist Party that reads, ‘We commemorate our murdered anti-Fascist comrades,’” Desig. #535.4710, W/S #11446, CD #0248; all three, Sept. 9, 1945, U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, Courtesy of Imperial War Museum.

21. Ulrike Puvogel, Gedenkstätten für die Opfer des Nationalsozialismus, vol. 2 (Bonn: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 1999), 13. (Unless otherwise noted, all translations are my own.)


23. Herf, Divided Memory, 74.

24. Stefanie Endlich, for example, finds that “the division of the city into four sectors, and thereby into one part administered by the Soviets and one by the Allies, at first had little effect on the development of memorial culture. In all of Berlin there were large public gatherings for all victims of persecution, even when they belonged to different political or ‘weltanschauliche’ groups” (Endlich, “Berlin,” in Puvogel, ed., Gedenkstätten für die Opfer des Nationalsozialismus, vol. 2 [Bonn: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 1999], 31).


29. Herf, *Divided Memory*. According to Puvogel, "Einleitung," the East German government clearly used such places and figures, including the resistance fighter and East German hero Ernst Thälmann, to "satisfy their need for legitimation" (16). For an in-depth discussion of the aesthetic styles and projects found in the East in this period, see Volkker Frank, *Antifaschistische Mahnmale in der DDR: Ihre künstlerische und architektonische Gestaltung* (Leipzig: E. A. Seemann, 1970).

30. Puvogel, "Einleitung," 14; see also Herf, *Divided Memory*, 163.


32. Frank, *Antifaschistische Mahnmale in der DDR*, 28 (their translation). This volume also provides a good visual overview of the aesthetic techniques for representing anti-fascist resistance, relying heavily on socialist realism.


35. Of course there were also monuments being built throughout East Germany for fallen Soviet soldiers, including the truly monumental Soviet memorial in the East Berlin district of Treptow. Autorenkollektiv, *Das Sowjetische Ehrenmal in Berlin-Treptow* (Berlin: Berlin-Information, 1976).

36. Herf, *Divided Memory*, 176. Herf also provides more detail about the planning for the memorials, as well as the dedication ceremonies themselves (ibid. 176–181).


39. Endlich and Lutz, *Gedenken und Lernen*, 34–35, 39–42. One of the earliest markers in the West was erected in 1953 by the Bund der Verfolgten des Nationalsozialismus (a citizens' group), not the government: "a memorial of shell limestone from, as the inscription reads, 'the synagogue in Fasanenstraße, destroyed by the Rassenwahn'" (Endlich, "Berlin," 40).


42. For more on this process, see Koshar, *From Monuments to Traces*.


44. In his thoughtful analysis of sites of violence and tragedy in the United States, *Shadowed Ground: America's Landscapes of Violence and Tragedy* (1997; Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003), the geographer Kenneth Foote finds four possible fates of such places in the wake of such events. They may be obliterared, rectified, designated, or sanctified.

45. See the discussion of synagogues in Chapter 5.

46. For more on this process throughout western Germany, see Diefendorf, *In the Wake of War*.


48. Examples are too numerous to cite here, but include a memorial (erected in response to years of citizen activism) in the form of a large sculpture by Richard Serra, accompanied by a large bronze panel set into the ground with additional information, on the site of the building that had housed the "T4" program in the western district of Tiergarten. This is where the so-called "Euthanasia Program" was directed and the deaths of up to 275,000 people, many ill or disabled, were ordered.

49. Martin Schönfeld and Annette Tierenberg, *Erhalten, Zerstören, Verändern* (Berlin: Aktives Museum/Neue Gesellschaft für Bildende Kunst, 1990), 51. It is also important to remember that these are official representations—private citizens had far more varied understandings of the past.

50. Endlich, "Berlin," 53, notes that "the remembrance of the seven anti-fascists was also misused for the legitimation of GDR politics," pointing out that the names listed represent a complex group of people, whose individual actions disappear in the monument, and who were not necessarily fighting for what the GDR had become by 1975.

