memory culture and the contemporary city

building sites

edited by

uta staiger, henriette steiner and andrew webber

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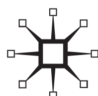

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Introduction

Uta Staiger and Henriette Steiner

To write on memory and the city is to enter into a densely populated scholarly terrain. In the late twentieth century, engagement with memory became what Andreas Huyssen has called a 'cultural obsession of monumental proportions',[1] and Jay Winter a 'memory boom',[2] experienced both in academia and in popular culture. The 1990s, in particular, witnessed the rise of this 'cult of memory',[3] as it turned into a veritable 'memory industry' able to play on and exploit the interest in memory. For some, however, this intensified interest has itself been interpreted as a sign of a memory crisis, and many scholars have advised about the concomitant terminological ambiguity, semantic burden and even rhetorical abuse which are also associated with this term.[4] In fact, some have raised the question of whether and how in this situation a contemporary practice of 'remembering well' may be conceived at all.[5] Overall, this epochal commitment to, and interrogation of, the past and its representation in the present can be described as a memory culture.

While this interest in memory extends across disciplines in the humanities and social sciences, it has perhaps acquired particular resonance through research on the city. In our everyday understanding, memory may be a phenomenon that has to do with the life of the mind of the individual, but it is also always bound up with common settings, situations and forms of praxis. Tied to the body and the social material context of the remembering subject, Edward Casey even suggests that 'memory is naturally place-oriented or at least place-supported'.[6] Even if memory is most often perceived as a temporal phenomenon, an intimate connection between place and memory can thus be suggested. Memory not only 'needs places', however, but arguably creates them: memory 'tends towards spatialization', as Jan Assmann puts it.[7] Often, these places of memory are urban. The city provides an abiding

frame for urban life and establishes concrete sites of encounter with the past. Changes to the urban fabric therefore always carry with them both conflicting interpretations of the past and desires for the future. Whether as a site of institutionalized memory, as a host to ephemeral or even immaterial urban topoi of remembrance, or as a key stimulus to artists and writers, the built environment of urban centres occupies a focal position in and for our memory culture.

A decade into the twenty-first century, the aim of this book is to take stock of the ways in which this memory culture appears in relation to the city at the present time. It presents new research by scholars within the humanities and the social sciences as well as by practitioners from the fields of architecture and the visual and performance arts. It aims, firstly, to present particular analyses of how architectural and planning practice, visual and literary culture, history, cultural theory and personal narrative engage memory. It thus looks into the way material culture is involved in building sites of memory in the city through art and architecture projects, visual representation or narrative. Secondly, this research is tied to a set of iconic cities in which the past is often deliberately, if conflictingly, mapped, erased, rebuilt and remembered. In other words, these cities come to be seen, literally and metaphorically, as contemporary building sites in and of themselves. The aim of this introduction is to survey the intellectual ground upon which the diverse approaches that constitute this book build, and which they use as a point of departure for their contemporary reflections on urban memory cultures.

Of the cities evoked in the book, Berlin is perhaps most closely linked with the recent surge of memory culture. Having hosted many of the central European conflicts of the twentieth century, Berlin is arguably an exemplary case through which to explore the urban dynamics of memory, history and commemoration. Indeed, as a 1990s promotional slogan by the city authorities had it, post-unification Berlin was the *Baustelle* as *Schaustelle* par excellence: the city in its constructions and reconstructions became a place of 'building-site-seeing'.[8] Yet despite its self-proclaimed status as memory capital, there continue to be lacunae in the growing body of literature on Berlin, making this a timely juncture for a critical re-visioning. While Berlin is thus a recurrent focus of the present volume, it neither should nor could be seen in isolation. The very predicament of Berlin's representational culture is tied up with a shared European experience of conflict and rebuilding. And beyond the European frame of reference, it is most productively seen in relation to other cities with a pivotal standing in memory discourses. Berlin

is thus situated here with respect to other key urban topographies of remembrance, both proximal, Dresden, and global, Jerusalem, Buenos Aires, New York and Cape Town. The book aims at once for a broad, generic and a particular, in-depth investigation of the theme of memory culture and the contemporary city. It will be contextualized, in what follows, by some of the key conceptual stakes in research and thinking on memory, particularly as they evolve from the early defining moments of twentieth-century thought.

The interest in memory as a cognitive faculty related to but distinct from perception, imagination or knowledge has deep roots in Western culture. In contemporary usage we associate memory with a variety of functions, such as retaining factual information, remembering how to perform certain skills, or keeping a perhaps fortuitous selection of past experiences alive in our minds while others are forgotten.[9] What, in the early twentieth century, Henri Bergson and Bertrand Russell considered the 'memory par excellence' is, however, recollective memory.[10] Requiring an effort of the mind to recall and prolong past experiences into the present and attaching particular significance to selected episodes and events, recollective memory establishes a causal connection between these past experiences and the present. In this way, the act of remembering has also been seen to play a role in creating a coherent and continuous narrative of identity and selfhood.[11] Yet while seemingly about the grasp of temporal connection, recollective memory has also been understood to connect with particular places as they support and add structure to the act of remembering itself.

Memory in this sense raises a number of epistemological and cognitive questions. These include the aim for authenticity in comparison with the inherently reconstructed nature of the recollection, the articulation of claims about the nature of identities, and the role of the place of memory as the connecting point between the recollective moment, the place of the remembered, and the person remembering. Ultimately, at the core of most philosophical and sociological concerns with memory, these questions converge in the normative, practical, and ethical aspiration to 'remember well'. However, the focus of this aspiration and the forms it has consequently taken have varied across the intellectual history of memory research.

In much of early twentieth-century thought, the interest in the possibility of remembering well was flanked by a preoccupation with the defects of memory. This implied an increased focus on issues such as forgetting or inadequate perception and on how to allow the individual mind to recover a 'true' recognition of the past. Bergson discussed how

the process of recalling past conceptions left in unconscious 'pure' memory and prolonging them into the present was crucial for the functioning of perception. And Freud's psychoanalytic theory sought to bring back hidden or repressed memories by means of narrative reconstruction of events. Although partial, this form of recollection was seen to give continuity to the patient's narrative of selfhood, letting memory work in the present by allowing the patient to recover from, for example, anxieties or phobias. Both writers developed their thought by examining not only the functions but also the pathologies of memory, such as amnesia, in the case of Bergson, or melancholia and trauma, in the case of Freud; and this was to have a long-lasting influence on memory discourse.

A contemporary of both Freud and Bergson, Walter Benjamin not only investigated the significance of the conscious and unconscious dimensions of memory, but also deployed them in order to examine the historical conditions of modern life in the European metropolises of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. For the group of thinkers connected more or less directly with the Institute for Social Research in Frankfurt, to which Benjamin belonged, the modern city with its random stimuli and constant change had on the one hand contributed to the withdrawn form of consciousness of the city-dweller – in line with what Simmel had characterized as the blasé attitude. From the perspective of critical theory, the city had furthermore turned into a phantasmagorical spectacle that no longer revealed its underlying historical conditions. On the other hand, however, the city was also thought to have the potential to stimulate knowledge and to provoke recognition. In this respect, writers like Siegfried Kracauer provided an important contribution to analysing the relation between modern, urban life and the capacity for knowledge, recognition, and recollection of the individual. For Benjamin, uncommon constellations of objects, sudden discoveries of often marginal places or seemingly insignificant fragments could bring about a quasi-physical encounter with the past, lifting conventional memory blocks. Recalling Marcel Proust's 'involuntary memory', Benjamin called it a form of remembering that 'has not been experienced explicitly or consciously by the subject'.[12] The sudden shifts of attention provoked by urbanity were thus thought to be the precondition for critical awareness of the present. Mirrored by artistic and literary practices, in such forms as the Surrealist *objet trouvé* or Joyce's stream of consciousness, the urban dweller, in the paradigmatic form of the flâneur, was seen to reappraise, indeed recollect, the residual presence of the past in the modern city, and to grasp the historicity contained therein.

Well into the early twentieth century, enquiries into memory were interested above all in assessing its functions and failures as a personal cognitive capacity. As Paul Ricoeur states, however, for sociology at the time 'individual memory, as a purportedly original agency, becomes problematic'.[13] Coinciding with an acute awareness of modernity's challenges to the prevalent understanding of subjectivity, which the study of the city in particular was believed to potentially make visible, a possibility for expanding the study of personal memory to the level of sociality or history was established. With Benjamin, in particular, we find a strategic interaction between the cognitive processes of the individual and the social and historical conditions that are always at stake in urban experience. This is also reflected in a new strand of sociological theory, which argues, against Bergsonian individualism, that memory is in fact essentially social. This has had a dual effect. On the one hand, concepts from the developing discipline of sociology could be applied to the study of memory, now seen in relation to a group or a collective. On the other hand, concepts from equally new psychological interpretations could be applied to the collective realm via the study of memory. One consequence is that themes from, for example, the Freudian vocabulary of psychoanalysis, such as trauma or the notion of repressed memory, have entered into the study of societal forms. This dynamic of mutual interference between the personal and the social set out defining features for the way in which the nexus of memory and the city is studied today.

The first to articulate a sociology of memory was Maurice Halbwachs, a student of Bergson and later Durkheim. He aimed to show that the notions people create of themselves and the past are necessarily shaped by their participation in different societal contexts and the status they assume therein: 'it is individuals as group members who remember'.[14] Consequently, personal memory is reciprocally bound up with what he calls collective memory. This is not to be confused with history, which Halbwachs considers a rationalized framework recording long-term changes. Collective memory, by contrast, provides uniqueness and continuity within a group by marking out a common normative horizon of expectations and experience, and creating what Assmann would later call a 'connective structure' between past and present.[15] As such, collective memory not only is seen as a culturally constructed representation of the past, it needs to be sustained and transmitted via narratives and traditions, bodily practices, material objects, and of course places. It is, in particular, these processes that have been of interest to scholarship on urbanity and memory since.[16]

The city is a prime site in which the negotiation of collective memory can take place and where it can be studied. Given the importance of the city as a shared topography, changes made to the urban fabric – in the name of preservation or redevelopment, or as the consequence of man-made or natural disasters – may have an impact on the self-understanding and sense of continuity of the inhabitants. This correlation continues to be of interest to architectural historians and theorists as they seek to reassess the relative success and impact of urban design strategies.[17] If architectural modernism notoriously sought to create a city without past in the name of a perhaps utopian promise, the new cities of the modern period, from the American gridded cities to the recent developments in Asia, have been found to represent a lack of urbanity. Subsequent movements such as critical regionalism and the citational forms of post-modernism, however, marked more than simply a resurgence of the interest in urban history. They prefigured what at the end of the twentieth century became a near obsession with the 'city of collective memory', as architectural historian Christine Boyer influentially phrased it.[18] Boyer suggests that since the late 1970s it is above all what she calls a pictorialization of the urban life world, an aesthetically sanitized and institutionalized staging of selected kinds of urban memories, which is being mobilized by planning practices – and resisted by other interest groups with competing claims to urban memory.

This infatuation with memory in the city does not, however, necessarily mark the return to a collectively shared and expressed experience of the past. This at least is the view of French historian Pierre Nora, who built on Halbwachs's work in his influential volumes on the places of memory *Les Lieux de Mémoire* (1984–1992). Exacerbating the distinction between memory and history, Nora argued that the latter, an analytical and reconstructive production of the past, has in fact put entirely into question the 'un-self-conscious' nature of memory.[19] In compensation for such a loss, he argues, societies feel an enhanced need to crystallize collective memory in symbolically charged sites and objects. The places of memory – *lieux de mémoire* – acquire their significance only because of the demise of memory's collective, environmental context – the *milieux de mémoire*.[20] Nora has thus played an important role in the increasingly intense battles fought over the alleged vacuity of the urban memory industry. But he is also representative of a trend to quasi-sacralize memory, endowing it not only with an aura of (lost) authenticity but with a spiritual or almost sacred dimension – a 'therapeutic alternative to historical discourse'.[21]

This discourse on memory culture emerged at a particular historical juncture and with direct implications for our contemporary urban situation. The continued centrality of academic questions concerning the Second World War and the Holocaust in particular has given rise to a large body of work pondering the weight of historical knowledge with respect to the witnessing function of memory.[22] This interest is both complemented and accentuated by broader concerns in critiques of modernity regarding the amnesiac pressures of globalization and mass culture, which seemingly produce what Nora called our 'hopelessly forgetful modern societies'.[23] Both perhaps converged most evidently in the recent reconstruction efforts in Berlin, where the inscription of remembrance and guilt coincided with the need to rebuild urban topographies damaged by war and by the ensuing division of the city, while seeking to create a metropolis for the twenty-first century. But Berlin is joined by other cities with a conflictual past that is as complex to resolve, offering up renewed challenges for academic, urbanist, and popular perception.

Indeed, much contemporary research now seems to focus on the critical and political implications of memory being 'open to the dialectic of remembering and forgetting, unconscious of its successive deformations, [and] vulnerable to manipulation and appropriation'.[24] In this sense, memory's relationship to place not only is about preservation, continuity, and identity, but can become charged with intense and potentially divisive meaning. In cities marked by conflict and contestation – from Belfast and Nicosia to Jerusalem and Cape Town – memory plays a role both during and after conflict. Memorial and heritage sites are often annexed in order to promote particular interpretations of the past, thus enacting symbolic claims on the urban environment.[25] More often than not, this renders competing narratives invisible, eliding the often fractured memory culture yielded by a single place or city.[26] Sometimes the key disagreement is even about whether keeping the past alive is detrimental or beneficial to a collective that has been through conflict in the first place. These incompatible desires, to remember or to forget a violent past that continues to inform the present, are therefore often played out as if by proxy, in and through the urban environment.

The memorialization and commemoration of the conflict a society has undergone thus remain intensely controversial. Underlying memorial sites generally, and in post-conflict cities in particular, is after all a symbolic exchange between what is, what was, and what is to become, between the living, the dead, and the not yet living. In the case of

wartime commemoration, as Jay Winter has argued with respect to the First World War, remembrance at symbolic sites can potentially show both indebtedness to a lost generation and an affirmation of community.[27] In other contexts, particularly those of civil strife, memorialization is a much more politicized act. Mapping memory at and through such sites is thus often shot through with more complex dynamics of guilt and redemption, challenging the representative nature and function of the monument or memorial site. Particularly in the 1990s, and often with reference to the Second World War, so-called counter-monumental strategies were supposed to provoke a new and very different kind of memory culture. This was complemented by renewed engagement, both in academic discourse and in museal and memorial practice, with many aspects of the memory discourse of the early twentieth century. As James E. Young describes it, the essence of these new memory practices can be seen as a fragmentary counterculture seeking to resist integration in totalizing discourses:

> [They aim] not to console but to provoke; not to remain fixed but to change; not to be everlasting but to disappear; not to be ignored by passers-by but to demand interaction; not to remain pristine but to invite its own violation and desanctification; not to accept graciously the burden of memory but to throw it back at the town's feet.[28]

In many ways, this has by now become a dominant view and has spread from the sites of monuments or museums to architecture and urban planning at large. This can be seen in a surge of a quasi-performative museum architecture buoyed by a demand to evoke and redeem traumatic experience and collective mourning, with urban design consciously integrating fragments and suggestive traces of the past. Yet some recent work on urban memory culture has also critiqued these practices.[29] This, in part, signals a critical engagement with the local, ephemeral, and perhaps even incommensurable nature of memory work and representation. Certainly, any attempt to 'remember well' is now also an enquiry into the forms and modes of its representation. Here, artistic practices have provided a particularly complex but also refined site to engage with the narrative and representational aspect of memory and its manifestation in the contemporary city.

If the processes of urban development are of an often subtle nature, deeply embedded in the cultural fabric, it takes very particular representational instruments to begin to expose and interpret their character. The contemporary city not only constitutes the main site in which the

contemporary art scene is situated; in and through different art forms, the city itself is subject to reflection, revision, and intervention. Writers from Baudelaire and Benjamin to Borges, Auster, and Sebald have tracked and transformed the often processual and unfinished nature of urban practices and constructions, emphasizing the narrative articulation of the past by which memory can be generated and transmitted. Film, similarly, has historically engaged with the motions, changes, and transitions of city, as they play out against its built environment.[30] And these principles apply, with variations, to all cultural media in their engagement of narrative, imaging, and performance. Drawing attention to the spatio-temporal forms in which urban life is played out, artistic practices stimulate a reconsideration of the possibilities assigned to memory in the contemporary city.

By engaging with arts projects including film, photography and dance, as well as architecture and urban planning practices and the discourses of heritage, tourism, and archaeology, the contributions to this book can be seen as concrete investigations into the role of memory cultures in cities. Recent scholarship may have suggested, and not without sound argument, that it is no longer 'so sure that memory has a place in the contemporary city and that is [precisely] why it is talked about so much'.[31] However, the continued engagement with the challenges, vicissitudes, and ethics of memory, above all in relation to our contemporary urban environment, also suggests that it is a concern that refuses to be laid to rest. As such, it is therefore in need of the sort of renewed critical examination from different angles offered here.

In its treatment of the problem of memory culture and the contemporary city, the book follows a tripartite structure. Part I develops the intersection between the individual and the collective facets of memory culture, exploring the ties between particular representations of the past and given places and settings. A lead concept in this respect is Nora's term *lieu de mémoire*, taken as a point of juncture (but also tension) between collective and personal forms of urban memory-making. In his chapter, departing from a nineteenth-century photograph of Pompeii and travelling to a range of contemporary cities, Victor Burgin links Nora's term to the anthropological concept of the non-place, the *non-lieu*, developing the concept of the *non-lieu de mémoire* as a conceptual tool to describe particular places that have developed in late modernity. Thomas Elsaesser, in his contribution, links memory with the para-urban place of the island, as *île de mémoire*. The chapter is concerned with a particular island close to Berlin on which a part of the author's family history was played out in the 1920s and 1930s. The island by

the city is the most important surviving material trace, connecting a particular episode in a family's history with concurrent historical events and movements. Photography and film are seen to play a special role here in twentieth-century commemoration of everyday life, and this topic is explored further by Henrik Reeh in his chapter. Reeh narrates the traversal of urban areas often deemed unworthy of remembering and photographing through a sequence of snapshot journeys to and from the airports of Berlin. Rounding off Part I is another personal account, by architect Daniel Libeskind. It is both a type of personal–professional memoir and a socio-political consideration of the uses of memory in contemporary cities, as Libeskind introduces the global building sites of some of his recent architectural projects. Here, the commitment of the architect to negotiation between past, present, and future is perceived as a tool with which to resist the non-places of memory often characterizing newly built, large-scale environments.

Part II develops more explicitly around conflicted and conflicting memories relating to the political realm and to fraught or haunted urban sites of historical significance. In their chapter, Karen Till and Julian Jonker investigate concrete instances of spectral ground in what they call new cities, the main point of focus being a postcolonial site of conflictual memory in Cape Town. Wendy Pullan and Max Gwiazda in their chapter uncover the consequences of a highly instrumentalized politics of heritage and cultural memory in the urban topography of conflict characterizing an archaeological site in Jerusalem, the so-called City of David. In view of how tourist sites of memory and commemoration often respond poorly to the conflicted ambiguities of urban realities, Mary Fulbrook investigates the problem of historical tourism with respect to Berlin's doubly dictatorial past: the period of the National Socialist regime and that of Communist repression. The problem of remembrance in post-conflict situations is an equally significant concern in Janet Ward's investigation of sacralized spaces when it comes to the urban remembrance of war, with particular reference to the cultural politics of reconstruction in Dresden. Finally, Charity Scribner presents a reading and mapping of Berlin's Cold War radical underground. The activities of the RAF group, as represented in texts and films, reveal a little-known topography of cultural memory linking East and West Berlin in intricate and unexpected ways.

Part III engages the potential inherent in contemporary art to intervene in the more processual and implicit workings of urban memory. In her photo-essay, Berlin-based visual artist Stefanie Bürkle presents an artistic practice which draws upon scenographic effects in her dealings with

architecture and a very particular topos in the city, the building site. Her theoretical exploration of the lack of memory in the contemporary city is at the same time a concrete exploration of the superficial image plane of contemporary urbanity. The interplay between surface and depth, image and structure, technology and body is also explored in Geoffrey Kantaris's chapter on contemporary cinematic constructions of Buenos Aires. Here the Argentine capital appears as a cyber-city populated by cyborgs and organized by memory machines all too easily programmed for the disappearance of dissident elements. This cultural-critical potential also ties in with the central theme of the chapter by Philipp Ekardt, dealing with works concerned with the transitory architectures and techno-spaces of Berlin and other cities by sculptor Isa Genzken and photographer Wolfgang Tillmans. In the final chapter, Lucia Ruprecht discusses the piece 'On the Road with *mnemonic nonstop*' by dancers and choreographers Martin Nachbar and Joachim Roller. The dance performance develops correlations between actual urban walks in a series of historically burdened cities and reconstructive choreographies, in which real bodies, projected city maps, and narrative performance work together to build acts of creative drift, derivation, and orientation.

From dance to photography, film, sculpture, street art, and architecture; from museums, monuments, and memorials to more personal sites or islands of memory; from theoretical considerations of how memory works in cities to questions of historical practice, both singular and everyday; from Berlin to Buenos Aires, Jerusalem, New York, Dresden, and Cape Town; from the ruins of Pompeii to the building-site cities of postmodern spectacle – this volume maps out explorations of what it might mean to construct an appropriate urban memory culture, to remember well in the contemporary city.

Notes

1. A. Huyssen (2003), *Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory* (Stanford: Stanford University Press), p. 16.
2. J. Winter (2002), 'The Generation of Memory: Reflections on the "Memory Boom" in Contemporary Historical Studies', *Bulletin of the German Historical Institute*, 31, 69–92.
3. T. Todorov (2003), *Hope and Memory: Lessons from the Twentieth Century*, trans. David Bellos (Princeton: Princeton University Press).
4. See for example, K. L. Klein (2000), 'On the Emergence of Memory in Historical Discourse', *Representations*, 69, 127–50.
5. R. Sennett (1998), 'Disturbing Memories', in P. Fara and K. Patterson, eds, *Memory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p. 22.
6. See E. S. Casey (1987), *Remembering – A Phenomenological Study* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press).