51. Here again, Endlich, "Berlin," finds that the site "lists the individual victims of the 'Blutwoche' by name but misuses them at the same time for GDR politics" (65).


55. Anna Dora Miethe and Hugo Namsläuer, Zur Gestaltung und Pflege Politischer Gedenkstätten (Berlin: Institut für Denkmalpflege, 1981), 2–3. Miethe and many others involved in writing the history of the Nazi era in East Germany before 1989 have continued to participate actively in this work since unification.


57. Maier, Unmaterable Past, 136.

58. BA, Präsidium des Ministerrats, Apr. 2, 1987, DC 20 I/4 6003, p. 4. They were also only to be “life-size or over-life-size statues; reliefs; sculptures in connection with written forms, paintings, mosaics, tectonic elements (columns, pylons, etc.) as well as other sculpturally symbolic elements; sculptural unitary works or complexly shaped arrangements and ensembles” (ibid., 5).


60. Reichel, Politik mit der Erinnerung, 187.


63. See Brigitte Hausmann, Duell mit der Verdrängung? Denkmäler für die Opfer des Nationalsozialismus in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1980 bis 1990 (Münster: Lit, 1997).


69. Jochen Spielmann, Denk-Mal-Prozesse (Berlin: Senatsverwaltung für Bau- und Wohnungswesen, 1991), 5. Spielmann also points out that points 2, 3, and 5 appear in East Germany during this time as well.

70. Young, “Counter-Monument,” 271; also see Noam Lupu, “Memory Vanished, Absent, and Confined,” History & Memory 15:2 (2003): 130–164. Such monuments appeared throughout western Germany, and included projects like Horst Hoheisel’s 1987 “Aschrott Fountain” in Kassel, “sunk beneath the old place in order to rescue the history of this place as a wound and as an open question, to penetrate the consciousness of the Kassel citizens so that such things never happen again” (Hoheisel, in Young, At Memory’s Edge, 98), and Jochen Gerz and Esther Shalev-Gerz’s “Harburg Monument Against War and Fascism and for Peace,” dedicated in 1986—a column covered in soft metal, into which people were encouraged to inscribe their own messages, as the column disappeared into the ground in stages over seven years, a disappearing (counter) monument.


73. Endlich, Kunst im Stadttraum, 8.

74. Offe, Ausstellungen, Einstellungen, Entstellungen, 81.

75. Kosher, From Monuments to Traces, 11. He goes on to say that “from monuments to traces, the memory landscape represented a rich field of symbols situating the national community in a historical sequence whose telling and retelling created the stretched sinews, the ‘mystic chords of memory,’ of that community’s existence.”

76. Magistratsbeschluss (East Berlin) 036/86. See also Martin Schönfeld, Gedenktafeln in Ost-Berlin: Orte der Erinnerung an die Zeit des Nationalsozialismus (Berlin: Contrast, 1991), 11.

77. Hübner, Gedächtnis der Stadt, 12.


79. Endlich and Lutz, Gedenken und Lernen, 55. Many of the plaques included images of the people who had been murdered and more details of their lives and their deaths, listing occupations, political orientations, and the places where they were killed, sometimes mentioning which floor of the building the person lived on. See Schönfeld, Gedenktafeln in Ost-Berlin, 65–97.
80. For an in-depth discussion of the Topography of Terror, the Jewish Museum, the central Holocaust Memorial, and the Sachsenhausen concentration camp just outside of Berlin, see Karen Till’s *The New Berlin: Memory, Politics, Place* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005).
87. Rüüp cited in ibid.
88. Ibid.
90. The Berlin Senate (Senat) consists of the mayor (regierende Bürgermeister), and eight appointed senators with various areas of responsibility (education, justice, urban planning, culture, etc., although the specific areas of responsibility and names of the different senate administrations change from time to time), overseeing the relevant state government administrations. The senators are essentially the mayor’s cabinet—they are nominated by the mayor, and approved by the elected representatives in the State Assembly (Abgeordnetenhaus). See Stephanie Pruchansky, *Das Berliner Parlament* (Berlin: Präsident des Abgeordnetenhauses von Berlin, 2004).
92. Matthies, ‘Grabe, wo du stehst,”’
97. Ladd, *Ghosts of Berlin*, concludes “it is probably of great importance that the consensus in favor of preservation had emerged by 1989. It had been much easier to agree that history forbade any normal use of the land when the land was of little value anyway. The fall of the Wall delayed and complicated the planning for the site, but the basic decisions remained unchanged” (164).
106. The Aktives Museum conducted a project titled “Digging After History” in 1985, which led to the excavations that later became the Topography of Terror. By 1993, the museum was receiving financial support from the State Culture Administration.
109. The new memorials constructed in the 1990s are too numerous to mention here, but range from the new Jewish Museum built by Daniel Libeskind and the central Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe to small sites like the red porphyry statues at the site of a protest in 1943 by non-Jewish women pressuring for their Jewish male relatives to be released from a detention center at Rosenstraße and the conceptual project by Renate Stih and Frieder Schnick in the western district of Schöneberg. Here the artists placed small signs on lampposts with excerpts from laws restricting the rights of Jews in the 1930s, coupled with a simple, colorful image on the reverse side—a law forbidding Jews to own house pets shows a simple image of a cat, or a law preventing “Aryan” children from playing with “non-Aryan” children is paired with an image of hopscotch. For a fine in-depth discussion of many of these sites, see Young, *At Memory’s Edge*. For more on new memorial projects, see Chapter 4.


114. In part because of their efforts, a curious bureaucratic apparatus emerged at the state and district levels that was partly responsible for exercising this caution. In 1992, the Berlin senate established the Commission on the Treatment of the Postwar Political Monuments of the Former East Berlin to determine which postwar monuments in eastern Berlin should remain (including sites that dealt with the Nazi past), and which should be torn down, discussed in greater depth in Chapter 3.


118. Staroste, “Politische Denkmäler,” 84.


120. Much of this remembering does happen along political lines, which makes it difficult to speak of these sites as necessarily the product of some kind of cultural or political consensus. In general, the Greens and the Social Democrats spearhead more memorial efforts concerning the Nazi era than do the Christian Democrats or the Free Democrats, although the lines are not always that clear-cut. See, e.g., Ute Frings, “Wo die Frauen die Gestapo besiegten,” *Frankfurter Rundschau*, Feb. 28, 1992, in which the author quotes the head of the Berlin Christian Democrats as saying that less is more when it comes to memorials in the cityscape.

121. In 1997, in the eastern state of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, for example, a conference was held to discuss the role of *Gedenkstättenarbeit*, or memorial work, in attracting tourists to the region, whose economy continues to struggle. See *Gedenkstätten und Tourismus: Nicht nur ein Konferenzbericht: Güstrow*, 15/16. September 1997/Projekt “Gedenkstättenarbeit in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern” (Schwerin: Projekt “Gedenkstättenarbeit in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern,” 1997). Also see Karen Till’s discussion of tourism in *The New Berlin*, and Oren Stier’s chapter on tourism and pilgrimage in his *Committed to Memory: Cultural Mediations of the Holocaust* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003), 150-190.

122. Throughout the 1990s and through today, the U.S. press has also consistently covered issues of memorialization and confrontation with the past in Berlin and in Germany more generally.