7. J. Assmann (1999), *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis: Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen* [Cultural Memory: Writing, Memory and Political Identity in the Early High Cultures] (Munich: C. H. Beck), p. 39 (editors' translation).
8. A. Webber (2008), *Berlin in the Twentieth Century – A Cultural Topography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p. 14.
9. These functions are also called 'habit memory' or 'procedural memory' (for embodied skills such as using cutlery), or 'propositional' or 'semantic' memory (for retaining factual information).
10. H. Bergson (1908), *Matter and Memory*, trans. N. M. Paul and W. S. Palmer (New York: Zone Books); B. Russell (1921), *The Analysis of Mind* (London: Allen and Unwin).
11. See for example, M. Schechtmann (1996), *The Constitution of Selves* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press).
12. W. Benjamin (2006), 'On Some Motifs in Baudelaire', in H. Eiland and M. W. Jenning, eds, *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings Volume 4, 1938–1940* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press).
13. P. Ricoeur (2004), *Memory, History, Forgetting* (London, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press), p. 95.
14. M. Halbwachs (1950), *The Collective Memory* (New York: Harper-Colophon Books), p. 48.
15. Assmann, *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis*, p. 16.
16. See for example, P. Connerton (1989), *How Societies Remember* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
17. See for example, N. M. Klein (1997), The History of Forgetting: Los Angeles and the Erasure of Memory (London: Verso Books).
18. C. Boyer (1996), *The City of Collective Memory: Its Historical Imagery and Architectural Entertainments* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press).
19. P. Nora (1989), 'Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire', *Representations*, 26, 7–24, p. 8.
20. Ibid., p. 7.
21. K. L. Klein (1999), 'On the Emergence of Memory in historical discourse', p. 145. See also C. Maier (1993), 'A Surfeit of Memory? Reflections on History, Melancholy and Denial', *History & Memory*, 5, 136–51.
22. See for example, S. Friedländer (1993), *Memory, History, and the Extermination of the Jews of Europe* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press); D. LaCapra (1998), *History and Memory After Auschwitz* (Ithaca, NY.: Cornell University Press).
23. Nora, 'Between Memory and History', p. 8.
24. Ibid. See also, among others, T. Todorov (2001), 'The Uses and Abuses of Memory', in H. Marchitello, ed., *What Happens to History: The Renewal of Ethics in Contemporary Though* (London: Routledge), pp. 11–22.
25. See for example L. Purbrick, J. Aulich, and G. Dawson, (2007), eds, *Contested Spaces: Sites, Representations and Histories of Conflict* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan).
26. W. V. J. Neill and H. U. Schwedler (2001), eds, *Urban Planning and Cultural Inclusion: Lessons from Belfast and Berlin* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan).
27. J. Winter (1995), *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p. 80.

28. J. E. Young (1993), *The Texture of Memory. Holocaust Memorials and Meaning* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press), p. 30. See also A. Huyssen (1999), 'Monumental Seduction', in M. Bal, ed., *Acts of Memory: Cultural Recall in the Present* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England), pp. 191–207; and P. Homans (2000), ed., *Symbolic Loss: The Ambiguity of Mourning and Memory at Century's End* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia).
29. See particularly M. Crinson (2005), 'Urban Memory – An Introduction', in M. Crinson, ed., *Urban Memory – History and Amnesia in the Modern City* (London, New York: Routledge), pp. xi–xx.
30. E. Wilson and A. Webber (2008), *Cities in Transition: The Moving Image and the Modern Metropolis* (London: Wallflower Press).
31. Crinson, 'Urban Memory', p. xx.

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Part I Urban Memoirs

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1
Monument and Melancholia

Victor Burgin

In the subterranean vault that houses the photographic archive of the Canadian Centre for Architecture, in Montreal, is a nineteenth-century album of photographs of Pompeii. In one of the images in this album a wide flight of stone steps in the foreground leads to a rectangular space flanked by broken colonnades. A woman stands in this space, her voluminous dress forming a broad-based cone, her face lost in shadow under the broad brim of a hat with a dark ribbon. The photograph is captioned 'Basilica'.[1]

No doubt the woman was included in the photograph to lend a sense of scale to the architecture, and this is why the caption does not recognize her. Nevertheless I am haunted by another explanation: the woman is a 'mid-day ghost'; she is not named because she is not seen. It is commonplace to note the uncanny effect of photographs that show the apparently living presence of someone long dead. Light reflected from a living being imprints itself in a photosensitive emulsion; the impression persists unaltered by time. The entire architectural site of Pompeii is an impression of this kind. Like a photographic plate, the surface of the city has received the imprint of an event that has irreversibly transformed it. In a neologism, Pompeii is a catastrographic image – one that remains so in its entirety and in perpetuity, unlike Coventry, Dresden, Hiroshima or Berlin.

One might suppose that the shades that haunt Pompeii view its ruined streets much as we see Berlin in the opening sequence of Roberto Rossellini's film of 1947, *Germany Year Zero*, which consists of a long travelling shot that moves silently between ruined walls and mounds of rubble down never-ending streets. The camera offers the spectator a feeling of gliding through the debris without touching the ground, the kind of motion conventionally ascribed to ghosts. In W. G. Sebald's

Figure 1.1 Carlo Fratacci, 'Basilica', 1864. Courtesy of Collection Centre Canadien d'Architecture/Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montréal.

The Rings of Saturn, the writer Michael Hamburger, who was 'nine and a half' when his family left Hitler's Germany, tells of wandering through the ruins of Berlin when he returned in 1947 'to search for traces of the life [he] had lost'. He says: 'For a few days I went about like a sleepwalker, past houses of which only the façades were left standing, smoke-blackened brick walls and fields of rubble along the never-ending streets'.[2] He later dreams of being at gatherings of friends and relatives; he passes through rooms, galleries, halls and passages thronged with guests, both living and dead, and no one can see him. In Phillip K. Dick's novel of 1964, *Martian Time-Slip*, we encounter a ten-year-old boy whose apparently autistic withdrawal from the world has led to his confinement in a psychiatric hospital. We eventually learn that the space-time he inhabits is different from that occupied by those around him: where they see the present, he sees a palimpsest of present and future. What they are busy constructing, he sees as already in ruins. Living beings surround him, but he is attended by ghosts.

The boy in Dick's novel sees the world much like the 'young poet' in Freud's essay of 1915 'On Transience'. The young man is Freud's companion on a walk in the Dolomites through a 'smiling landscape', but the poet is unable to enjoy the beauty around him because he is haunted by the thought of its impermanence. Freud looks forward to a time after the war when the mourning is over and when 'our high opinion of the riches of civilization has lost nothing from our discovery of their fragility'.[3] In the meantime, he tells his companion, the transient nature of beauty should only enhance our enjoyment of it rather than spoil our pleasure; that the poet resists Freud's arguments, and remains inconsolable, signals the 'melancholic' nature of his unhappiness.

Freud had already described the psychopathology of melancholy in his essay 'Mourning and Melancholia', written in that same year after the outbreak of the First World War. Mourning is a 'normal', non-pathological, response to 'the loss of a loved person, or to the loss of some abstraction which has taken the place of one, such as one's country, liberty, an ideal'. Melancholia imitates mourning, but with the difference that the melancholic subject does not know what it is that he or she mourns; melancholia, Freud writes, is 'related to an object-loss which is withdrawn from consciousness'.[4] In addition to an ineradicable sense of loss, the melancholic subject suffers an undying self-reproach. Freud writes: 'In mourning it is the world which has become poor and empty; in melancholia it is the ego itself'.[5] The boy in Phillip K. Dick's novel, we are told, suffers from 'the stopping of time. The end of experience, of anything new', such that 'nothing ever happens to him again'. In Freud's now familiar words: 'Thus the shadow of the object fell upon the ego.'[6]

In Freud's essay on mourning the bereaved subject grieves alone; there is no reference to the role of others in the mourning process. In the course of his detailed 1965 study of mourning in Britain, the cultural anthropologist Geoffrey Gorer remarks that 'up to the beginning of [the twentieth] century every society in the world [...] had explicit rules of behaviour which every mourner was meant to follow';[7] today, however, such socially ordained rules and rituals have largely disappeared. It has been suggested that the unprecedented extent of industrialized mass slaughter during the First World War precipitated the decline of communal rituals of mourning in Europe; whatever the case, this particular form of communal remembrance went the way of communal rememoration in general. The historian Pierre Nora has posed the question of how national memory, and therefore national identity, is produced and maintained in nation states with populations that are increasingly

multi-ethnic, multicultural and peripatetically cosmopolitan.[8] What Nora calls a *milieu de mémoire* circumscribes the collective memory that results from generations of habitation of a particular place. As these milieux disappear from today's 'developed' societies such things as the monument and the museum, the commemorative service and the annual celebration, the guide book and the history lesson, provide various disparate sites for the concentration of memory; such places where memory is formally invoked Nora calls *lieux de mémoire*. There are *lieux de mémoire*, Nora writes, because there are no longer *milieux de mémoire*, because there is neither a local nor a national community capable of supporting a communal memory.

The idea of *lieux de mémoire* has been widely debated and put to a variety of uses since it first appeared in print in 1984. In recent years it has been brought into conjunction with the cultural anthropologist Marc Augé's idea of *non-lieux*. Augé's book *Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity* appeared in French in 1992 and in English translation in 1995.[9] One of the defining characteristics of what Augé calls 'supermodernity' (*surmodernité*) is the 'non-place' (*non-lieu*): principally, those anonymous and interchangeable spaces of communication and consumption – from supermarkets and malls to airports and the internet – that form nodal points in the global system of social and economic exchange. Bringing Augé's '*non-lieu*' together with Nora's '*lieu de mémoire*' has allowed some writers to speak of '*non-lieux de mémoire*'. For example, the French historian Benjamin Stora writes: 'French media attention given to American cinematic depictions of the war in Vietnam has [...] strengthened the perception of Algeria as a *non-lieu de mémoire* [...] a memoryless site'.[10] Another French historian, Tristan Landry, has turned the compound expression against the very idea of *lieux de mémoire*. He writes:

> What we call 'places of memory' [*lieux de mémoire*] are in fact places of power [*lieux de pouvoir*] or non-places of memory [*non-lieux de mémoire*]. Memory is precisely that which lives in the margin, in near ignorance of these places which are [...] the fruits of chronological and eventful political and official history, and which are therefore not works of memory.[11]

However, *mileux de mémoire* – which we may assume Landry would accept as 'works of memory' – and *lieux de mémoire* are not necessarily mutually exclusive. For example, in Britain, on 'Remembrance Day', ex-service members parade in London's Whitehall, where wreaths of poppies are left at the Cenotaph, the memorial designed by Edwin Lutyens as a temporary

structure in 1919, then rebuilt in stone in 1920. Lutyens went on to design over 130 memorials and cemeteries to commemorate those who died in the First World War,[12] including the Memorial to the Missing of the Somme at Thiepval in northern France. Unlike the Cenotaph, which commemorates all servicemen and servicewomen who died in wars, the Somme memorial is dedicated uniquely to casualties of the 1916 Battle of the Somme. Mourning at the Cenotaph, like the daydream in Freud's description, receives a perpetually revised 'date-mark';[13] at the Somme memorial the date is literally 'set in stone'. The Cenotaph in Whitehall may remain both *milieu* and *lieu de mémoire*, whereas – as veterans of the Battle of the Somme die out, and living memory dies with them – the Somme memorial is destined to provide only a *lieu de mémoire*.

Tristan Landry implies that the only authentic memorial to disaster is the trace it leaves in the living memory of the survivor, but surely we may be touched by a past we have not actually lived in ways that go beyond the affectless observation of a ritual. Our experience of photographs provides perhaps the most obvious confirmation of this. I began by remarking that it is commonplace to note the uncanny effect of photographs that show the 'living' presence of someone long dead. In his book of 1980, *Camera Lucida*, Roland Barthes observes:

> The photograph is literally an emanation of the referent. From a real body, which was there, depart radiations which come to touch me, I who am here. [...] A sort of umbilical cord connects the body of the thing photographed to my gaze: light, though impalpable, is here a carnal medium, a skin that I share with he or she who has been photographed.[14]

Barthes speaks of the photograph as 'an emanation of past reality: a magic'. His language here may evoke that of Jean-Paul Sartre, to whose book of 1940, *l'Imaginaire*, Barthes dedicates *Camera Lucida*. Sartre writes that the act of imagination is 'a magical one [...] destined to produce the object of one's thought, the thing one desires, in such a way that one can take possession of it'; and he adds, 'In that act there is always something of [...] the infantile'.[15]

Barthes' mother had recently died at the time he wrote *Camera Lucida*. The photographs he comments upon serve ultimately to support the 'act of imagination' that is mourning as described in Freud's essay: an imaginary presence takes the place of the real absence of the object, in order that the attachment to the real object may be gradually relinquished and the ideal object assimilated into the ego. In a passage in James Joyce's *Ulysses*, Stephen Dedalus contemplates the sea, each aspect of

which evokes for him the recent death of his mother. Commenting on this passage, Georges Didi-Huberman remarks on the historical association of all acts of seeing with loss. He notes that mediaeval theology found it necessary to distinguish between the concepts of *imago* (image) and *vestigium* (vestige, trace, ruin) in order to explain how the visible world carries the trace of a lost resemblance, how the visible world is the ruin of a resemblance to God which was lost through sin. In the different context of modernist aesthetics, Didi-Huberman cites the desire expressed by the American painter Jasper Johns to produce: 'an object that tells of the loss, destruction, disappearance of objects'.[16] But such an object already exists – it is the photograph. Every photograph is the trace of a previous state of the world, a vestige of how things were. The sum of all photographs is the ruin of the world.

All photographs may be offered in evidence, but are not some photographs inadmissible evidence? In his book of 2003, *Images malgré tout*, Didi-Huberman joins the argument over whether the Holocaust may be represented in images. He discusses four photographs that were taken secretly by members of the Auschwitz *Sonderkommando* and smuggled out of the camp. These are the only photographs of the death camps that were made by inmates. Didi-Huberman's main adversary in the debate is the documentary film director Claude Lanzmann, for whom any image of the death camps is condemned in advance to obscene inadequacy in the face of the literally unrepresentable horror of the Shoah. Didi-Huberman maintains that these four photographs, as all that remains visually of Auschwitz, are 'truth itself'. In order to know, he argues, it is necessary to imagine – to make the effort to imagine even though it is obvious that we can never fully know. He writes:

> Images in spite of everything, then: in spite of the hell of Auschwitz, in spite of the risks that were run. In return we must contemplate them, take them on board, try to give an account of them. Images in spite of everything: in spite of our own incapacity to look at them as they deserve. In spite of our own world filled, almost suffocated, by imaginary merchandise.[17]

Not to look, he argues, is to collude with the Nazi design that the machinery of extermination should leave no trace, for these photographs are just that, traces:

> [M]iniscule samples, taken from an extremely complex reality, brief moments from a continuum that lasted at least five years.

> These moments nevertheless constitute – in relation to the view we have upon the facts today – the truth itself, that is to say a relic of this truth, a pitiful remainder of it: all that still remains of the visible of Auschwitz.[18]

The impression of an 'emanation of past reality' that we may find in photographs we may also find in things. The Musée Carnavalet, in Paris, is housed in two splendid *hôtel particuliers* that date from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Here one may visit apartments that Madame de Sévigné occupied for some 20 years to the close of the seventeenth century. One may also visit a reconstitution of the cork-lined bedroom of Marcel Proust. There is something oneiric in this telescoping of different times and spaces, all the more so in that the reconstitution combines the three rooms Proust occupied after the death of his mother in 1905. It is a dream of a room, and may recall the room to which the narrator awakes at the beginning of *In Search of Lost Time*, where, in the liminal space-time between sleep and wakefulness, he finds himself in two places at once. When I visited the Musée Carnavalet early in 2007 I found an addition to Proust's bedroom: his cane was still lying on the bed where I remembered it from previous visits, but it had now been joined by his overcoat – as if, during my absence, he had passed through and discarded it there. On an impulse I reached beyond the rope barrier that cordons off visitors and lightly touched the heavy fabric of the coat. In the incomplete last chapter of his final book, *The Visible and the Invisible* (1964), Maurice Merleau-Ponty reminds us that to touch is to be touched, that my hand 'if it takes its place among the things it touches, is in a sense one of them'.[19] To see also is 'to be seen by the outside, to exist within it, to emigrate into it, to be seduced, captivated, alienated by the phantom, so that [...] we no longer know which sees and which is seen'.[20] Moreover, 'there is encroachment, infringement, not only between the touched and the touching, but between the tangible and the visible'.[21]

After my *passage à l'acte* in the Musée Carnavalet I rationalized my impulse to touch the hem of Proust's garment as the superstitious expression of a wish to be cured of mediocrity and to accede to genius. But this is not what it felt like at the time; it felt as if I entered the past, or rather as if the past entered me. Merleau-Ponty writes: 'past and present are each enveloped-enveloping, and that is flesh'. The body is made from the same 'flesh' as the world, that which we see and touch touches and sees us. As the hand touches, says Merleau-Ponty, '[t]hrough this crisscrossing within it of the touching and the tangible, its own

movements incorporate themselves into the universe they interrogate, are recorded on the same map as it'.[22] It is because the body is the same 'flesh' as the world that we can understand the world; although we cannot have the other's experience we may nevertheless sense something of it because we are the same flesh. Moreover, our psychical being (if we may accept a distinction between psyche and soma for expository convenience) is a tissue of identifications with others. Freud provides his most concise definition of identification in his book of 1933 *New Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis*: 'an "identification" – that is to say, the assimilation of one ego to another one, as a result of which the first ego behaves like the second in certain respects, imitates it and in a certain sense takes it up into itself'.[23]

From a psychoanalytic point of view, the prototypical oral relation to the object guarantees that all subsequent identifications are ambivalently both loving and aggressive. In 'Mourning and Melancholia', Freud notes the structural similarity between oral incorporation and the process of mourning, in which the lost object is internalized by the bereaved. In his book of 1923, *The Ego and the Id*, he remarks on the more general nature of this process, which 'especially in the earlier phases of development, is a frequent one, and it makes it possible to suppose that the character of the ego is a precipitate of abandoned object-cathexes and that it contains the history of those object-choices'.[24] Identification, then, is the very process through which the human subject is constituted: personal 'identity' is nothing other than an accretion of identifications.

Empathetic identification with others from within the flesh of the world may be felt not only through such fabricated things as photographs, buildings and garments, but also through the natural environment. In 1775 Johann Wolfgang von Goethe became a ducal administrator for the Duchy of Saxe-Weimar. The ducal seat was at Schloss Ettersberg, in the Ettersberg forest that borders Weimar, and it was here that Goethe presided over the 'Court of the Muses' that first established Weimar's reputation as a capital of German culture. When, some years ago, I visited the Schloss Ettersberg and the park around it I was struck by an uncanny sense of familiarity. I then realized that I was inhabiting the topography that Goethe describes in his novel of 1809, *Elective Affinities* (*Die Wahlverwandtschaften*). Goethe's principal characters planned a utopian construction on the hill above the house:

> at home that evening they straightaway took out the new map. [...] 'I would build the pavilion here', said Ottilie, laying her finger on

> the highest level place on the hill. 'You could not see the mansion, I know, for it is concealed by the little wood, but [...] you would find yourself in a new and different world'.[25]

What would be built on that site in reality over a century later, in 1937, would be the 'new and different world' of Buchenwald concentration camp. In Goethe's day a 'hunting star' was maintained in the forest. Animals would be flushed out and driven down paths cut through the woods in the form of a star. Members of the leisure class would lie in ambush where the paths intersected.

By the time the National Socialists arrived at the forest, Schloss Ettersberg had fallen into disrepair and the hunting star had become overgrown – except in places at the edge of the forest where local people came to cut wood. Without the builders of Buchenwald being aware of it, one of these paths came to provide the principal axis of the camp. When Schloss Ettersberg was renovated in preparation for the *Weimar '99* cultural festival, the architect Walther Grunwald inaugurated a simple and effective act of remembrance. He commissioned the clearing of the long-concealed hunting path that connects the site of Goethe's Court of the Muses to the site of the Buchenwald camp. Visitors to Weimar are now able to walk from one place to the other, through the same trees that sheltered them both. The walk is physically arduous; no less difficult is the task of covering the emotional and intellectual ground between the two sites. The woods are now much as they were then: the space is the same; as one moves down the path, the knowledge of where one is in time is subject to an irrational and dreadful doubt. Certainly this 'empty' space between provides a more effective occasion for remembrance than the inert monuments that border it.

Tristan Landry disparages monuments as *non-lieux de mémoire* because official history has little to do with living memory. But there is a sense in which the expression *non-lieux de mémoire* might be better applied to memories than to monuments. Marc Augé did not coin the expression *non-lieu*; he appropriated it from French juridical discourse, where a judge's decision that there are insufficient grounds to justify the pursuit of a prosecution is termed a *non-lieu*. The judgement of a *non-lieu* may come at any point during a process, and is not the same as an acquittal. Among the most common grounds for a *non-lieu* is the judge's finding that the facts of the case have been insufficiently established, that what has been produced in evidence is inconclusive.

The juridical connotation of the expression *non-lieu* may suggest a different understanding of the neologism *non-lieu de mémoire* in its

application to the question of remembrance. In this understanding there are 'monuments of mourning' and 'monuments of melancholia'. The former are best exemplified by official sites of remembrance – monuments, memorials or museums more or less well conceived architecturally, more or less well received publicly. The result of often highly politicized competitions (as if competition and triumphalism were not at the root of what they purport to lament), the apparatus of the monument of mourning may include such things as websites, car parks, cafeterias and shops. These are the *lieux de mémoire*. Monuments of melancholia are *non-lieux de mémoire* in that, unlike monuments of mourning, they fail to make their case. The documentation is incomplete, witnesses are missing or unreliable, it is not always clear what is to be proved, and there is so much that has been forgotten.