123. Young, “Berlin’s Holocaust Memorial,” 56.


125. Hoffmann, “The Dilemmas of Commemoration,” 3. Young, “Counter-Monument,” finds a situation very different from what we saw in the late 1940s, one where he can write, in response to the years of controversy surrounding the central Holocaust Memorial, that “in fact, the best German memorial to the Fascist era and its victims may not be a single memorial at all, but simply the never to be resolved debate over which kind of memory to preserve, how to do it, in whose name, and to what end. Instead of a fixed figure for memory, the debate itself—perpetually unresolved amid ever-changing conditions—might be enshrined” (270). Authenticity also continues to be a prevalent theme in memorialization, particularly in light of the planning for the central Holocaust Memorial in Berlin, which many people felt diverted both funding and attention from “authentic” sites. Christian Hunziker, “Kalter Krieg der Erinnerung,” *Berliner Zeitung*, Nov. 27, 1997; Volker Müller, “Schindler Tours, nein danke,” ibid., Apr. 21, 1999.

Notes to Chapter 3


3. This figure is based on comparing pre-1989 and post-1989 catalogs of memorial sites (listed elsewhere, but including those of Hans Maur and Endlich et al.), and comparing these with on-site visits and newspaper coverage. The figure is necessarily approximate and will almost inevitably change as the city itself continues to change. These sites range from large-scale cemeteries and *Ehrenhain*, or memorial fields, to small granite stones in gardens and courtyards or on traffic islands.

4. This is also an approach very consciously used by many in Berlin who have to do with memorialization, as seen in the discussion of the Memorial Plaque Commission. It is also an approach used by Kenneth Foote, *Shadowed Ground: America's Landscapes of Violence and Tragedy* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003).

5. "[T]he experience of the visitor at a particular site is collectively influenced by its location in the city, its accessibility, the approach to it, its topography, and the combination of elements presented at the site," John Czaplicka writes in "History, Aesthetics, and Contemporary Commemorative Practice in Berlin," *New German Critique* 65 (Spring–Summer 1995): 158.


7. For a more in-depth discussion of the bunker complex, see Chapter 6.

8. In addition to the most obvious and immediate levels of supply and demand, there were additional forces contributing to the explosion of real estate prices and new construction in the early 1990s. A particularly important impetus for the early boom came from the projections issued by the government and various consulting agencies. See Dietrich Flick, ed., *Büroflächenmarkt Berlin: Tendenzen von Nachfrage und Angebot bis zum Jahr 2005*, Senatsverwaltung für Stadtentwicklung, Stadtverwaltung Berlin (Berlin: Regioverlag, 1996). Berlin was called one of the "most interesting and dynamic real estate markets in the world" (Liegenschaftsgesellschaft der Treuhandanstalt, *TLG MarktReport 92/93*, 22). The TLG predicted Berlin would need between eleven and thirteen million square meters of office space in the next fifteen to twenty years, a near doubling of the amount of office space available in 1992. The real estate analyst company Aengevelt offered a chart of the various projections for growth in the greater Berlin area in 1992. The population of Berlin at the time was 3.45 million, and the Statistical Office predicted three different populations based on three different scenarios, ranging from 3.71 million to an astonishing 5.19 million. Private consulting agencies were more conservative in their estimates, ranging from 3.39 million to 3.6 million. See Aengevelt Immobilien KG, *City Report Region Berlin Nr. IV 1994/95* (Berlin: Aengevelt Immobilien, 1994), 6–7. The state projections have yet to be realized—in fact the population increased by only six thousand people between 1990 and 1998, and 1999 saw the population drop to 3.39 million. But the projections did play an important role in urban change in the early 1990s, figuring not only in governmental boosterism, but in on-the-ground investment and construction as well. Population predictions thus led to similarly inflated predictions concerning the need for housing and office space. Based only on leveling living conditions between East and West (specifically, m² of living space per resident) and raising eastern amenities (primarily plumbing and heating) to western standards (that is, with zero population growth), the TLG estimated that 300,000 new apartments would be needed in Berlin, and 150,000 more to accommodate migrants into the city (Liegenschaftsgesellschaft der Treuhandanstalt [TLG], *TLG MarktReport 92/93*, 26). In 1992, the real estate advising company Jones Lang Wootton predicted that Berlin would need an additional 10 million m² of office space by 2000.