Michael Hamburger says that when he now looks back to Berlin, all he sees is 'a darkened background with a grey smudge in it, a slate pencil drawing, some unclear numbers and letters in a gothic script, blurred and half wiped away with a damp rag', and he remarks 'Perhaps this blind spot is a vestigial image of the ruins through which I wandered in 1947'.[26] A page later, Sebald's character recalls:

> at length I came upon a cleared site where the bricks retrieved from the ruins had been stacked in long, precise rows, ten by ten, a thousand to every stacked cube. [...] If I now think back to that desolate place, I do not see a single human being, only bricks, millions of bricks, a rigorously perfected system of bricks reaching in serried ranks as far as the horizon.[27]

Here, Hamburger in Berlin – like Phillip K. Dick's boy on Mars – might have been granted a vision of the future, for the parallelepiped tends to be the solid of choice for monuments of mourning. Memory itself, however, has no clear boundaries, its images may seem arbitrary, and even these are blurred and half wiped away, riddled with blind spots – the trace of forgetting in memory.

In common sense, memory is a kind of attic where we may rummage for misplaced recollections, and expect to recover them whole. In this view, forgetting is a form of passive neglect, and remembering a form of active restoration. But forgetting is an endless 'work' we must do if we are not to be overwhelmed by the constant accumulation of new impressions, or be so overwhelmed by the past that we can no longer live in the present. Forgetting is not always the same kind of work,

nor is it always easily distinguished from remembering. In an essay on Proust, Walter Benjamin asks:

> Is not the involuntary recollection, Proust's *mémoire involontaire*, much closer to forgetting than what is usually called memory? [...] When we awake each morning, we hold in our hands [...] but a few fringes of the tapestry of lived life, as loomed for us by forgetting. However, with our purposeful activity and, even more, our purposive remembering each day unravels the web and the ornaments of forgetting.[28]

In Benjamin's description, involuntary recollection is as different from 'purposive remembering' as dreaming is different from waking thought. In placing involuntary memory on the side of the primary processes, and in emphasizing its kinship with forgetting, Benjamin places forgetting on the side of repression.

Jean-Bertrand Pontalis has emphasized that repression does not act upon memories as such, but upon the mnemic traces that memories may secrete. A memory is something narrated; a mnemic trace is an element in the narrative that is nevertheless independent of it. Pontalis gives as examples of such traces the pattern on the wallpaper in one's childhood bedroom, the odour of the parents' bedroom (Benjamin remarks, 'A scent may drown years in the odour it recalls'[29]), or a word caught in passing. Moreover, repression acts not so much upon the trace itself as upon the connections between traces. It is in the course of a police investigation that individuals are enjoined to make a conscious effort to remember what they know about a past event. In a psychoanalysis the individual is asked merely to say whatever comes to mind. The course of an analysis depends less on the ability to remember than upon the ability to freely associate – which is to say, as Pontalis puts it: 'to dissociate existing, well established, liaisons in order to make others emerge, which are often dangerous liaisons'.[30] Dangerous, we might add, to official memory, which relies on a seamless network of associative links – a 'totalitarian' regime is one in which what we read in history books is confirmed by the monuments on the streets, the images on cinema and television screens, the songs we sing and perhaps even our dreams.

The individual subject is the sum of the stories it tells itself. The subject of modern democracies increasingly contrives its stories from contents and schemas provided by the media, transmitting what Jacques Rancière terms the 'framework of consensual descriptions and

categories'.[31] History is not only that which is over but also that which is incomplete, unrealized or unexplored, and therefore the repository of much that is counterfactual in terms of the hegemonic order. An opening onto alternative histories, the histories of alternatives, cannot be provided by *lieux de mémoire*, as these by definition speak only in consensual terms. Where the official monument fails, may not the ruin take its place? In his book of 2003, *Le temps en ruines*, Marc Augé observes that, although recent history contains an abundance of wars and natural disasters, it has left no ruins. The ruin, he says, is 'absent from our world of images, of simulacrums and reconstitutions, from our violent world whose debris no longer has the time to become ruins'.[32] He writes:

> We today face the necessity [...] to relearn a sense of time in order to recover a consciousness of history. At a time when everything conspires to make us believe that history is at an end and that the world is a spectacle in which this end is staged, we have to refind the time to believe in history. This, today, would be the pedagogic vocation of ruins.[33]

But on what grounds may we hope that ruins may enlighten us? The ruin that does not disappear becomes an official monument, a *lieu de mémoire* and tourist attraction like Berlin's Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church. If the past is really to touch us then it is more likely to be when we least expect it, as when some of its litter blows across our path. In his essay of 1939, 'On Some Motifs in Baudelaire', Walter Benjamin observes that although the past is beyond the reach of the intellect, Proust shows us that it is 'unmistakably present in some material object (or in the sensation which such an object arouses in us), though we have no idea which one it is', and he adds: 'it depends entirely on chance whether we come upon it before we die or whether we never encounter it'.[34] Benjamin has Proust's madeleine in mind, and the recovery of personal history, but the past routinely returns in more modest ways, and not always in the form of our own past. There is no certainty whether the chance encounter with the object will 'teach' us anything, but it may help us teach ourselves. The monument of melancholy – the inconclusive *non-lieu de mémoire* – remains to be completed; as a building site it is virtually indistinguishable from a ruin – not the transcendental ruin of the Romantic picturesque invoked by Augé, but something closer to the shattered ruin of Renaissance Humanism – the hieroglyphic keys to a lost knowledge, the enigmatic fragments of a rebus.

The fragment, it must be admitted, is itself a Romantic preoccupation. It is also the very figure of mediatic and aggressive industrial modernity. In his essay of 1936, 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction', Benjamin writes:

> Our taverns and our metropolitan streets and offices and furnished rooms, our railroad stations and our factories appeared to have us locked up hopelessly. Then came the film and burst this prison-world asunder by the dynamite of the tenth of a second, so that now, in the midst of its far-flung ruins and debris, we calmly and adventurously go travelling.[35]

The aerial bombardment of the civilian population of Guernica came the following year, in 1937. Then came the relentless assaults of the Second World War that included the area bombing of Berlin, and the atomic bombardment of Hiroshima in 1945. The opening sequence of Alain Resnais' film of 1959, *Hiroshima mon amour*, is a close-up of the upper bodies of a couple in an embrace. What appears to be a rain of ash is falling on them in darkness, giving a granular whiteness to their arms and torsos, as if they are turning to stone. Towards the end of Rossellini's film of 1953, *Journey to Italy*, the unhappily married protagonists drive to Pompeii, where they watch as a plaster cast is made from a natural mould in the compacted volcanic ash, a mould formed from a cavity left after the disintegration of bodies buried in the eruption. When the cast is finally freed from the ground, it reveals the figures of a man and a woman, side by side at the moment of their death. Raymond Bellour observes: 'there emerges the form of a couple [...] as a picture appears in a developer. Thus a photograph is formed from the real itself'.[36]

In the photogram, the most elemental form of photography, an object is placed between a source of light, or other form of radiation, and a sensitive surface. The image that results is the shadow of the object. The Hiroshima branch of the Sumitomo Bank is 250 metres from the hypocentre of the atomic blast that destroyed the city on the morning of 6 August 1945. At this distance the explosion created temperatures at ground level of over 3000 degrees centigrade for a duration of about three seconds. This exposure incinerated the person who was sitting on the flight of stone steps at the main entrance of the building, perhaps waiting for the bank to open. The shadow of this individual, believed to be that of a woman, was inscribed in stone, and remained clearly visible for about ten years before it began to fade.[37] It is likely

that the woman in Carlo Fratacci's fading photograph of Pompeii would have been dead before the First World War reduced her world to rubble, and yet her shadow – haunting the ruin – might be haunting the aftermath of the conflict. It might have been her image that inspired Benjamin's observation:

> A generation that had gone to school in horse-drawn streetcars now stood in the open air, amid a landscape in which nothing was the same except the clouds and, at its centre, in a force field of destructive torrents and explosions, the tiny, fragile human body.[38]

Notes

1. Carlo Fratacci, Active Naples ca. 1860s, 'Basilica', 1864. Albumen silver print, 17.4 × 18.1 cm (image, rounded corners). Unnumbered plate from an album entitled 'Principales Vues de Pompeii par Charles Fratacci, Naples 1864' comprising 26 photographs by Fratacci. Inscribed in ink on album page, below image: 'Basilica'. Inscribed in ink on preliminary page: 'A. Monsieur/ Le Conte de Milano/Souvenir de/Charles Fratacci/Naples 2 Mai 1864'. Collection Centre Canadien d'Architecture, Montréal: PH 1983:0504:007.
2. W. G. Sebald (2002), *The Rings of Saturn* (London: Vintage), p. 178.
3. S. Freud (1957), 'On Transience', *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, 14. (London: Hogarth), p. 307.
4. S. Freud (1957), 'Mourning and Melancholia', *Standard Edition*, 14, p. 245.
5. Ibid., p. 246.
6. Ibid., p. 249.
7. G. Gorer (1965), *Death, Grief, and Mourning in Contemporary Britain* (London: The Cresset Press), p. 63.
8. P. Nora (1984–92), *Les Lieux de mémoire* (Paris: Gallimard).
9. M. Augé (1992), *Non-Lieux: Introduction à une anthropologie de la surmodernité* (Paris: Seuil); ((1995), *Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity* (London: Verso)).
10. B. Stora (1997), *Imaginaires de guerre: Algérie-Viêt-nam en France et aux Etats-Unis* (Paris: Editions de la Découverte), pp. 25–8; cited in R. L. Derderian (2002), 'Algeria as a *lieu de mémoire*: Ethnic Minority Memory and National Identity in Contemporary France', *Radical History Review*, 83 (Spring), 28–43.
11. T. Landry (2003), 'Lieux de pouvoir et micropolitique de la mémoire: L'exemple de la Cathédrale du Christ-Sauveur à Moscou', (my translation), *Politique et Sociétés*, 22.2, 98–9.
12. See A. Greenberg (1989), 'Lutyens' Cenotaph', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 158.1, 5.
13. S. Freud (1959), 'Creative Writers and Day-Dreaming', *Standard Edition*, 9, p. 147.
14. R. Barthes (1980), *La Chambre Claire* (Paris: Seuil), pp. 126–7 ((1981), *Camera Lucida* (New York: Hill and Wang), pp. 80–1).

15. J. P. Sartre (1972), *The Psychology of Imagination* (London: Methuen), p. 141.
16. G. Didi-Huberman (1992), *Ce Que Nous Voyons, Ce Qui Nous Regarde*, (my translation), (Paris: Minuit), pp. 14–15.
17. G. Didi-Huberman (2003), *Images malgré tout*, (my translation), (Paris: Minuit), p. 11.
18. Ibid., (my translation), p. 54.
19. M. Merleau-Ponty (1968), *The Visible and the Invisible* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press), p. 133.
20. Ibid., p. 139.
21. Ibid., p. 134.
22. Ibid., p. 133.
23. S. Freud (1975), 'New Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis', *Standard Edition*, 22, p. 63.
24. S. Freud (1961), 'The Ego and the Id', *Standard Edition*, 19, p. 29.
25. J. W. von Goethe (1971), *Elective Affinities* (London: Penguin), p. 76.
26. W. G. Sebald, *The Rings of Saturn*, pp. 177–8.
27. Ibid., p. 179.
28. W. Benjamin (1973), 'The Image of Proust', *Illuminations* (London: Fontana), p. 198.
29. W. Benjamin (1973), 'On Some Motifs in Baudelaire', *Illuminations*, p. 184.
30. J. B. Pontalis (1997), 'ÇA en lettres capitales', (my translation), in *Ce temps qui ne passe pas* (Paris: Gallimard), p. 115.
31. J. Rancière (2005), *Chroniques des Temps Consensuels*, (my translation), (Paris: Seuil), p. 198.
32. M. Augé (2003), *Le Temps en ruines,* (my translation), (Paris: Galilée), p. 9.
33. Ibid., p. 45.
34. W. Benjamin, 'On Some Motifs in Baudelaire', p. 158.
35. W. Benjamin (1973), 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction', *Illuminations* (London: Fontana), p. 238.
36. R. Bellour (1990), 'The Film Stilled', *Camera Obscura*, 24 (September), 109–10.
37. When the bank was rebuilt, in 1971, the section of stones bearing the shadow was removed to the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum.
38. W. Benjamin (1999), 'Experience and Poverty', in *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings, Volume 2 1927–1934* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press), p. 732.

2
Sonnen-Insulaner: On a Berlin Island of Memory

Thomas Elsaesser

Lieux de mémoire and cultural topographies

The French historian Pierre Nora famously coined the term *lieux de mémoire* for his seven-volume edition of the memorial spaces of France (1984–92), helping to redefine what we mean by cultural memory, its practices, its material as well as its symbolic manifestations. He has opened up a new understanding of the very diverse sites, realms and locations where cultural memory can be enacted. He and his collaborators have shown how memory intersects with the lives of communities, as it shapes individuals' sense of their origins and roots, even when not tied to a place, to a bloodline succession or an unchanging geography. 'A *lieu de mémoire*', Nora says, 'is any significant entity, whether material or non-material in nature, which by dint of human will or the work of time has become a symbolic element of the memorial heritage of any community'.[1]

These *lieux de mémoire*, 'where memory crystallizes and secretes itself',[2] famously include not just what we would expect to find, namely, the built spaces of collected and collective experiences, such as archives, museums, cathedrals, cemeteries or memorial sites. They extend also to rituals and practices such as annual holidays, festivals, public events and private celebrations, the encounters of different generations, verbal mottos and common turns of phrase that have been passed on, been reinvented, or are being reinvested with fresh meaning. Finally, Nora includes in his *lieux de mémoire* also inherited property, manuals, dictionaries, such as the *Petit Larousse*, emblems such as 'Marianne', basic texts such as school primers, and other kinds of common objects that by virtue of their longevity, or by the affective investment they have received, become symbols, across which people communicate with each other their sense of belonging or simply their longing for belonging.

Perhaps against Nora's intentions, or even in contradiction to his declared aim, the term *lieu de mémoire* has been appropriated by others in at times controversial contexts, making it a rallying cry, when Nora may have intended it as a warning. For instance, it has generally acquired wholly positive connotations, where Nora was more cautious and critical, seeing in *lieux de mémoire* – and the memory discourse that followed – a potential threat to the craft and conscience of the practising historian. But it has also been taken over by writers interested in the memory function of modern commodities and communication technologies. Those of us fascinated by the affective power of the common symbols of consumer society, from Coca Cola bottles to bell-bottom trousers, from 1950s pop songs to lines from cult movies such as *Casablanca* or *Taxi Driver*, have found in the term *lieu de mémoire* a respectable catchphrase and useful antidote with which to counter the disparaging associations of nostalgia or retro-fashion. Being in time, as well as marking the passage of time, a *lieu de mémoire* in this sense becomes the embodied form of a different battle against forgetting, in the very medium of forgetting, namely, ephemerality and fashion, popular culture, mass production, accumulation and waste.

In the second part of this Chapter I, too, am guilty of an act of appropriation, and I, too, will be speaking of detritus and waste. I have opted for the word *île*, island, rather than *lieu*, space or site, to emphasize a certain extraterritoriality, and an element of the private and personal rather than common or communal, quite apart from the fact that what I intend to present does in fact take place on an island. Nonetheless, *île de mémoire* does concern 'spaces', too, in the more symbolic sense of discursive spaces of politics, ethics and philosophy, as well as of intersecting lives and parallel lines of force, and of more fundamentally contradictory encounters: in this case, encounters between nature and culture, between physical labour and material toil on the one hand, and on the other, a more spiritual, artistic and even erotic culture, manifested in letters, poems, gifts and other signs or tokens. Perhaps most crucially, while my *île de mémoire* encompasses the relations between culture and nature, it extends their mutually determining dynamics to include the visual media of film and photography as conflicting and competing 'time machines' and temporal registers. When it comes to cultural memory – or as we should perhaps now say, when cultural memory bleeds into cultural topography, dissipating and redistributing the linear, goal-oriented and intentionally inflected energies of both personal memory and public history – the presence of visual media is a given. But this given subtly alters the ground of the encounters between past and

present, story and history. As Hal Foster has observed: 'We still find it difficult to think about history as a narrative of survivals and repetition, yet we increasingly have to come to terms with a continual process of protension and retension, a complex relay of anticipated futures and reconstructed pasts'.[3] He does not name film and photography, or their time-warp effects on our sense of space, but the relays of countervailing temporalities that the ubiquity of photographic media has engendered necessarily shape what we understand by cultural topographies.

Cultural topographies remind us of the permanence of geographical formations, as they absorb both the *longue durée* of history and the short memory of human generations, gathering energy and entropy around built spaces, even when in ruins or apparently rebuilt. The adjective 'cultural' gains new weight here, if it can also mark their equally permanent transformations, with at times violent, and therefore not ephemeral but traumatic, inscriptions of pain, suffering and extreme affect. Christian Boltanski's *The Missing House* (1990) comes to mind as an exemplary topography of such negative presence, evoking the contraction of generational time to a sudden moment, trapped in a particular place as an imprint in a void.[4] Between material residues, symbolic voids, performative acts, visible evidence and non-visible in-evidence (in Roland Barthes' sense of the obtuse),[5] Boltanski's work is almost like an allegory of the photograph, but in its extended resonances will serve as a bridge to the memory function and time-space conjunction of film as well.

In introducing the peculiar temporal registers of visual media, I shall use – or abuse – the term 'cultural topography' to emphasize also its potential as an oxymoron, made necessary by the confusion and conflation of categories that used to be separate and even opposed to each other, precisely those of 'culture' and 'nature', now rendered productive by pointing to the different temporalities of human activities we usually call 'history', and the temporalities of the biological environment we call evolution. Its oxymoronic force is especially acute when one is dealing with the temporalities of the built environment, sometimes subject to natural disasters, like earthquakes or floods, but more often altered by armed conflict or aerial bombing, and more recently affected by urban planning, property values and the perceived needs of modern automotive transportation. Cultural topography draws attention to all these different kinds of agency, and could therefore be said to define at once that which comes 'before' history and 'after' it, the prehistory of post-history, so to speak. It also reflects our recognition that we are

henceforth in charge of – and therefore responsible for – nature as well as culture.

Cultural topography thus is not a euphemism eliding the very real forces changing or degrading our environment. Rather, it indexes a different relation to memory, indicative as the term is of a turn to the performative in our awareness of the past (the famous 'invention of tradition'), and the 'spatial turn' (in which it participates, of course, with the reference to topography).[6] Yet it also evokes a new and complex relation to history in general, and to all kinds of macro- and micro-histories, since the end of 'grand narratives' and other Enlightenment teleologies, where not only traumatic narratives have come to the fore but also belief, whether fervent or sceptical, in all manner of benevolent and/or malevolent, magical or, at any rate, non-human agencies.[7] Among historians, there has been a return to macro-history, and especially to history in which the geopolitical environment and biology play their decisive part: in short, the tendency to see 'history' as part of 'natural history', now defined to include human and non-human agents. Popular best-sellers such as Jared Diamond's *Guns, Germs and Steel*, or more recently the history of the destruction of the Eastern Roman Empire and the birth of Europe, William Rosen's *Justinian's Flea*, mark this opening up as well as crossover between natural history, biology and traditional *res gestas*. One also thinks of W. G. Sebald's musings as to why the effects of the air strikes and bombing raids on German cities in the last months of the Second World War did not find a greater echo in post-war literature and collective memory: a series of informal lectures, posthumously published under the suggestive and symptomatic title *On the Natural History of Destruction*.[8]

Sebald's name, of course, stands for the very idea of cultural topographies in contemporary literature, at the interface between the written text, the photograph and the map. He is the inspiration, for instance, behind a project by Marina Warner, on Memory Maps, at the University of Essex and the Victoria and Albert Museum. It is in the main focused on the county of Essex, in the way that Sebald's *Rings of Saturn* established a new and delicate marriage between stretches of nature and history, 'exploring places and setting them in time', remapping Norfolk and Suffolk with his own body, become medium of elation and fatigue, by walking as well as deploying a finely tuned and erudite literary imagination that everywhere paid attention to the memory traces of past histories, broken-off trajectories and signs of small or momentous human endeavours that may or may not have begun in an abandoned,

forgotten or completely remodelled country cottage. To quote from Marina Warner's prospectus:

> A new genre of literature has been emerging strongly in recent years. [...] Writers working in this vein are exploring people and places and the relations between them, and in order to do so, they combine fiction, history, traveller's tales, autobiography, anecdote, aesthetics, antiquarianism, conversation, and memoir. Mapping memories involves listening in to other people's ghosts as well as your own. Dérive – the French for drift – characterizes this approach, rather than more purposeful terms like quest or research, though memory maps demand processes of investigation and endless curiosity and an impulse towards wonder. Memory mapping grows out of daydreaming, reverie, and the unbidden images that come up in the mind. This is writing as fugue, as enigma variations, [...] that is, the phantasmatic flow of consciousness. A dériveur arrives at 'astonishment upon the terrain of familiarity,' writes Robert Macfarlane, and becomes 'more sensitive to the hidden histories and encrypted events of the city' – or the country.[9]

Warner identifies a number of general concerns which she sees focalized in the genre of the memory map, whether undertaken in the city or in more rural areas, each sedimented and fragile, each persistent and ephemeral: she singles out the concerns with 'identity and belonging' and those with 'ecology and stewardship', both of which 'are interconnected through memory and through the stories we use as compass bearings'. Warner's project gives priority to literature and painting, but other studies, similarly inspired, occasionally take a wider sweep.

For instance, an earlier and also much commented-upon foray into what one can retroactively call 'cultural topography' was undertaken by Simon Schama, with his 1995 book *Landscape and Memory*. Schama kept the two sides in focus: how much landscape has shaped human history and indeed human society right up to the present, and the inverse, how much of 'nature' as we perceive it today – and as poets and painters have celebrated it for the past 500 years – is actually the product of centuries, indeed millennia of human intervention and the shaping power of farmers, warriors and civil engineers.[10]

On a smaller scale both temporally and geographically, but along the lines of both Sebald and Schama, my *île de mémoire* introduces a special place, an island not that far from the heart of Berlin. It, too, is located between a site of seemingly pristine nature and a site that bears its own

scars and traces of lived history, a site to which the phrase 'natural history of destruction' applies, just as it presents the case of a landscape that has shaped three generations of lives, whose life-work has made nature into culture, even as nature unmade this cultural topography once more in its own relentless work upon human remainders, its work of in-evidence.

In the course of tracing this process, I have, as indicated, tried to appropriate Nora's concept, not only by giving it a positive turn but by turning it around: my project requires that I first create this *lieu de mémoire* before I can commemorate, celebrate or make it an occasion for mourning. The primary challenge is that of Berlin itself. Despite the shelves of books written about the city as one of Europe's great metropolises and incubators of modernism, and, notwithstanding the slew of new publications since it has once more become the capital of a united Germany, Berlin remains impossible to grasp or keep in focus. As almost everyone writing about it notes, it is a very peculiar, uncanny chronotope.[11] One might say that Berlin is a city without a present: it lives in the past and yet always anxiously anticipates the promise of its future. Berlin is a city of multiple temporalities and of diverse modalities: virtual and actual, divided and united, built and destroyed, repaired and rebuilt, living in a perpetual *mise en scène* of its own history, a history it both needs and fears, both invents and disowns. A city of superimpositions and erasures, full of the 'special effects' that are the legacy of Nazism and Stalinism, obliged to remember totalitarian crimes while still mourning socialist dreams. Mindful of these particular temporalities that apply only to Berlin, my project is eccentric in two distinct ways: it situates itself geographically at the very boundary of the city while nonetheless unthinkable without it, and it is a virtual *lieu de mémoire*, not because it awaits realization but because it wants to be a ruin in progress rather than its restoration. At the same time, the project is imaginary in the precise sense of being based on images, as the primary reality, of which the actual site, such as it still exists, may be no more than a 'sediment' or material residue. A *lieu de mémoire* in becoming, as it were, not least because of the several kinds of anticipated potentialities that were involved right from the start.

With this claim that images, both moving and still, are the primary realities, I return to my initial point, namely, the difference of emphasis I put on the role of the visual media – that is, film and photography – in the life of this yet-to-be *lieu de mémoire*. Images are the record both of a physical site and of a moment in time. Snapshots of an instant, they are also evidence – or, again, with reference to Roland Barthes:

in-evidence – of a site's continued existence in another dimension, somewhere between site and sight, between mental imagery and intensely felt materiality. In other words, technical images have, for the past century, created and fashioned, falsified and fortified memory and turned it into (our) history. As cultural artefacts, they tend to assume a separate reality status, often becoming iconic, that is, more palpably real than the place and the moment to which they owe their existence, while the sense that they confer a 'reality of presence' on places which without the photographic record might never have existed gives their preservation (and interpretation) a special, ethical charge.

This ethical imperative, similar to what Marina Warner calls 'stewardship', applies with singular force to film, one of the most physically fragile and yet imaginatively powerful archives of such presence. Moving images differ in this respect from photography, in so far as their reality of presence is neutral or suspended in respect of time's arrow: neither past nor present, neither alive nor dead, but existing in a sort of undeadness at once unbearably light and weighed down with longing. Film extends the concept of cultural topography by adding to it the intimation of a cultural hauntography, inscribing and accounting for the uncannily spectral quality of our photographically based media memory.[12] Film, finally, always crosses borders between the private and the public, the intimate and the outwardly projected. This raises further ethical dilemmas that have to do with trust, discretion and tact, nowhere more so than in this particular instance, where some of the material remains of the *île de mémoire* do not belong to the public domain but are in every sense private property: home movies and amateur photographs, complemented by personal letters and poems, concerning public persons when captured as intensely private selves. Yet the realities that this evidence documents also belong to a collective history, in that letters and photographs – these literary and technical media of friendship, of courtship, of the family and of family memory – are the only extant testimony to an 'experiment in living' intended to be emulated, propagated and eventually to be made public. In both inspiration and implementation these island experiences belong to the history of Berlin modernism.

The sun-island as chronotope of multiple space-time narratives

In what follows, I embark on a journey to an island in the middle of the Seddinsee, a lake east of Berlin, bordering on what used to be Greater Berlin, with the well-known town of Köpenick and the so-called

Figure 2.1 The Dommelwall Island Boat House, Spring 2001, © Thomas Elsaesser.

Müggelberge (Müggel hills) to one side, and its water lapping against the shore of the Mark Brandenburg to the other, with the farming hamlet of Gosen and the small market town of Erkner close by.

Today, this island is called Dommelwall and, although private property, it is part of a larger domain of reed-covered marshland kept as a nature reserve, mainly for rare birds. But as far as the island is concerned, what is now being preserved in the name of endangered nature is in fact largely the result of an act of Culture, a culture, which over the years, and especially in the years since the Fall of the Wall, has been wholly reclaimed by Nature. This in itself would perhaps not be all that unusual were it not for the fact that the particular culture, or cultivation, which existed here between June 1933 and February 1946 was itself conceived with the explicit aim to initiate a new nature–culture symbiosis, a form of nature, born from the rejects and refuse of urban culture, in a strip of windswept marshland, that until then had been a rather forlorn and somewhat barren wilderness.

One's first encounter with the island today suggests pirates and desert islands, abandoned fireplaces and the barely recognizable traces of human habitation, with all the suggestions of Boys' Own mysteries and adventure, of buried treasures, and bearded desperados finally abandoning their hideout. That there may be a buried treasure is not altogether the wrong surmise or expectation, but, evidently, it is not gold

bullion, coins or buried human remains. Rather, what lies hidden here is a wealth of histories, but also skeleton stories and narratives which can guide one, baffle one or indeed lead one astray in one's encounter with this lush, overgrown island and its collapsed ruin that barely hints at human habitation. To name a few of these narratives:

> There is the tale of an urban experiment in recovery which partly failed and partly succeeded beyond anticipation, initiated by a remarkable visionary and reformer of the 1920s and early 1930s, the garden architect Leberecht Migge. It might be called 'the inconclusive masterpiece'.
>
> There is the no less remarkable story of labour and devotion by a woman to the man she loved, and for whom she left both husband and children. Her lover died barely two years into the experiment, leaving the island in her possession as well as her care. She mourned his loss by an active working life, at once self-sustaining and outward looking, remembering his life by implementing his vision, on her terms. This is 'the island utopia as mourning work and green memorial'.
>
> There is the narrative of an alternative life-design. Attracting a stream of visitors, in the midst of persecution during the late 1930s and sustained into the 1940s despite war, perhaps even because of it, the island proved an improbable enclave of bourgeois-bohemian values amidst farmers, foresters and fishermen. Reflected in its intellectual tastes and artistic preferences (which ranged from theosophy and body-culture to modernist architecture and the music of Anton Bruckner and Paul Hindemith) was the topography of the island itself: part of metropolitan Berlin's cultural life, while marginal to its politics of nationalism and racial hate.[13] Such ecumenical spiritualism, humanist and with universal aspirations, yet rooted in the soil and practical to the point of autarchy, stands in the long tradition of German artist colonies from the early part of the twentieth century. Comparable to Worpswede near Bremen, Murnau in the Alps, the Dessau Bauhaus, or Monte Verita in Switzerland near Ascona on Lake Maggiore,[14] the sun-island experiment might have evolved into a 'Worpswede on the Spree'.
>
> There is an as yet barely researched history of the island between 1946 and 1961, when the Soviet occupation and almost daily harassment forced its evacuation. *Swan-song on Dommelwall or The Seddinsee Elegy*, a 98-page poem in rhymed couplets, gives a harrowing account of the last days of the Third Reich between April and June 1945, as

experienced by four of the island's remaining residents, detailing pillage, rape and the administrative chaos that followed the fall of Berlin. However, little is known of the fate of the island since, either before or after the building of the Berlin Wall in 1961 (when it became inaccessible even to visitors allowed into East Berlin). There is evidence that the boathouse was maintained by one of the GDR trade unions, and served its more privileged cadres as a summer-house, holiday-home and weekend dacha. This narrative could be called 'Urlaub vom Staat' (with the double meaning of holiday away from/by the grace of the state), after the title of a study of GDR state-owned or state sponsored holiday-resorts.[15]

And, given the varied phases of ownership, there is the enigmatic story of the Schulze family, whose name appears in the Köpenick land register as having received the rights to the island in the 1810s and who presumably have thus owned the island for generations, as a Dr Werner Schulze is still (or: once more) the registered owner today. Leased out between 1933–46 to Leberecht Migge and his devoted disciple, 'lost' during the GDR years, because expropriated by the Communist authorities, it was eventually returned to private ownership after German unification in 1990. Considering the dilapidation and dramatic decay suffered by the boathouse as well as the once-cultivated parts in recent years, Dr Schulze, a forester by profession, seems to have little use for the island. Approached and interviewed

Figure 2.2 The Dommelwall dacha, as glimpsed through the trees, November 1988, © Thomas Elsaesser.

> by telephone, he showed no interest whatsoever in its multi-layered past and sometimes turbulent history. The almost 200-year record of single and continuous ownership stands in such stark contrast to the thirteen years of intense cultural and ecological cultivation that this narrative inevitably revolves around 'the Schulze family mystery'.

Taken together, these narratives, in their overlay and condensation, their divergent but interlocking trajectories, their different tempi and time frames, mostly determined by the seasonal cycles but also subject to disconcerting moments of acceleration into rapidly unfolding tragedy, make the island a site for reflection on the very possibility of a cultural topography. For what exceeds the usual chronology, and makes a simple history of Dommelwall island less than the sum of its parts, are both the long stretches of non-human agents, contrasted with short bursts of intense and intermittent activity, and the 'nature' of this activity's afterlife. As on-site slow decay of the built environment progresses at an inverse speed to – and is counterpointed by – the vigorous and verdant growth of shrubs, weeds and birch trees, the afterlife of the ideas and ideals, of the hopes and lives of those that harboured them, is found in the realm neither of culture (the island is neither a heritage site nor the target of tourism) nor of nature (the efforts to preserve the area as a sanctuary are ignorant of, or indifferent to, the vanishing traces of this sliver of Berlin modernism). The sun-island's afterlife consists instead of the hundreds of photographs, the several hours of 8 mm film, the roughly 200 poems and more than a thousand letters that life and the lives on the island engendered in the years between 1932 and 1946. These texts and media have in turn become – so my argument goes – the only kind of reality, referentiality and materiality to which any site of memory or any memory map can be attached or could be usefully associated. The *île de mémoire* in the making stands under the sign of an ongoing 'mnemotic metamorphosis'. We might say that it forms a Möbius strip of Nature, Culture and Image, the one turned into the other. Against the slow destruction and cyclical renewal of culture and nature, it sets the symbolic force and iconic evidence of word and image, in a process of decipherment, documentation, conservation and reconversion.

The inconclusive masterpiece: Leberecht Migge's sun-island

Here I can follow only one or two turns in this Möbius strip, revealing the recto and verso of its storylines. Let us start with Leberecht

Migge and his initial idea for Dommelwall. A chronological account of his life and activity is preliminary to pointing to the experiment's significance as an instance of a cultural chronotope, or *île de mémoire* in the making. I do not comment in detail on the photographic residue, which is both more and less than a documentation of this exercise in urban reclamation, since the images' private character as a collection of family snaps only inadvertently or unwittingly testifies to the various phases of the project. But it is important to appreciate the extent to which the island represents a cultural topography also in the literal sense, in so far as it is the cultivation or colonization of urban space by its own reverse other, what Migge himself termed *Binnenkolonisation* (that is, a city's internal or auto-colonization). But as Migge intended to colonize the city by recycling its own waste until it becomes fertile soil, so the chronotope functions by the same principle. In its processing through technological media, the recycling of the chronotope is translated into the cybernetic principle of the feedback loop. Without the media afterlife that I happen to have inherited, this *locus memoriae*, still a *non-lieu* among Berlin's many hyper-memory spaces, would remain so: no public documents exist, no written records, no scholarly article or scientific treatise to testify to its significance or flawed ambitions.

Thanks to the films and photographs that have survived, I was able to locate and revisit the 'physical' site, registering there the many differences as reversals heavy with irony, as improbable persistences and as absent presences. Recycling these images, inserting them into discourse, creates a feedback loop that initiates another cycle, now running from the images to the physical site rather than the other way round. This, too, could be considered ecological: the photosynthesis, or film ecology, not only makes of this island an *île de mémoire* by giving it the dimension of presence that crystallizes and sediments (public) memory. The *île de mémoire*, in its turn, loops back or reclaims the island, as evidence, as in-evidence, and as counter-evidence of the images' stored and re-stored time–space presence. It is as if, precisely because they are home movies, or family snapshots, and thus heavily invest in fictions (of happiness, plenitude, togetherness and utopian aspirations), these images become the more strongly telling as documents not of these fictions but of the already realized evidence and achieved reality of these fictions. The fictions demand verification on-site, as proof of the promise contained in and maintained by the images, impervious to time while indexing much more than the moment.

The initial project that the garden architect Leberecht Migge intended with the island was in every respect one of urban modernity, inspired by the urgent need of Berlin's rapid demographic expansion in the 1920s,

namely, to devise an innovative and efficient way of reclaiming large amounts of urban waste, not by depositing it in landfills or on garbage mountains, but building with it an island, and there, through hard but bracing work, returning it to a form of nature: fertile, bountiful and spiritually rewarding. Migge had devised for this idea his own tree of refuse (*Abfall-Baum* – a pun on *Apfelbaum*, or apple tree), where one can diagrammatically follow how the very product of human and urban waste is fed back into a life-renewing and even economically profitable cycle.

Yet today this particular memory map of an early moment in the history of the German Green movement, and of the ecological efforts to save the planet by way of recycling and reprocessing urban and industrial detritus, cannot be recovered, preserved or archived because the area has become, as indicated, a nature reserve, where nature needs to take its course, undisturbed by culture and oblivious to history. In one sense, the experiment was thus a failure in that it did not initiate the permanent processing of urban waste. But in another sense it was almost too much of a success in that nature, encouraged by the experiment on its behalf, so to speak, took over, and in the process all but obliterated the material evidence and historical conditions to which it owes its own sustainable life cycles.

Migge (born 1881 in Danzig, died 1935 in Flensburg) was a garden architect, urban planner, visionary, polemicist and life-reformer. His entry on Wikipedia describes him as 'best known for the incorporation of social gardening principles in the *Siedlungswesen* (settlement/social housing) movement during the Weimar Republic' and suggests that '[r]enewed interest in his work in recent decades bears relevance to current concerns about sustainability'.[16] In the 1910s, Migge was close to Heinrich Vogler and the artists' group in Worpswede, where he lived with his wife Andrea and a large family consisting of four daughters and two sons. Migge tried out most of his reform ideas in his own house, the Sonnenhof, implementing the ethos and principles of the bourgeois-bohemian *Jugendstil* life-reformers. His first garden designs were in this style, but the dire consequences of the war on the urban masses seemed to have radicalized him. Instead of seeking commissions from private clients, Migge made his name with designs for people's parks, war memorials, and as a pamphleteer, especially in the form of his 'Green Manifesto', which earned him the nickname the 'green Bolshevik'. Besides working from Worpswede, Migge opened a second office in Berlin, where in the 1920s he collaborated with Martin Wagner, Bruno Taut and Walter Gropius. His regeneration and recycling ideas brought him in contact also with one of the more colourful characters of the

Weimar years, Ernst Fuhrmann, with whom he shared a fascination with the potential of human waste, eventually leading to another famous pamphlet, *Der Mensch und die Fäkalie*, subtitled 'a treatise on the physiognomy of excrement' (published 1935).

In the late 1920s Migge was called to Frankfurt to help Ernst May design the allotment gardens and plots that were integral parts of May's *Siedlungen* or suburban housing projects for workers and young professionals. It is there that he came to know May's colleague, the architect Martin Elsaesser, and his wife Elisabeth. After designing their private garden and undertaking a major commission in Hamburg for the German 'cigarette king', Philip Reemtsma, Migge at the beginning of the 1930s concentrated on questions of urbanism and the survival of cities as functioning organisms in industrialized society. He took an active part in the exhibition project and book publication of *Das wachsende Haus* (The Growing House) from 1932, with both an exhibit 'Das grüne Wohnzimmer' ('The Green Living Room') and an essay, the latter propagating his idea of a minimal modular housing unit in the garden-settlement, the *Zeltlaube* or tent-hut, complete with dung silo and peat toilet, the so-called *Metro-Klo*, both of which he also propagated in his own book of 1932, *Die wachsende Siedlung* (The Growing Housing Estate, or Housing Estate in Stages).[17]

In a recent PhD thesis devoted to Migge, by David H. Haney, the chapter on the island experiment, for which I supplied the documentation, suggests that it might have been Migge's masterpiece had he lived to see it implemented. I cite Haney's thesis at length:

> [In 1932] Migge leased a small island in the Seddinsee. [...] This island he renamed 'Sonneninsel', or 'Sun Island', echoing the name of his farmstead in Worpswede – the Sonnenhof. In March 1933 he received permission from the local authorities to build a 'boat-house with changing room', on the island, [and] persuaded the city of Berlin to contribute solid waste to be used as landfill to enlarge the island. At the outset of the project, a group of Hitler Youth were engaged to unload the fill from barges onto the island. However, Migge reported in a letter to [Elisabeth Elsaesser] that the Youth were so inept that he had to turn the project over to his two eldest sons, Claus and Gerd. The landfill continued, and junk such as old umbrellas and baby carriages were laboriously and painstakingly removed from the organic fill, and tossed into the lake.
>
> Elisabeth Elsaesser, who moved to the island in June 1933, drew a plan of the island and the proposed layout that she and Migge had

designed together. The small house they built had two stories, and included a hothouse for growing tomatoes and other vegetables. This was the only building that Migge ever built following his own designs. His first houses in Hamburg were designed by others, and the houses at Worpswede were older farm-houses. Migge had written an article in 1920 called 'Natural Architecture', subtitled, 'Building by Stages', in which he described and depicted small garden houses which were gradually added to room by room, until a small dwelling was created to serve the needs of a family with minimal means. This had also been the basic concept of the 'growing house', exhibited in 1932. While the house on the island was built all at once, with its additive spaces and simple construction, it looked very much like the little garden houses illustrated in 'Building by Stages'. This was Migge's final realization of his own [long cherished] idea [64–69].

The island was laid out following Migge's typical Siedlung concepts. Indeed, one of the primary purposes of settling there was to have sufficient space for the growing of vegetables and fruit. A wooden 'protective wall' traversed the entire island, to which was attached a small shed and a wine-house – this followed one of the central ideas of his "growing Siedlung" concept (*Die wachsende Siedlung*). The indispensable compost facility was present, the peat-toilet or *Metro-Klo*, as was the 'tent-hut' ('Zeltlaube') a type of very small one-man pavilion illustrated in the Growing House book the previous year. The complex was naturally managed following Migge's typical organic gardening systems.

Visitors to the island included the cigarette millionaire Reemtsma, the architect Martin Wagner, Max Schemmel, a specialist on Chinese agriculture as well as Ernst Fuhrmann, all-round philosopher, publisher, scholar and free-thinker. For a time, Fuhrmann and Migge considered moving their experimental garden to the Island, partly at Reemtsma's suggestion, but this was never realized. Migge's wife Andrea remained the entire time in Worpswede and was not only never to visit the island, but successfully kept all knowledge of it and Migge's work there, first from her children and then from Migge's biographers. In a letter to Fuhrmann, Migge remarked that he was seldom able to make it home to Worpswede, between maintaining his office in Berlin and the ongoing work on the island. In May 1935, Migge was stricken by an acute attack of the kidney ailment from which he had long suffered. Elisabeth Elsaesser drove him to a clinic in the North-German city of Flensburg, where he died shortly thereafter.[18]

Officially, Migge died of cancer in Worpswede on 30 May 1935. But a letter of 2 December 1935 from Martin Wagner in Istanbul to Ernst May in Africa confirms that Migge passed away in Flensburg, in the presence of Elisabeth.

Mnemotic metamorphoses: The Möbius strip of nature and culture

While Leberecht Migge's life and work is generally well documented and researched, especially since he has become something like the grandfather of the German Green movement, his professional role and personal involvement in the Dommelwall Island has remained, until I intervened by assisting his latest biographer, unknown territory, a non-place and even a repressed part of his life story. Yet on my part this history and its aftermath is, as indicated, primarily family history, recycled in stories told and retold, documented in intimate correspondence, and kept alive over decades by the undying evidence of home movies and photographs. A cache of poems has only recently come to light, a consequence of the renewed effort to make the island into an *île de mémoire* rather than the natural vehicle or vessel of memory, as it might have been in an age when the epic form served to transmit the deeds of heroes and document the disasters of war. Ever more accessible geographically since the fall of the Wall, but also ever more threatened by the expanding and thus also encroaching need of the new Berlin for recreation areas, beaches and water-sport facilities, the island is heading for turbulent times, quite different from the ones it saw in the 1930s and 1940s. A natural impulse when one sees these pictures is to say: should we not rescue this, should we not reconstruct the building, the tent-house, the little interior lake, the fruit trees and bushes bearing berries? We still have the plans and the layout, and all the material evidence for rebuilding it 'as it really was' is present in the photographs. Perhaps we can reverse the effects of time, of neglect and vandalism, and – as with the Berlin *Stadtschloss*, and many other places in post-Wall Berlin – recreate the exterior, the façade. Why not try at least to flatter the eye into believing that nothing has changed and time can be regained?

But here I want to propose for this dilemma almost the opposite course of action. First, let nature take its course, indeed let nature complete its course of destruction to the end, and perhaps even document the final stages of this re-appropriation process. Second, even if the current ownership situation of the island and the nature reserve's constraints made

it possible or feasible, the attempt to recreate the house or re-cultivate the land would in some sense be against the spirit of the place, its *genius loci*, which was about recycling, not about artificially recreating the past. Third, the fact that I happen to possess a good deal of more or less immaterial media as well as material residue and memory sediment, which can serve as documentary evidence, does not in itself constitute a claim to special status; at least not yet. As I tried to indicate, this evidence at present inscribes itself in a number of histories and discourses, none of which, however, has so far been decisive enough or of sufficient public interest to generate the necessary momentum, also in light of some very specific Berlin problems, resulting from its long-divided status and its divergent and still contested histories.[19]

As part of these contested histories, for instance, the story of Migge and his sun-island is at best a footnote to the glory days of international modernism, urban planning and utopian thinking about new designs for living associated with Berlin and the Weimar Republic. It will remain in the shadow of the great thinkers, reformers and architectural pioneers like Bruno Taut, Hans Scharoun, Hans Poelzig, and Martin Wagner. At worst, not only was it a failure from the practical point of view (as was Migge's more ambitious parallel project, the Stahnsdorf regeneration scheme), but even as a footnote it involved some rather dubious if colourful characters, fantasists and visionaries, so little grounded in the political realities of their time that they swerved and gyrated between left and right, and in the case of Migge finally decided to throw in their lot with the *Blut und Boden* right. Luckily for his posthumous reputation, he passed away early enough not to have become too heavily tainted by explicit Nazi ideology, but his two sons, Gerd and Claus, who as we saw were instrumental in making the island happen, joined the Waffen SS and died on the eastern Front.

As family history, it is also ambiguous: after all, it began with the break-up of a family, with (tolerated) adultery, with a mother abandoning her teenage children for a man whom she loved and who never officially quit his own family or broke with his wife. For Migge, Elisabeth was an ideal helpmate, and someone who supported his experiment and believed in his vision. For her part, Elisabeth threw herself into this venture with heart and soul, and yet it was the premature death of her great love that bodied forth this most remarkable act of faith and loyalty beyond the grave, a life-affirming dedication to an ideal that was as much spiritual as it was based on hard work and daily toil. It was a solitary and almost monastic devotion, born out of grief and mourning, and radiating to so many other human beings. In the course of the

subsequent ten years, which turned out to be the darkest in German history, it became a strange beacon of light, so much so that the family, dispersed by the affair but now augmented by the hospitality and refuge which the island afforded, did in fact come together again, and bonded even more strongly than it had done before.

In other words, as both a history of an experiment in ecology or 'Green thinking' and as family history, this particular cultural topography has, in the end, a downward, dying fall: barely mentioned have been the dark days in 1946, when the Russians came, plundered the island repeatedly, raped and nearly killed the daughter who had stayed with her mother. Nor have I dwelt, as does the long poem, on the sad exodus which followed and which broke Elisabeth's spirit and body. Equally disheartening, and almost as oddly counter-cyclical as the Seddinsee idyll that maintained itself in the midst of the horrors of persecution and war, is what happened after 1989. While Berlin revived, the city rebuilt itself and the nation came together, vandalism reigned unchecked on the island, leading to the at first gradual neglect but by now total destruction of the site: a combination of human indifference and weakness, and of nature's indifference and strength.

The, so far, final journey to the island – which I undertook in June 2007 – was thus not so much a quest or a treasure hunt – not even a dérive. It, too, describes a kind of loop, a variant on the already mentioned Möbius strip, with no inside to the outside, where a reality

Figure 2.3 Sonnen-Insel, house and lawn, October 1939, © Thomas Elsaesser.

which existed most vividly before I existed, but which accompanied me throughout my life by having become image, gradually invaded and penetrated me to an extent that it propelled me to the site. This, not in order to seek ocular evidence in any representational sense, but as in-evidence, at once insufficient and excessive. In their re-embodiment, the images regained a new kind of indexicality that had less to do with photographic emulsion than with a differently indexed time, my life-time, as it happens, parallel to and dilated across the 'natural' process of decay and dereliction, accompanied as this is by exuberant vegetation and indestructible life. A happy return, one might say, after all: one that thanks to the moving image and its reality of presence points to any number of possible revivals in the future. Rather than seeking to restore the past, or contemplate and repeat its ruinations, this *île de mémoire* resists time precisely because it stores it forever.

Notes

1. P. Nora and L. Kritzman (1996), eds, *Realms of Memory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), xvii.
2. P. Nora (1989), 'Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire', *Representations*, 26 (Spring), 7–24, p. 7.
3. H. Foster (1994), 'What's Neo About the Neo-Avant-Garde?', *October*, 74 (Fall), 5–32, p. 30.
4. Christian Boltanski's *The Missing House* is a site-specific work commissioned in 1990, and located in the Grosse Hamburgerstrasse in former East Berlin. It inventorizes the names and dates of former inhabitants on the walls of the missing central section of an apartment building destroyed in the Allied bombings of Berlin in 1945. For an extended analysis, see A. Solomon-Godeau (1998), 'Mourning or Melancholia: Christian Boltanski's Missing House', *Oxford Art Journal*, 21.2, 1–20.
5. R. Barthes (1982), 'Le troisième sens', in *L'Obvie et l'Obtus* (Paris: Seuil), pp. 43–58.
6. See E. Hobsbawm and T. Ranger (1992), *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press). The 'spatial turn' in the Humanities is associated with Edward Soja, among others. For an overview, see B. Warf and S. Arias (2008), eds, *The Spatial Turn: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (London: Routledge).
7. For an account of different kinds of agency, see A. Pickering (1995), *The Mangle of Practice* (Chicago: Chicago University Press).
8. J. Diamond (1997), *Guns, Germs and Steel* (London: Chatto & Windus); W. Rosen (2007), *Justinian's Flea: Plague, Empire, and the Birth of Europe* (New York: Viking); W. G. Sebald (2003), *On the Natural History of Destruction* (New York: Random House).
9. M. Warner, 'What are Memory Maps?', http://www.vam.ac.uk/activ_events/adult_resources/memory_maps/what/index.html (last accessed 15 March 2009).

10. S. Schama (1995), *Landscape and Memory* (New York: Vintage).
11. M. Bakhtin (1981), 'Form of Time and Chronotope in the Novel', in M. Holquist, ed., *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays* (Austin: University of Texas Press), pp. 84–258.
12. This is an example of in-evidence in the sense that it situates itself between tangible, indexical evidence and its absence or intangibility from which nonetheless emanates a strong presence. Rather than demanding a painstaking archaeology or reconstruction, what one needs here is a kind of hauntology, that is, a way of recognizing that this as a place where one is silently observed by a past rather than encouraged to dig up a past. It is a technique that is sensitive to elements of trauma, repetition, visitation.
13. The intellectual horizon of the island community was delineated by writers such as Romain Rolland, Paul Brunton, and the Eranos Circle around C. G. Jung. See J. Campbell, ed., *Papers from the Eranos Yearbooks* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982–85).
14. At Monte Verità, for instance, the first pioneers around 1900 were reformers and free spirits, founders of a vegetarian colony, and – over a period of some 20 years – drawing some of the leading cultural figures of the time to their utopia of a 'reform of life'. On the history of Monte Verità, see Andreas Schwab, *Monte Verità – Sanatorium der Sehnsucht* (Zürich: Orel Fuessli, 2003).
15. See C. Görlich (2007), 'Urlaub vom Staat: Zur Geschichte des Tourismus in der DDR', *Potsdamer Bulletin für zeithistorische Studien*, 38/39, 64–8.
16. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leberecht_Migge (last accessed 15 March 2009).
17. In his 1926 book, *Die Deutsche Binnen-Kolonisation* (German Inland-Colonization), Migge described gardens as industrial products that were essentially tools for better living. He viewed the garden not as a bourgeois escape from industrialized society but rather as a mechanized object, a compatible means of improving life in a mechanized society. The notion of colonization from within was also a criticism of Wilhelmine Germany's imperialist ambitions. Although Migge saw the virtue in resettlement outside the city as a means of connecting back to the land, his ideas for organizing space applied to the urban inhabitant, the overriding concepts being a part of a comprehensive urban regional planning. He emphasized maximum efficiency in his garden system, stressing that there was a complete connectivity with the systems of dwelling and the organic system of the garden, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leberecht_Migge (last accessed 15 March 2009).
18. D. H. Haney (2005), *Leberecht Migge (1881–1935) and the Modern Garden in Germany* (Diss., Univ. of Pennsylvania, ISBN 0-542-00586-7).
19. The Gartenbau-Denkmal-Amt (Office of Historic Parks and Gardens) of Berlin, which I approached some years back, argued that, given the many other projects they were financially committed to, the Seddinsee island did not have any kind of priority.

3
Arrivals and Departures: Travelling to the Airports of Berlin

Henrik Reeh

Memories of foreign cities are often tied to the experience of crossing thresholds on the ways in and out of the urban domain: these are both generic and personal. When one recalls a first encounter with Rome, the arrival in *Roma Termini* after 30 hours of train travel through snowy Europe may stand forth with a surprising detail and clarity. Conversely, the memories of particular departures frame the mnemonic image of a particular stay. Spontaneously leaving Paris together with a friend whom you were simply accompanying to Gare du Nord presents itself as such an unexpected event. It communicates with many later departures, all of which inform the general experience of Paris and other metropolitan cities. Consciously or not, both arrivals and departures become memorial thresholds of human lives within a global urban network.

By the mid-1980s, Paul Virilio, the leading French theorist of the urban field, had published *L'Espace critique* (Critical Space), which still provides valuable points of departure for addressing the contemporary city.[1] In the introductory chapter, 'La ville surexposée', or 'The Overexposed City', Virilio summarizes the critical situation of architectural and urban space in the following way:

> we have to approach the question of access to the City in a new manner […] does the metropolitan agglomeration still possess a façade? *At which moment does the city show us its face?* […] The popular phrase 'going into town' ['aller en ville'], which replaced the nineteenth century's 'going to town' ['aller à la ville'], indicates the uncertainty of the face-to-face encounter (as if we were no longer *before* the city but rather forever *within*).[2]

Virilio's experience of never being fully outside the city but always inside the uncertain boundaries of urban life is hardly new: it reflects a basic and

well-known feeling in modernity (from the nineteenth century onwards). Yet his hypothesis that the contemporary city has no obvious outside and, as a consequence, that there is no longer a spatial encounter with the boundaries of the metropolis is worth testing in concrete contexts. It establishes the necessity to enquire into the human experiences that accompany arrivals and departures in urban settings. Virilio himself has no confidence in the experiential value of travelling; instead, he focuses on space-condensing and speed-accelerating technologies that allegedly turn the human life world into a network of electronic interfaces. From Virilio's point of view, everything comes to you, wherever you are (at home, in your city, or in front of your screen), and exempts you from real-time movements in the given world. Travelling on the Concorde from Paris to New York, you even arrive before you have left, Virilio argues. This is why bodily movements and perceptual processes in space and time are blanked out in his conceptual universe: 'Whereas there used to be the three terms of departure, travelling and arrival, only the two of them are left: departure and arrival'.[3] When bracketing the actual journey, however, Virilio makes a hasty and problematic move, in so far as in reality the experience of travelling plays an increasing role in everyday life.

Figure 3.1

In the following I shall consider the encounter with the contemporary city by means of four situations of arrival and departure. All of them refer to the Berlin of the twentieth century. Conceptual assistance is provided by critical theorists Siegfried Kracauer (1889–1965) and Walter Benjamin (1892–1940), both of whom have close biographical and critical links to Berlin. The empirical enquiry addresses important Berlin places such as Friedrichstraße station in the centre, Tempelhof airport, located further away but still within the city borders, as well as two more recent airports located at the periphery: Tegel and Schönefeld. In this way, variations on the theme of travelling to the airports of Berlin are elaborated as elements of a metropolitan memory culture.

Arrival by train – Friedrichstraße railway station

Until recently, the encounter with Berlin was associated less with airports than with the arrival by train at one of the main stations of the city. For cultural critic and editor of the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, Siegfried Kracauer, who lived in Berlin at the beginning of the 1930s, the monumental presence of a locomotive waiting on the elevated train tracks above Friedrichstraße is a manifestation of a clash between two different worlds: the world of the railway criss-crossing the entire country, and that of metropolitan Berlin. Friedrichstraße is emblematic of the young metropolis Berlin; Georg Simmel, the great sociologist and author in 1903 of the seminal *Die Großstädte und das Geistesleben* (The Metropolis and Mental Life) was born in that very street in 1858. From the perspective of a resident of Berlin in the early 1930s, Kracauer imagines how an engine driver might perceive the transitions from country to city, from darkness to illumination, from movement to immobility, from cosmic landscape to urban enclosure when entering the city:

> What a spectacle though Friedrichstraße itself provides to the man in the locomotive. One has to imagine that he has perhaps been driving the engine through the darkness for many hours. Still the open railway line drones inside him: tracks racing towards him, signals, signal-boxes, forests, fields and meadows. […] After a ride during which everything fled before him except for the sky and the earth, he suddenly stops above Friedrichstraße, which in turn drives away the sky and the earth. The street must appear to him as the axis of the world, stretching straight as an arrow and beyond measure in both directions.[4]

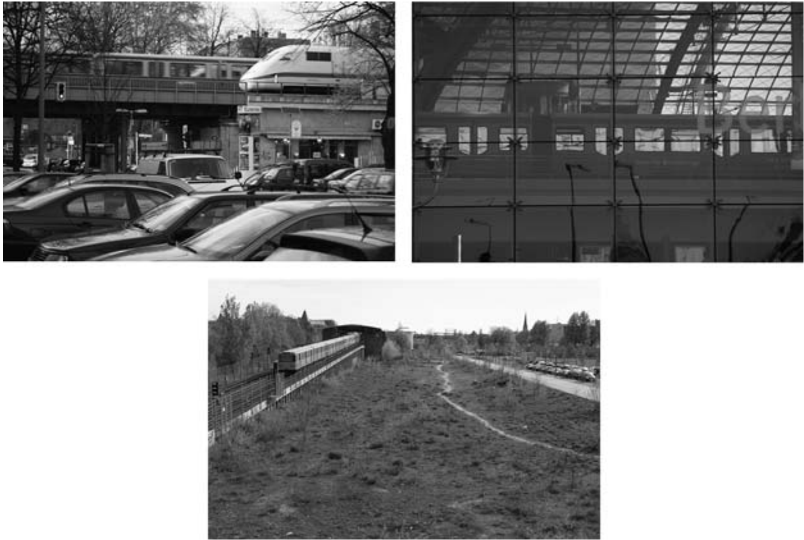

Figure 3.2

Depicting the illuminated city as a striking contrast to the darkness of the countryside, Kracauer provides a positive response to Virilio's search for gateways to the city. The encounter with metropolitan Berlin is crystallized in time and space in the form of the arrival in a major station such as Bahnhof Friedrichstraße.

Arriving in Berlin during the Cold War

Throughout the twentieth century, travellers arrived in Berlin by train. During the Cold War, passengers from Scandinavia in the North even got their first impressions of the city at Friedrichstraße railway station, which for decades was the border station of East Berlin. Passing through this station around 1980 – half a century after Kracauer's 'Locomotive above Friedrichstraße' – was a dramatic experience. All the way through East Germany, from Rostock on the Baltic coast of Germany to Berlin, the windows of the train had been sealed in order to prevent any direct contact between the passengers and locals on the platforms outside. As a train passenger locked in behind the window screens, one could only look at the East Germans outside, dressed in jeans and denim jackets which resembled a collective gift from the East German state to its citizens.

For travellers by train from Denmark, the arrival in Berlin took place in two steps. The train from Copenhagen stopped, first, at Bahnhof

Friedrichstraße, the terminal point of the long train ride through East Germany, and, second, at Bahnhof Zoo: the main station of West Berlin. At Friedrichstraße station, the security procedures were highly manifest. Military police searched the compartments, and one could hear policemen hammering on all possible hiding places under the trains. Under the roof of the station, the entire setting was overlooked by soldiers with machine guns. Finally, the train was allowed to continue across the wasteland of the Berlin Wall before it arrived at its terminus in West Berlin: Bahnhof Zoo. By the late 1970s, this Bahnhof Zoo area of West Berlin still recalled the metropolitan Berlin of 1933 that Kracauer stages in his 'Locomotive above Friedrichstraße'.

The twin arrival in Friedrichstraße and Zoo stations clearly reflected the status of Berlin as a divided city during the Cold War. But in non-divided cities of Europe, too, it is an intense experience to arrive by train. A main station is an urban microcosm that allows travellers to feel the presence of many milieux of the city. Fellow travellers, railroad employees, shopkeepers, masses of employees commuting from the suburbs, as well as the subterranean world of crime and social exclusion, all mingle in one single place. Displaying both movement and inertia, the main station presents in condensed form the life of the city in which you are about to arrive.[5] In the 2000s, however, many international travellers no longer go by train to Berlin; and even Europeans prefer to fly into one of the city's airports.

Arrival by aeroplane – Tempelhof airport

Since the Second World War, travelling has increasingly become part of everyday life. Far from being limited to a small section of the population, travelling is now a recurrent activity in the schedule of ordinary people, including seasonal holidays abroad and maybe various trips – monthly or even weekly – as part of professional obligations. At a subjective level, too, experiences related to travelling are major events and should not be erased, either empirically or theoretically, as Virilio tends to do.

The massive increase in airborne traffic started in the 1980s after deregulation of the market and was followed by the emergence of discount flight companies (with Laker Airways, UK, from the late 1970s as a forerunner to later developments). Little by little, it became affordable to fly to Berlin. The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 improved the conditions for civil aviation and accelerated the transition from travel by train to travel by plane, from the railway station to the airport. Instead

of spending the day or night on board a train or a bus, one could fly from Copenhagen to Berlin in less than an hour. Flying to Berlin in the first years after the unification of West and East Germany was still different from going to other European capitals. The international flights to Berlin frequently used small propeller airplanes landing at Flughafen Tempelhof, an airport with relatively short runways.

Berlin's Tempelhof airport is charged with world history. It was designed for Nazi Germany by architect Ernst Sagebiel in the mid-1930s as an infrastructural element in the project for the 'world capital', Germania. The architecture of the airport terminal had many references to Classicism, not least to the embracing colonnades at Saint Peter's Square in Rome. After the Second World War, Tempelhof was taken over by the Allied forces and played a significant role in the Cold War. But by the early 1990s, military use of the airport had decreased and civil aviation had returned.

Tempelhof is an intra-urban airport and has long been considered inadequate for international aviation. Its historical importance during the Cold War probably accounts for the fact that the terminal remained in use, but eventually the Berlin Senate decided that Tempelhof's function as an airport should be abandoned. Even the majority of votes in a local referendum (April 2008) could not prevent this decision from

Figure 3.3

becoming reality: the level of participation was too low. On 30 October 2008, the use of Tempelhof as an international airport was brought to an end.

But let us return to the time when Tempelhof was still a Berlin airport. At that time, the traveller could not avoid being impressed by the sheer size and architectural composition of the terminal, which is nearly a mile wide. Although it provides a somewhat uncanny architectural setting for the initial encounter with Berlin, Tempelhof may in fact be perceived as the very destination of the journey, as a representative architecture of the Berlin historical imaginary. Indeed, this airport looks like 'the last gateway to the State', as Paul Virilio notes of airports in general.[6]

Non-staged Berlin?

The powerful experience of arriving at Berlin Tempelhof depends on the very process of approaching the city from the sky. As opposed to most international airports, Tempelhof is located in the middle of the city, not in a remote setting somewhere in the urban agglomeration. Landing at this airport therefore implies quite a long period of flying above the city and its environs.[7]

Figure 3.4

After being astonished by the expansiveness of Berlin, one is able to detect major urban structures and even tries to focus on street patterns, individual streets or even backyards. Since this visual perception takes place at a speed of several hundred miles per hour, genuine contemplation is impossible. Rather, one is overwhelmed by the urban forms passing rapidly below and seizes the opportunity to take a few black-and-white photographs as evidence of this accelerated encounter with the city.

Although Siegfried Kracauer addresses neither the experience of flying nor the view from the sky, he helps us to understand the magic of this arrival. In a text from 1931 originally entitled 'Berliner Landschaft' (Berlin Landscape), Kracauer analyses a distant cityscape that can be overlooked from his apartment on the outskirts of West Berlin. The extensive urban environment, visible behind some railway tracks, is described by Kracauer in terms of abstract patterns, some of which recall an organic landscape. At night, when darkness falls, only the lights of the city are visible, and become ornamental signs devoid of perspective.

This cityscape implies a scale which goes beyond the control of urban design. In contrast to representational urban spaces which are designed in conscious intent to be legible, Kracauer outlines another kind of city images 'that are provided unintentionally'.[8] These aleatory city images

> come into being without having been planned in advance. [...] Wherever masses of stone and streets converge, their elements resulting from completely differing directions of interest, such an urban picture [*Stadtbild*] arises that has itself never been the subject of any interest.[9]

The unintentional character of this urban 'image' has epistemological importance. Kracauer goes as far as to assert that if the social contrasts and cultural contradictions are deciphered critically, the image may reveal essential aspects of the city. In short, '[t]he understanding [*Erkenntnis*] of cities is tied to the deciphering of their images spoken in dreamlike fashion'.[10]

Just as this view from a window at the urban periphery appears essential to Kracauer, the urban images perceived from a descending airplane that approaches the airport are dense and complex, an aleatory combination of competing urban interests. Seen in passage, they are difficult to capture, let alone interpret. They represent an agglomeration of urban histories and remain in the mind's eye of the traveller as a memory image of the city, captured on arrival, or in the reverse mode of departure.

Departure by aeroplane – Tegel airport

A fast ride by taxi to Tempelhof airport in 1996 provides an initial, astonishing glimpse of Daniel Libeskind's Jewish Museum Berlin. In those days, the building was still under construction and appeared to the unprepared taxi-passenger as a long folded concrete wall with a multitude of heterogeneous openings.[11] In other situations, too, the way to the airport may surprise the gaze and single out some of Kracauer's overlooked urban images within an anonymous cityscape.

Undeniably, unintentional city spaces are at work at street level. Commenting on a little square at the foot of his apartment building, Kracauer observes how this place is able to make itself invisible,[12] and how it thus remains unnoticed in spite of the fact that thousands of people are crossing it every day. The very talent of a place to pass unnoticed may, nevertheless, allow its dimensions of urban potential to develop.

By chance, the area described in Kracauer's 'Berlin Landscape' coincides with the present-day bus itinerary linking central West Berlin to Tegel international airport, which, from the late 1960s, gradually took over the international flights from Tempelhof.[13] Kracauer observes a general absence of spatial attention when people move through unintentional places, and this observation is valid for the bus ride to Tegel airport. Looking into some black-and-white film rolls from 2000, I find photographs taken at an airport bus stop on West Berlin's principal commercial artery, the Kurfürstendamm, as well as photographs from Tegel airport. By contrast, there are no photographs from the bus trip itself – as if the shaky bus ride through residential West Berlin (from Charlottenburg to Tegel) belonged to another kind of perception in which the reality of urban space is hardly an object of visual attention.

Does this absence of photographs from bus trips to airports indicate a lack of respect for the ordinary cityscape, one that might be transferable to other times and other media? At this point, Kracauer is an ambivalent witness: on the one hand, he promotes anonymous urban spaces as material for a critical deciphering of contemporary reality; on the other, he takes pleasure in overseen spaces and valorizes their unremarked status. A particular reciprocity between recognition and secrecy, between elaborate interpretation and suggestive designation is at work in Kracauer's writing.

Since the early 2000s, the technology of digital cameras has made photography nearly free of cost and has radically extended the field of the photogenic. A series of images from a 2007 bus ride to Tegel Airport documents the ways in which spatial and social diversity unfolds along the large and uniform streets.

Figure 3.5

The photographs, taken hastily during the bus trip, may even be observed individually and commented upon as if they were images intended for contemplation. The photographs indicate the possibility of another and unfamiliar mode of approach: a walk to the airport. This would provide the traveller with the time to sense and consciously read the street as a text – without judging whether it is ugly or beautiful. The corresponding urban poetic is summarized in the following lines from another witness of urban texts and textures in Weimar Berlin:

> If the street is indeed a kind of reading, then read it, but don't criticize it too much. Don't be too quick to find it beautiful or ugly. These concepts are unreliable. Let yourself be misguided or seduced a bit by the light, by the time of the day and by the rhythm of your steps. […] By being looked at in a friendly way, the ugly, too, derives some beauty. The aestheticians don't know this, but the flâneur experiences it.[14]

This open-minded and sympathetic way of approaching city space was styled by Franz Hessel, a friend and collaborator of Walter Benjamin, around 1930. The method may be just as important today in a situation where inner cities are often overly neat and consciously staged, taken

over by retail commerce, and losing both their residents and a composite urban life world.[15]

Travelling to Schönefeld airport

Certainly, the hasty traveller on the way to the airport has no time to be seduced or misguided by the marvels of the ordinary city. And against this background, a significant question arises: What are the conditions for 'looking at the city' while you are already on your way to or from it?

So far, the speed of the aeroplane and the rhythm of a taxi or a bus have been cited in order to explain why the photographically intense images encountered along the way are so elusive in our minds. Yet a non-technical explanation may be possible, too. Instead of assuming that contemplation is the primary practice of travellers, we may question the very nature of architectural perception as it is embedded in the urban life world. Otherwise we will hardly understand how in reality contemporary citizens perceive urban and architectural space while they are on their way.

Indeed, architecture is more than an object of disinterested and artistic observation. In his essay 'The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility' of 1936,[16] Walter Benjamin observes that the perception of architecture, traditionally understood in terms of contemplation, is split between two aspects which partially contradict each other. Contemplation is but one aspect, whereas use – though generally underestimated – is an equally important one. Perception via use is important in as far as architecture serves practical purposes in human life. Conversely, everyday seeing is informed by tactical movements and tactile sensations. Despite architecture's practical dimension, the representation of architecture remains predominantly visual. And architectural space is elaborated and explored with tools and concepts that, to a very large extent, remain optical. This professional focus on vision is simplistic compared with the everyday perceptual practices which, according to Benjamin, depend on 'using' as well as 'getting used to' space.

Travelling is one of those situations in which contemplation may come to the fore, when travellers admire historical monuments or visit urban spaces. But if one follows Benjamin's observation on the twin nature of spatial perception – at once optical and tactical – even the experience of travelling is not rooted in contemplation alone. However much the traveller is associated with a concentrated mode of looking which serves the purpose of cultural learning, a real traveller is first and foremost a practical human being on a journey.

Tactics and tactility profoundly affect the visual perception of travellers, and a tactically informed perception of space is key to understanding travelling as a social and cultural phenomenon. Yet tactical perceptions are very difficult to translate into images that are immediately recognized as representations of architectural space: 'On the [tactical] side, there is no counterpart to what contemplation is on the optical side', Benjamin notes.[17] Nevertheless, this gap between human experience and constructive space shall not prevent us from using photographs as the point of departure when addressing the relationship between contemplation and human action.

Challenging Benjamin on the way to Schönefeld

Visual documents from a tour to Berlin's future main airport at Schönefeld may inform us as to how the human gaze, even that of a photographing traveller, is affected by the practical and tactical aspects of life. Located south of the city and further away from the centre than both Tempelhof and Tegel, Berlin–Schönefeld, a former East German airport, was frequently used in the first decade after 2000 by discount airlines such as easyJet.

In general, neither an airport itself nor the airport transfer is a typical tourist attraction. Even for amateurs of urban and suburban space, the immediate anxiety involved in the idea of arriving too late for the flight prevents the trip from becoming a discovery based on disinterested contemplation. Nevertheless, the infrastructure between the city of Berlin and the airport in Schönefeld seems so well organized that it eliminates feelings of risk. First of all, the city and the airport are linked by a variety of railways, for example a metropolitan train line (*S-Bahn*) which runs every 20 minutes. On a dark evening, this connection ran punctually from the airport to the city centre. By sunny daylight, why should it not do so in the other direction – from the city towards the airport? When taking the train, you do not depend on buses or taxis that may get stuck in a traffic jam. Leaving a bit early, you should be able to experience the trip to Schönefeld airport like a simple routine, making the idea of observing and photographing East Berlin suburbs from the train a realistic project.

Nevertheless, the actual trip to the airport evolves in an unexpected way that highlights Benjamin's emphasis on the tactical gaze. Although photographs are indeed taken at almost any stage of the itinerary, the changing mental climate underlying these images is not reflected at the surface of the digital photographs.

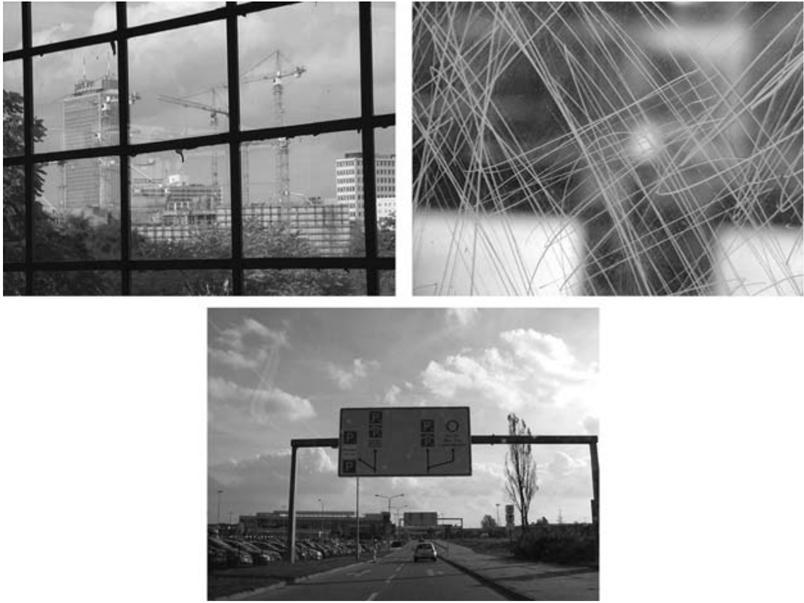

Figure 3.6

Consequently, the variable conditions for photographic contemplation are at the centre of the following report on relations between seeing and doing, between optics and tactics, between visual and tactile perception on the way to Berlin–Schönefeld airport.

On the platform, waiting

Once the luggage is carried safely from the *U-Bahn* (subway) to the elevated platform of the Jannowitzbrücke station, a slight anxiety – present before any departure by plane – gives way to a relaxed and contemplative mode of seeing. Standing on the platform, one recalls Kracauer's engine driver above Friedrichstraße who was pondering on the specificity of Berlin city life. Given that plenty of time is available and the famous German punctuality, one enjoys the wait, occupied with taking photographs of the architecture of the railway station in its urban setting as well as the various passengers present on the platform: a group of elderly German football supporters and young Thai immigrants.

In the train bound for another destination

Realizing that two or three trains to Schönefeld have not arrived as indicated on the timetable is a bit disquieting. So is the lady overlooking

the platform in a surveillance tower; she urges the traveller to take the next incoming train (although it is not bound for the airport) and continue with another train from the terminus. Once on board the train, a less confident way of looking and of photographing takes over. Unintentionally, the camera focus remains very close (in the macro mode), and the images of an unstaged Berlin (as cherished by Kracauer) are captured with an increasingly vague idea of the exact locations. Furthermore, when loudspeakers inside the train start instructing the passengers bound for certain destinations to get off, while others are requested to stay, the act of photographing becomes slightly feverish and turns into an unpremeditated reaction to the passing places. Suddenly the loudspeakers announce that the train is heading for a station next to the *U-Bahn* station from where the traveller left several hours earlier. But the train does not even get that far. Finally, it stops and lets hundreds of passengers out on the platform of an unknown station somewhere in suburbia.

By taxi through the suburbs

Suburbs and taxis belong to two different worlds. But in the end a taxi passes, and the driver agrees to make the 20-minute drive to the airport. It is now a matter of reaching the airport before the check-in desk closes, while it becomes significantly less important to photograph the final stage of the long and winding way to the airport. Yet inside the taxi, the situation appears to be so much under control that, from the front seat, photographs can be taken once again. The taxi driver makes instructive comments on the passage from West Berlin into former East Berlin (the Wall is still a void, 17 years after its fall in 1989).

The photographic project is maintained first of all as an attempt to test the relation between practical life and contemplation in the age of digital photography, while the ambition to document overlooked spaces of suburbia diminishes. Any requirement of technical perfection is abandoned, and strangely dark photographs are deemed acceptable. In fact, the photographs taken during this last part of the trip are surprisingly shady, as if contemplation had been replaced by tactical considerations of time, itineraries, and the shortage of cash. Identification with the heterogeneous places along the road is correspondingly low, and the feeling of relief is immense as the airport buildings arise on the horizon. Arrival at the check-in desk takes place exactly three minutes before the ticket would have become void.

Benjamin's hypothesis of a twin perception of space, divided between contemplation and tactics, and dominated by practical purposes, is left fairly intact by this experience of travelling from the centre of Berlin to

the city's future main airport. On the other hand, nearly all stages of this chaotic ride are eternalized in photographs. But a feeling of genuine contemplation is limited to the beginning of the trip, while a reactive way of framing the images takes over as the journey progresses. These images later allow the photographer to recall feelings of the trip. Notwithstanding their technical shortcomings, they provide a material for a study of the optical unconscious,[18] unfolding in metropolitan landscapes of departure.

Travelling to the airport

At a certain point in *L'Espace critique*, Paul Virilio asks: 'Where, in fact, does the city without a gateway start?' And he answers: 'Probably in the mind, in this passing anxiety that takes hold of those who return home after a long journey. [...] Or, perhaps also conversely, in the desire to run away, to escape for a moment from an oppressive technical environment'.[19] Despite the psychological factors, the gateways in and out of metropolitan Berlin exist in material reality. Travellers have to pass such spatial thresholds – thresholds that dominate the journey and may later resurface in memories of foreign destinations.

In early modernity, a major topos corresponded to the 'arrival' in a city – by foot, by carriage, by boat, by train. In contemporary urbanity, when cities are gigantic and always already linked to other cities by complex infrastructures, the experience of 'departure' may become a new topos of urban culture. Increasingly, the airport occupies a privileged role. The airport is the place of departure, but also becomes a destination in its own right: a destination at which one should arrive in due time. Travelling to the airport is part of the journey itself. Given the global importance of flying, it is time to think of the trip to the airport as the beginning of a journey. The airport transfer allows us to evaluate Benjamin's theory, according to which architectural perception is simultaneously optical and tactical, but also affected by practical life. On the way to the airport the traveller's perception is mediated by transportation technologies (subway, rail, taxi) and visual prostheses (windows, camera, screens), all of which are interpreted by a wide range of practical procedures.

Benjamin is right: contemplation rarely gets the upper hand. However, the human perception of spaces on the trip to the airport generates aesthetic components, which are strengthened by the excitement of leaving and the secret hopes of any journey. Whether artistically valuable or not, materials for memory culture are collected at any

moment. Individual or collective memory may some day realize the sensory power and experiential energies concealed along the ways of travelling to the airport.

Notes

1. Paul Virilio is obsessed with speed as a factor that undermines the solidity of urban architecture. After delving into the history of military technologies that made the city an unsafe but also structured place, Virilio focused on media such as the car, cinema and the television screen in order to understand contemporary spatial practices and preferences. See H. Reeh (1986), 'En hommage à la ville du futur antérieur – ville et vitesse dans l'œuvre de Paul Virilio', in *Ville et voyage – trajectoires urbaines* (Paris: Editions Didier Érudition), pp. 65–88.
2. Quoted from P. Virilio (1997), 'The Overexposed City', in Neil Leach, ed., *Rethinking Architecture* (London: Routledge), p. 382, trans. modified (P. Virilio (1984), *L'Espace Critique* (Paris: Christian Bourgois), p. 12).
3. Translated from P. Virilio (1984), *L'horizon Négatif* (Paris: Galilée), p. 158.
4. Translated from S. Kracauer (1987), 'Lokomotive über der Friedrichstraße', in *Straßen in Berlin und anderswo* (Berlin: Das Arsenal), pp. 33–4.
5. For a phenomenological exploration of the main station, see P. Sansot (1972), *Poétique de la ville* (Paris: Klincksieck), pp. 81–92.
6. Virilio in Leach, *Rethinking Architecture*, p. 381 (Virilio, *L'Espace Critique*, p. 10).
7. On the history of Tempelhof, see P. Meuser (2000), *Vom Fliegerfeld zum Wiesenmeer: Geschichte und Zukunft des Flughafens Tempelhof* (Berlin: Berlin Edition).
8. Quoted from H. Reeh (2004), *Ornaments of the Metropolis: Siegfried Kracauer and Modern Urban Culture* (Cambridge, MA and London: MIT Press), p. 100. German from S. Kracauer, 'Aus dem Fenster gesehen' ['Berliner Landschaft'], in *Straßen in Berlin und anderswo*, p. 40.
9. Quoted from Reeh, *Ornaments of the Metropolis*, p. 100 (Kracauer, 'Aus dem Fenster gesehen', p. 40). For an interpretation of 'Aus dem Fenster gesehen', see H. Reeh (2001), '"Un paysage hanté, intense comme l'opium": Ville et notion de paysage selon Siegfried Kracauer et Walter Benjamin', in *Revue d'Esthétique*, 39, 13–27.
10. S. Kracauer, *Straßen in Berlin und anderswo*, p. 41.
11. A photographic interpretation of Libeskind's *Between the Lines* in the construction process (c. 1996) is given by H. Binet (1997), *A Passage through Silence and Light: Daniel Libeskind's Jewish Museum Berlin* (London: Black Dog Publishing).
12. 'Tarnkappe' (concealment helmet) is a term employed by Kracauer in both 'Lokomotive über der Friedrichstraße' and 'Berliner Landschaft', in Kracauer, *Straßen in Berlin und anderswo*, pp. 34–40.
13. M. Wörner, D. Mollenschott, K.-H. Hüter and P. Sigel (1997), *Architekturführer Berlin*, 5th edn (Berlin: Dietrich Reimer), pp. 310–95.
14. F. Hessel (1981), 'Von der schwierigen Kunst spazieren zu gehen', in *Ermunterung zum Genuß* (Berlin: Brinkmann & Bose), pp. 59–60.

15. On the urban lifeworld, see P. Madsen and R. Plunz (2002), eds, *The Urban Lifeworld* (London: Routledge).
16. W. Benjamin (1974), 'Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter seiner technischen Reproduzierbarkeit [Zweite Fassung]', *Gesammelte Schriften*, 1.2 (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp), pp. 471–508, especially pp. 503–5 (W. Benjamin (2003), 'The Work of Art in the Age of its Technological Reproducibility', *Selected Writings*, 4 (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press), pp. 251–83, especially pp. 267–9).
17. W. Benjamin, 'Das Kunstwerk', p. 505 ('The Work of Art', p. 268. Trans. modified).
18. W. Benjamin, 'Das Kunstwerk', p. 500 ('The Work of Art', p. 226).
19. Virilio, in Leach, *Rethinking Architecture*, p. 21 (Virilio, *L'Espace Critique*, p. 21).

4
Global Building Sites – Between Past and Future

Daniel Libeskind

In July 2007, architect Daniel Libeskind gave a public presentation of his work at Cambridge University to open the conference 'InEvidence – Witnessing Cities and the Case of Berlin'. In response to questions from architectural scholar, Peter Carl, he took stock of key projects from his portfolio. This article constitutes a record of the presentation. In his recent work, Daniel Libeskind has moved freely between well-known building sites of modernity such as Berlin and New York and more recently developed global sites presenting new meanings and challenges to the architect and to contemporary architectural culture. A recurring feature in the text is the idea of buildings as witnesses to the past, in the present, and for the future. It records the conceptual and practical demands that have to be faced by projects for architectural innovation. And it documents the architect's own personal recollection of, and witness to, the projects in question and the historical experience – political, cultural, commercial, and ethical – out of which they are built.

On the Jewish Museum in Berlin as memory work and witness to a contemporary city

I won the competition for the Jewish Museum in 1989, before the Wall came down, before Germany was unified. I had already decided during the competition that there must be a link which oriented the museum not just to the West but also to the East. And I remember that after I won the competition some members of the administration asked me, 'why did you design a building with the front over the street line? It is completely wrong because the Wall is over there and no one will see it and no one will care'. But I said, 'look, that really does not matter because in terms of Jewish history, the museum belongs to East and

West, to Berlin as a whole'. And I was truly delighted, of course, when the Wall came down, but I do remember that when I drew the original drawings for the museum, I drew the Wall, and I also crossed the Wall with a matrix of connections, mapping the historical lines of Jewish life in Berlin. I considered that the Wall was not of any importance for representing Jewish history, even in 1989. It was even more emphatically the case after the Wall came down and Germany was unified.

One should remember that when Germany was unified, the building was virtually scrapped by the Senate of Berlin. Right after unification, when the project came up for discussion in the Berlin Senate, which is the executive branch, it was unanimously voted not to go forward with the building. There were several reasons: Germany needed money for roads; it needed money for its bid to compete for the Olympics; it needed money for the railway, and so on – more than it needed a Jewish Museum. And that, I think, made us more determined to try to argue that the museum was even more important now that the Wall had come down and Germany was unified as a democratic country. Within a few months, the vote was reversed, the Parliament voted unanimously for the project to continue, but it was a tremendous struggle for some years before opinion really changed and people thought that it was indeed a good idea to create a museum.

In fact, for a very long time the museum was not called the Jewish Museum; it was not designed as a Jewish Museum: the competition was for a Berlin Museum – with what they called the 'Jüdische Abteilung' or Jewish department. And when I received that programme, I remember that day vividly – the words 'Jüdische Abteilung' really seared me, they stabbed me in my heart, because those words were coined by Adolf Eichmann to deport the Berlin Jews; he invented 'Jüdische Abteilung'. So I said to myself, when I design the building I will do everything possible not to create a 'Jüdische Abteilung', not to have anything that looks like a 'department' within a larger museum – but to address the museum as a whole to German history, to Jewish history, and to Berlin. It was a 'Jüdische Abteilung' for a long time, and it had six different names before it became, in fact, the Jewish Museum Berlin. And of course its programme changed completely from when I began to work on it. It was no longer a small, Jewish department with a door and a key. In the competition, which had almost 190 architects from around the world, including ones from Israel and the United States, everyone did a big museum, with a small room with a door called the 'Jüdische Abteilung'. So from the very beginning, I thought, you have to design a museum that really looks and speaks to the reality that Berlin is a complex city;

it has an incredible history, with an absence that will never go away, no matter how much is built there; an absence which is always going to be part of the city. And at the same time you have to open new avenues of understanding, of hope, of something positive in a city which is now the democratic capital of an important European country.

On the Jewish Museum as innovation – the void – and capturing a cultural drama

It is pretty easy to win a competition, but to realize something, to build something as a result of a competition, is another thing altogether. Many competitions are exercises in political publicity, they evoke an idea, a discussion. And that is very often why they are used as instruments to enhance a politician's profile. But to create a building that really tackles the issues is very problematic. I honestly think that this project won the competition back in 1989 because no one believed that it was going to be realized, because it was so far beyond what a Jewish Museum was expected to look like. So it was just the right project to make a conversation. But sometimes that kind of risk in a project is worthwhile, because it opens completely new challenges. Of course the museum was not designed in a conventional way, because Berlin's history is not conventional. This is not a history that can be addressed through some kind of road-tested method. The museum opened a completely new way of understanding, not just the Holocaust, but what Jewish culture was in Germany and in Berlin before World War II; the fact that the Jews were not just victims but successful citizens who contributed to the success of Germany and Europe. They were involved in everyday life, the arts and business, culture, and the sciences.

So, I created the design for the museum that shifts the perception of Jews as simply victims, a museum that has a civic scale; to create a building with a view to the future and an architectural device – the void – to illustrate the physical absence. But to get it built was another thing! An anecdote can illustrate this. When the museum was getting built as a public project, there were 50 administration people at all the design meetings. It is not like in America or in the UK where you draw a building and then you get it built. Every line was analyzed: why is it there? This is Germany, this is Berlin. 'Why is it there, what does it mean, who is paying for this line, what is this line going to be in the future?' And when it came to the void, the first question was, 'is it a museum?' Because, in conventional terms, it is not. It is not air-conditioned, it is

not technically a museum space. It is really a non-museum space. And so they said, 'well, we can't build it; it's not part of the programme'. The programme for the competition is not just an idea; it is not a short sheet of paper saying 'give us an idea for a *Jüdische Abteilung*'. It is a programme book of hundreds of pages which has in it every room, every electrical outlet – where it should be, how it should work – it is a very finely detailed document that architects have to respond to.

So, to design and build such a space as the void – well, I remember trying to explain how important this was to the building, but it took many, many conversations. And it really took a change of vocabulary: to build a space that does not hold collections is as important as to build a space that does hold collections in this case. But the response was that it would cost too much, that nobody would be using it, that it was not part of the original programme. And yet, I thought: you have to invent something, imagine something that might not have a precedent, and I think that there are many aspects of the Jewish Museum that do not have a precedent. The circulation, going underground to enter the new building in this case, was absolutely new. This was the only scheme that proposed to go underground. Every other architect in the competition proposed a bridge between the existing Baroque building and the new one. There is a site with an existing building and you add a bridge. But I thought this was completely wrong, because there was no obvious connection between the Berlin of the Enlightenment and the Berlin on which this ground now stood. So I created an underground 'bridge', which of course was very complex: digging down into the foundations of an existing Baroque building. It is complicated technically, but it is also a complex philosophical idea, because it says that the initiation into the museum is through the underground, it is not through the light, it is through a labyrinth in the foundations. After all, the suburbs of Berlin were built with stones from the Jewish cemetery during the late 1930s.

So, this was the right way to enter, I thought. And it was lucky that there were some people in the government who thought it could be a good idea for Berlin to build such a building. It could be a good idea that it is not a didactic building – I resisted creating a didactic building – one which would have a kind of pathos to it, or a certain architectural nostalgia. I wanted to create a completely contemporary building, with none of those references. I remember that the director of the museum, Mr Blumenthal, himself did not know how to view the void. He said, 'what is this void, what are we going to do with it? How are we going to make exhibitions in this building?'. But slowly, he discovered that

it was possible not only to install conventional exhibits but to use the architectural devices.

On the uses of the Jewish Museum and future history

I had nothing to do with the exhibition installation – which is fine, because architects are responsible for building a building, not for the exhibitions. Sometimes they are given a chance to design the exhibition, as I was in the Nussbaum Museum, to hang paintings in a certain way and in a certain order. But in the Berlin case, the museum was curated by a German exhibition planner. In fact, I think it is a robust enough building to withstand all kinds of exhibitions, and a useful building. A good building should be pretty tolerant of all sorts of things.

I think that people who wanted to make the building a working museum as soon as possible were originally terrified about what to do with it, what to put in it, how to install it. There is a record of the number of visitors coming to the museum and a register of why they come. Half cite the exhibits and half cite the building. There has been a realization that the building is an asset: that people are coming to the building and therefore they are also coming to learn about Jewish history, to learn about the interesting history of Berlin and German Jews, the tragic history, and also the future possibilities. So, in a way, it is an evolutionary process. We often think that buildings are in some sense frozen and fixed in time, and that is it. But buildings do change. They change with their users, they change in their installations, and even the way the building works in the streets changes. I have just completed a new part of the Jewish Museum in Berlin, which is in the courtyard of the Baroque building, creating space for performances and other public functions: a kind of glass pavilion in the middle of the Baroque structure. So the building is evolving, and I was thrilled to do an addition to my own building.

On the 'Michael Lee-Chin Crystal' extension to the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto – dinosaurs on the street

It is true that Toronto is a very beautiful city, but for many years it has been sleepy; there have not been many new buildings. The time came when the city realized that it had to do something else, to compete in the market of museum tourism, and to renovate a museum that was very beautiful but very old-fashioned. There was a bleak entrance, a dark corner on the main street of a major city, and a huge, concrete

1970s building, pushed back with a big fence that basically said 'do not come to this museum'. And so, when I was asked to enter this competition with many fine architects, what I proposed was not a self-standing building, but one integrated into the historical fabric of heritage buildings from 1914 and the 1920s. This very bold building has six main new galleries, cafés, restaurants, and public spaces. Its programme was to transform the museum, to give it a completely new identity – away from the Victorian notion of a closed form. The first part of the project was just to renovate the major galleries in these heritage buildings which were completely destroyed in the 1960s and 1970s by the introduction of staircases, fire escapes, toilets, low ceilings, closed windows, false ceilings, false walls. We ripped it all out and transformed it to its old grandeur, so that new collections could be installed. The courtyard that was created revealed the beauty of the heritage buildings, but we also opened up very dramatic new spaces that were necessary for a museum of the twenty-first century.

Certainly, it is very different to the Berlin case. Each city has a different need, and so does each museum. The extension, with its large-scale vitrines, aimed to transform the image of the Royal Ontario Museum. At night you see through the windows one of the best dinosaur collections in the world, and native people's art is made visible on the main street of Toronto. It is a totally different view of what a museum is, truly breaking through the box-like limitations of a previous era. It works towards a freer and more urban transformation of the city. This dark corner of old is now in the process of becoming one of the most lively and dense public spaces in the city of Toronto. The 'Crystal', with its crystalline structure, serves as a new entrance and gives a new aspect to the complex of museums on this site.

On public-private heritage – the patron and political will

The patron of the museum is Michael Lee-Chin, a man of Jamaican-Chinese heritage from Toronto, an immigrant who came as a poor student to Toronto and became one of the richest people in Canada. He was a man who seldom visited museums. But luckily for me, Mrs Weston, who was on the board of the museum, appeared next to him in a picture in Forbes Magazine, amongst photos of the richest people in the world. Apparently, she said to Michael Lee-Chin, 'now that you are on the same page as I am, you should support the ROM'. When he asked 'why him?', she said that he represented a new generation of donors, a new image of Toronto, which is a city of immigrants. He agreed with her and donated a large naming

gift, and it is a wonderful thing that that building is public–private; public money was invested in the building, but Michael Lee-Chin gave the decisive millions to complete the museum. He brought his mother from Jamaica to the opening. It was a very touching, wonderful feeling. The main court of the building is called the Gloria Chen Court, after her. It is a great story, because a building is also about people – individuals as well as communities. One of the ways to realize a building is to find a person who can appreciate it and with the stamina to see it through.

It was another story in Berlin, of course, with the different mayors and senators. There were always some people in Berlin, in the academic world, in the world of the press, in intellectual life, who fought for the building. And they seemed to be powerless at first, but if you are lucky those different communities galvanize enough support to get a building going. It is very difficult to get public buildings built. They are expensive, they require a lot of effort, and it takes the will of a city to do it. We all know how demanding the smallest domestic renovations can be, and to imagine a building that has not been there and to get it built is something that is in some sense miraculous.

On crossing boundaries with housing developments – Keppel Bay, Singapore

I was lucky enough to win a competition in Singapore: a very unusual project, which is to transform Keppel Bay, one of the beautiful bays at the entrance to Singapore, into a residential area. In this competition there was a certain height limit, and I thought it was a bit too low, that these buildings should be taller. Our developers said that if we succeeded in getting to these heights, we would be walking on water. But we did get almost 50 per cent greater than the original height allowed, because of the shaping of the buildings. We were creating what was a very urban, but also a very environmentally important response – a high-density area, with 1200 apartments, a new part of the seashore, grand residential villas, and a water walk. It is an entirely new piece of the city.

It is true that we often judge cities by their museums – a city is good if it has a great museum, but cities in my view should also be judged by the way people live in them. Do they have a good life in the city, do they live well? It is a crucial problem that many architects have abandoned housing; it seems to be abandoned to developers or to technocrats, so that it is no longer an architectural matter, but simply a functional one. I believe this is wrong. The question of how people live is an aesthetic issue; it is an issue of urban culture. The Keppel Bay

project created these very special spaces to live in – special because they have never been done before – with doubly curved high-rise buildings, so that every unit, every floor is different.

At one point, during the design process, our sophisticated and careful developers felt that the buildings had perhaps become a bit too complex. They proposed a single, more extended curve, eliminating the double curvature. Then came a presentation to the Singapore Redevelopment Agency and it was a fantastic scene. The development authorities said they would only allow the scheme to go ahead with the higher towers if the double curvature of the towers was restored. They had an idea for a project that would make a difference to this site. So of course the developers immediately gave us the permission to restore the double curvature – these buildings are now in construction. I think that housing, just like shopping centres, which I am also involved in, are very important architectural projects. Increasingly, the division between what is culture, what is living, what is entertainment, is really changing. It is interesting that when I design museums around the world, people ask more and more about the commercial possibilities of the project. And when I design shopping centres or condominiums, those clients ask how these projects can become culturally more significant. So, there is a change going on, a crossing of boundaries.

On the architectural culture of shopping – from Berne to Las Vegas with the Marx Brothers

The Westside complex in Berne was the first international competition for the architecture of a shopping centre, with entries from Nouvel, Koolhaas, Fuksas, and myself. It was a very interesting competition, not just because of the design entries, but it was also a political process, asking how we as architects could transform what was needed – a shopping centre. My inspiration was a Marx Brothers' film that I love, called *The Big Store*. In this film, the Marx Brothers take over a big department store. They move into the department store at night and start living in it with all their friends. And I thought, this is really the right vision for this project – that the department store does not really belong to the proprietors, but to the people who shop there. It should be fully accessible – owned, so to speak, by the public. The project also has a very important ecological component. It is built over what is a huge and incredibly trafficked main route between Germany, Switzerland, France, and Austria, linking that whole region. So it is a major infrastructural task. It includes not only shopping, but also housing for the elderly, because I thought, what better place to live for the elderly, than with a lot of

young people around? It has a large wellness centre, a convention centre, a hotel – not five-star but three-star. It is a piece of a city set in front of a capital, which is Berne, one which is characterized by arcades. There are many motifs imported in conversation with the city.

The project has been long in the making. In Switzerland, any citizen who does not like a project can stop it by taking it to court. So, a coalition group between extreme right-wing and extreme left-wing partners did this. And the case was in court for about two years, but the project is now completed. We had to integrate the project with the existing housing, around the suburbs of the city. The first reality is that architects cannot tamper with the formulas for commerce and shopping; what we can do, and what I tried to do here, is to transform the public spaces, to make them really different and interesting. And I believe that the public spaces in this project are probably much more radical than in the 'Crystal' in Toronto or the Denver Art Museum. That seemed to be exactly what the commercial world wanted. They want a cultural input into the spatial distribution of programmes. Of course, things like parking are determined by the grid of the thousands of cars parked underneath, but it is not just access for parking, it is an opportunity for some spectacular new ideas, for example getting immediate access from the car parks into the large-scale public spaces, which are very high. This shopping centre, built next to a city of 125,000 people has had two million visitors in the first four months.

I also have a project for Las Vegas, where I am working for MGM Mirage on what is now the largest project in the United States, called City Center. It is a colossal, nine billion dollar project. Other architects are working on the casinos and the hotels and the large-scale housing, and I am doing the base, a retail and entertainment base for the whole project. It is really more fantastic than almost anything I have designed and the client encouraged me to do something more dramatic than you can generally do even in a museum space. We are reaching heights of 60 metres in some parts of the shopping centre, which really takes shopping out of shopping. The experts in shopping have explained to me that most people do not simply go to shop, but they might shop as a result of being somewhere really interesting. Many major architects who entered these competitions were somewhat timid. They just designed a shopping centre that was a little bit better than the standard shopping centre, or a cinema space that was a little bit better than normal, but actually what the client wanted was a total change – one which would also be profitable. Architecture has always been informed by economic realities and so are these projects.

On designs for the future city – between architecture and urbanism in Songdo, Seoul

The Songdo project is even bigger than the Swiss one. Located between Seoul and its airport, it is projected to be a composite of Sydney, Venice, Paris, and New York. It is to be a U-city, ubiquitous, completely wired. The city does not yet exist; it is an empty meadow, reclaimed land. The challenge here is to create a really new identity for a place, one that has to work with the future of the city. We have been asked to design a very large project, and one that is very unusual in how it operates. It is organized around two very large urban blocks, with shopping and entertainment, which will be among the first things to be built in the city. And then there will be a couple of skyscrapers built, one for offices, and some housing as well. It is designed to set a tone as well as being commercially viable, and to be something that will attract the public from beyond the immediate region. Of course, now it is not as dense as it will be in a few years. Often people talk about designing cities in the abstract, by a kind of master planning, large-scale cities – and I am involved in some of this too. But I think that the most important thing is not to make that divide between architecture and planning, as if they were two different disciplines, because planning does depend on architecture, whether it is in New York or in Songdo or in Copenhagen. The building's shape and massing is certainly part of the experience of the city.

What is pretty unusual in this project is the use of daylight. It seems pretty obvious to a normal human being that daylight is important, but it has not been done in shopping centres around the world. Few shopping centres have any daylight. They make an illusory atmosphere with their expensive little lights – because they want you to concentrate on shopping. Just think about Las Vegas, where they pump extra oxygen into the casinos to make you feel better. But these Songdo buildings are very large-scale and multifaceted. They aim for a balance between architecture and functionality. There is a river of light that moves throughout and creates different atmospheres, a very strong, almost organic element at the centre.

On the past and future city – building on the fairground in the Fiera Milano

The competition for the development of the old fairground in Milan is one that I think almost every major architect in the world participated in, with teams like Gehry with Foster and Rogers, or Koolhaas and Chipperfield. We entered with Zaha Hadid, Arata Isozaki, and Pier

Paolo Maggiora, and very fortunately won. I was asked to do the master plan, which centred on creating a large park for the city. I have lived in Milan, and although beautiful, it is a city that obviously needs green spaces. I am also designing a new museum for the twenty-first century and a large hotel and high-density housing. Zaha, Isozaki, and Pier Paolo also have housing, retail, and commercial buildings. Working on such a master plan with architectural elements is really what creativity is about. This is a project on a very large, central site – four times that of Ground Zero in New York – and it will radically transform Milan. Yet is very much part of the history of the city – the different urban scales, the perimeter connections with existing housing. I created a master plan that really has very different neighbourhoods. Hadid's neighbourhood is built around curves, ours is an area of villas, Isozaki has tall towers fragmented into fractal shapes.

If you go there now, you will see the demolition of the fairground buildings and the foundations. Our housing and Zaha's are the first to be built, establishing the housing on the periphery of the park. Later on, the higher buildings, the museums, and the retail blocks will be built. This is an evolving process, a process over a length of time. The programme is changing, and people are asking different questions about, for example, the museum – interactivity rather than traditional exhibition walls. So, the form might change, certainly. Milan is a great and beautiful city, with fantastic historical architectures, and yet it is not a matter of choice between past and future. Cities have to compete if they want to continue to grow. They cannot become museum cities, where there is nothing more happening. I think this aspiration has begun to be realized more and more by great cities: that they also have to introduce new possibilities for working, for living – for life.

On building on a site of memory – the World Trade Center and the Lower Manhattan renaissance

The scheme Memory Foundations on Ground Zero in New York is about claims and counterclaims, about commerce and commemoration. Clearly it was not just any site, although it had to also be a place of commerce. But I did everything in the master plan to create a meaningful, symbolic site, where nothing is built where the World Trade Center stood, since this is a place where people died. This is a 16-acre site, and more than half of it is public space. It was very difficult to build almost ten million square feet of office space and another six million square feet of infrastructural and commercial space, while protecting half of the site

from any private use. That is really the idea of the project. And that is not easy to do in New York because the project is highly political, and constantly in the daily news. There is not a day where the project is not under scrutiny. There are many stakeholders: the families of the victims who perished have a very strong voice; the Governor of New York who, along with the Governor of New Jersey, controls the Port Authority of New York/New Jersey, which is the largest engineering and architectural organization in the world with 7000 architects and engineers, and who owns the site and administers the tunnels and transportation; the Mayor of New York who is responsible for the streets of the city and the public space; the MTA, the subway authorities, and so on. So the challenge is to create a scheme that gathers consensus, that will work, and that has a balance; one that truly speaks about what democracy is, about what the death on that site really means, and at the same time reconstitutes an area of the city that badly needs to come back to life.

It is an incredibly dense site, equivalent to the entire downtown of Denver or Baltimore. The floor plans of the buildings are very large in scale. Since the World Trade Center was 'only' two towers, no one understood that it was a city within a city – with its own zip code. So my idea was to distribute the density amongst five buildings, using the site of the demolished Deutsche Bank building, to construct a neighbourhood of buildings, rather than solitary structures. And that is actually happening, despite all the complexity, the daily stories and critiques. One has to be very resolute in order to make the site accessible to New Yorkers and everyone else within a reasonable time frame. And I think that if you come to New York in a couple of years, you will see a very new neighbourhood. The plan has already generated a tremendous renaissance for Lower Manhattan. There are some 30 or 40 buildings – new, residential high-rise buildings – going up all over Lower Manhattan. People are moving back. It is no longer just Wall Street and nothing else. There is a sense that this is an important part of New York, the historical part, and it is being woven back into the city as a whole.

What I proposed for the competition was to maintain Ground Zero as a memorial down to bedrock, with the buildings arranged in a spiral that echoes not the grid of New York but the shape of the Statue of Liberty. These were buildings that would not cast shadows onto the site – that would be as luminous as possible. There are many different interests here, with investors and architects, and a division of labour that is not always straightforward. There are so many people doing different things, but what I attempted to do is to create a unity through the master plan. Certainly I have had to make compromises, and this is not a project

designed to make you a hero. In history, I felt that the difference between George Washington and Franklin is that Franklin was a compromiser, but I think that without him there would not have been a constitution. So, I have to compromise on a lot of issues in this project, but I do not regret it. I felt strongly that one had to everything possible in order for the site to be rebuilt, and I think now that construction is going on, given the complexity, which is almost unfathomable, the site is on its way. You have the memorial underground, the slurry wall, the footprints of the buildings, the transportation lines that are running underneath. And at the same time you have to create vibrant buildings that can accommodate many large-scale companies, the real lifeblood of Lower Manhattan. So, all I can say is that it has been a very difficult process, but I think it is going to be a tremendous success. In 2011, the memorial will open, the transportation hub will function, the slurry wall will be there and the Freedom Tower, the tallest tower, 1776 feet tall, will reach its roof topping.

On the freedom to build

In spite of all the controversies and difficulties I had in this project, this is what I believe: I believe that I would still rather work on this in a democracy than any building that I am offered under a totalitarian regime. And I am offered many: 'Mr Libeskind, here is a big site, do anything you would like on it!' And I say 'No, thank you'. I would rather build in a city with a lot of argument, with a lot of complexity, where you do not always get to where you would like to, rather than building for a totalitarian government: buildings that look nice, but that I believe are empty in any sort of ethical sense. So that is the decision I made for myself. I was brought up under a Communist government in Poland – I was 11 years old when I left but the memories are strong. I am now building the tallest residential property in Warsaw – perhaps even Europe. It sits right across from Stalin's Palace of Culture, which I used to visit with my parents. We always tacitly understood that to build this palace in the centre of the city was a way of suppressing the Poles and, equally important, we knew that the site is in an old, Jewish neighbourhood which was destroyed by German bombing. But cities change, and – with my wife and partner, and our team – I have been lucky to play my part in these transformations around the globe.

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Part II Conflict Zones

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Spectral Ground in New Cities: Memorial Cartographies in Cape Town and Berlin

Karen E. Till and Julian Jonker

More than a decade after the fall of apartheid, Cape Town is a city marked by the construction cranes and scaffolding of urban development. Reimagining itself as new, Cape Town appears eager to submerge remnants of its colonial and apartheid pasts behind new facades and building sites. Sometimes the spirit of reconciliation is etched into the city's new architecture: Mandela-Rhodes Place, a complex of chic inner-city hotels and restaurants, names both the struggle-icon Nelson Mandela and the imperialist Cecil John Rhodes. Other times, gentrification overwrites histories of violence. In Green Point, an inner-city precinct where cemeteries for slaves and members of the colonial underclass once existed, a thriving gay and lesbian night scene, boutique designer stores and world-class restaurants seem to leave little room for such memories of shame and exclusion. Instead, a new 2010 World Cup football stadium rises up in the midst of the neighbourhood, as another urban icon that will perform a cosmopolitan new South African nation on the world stage.

From atop Sir Norman Foster's glass Reichstag dome, a visitor may gaze upon the completed landscapes of the 'New Berlin'. What was once described by city marketers as a 'forest of construction cranes' is now the renovated inner-city district, Mitte, with its high-rise corporate buildings, sleek regional train stations, architectonic Holocaust memorial district, federal government buildings wrapping along the River Spree, neo-classical structures along Unter den Linden, Berlin Wall memorial sites and trendy gentrified inner-city neighbourhoods. Almost 20 years following unification, the once-divided city now seems a distant past. Cold War places such as Checkpoint Charlie and the Berlin Wall, once part of the everyday reality of many residents, are now exhibitions, even museums, of themselves.[1]

Figure 5.1 The New Cape Town: The South African World Cup Football Stadium under construction. Photograph by J. Jonker, December 2008.

To (re)build and market any new city, it seems, the past must be spatially contained. Renaming streets, renovating buildings, creating heritage districts and memorializing pasts situate ‘old’, ‘historic’ or ‘modern’ cities in the cartography of the new, locating the messiness of the temporal, as it were, in the built environment. While perhaps best known, Berlin is not entirely unique in reimagining itself – and the nation – as new after a period of dramatic social and political transformation. Cape Town’s tourism routes, renovated museums and gentrified ethnic neighbourhoods spatially declare the arrival of the new South African ‘rainbow nation’ following 1994. Indeed, as a means of distancing the colonial and apartheid pasts from the present day, the (re)building of Cape Town, as symbol and place, has become part of a more general nation-building project defined by memorializing loss, rewriting historical narratives and claiming a distinctive ancient African heritage.[2] Through marketing and planning discursive practices, experts attempt to empty out places and create in their stead sites, bound objects that can be mapped and consumed in Cartesian space.[3]

During times of transition, however, the city becomes out of joint in time and space. Another new set of property maps for the (future) city does not always sit comfortably atop existing places and former boundaries. In cities such as Berlin and Cape Town, places marked by national pasts of extreme violence and displacement, as well as the silences,

shame, guilt and suppressed injustices that accompany those pasts, 'heterogeneous references, ancient scars', to paraphrase de Certeau, 'create bumps on the smooth utopias' of their imagined futures.[4] Traces of lives past and present materialize to upset new linear historical narratives, litter habitual paths with unexpected remnants or prevent capital from circulating in predictable patterns.

As we suggest below, the trans-generational phantoms that inhabit the lived places of the city are, to borrow from Nicholas Abraham and Maria Torok, radically heterogeneous: they are not easily exorcized through linear understandings of time or absolute understandings of space.[5] We explore what it means to track the currents of spectral ground in Cape Town and Berlin through two forms of 'memorial cartographies'.[6] Memorial cartographies are creative acts that honour those who have gone before; they disrupt narratives of the new as separate from the old. By listening to, witnessing and imagining how geographies of loss continue to structure contemporary urbanisms, memorial cartographies outline the contours of places through which multiple space-times, opening up other spatial imaginaries, may offer the possibility of more just futures.

The first memorial cartography is a strategy of narration. We discuss the controversies surrounding Prestwich Place, just another Cape Town construction site in 2003, until construction workers unexpectedly unearthed the final resting ground for hundreds of former slaves and members of the colonial underclass. When developers excavated these bodies, numerous debates and controversies erupted about the meanings and future treatment of this parcel of land. Rather than providing a biography of this site, we were inspired by historical and contemporary activist interventions, and draw upon the writings of Michel Foucault, Walter Benjamin, Giorgio Agamben and Achilles Mbembe to create a memorial cartography of Prestwich Place that follows the ripples of the postcolonial city in ways that trouble contemporary representations of urban space according to property. Our commemorative mapping thus plots the connections these contemporary debates have to other places in the past and present, and as such understands particular places such as Prestwich as thresholds through which citizens can access voices, inheritances and resources for their present and future, even as these phantoms speak of structural exclusions from the city.

A second approach to memorial cartographies is through artistic encounters with past lives. In and through installations, performances and non-traditional memorials, citizens are invited to bump into their city, sometimes quite literally, to experience their neighbourhoods,

cities and nations from different vantage points. Creative juxtapositions of space and time in taken-for-granted urban settings may disrupt quotidian routines by asking residents and visitors to situate themselves in relation to the many space-times of their city. We briefly describe the performance piece *site* by Cape Town-Melbourne artist Talya Chalef and the Bavarian Quarter Holocaust Memorial by Berlin artists Renata Stih and Frieder Schnock to consider how different spatial-temporal moments of reinhabiting the city are made possible through creative interruptions of everyday life.

While quite distinctive, these two approaches to memorial cartographies serve to disrupt comfortable and established zones of social belonging. Through unexpected acts of discovery, residents and visitors may experience their city as both witness and inhabitant. They may make contact with past, contemporary and future lives in ways that encourage reflection and even mourning work; intersubjective processes that may change their understandings of citizenship and belonging.

Prestwich place: Narrating a memorial cartography of the postcolonial city

In 2003, the skeletal remains of more than 1400 former slaves and members of the colonial lower classes were unearthed by unsuspecting

Figure 5.2 Prestwich Place as construction site in the new Cape Town. Photograph by J. Jonker, 2006.

construction workers who were levelling ground to build a high-rise boutique, office and apartment complex. Located in the upscale inner-city precinct of Green Point, the 2800 square metre plot was once part of a much larger set of seventeenth and eighteenth century informal burial grounds. Once the unearthing of human remains became known, activists protested against the heritage authorities' failure to provide an adequate public consultation process and temporarily halted development. A number of individuals claimed descent from those buried at Prestwich Place and appealed against the authorities' insistence that the remains be exhumed; they demanded that the site be memorialized and the site protected under new national heritage laws.[7]

Debates about difficult pasts often emerge in cities undergoing political and social change: at zones of transition, (re)discovered objects – remains, remnants, ruins – speak to the living of past lives and presences that still belong to the contemporary city, even if they are

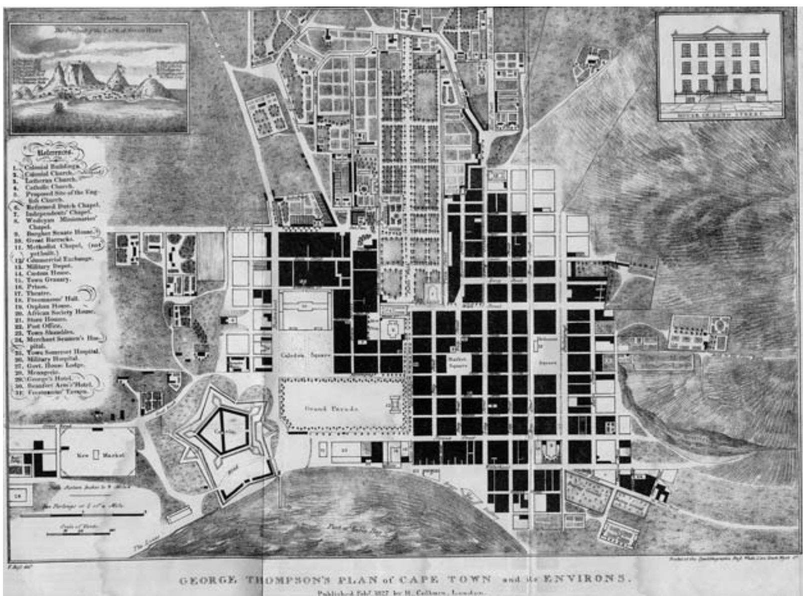

Figure 5.3 Map from: *Travels and adventures in Southern Africa* by George Thompson, Esq: Eight years a resident at the Cape, comprising a view of the present state of the Cape Colony, with observations on the progress of British Emigrants (London: Henry Colburn, 1827, 2 vols). Reprint courtesy of the National Library of South Africa. Prestwich Place is located in the lower right corner, outside the western border of the colonial city.

understood as occupying space-times beyond the realms of the living. Places such as the Prestwich burial ground interrupt habits of citizenship and belonging in the city, habits which, in a postcolonial setting, were produced by colonial and apartheid articulations of spatiality and racial identity. Like other colonial cities, Cape Town resulted from an excessive bio-power that did not confine itself to the power to regulate life, but also regulated the dead through the spatial management of the very corpse of the colonial subject.[8] And so we begin our memorial cartography by mapping the historical, legal and territorial boundaries of self/other that continue to haunt contemporary notions of urban belonging and inheritance.

The frontier, the first inscription of the law, is a line drawn between citizen and subject, between inhabitant and alien. It is also a line drawn to delineate the body politic and locate those that belong within and those that belong without – a line drawn for the dead as well as the living. Located outside of the city's colonial walls, beyond geopolitical territorial spaces, a vast informal graveyard existed where, according to documentary, archival, oral and archaeological evidence, slaves, Khoikhoi, Europeans, Africans, Muslims, free blacks and 'other members of the Cape underclass' were buried until at least the mid-nineteenth century. The denial of access to the Dutch Reformed Church's formal graveyards for these individuals of the so-called lower strata of society was a final marker of their lack of citizenship.[9]

Here, at this boundary, we can delineate the imprint of a 'bare death'.[10] Not only was the geographical fate of the colonized body prescribed by colonial sovereignty through bio-political power; even the location of the material remains was subject to this order, constituting a thanato-politics that continues to haunt the city. Colonial, spatial settlement was thus produced in conjunction with the colony's legal authority over the dead, manifested in its regulation of the corpse of the colonial subject. And yet this colonial politics of death that delineated boundaries between citizen and subject persists in the form of spatial layouts, boundaries and street names, such as Buitengracht, or Outer Canal, a line that once marked the western end of the city.

Where else in the city was this colonial thanato-politics engraved? If we map other cemeteries in the city at different moments in time, we find that bio-political colonial geographies were not merely imposed, they were also contested.[11] In the early twentieth century, for example, men from a Muslim congregation buried a stillborn child in a cemetery previously closed by the colonial authorities. When convicted for this act, they appealed to the colony's Supreme Court by noting that

a nearby Christian cemetery remained open, complaining that the motive for the closure of the cemetery was segregation.[12] Twenty years earlier at Tanu Baru, a cemetery near Prestwich Place, 3000 Muslims congregated for a funeral to protest against the 1884 legislation closing western cemeteries in the wake of a devastating smallpox epidemic. When policemen arrived, a riot broke out, and a second burial took place that day.[13] This unrest was a response to an imperial order that legitimized a modern reordering of the city, in spite of the religious beliefs and traditions of those affected. It would be a premonition of how sanitation would become a pretext for other removals, including a history of dislocating people of the next century from an area of the city that came to be known as District Six in the early twentieth century. Residents of this area, located on the eastern boundary of the old colonial city, were forcibly removed more than once in the twentieth century under the modern (racist) labels of slum clearances, cleaning up the city and 'progress'.[14]

The ancestral dead that haunt the city thus call us to trace stories of other places formed or forgotten when 'new' cities – be they colonial, modern, apartheid or contemporary – are created. In mapping these places, social geographies emerge that allow the dead to speak to the living, if they are willing to listen. And while the continuities between past and present life histories exist elsewhere, including through generational silences, family traditions or body memory, they are not so easily articulated through narrative.

There are moments when the stories of the dead resonate with living memory in ways that demand other mappings of the contemporary city. Many activists recognized themselves as descendants of colonial subjects who had suffered these earlier histories of displacement under colonial urbanization; when they recalled colonial histories in the present day, the revenants spoke to citizens about reasserting their rights to the city. While activists who protested against development and exhumation of Prestwich Place in 2003 argued for the sanctity of the uncovered human remains, their protests were also calls for justice and communicated a desire to resurrect their memories of inhabiting this inner-city space, for many of these same Capetonians were themselves forcibly removed to the far reaches of the city through apartheid urban planning and racial segregation under Group Areas legislation beginning in the 1960s.

The colonial space-times of Prestwich Place in the new city thus overlap and fold into the apartheid geographies of the modern and colonial city, in particular of the displacements of District Six and

Figure 5.4 District Six as Salted Earth. Photograph courtesy of Andrew Tucker, taken in 2007.

the exclusions of its residents from Cape Town's body politic. Once a vibrant, multicultural precinct, a vital manifestation of Cape Town's existence as a colonial port city, District Six inspired many of the Cape's musical, literary and artistic legends as well its radical political discourse. Residents included immigrants from Europe, the Caribbean and the Americas, and slaves and freed slaves of Southern African and South East Asian origin. Between 1966 and 1982, District Six saw Cape Town's most notorious forced removals: its 60,000 residents were methodically removed to townships on the margins of the city.[15]

And yet it remains largely empty today, a physical reminder of activists' defiance in the face of injustice.[16] Today District Six persists as an icon of the anti-apartheid struggle and a symbol for many South Africans of the apartheid state's large-scale violence against intimate and domestic lives. After the protracted forced removals had cleared the land of almost all signs of habitation, destroying families and tight community bonds, an activist campaign endeavoured to prevent the government rebuilding a white or even a mixed suburb on the land. For the 'Hands Off District Six' campaign, the empty land was 'salted earth', fit only for a justice to come that would bring with it the restitution of the land to those who had been removed.[17] Later, in 1994, as a result of that campaign, the District Six Museum would open as a place for 'the documentation and imaginative reconstruction of the history, labouring life

and cultural heritage of District Six. To help these residents and their children rebuild their lives, the museum offers a space to think about the community and the roles of being a citizen in a newly democratic country'.[18]

As if to summon these living ghosts, activists in 2003 created the Hands Off Prestwich Street Ad Hoc Committee (which later became known as the Prestwich Place Project Committee).[19] Indeed, many of the Hands Off District Six members were instrumental in formulating the Prestwich Place campaign to protect and honour the sanctity of the human remains. Both organizations have been said to arise from what former District Six Museum director Valmont Layne calls 'a *crisis* of authority, of the right to speak'.[20] Without condoning the excesses of re-imagination, the Museum and Prestwich Committee supports a creative element in the work of historical memory. Both challenge fixed and restrictive delineations of identity and fight against an amnesia of the future anterior, of what might have been possible, when re-imagining the city.[21]

District Six and Prestwich Place thus delineate at once the historical spaces of colonial and capitalist urbanization, their zones of creative destruction *and* their social memories. Today District Six reminds us that Cape Town was the locus of the creolization and creative ferment that thrived in the least pretentious areas of a busy port. Yet apartheid laws that legislated a tripartite racial identity ('white', 'coloured', 'black') halted cultural hybridity spatially by physically separating people through forced removals and areal segregation. On the other side of the city, the gentrified spaces and chic facades that now populate the (once classified 'white') area around Prestwich Place make little room for remembrance. The histories of this place are lost to archival silences and contemporary shame and denial about slave ancestry. Indeed, the National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA) 25 legislation of 1999 proved to be a significant obstacle to activists mobilizing around Prestwich Place, because individuals were unable to show direct descent, in part due to familial silences about ancestry caused by shame, lack of record-keeping and the racialization of genealogical narratives. Yet the NHRA, like much other legislation in the ten years following the end of apartheid, was regarded as breaking with its equivalents before 1994, the latter of which had typically demarcated burial places as archaeological objects to be protected, or, with increasing urgency, as memorials to those fallen in service of the nation.[22]

In such a memorial cartography of the city, then, Prestwich Place can be mapped between contemporary discourses of cultural property, urban

planning and transitional justice. As Heidi Grunebaum and Yazir Henri describe, activists claiming Prestwich Place as a practice of memory-work disrupted the official amnesia of 'nation-building as reconciliation'. By this, they refer to the discourse of reconciliation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), a discourse that distinguishes 'admissible from inadmissible forms of historical consciousness and representations in the domains of the public'.[23] The TRC's establishment was a product of negotiated settlement and as such, marked by compromise. Intended to prevent civil war and more bloodshed, the moral calculus of this novel approach to political transition was simple: retribution would be foregone in exchange for the truth about apartheid's violent history. A public process, it was hoped, would open out catharsis and the narration of grief, a therapeutic process to be followed by remorse and ultimately forgiveness that would clear the path to reconciliation. Yet as some of the stories and memory-work in the city testify, this process of public catharsis was for some yet another form of violence.[24]

In addition, the hearings and report of the TRC, as Mahmoud Mamdani pointed out, narrated apartheid as a history of the few, of perpetrators and individual victims, rather than as a history of the many, of beneficiaries and shared victimhood.[25] What has been left out is the 'unfinished business' that Terry Bell and Dumisa Ntsebeza describe as the violence of everyday life and the ongoing continuities of the colonial past.[26] For this reason, the TRC has been portrayed as a 'paradox [...] of history's simultaneous exhumation and burial',[27] a metaphor that reminds us of our mapping of Prestwich Place and the revenants who emerge, uncalled, from the absences and silences of the state's archives.[28] In Cape Town, this structural legacy continues to be visible in the urban built environment and experienced through day-to-day practices of racialization.

The metaphor of exhumation reminds us not only of historical and contemporary displacements (of both the living and the dead), but what the unearthing of burial sites means in post-colonial cities. When the bodies at Prestwich Place were uncovered, so too were the archaeological practices of the city: developers' excavations for construction were halted by national heritage laws; professional archaeologists were called in to exhume the bodies and scientifically study the remains and resting places; historians excavated archival presences and absences to document the place's historical significances; activists and intellectuals engaged in emotional and disciplinary archaeologies of the site's role in the urban unconscious. In other words, contestations over the rights to excavate at Prestwich Place were justified according to literal, ethical

and moral premises. Not only was ground turned over: digging itself emerged as a haunted practice.

To give just one example: at the very first public consultation about the future of Prestwich Place, one person shouted from the floor, 'Stop robbing graves!' The claims to dig by developers, scientists and heritage experts reminded activists of the ways in which another set of their ancestors had been historically objectified. With the unearthing of human remains at Prestwich, colonial pasts tied to the history of archaeology and its international trade of human remains resurfaced. As Graham Avery of the South African Museum has argued, '[s]keleton hunting, conducted under the guise of "physical anthropology", continued to devastate large portions of significant Stone Age archaeological sites and was only stopped just prior to the promulgation of the National Monuments Act in 1969'.[29] In particular the Khoikoi and San peoples, the inhabitants of the Western Cape, 'were opened to the scientific gaze of the all-powerful coloniser' after military subjugation, according to Martin Legassick and Ciraj Rassool; their bodies became 'the centre of the transformation of the museum in South Africa as an institution of order, knowledge and classification'.[30] In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the dignity of human life became irrelevant compared with larger Enlightenment-based claims to conduct scientific research on so-called 'dying races'. For example, Saartjie (known as Sara) Baartman, a 20-year-old Khoikoi woman who was taken from Cape Town to London in 1810, was exhibited as the 'Hottentot Venus' or spectacle of exaggerated African sexuality. Her brains and genitals were displayed at the Musée de l'Homme in Paris after she died in 1816; only in 2002 were her remains repatriated and re-interred. Subsequently, Sara Baartman's body, as well as the narrative of her return, have been appropriated as symbols of the South African national estate with relevance beyond localized struggle by descendants of the Cape's indigenous peoples.[31]

Our memorial cartography thus must move again from Prestwich Place across continents, for in South Africa recent calls to prevent future exhumation and to repatriate human remains by indigenous communities emerge within this systematic history of museological and scientific acquisition and displacement. Given the extent of the competitive trade between systematic grave robbery and clandestine deals for newly dead corpses in the name of science, indigenous peoples, activists and scholars have made a case for a critical examination of the bone collections that now exist in post-apartheid South African and contemporary European museums.[32] Their demands make clear how the disciplines of anthropology and archaeology were complicit with

the colonizing project in the production, collection, classification and trade of scientific and cultural knowledge.

Places such as Prestwich Place and the broader, emerging cultural landscape of which they are a part, therefore, are landmarks on a cartography of incomplete political transformation. They remind us that ground is never just property, despite the hegemony of capitalist discourse. They remind us that digging and mapping may be particularly rich metaphors for memory and mourning work in postcolonial cities. What each archaeology at this place promises is the possibility of unearthing psychological and material spaces, since it is the living that do the work of returning to create places that bear witness for past atrocities. In the process, residents may begin to imagine inhabiting a more just city.

Artistic projects: Creative memorial cartographies of spectral ground

Having returned to visit Cape Town from Melbourne in 2005, artist Talya Chalef learned about the controversies surrounding Prestwich Place. A South African and Australian dual citizen, her extended stay in Cape Town included working with the District Six Museum staff and us (the authors) to develop the first of a series of 'memory methodology workshops' with community leaders from the Cape Flats and the city, and becoming familiar with the unfolding debates about the future of Prestwich Place.[33] Chalef confronted the lack of debate and discussion about 'questions of progress, memory, reconciliation, identity and the past' in Australia by creating the performance project, *site*. 'The traumas of the past didn't seem to be confronted on an everyday level. As I began to work on *site*, I wondered what this meant for Australian identity. If Melbourne were to rub her skin raw, what would she find? And perhaps more poignantly how would she deal with it?'[34]

Site, a multi-sensory, one-woman conceptual project, unravelled, but did not put back together, the complex stories and controversies surrounding Prestwich Place. Performed in the old colonial watch house in Melbourne in 2006, the paths, maps, silences and sounds of the Prestwich Place burial ground were literally projected onto actress Tanya Heyward's body. In this otherwise forgotten colonial space in Melbourne, Chalef asked audiences to witness the hauntings of the city emerging through its building sites:

> Soft high pitched sounds enter gently through the space. Layered on top with muffled voices indistinct and whispering. A faint hammer

> drill begins to hum underneath. From the darkness a projected map traces an old city, its bay, its streets, and its railway lines. A construction worker, wearing a white overall that acts as a screen, walks out of the map. She's been there all this time. We just haven't seen her. Lines of this foreign city mark her body while Prestwich Street (the burial site) is projected onto the contours of her face. She scratches her forehead. All sound ceases except for the gentle hum of the drill, faint, barely audible but present. She slowly lifts up her hand and begins to delicately brush along the projected detail on her torso. Her body remains motionless except for her hand which continues its journey along the ridges of her overall. She tries to speak.[35]

As the actress/city/audiences were rendered speechless in this opening act, in subsequent scenes Heyward's body moved and writhed through the abandoned building. She performed sequences that did not always fit together, a series of perspectives that crowded the space of the building site. Heyward became the archaeologist in one story, the ancestral spirit in another, the law in another and the city planner in still another.

Site revealed the multi-scaled temporal and spatial coordinates that emerged through Prestwich, asking the living in one post-colonial city to come into contact with past lives of another. This memorial cartography encouraged audiences to become witnesses not only of Prestwich

Figure 5.5 Performance artist Tanya Heyward in *site*, Melbourne Watch House, 2006 © Talya Chalef. Photograph by Bronwyn Pringle, courtesy of the artist.

but of their own colonial pasts. Left only with questions, fragmented stories, partial experiences and suggestions of acts of violence, audiences were asked to invite these phantoms to the spectral ground of their abandoned colonial watch house. For Chalef, this 'remapping of coordinates' performed 'our shared postcolonial condition, a condition that continues to haunt many individuals who carry unresolved traumas within them'. *Site* asked audiences to explore 'how the past surfaces in our "everyday" and how we as a contemporary society need to deal with these intersections. When the skeletons of our past come back to haunt us, quite literally, how do we as a society respond?'[36]

Through mappings, journeys, and bodies in motion, *site*, as a memorial cartography, located postcolonial places as embodied contexts of experience, porous and mobile, and connected to other places, times and peoples. Artistic mappings such as Chalef's exceed contemporary national narrations of public memory in one geopolitical space; as such, these memorial cartographies have the potential to transform repressed memories of violence to shared stories of relevance through forms of collective witnessing and potential self-reflection. Other artistic mappings that juxtapose places and times include very different embodied journeys to encourage acts of personal and collective discovery.

Renata Stih and Frieder Schnock's creative and conceptual work in public space invites residents to make accidental discoveries about the histories of violence and loss in their own cities.[37] Their project *Places of Remembrance: A Memorial for Jews Living in Berlin from 1933 to 1945* unanimously won a public competition in 1993 in the residential district of Berlin-Schöneberg, known locally as the Bavarian Quarter.[38] Yet this 'memorial' is a social rather than plastic sculpture, created through a network of 80 signs and four maps in one neighbourhood. Located just above the level of regular city street signs, the pedestrian first might become aware of a memorial placard becoming visible just within the outer edge of the horizontal street view. Walking en route to the bank or to school, the passer-by might see one sign, and unintentionally begin to see other signs, prompting an unconscious, and perhaps later quite conscious, search for still yet other signs on subsequent trips, such as to the metro or bakery or playground.

This decentralized network of signs is a memorial cartography of overlays of doubles. Each sign has two sides. On the one side, a pleasurable form – of a dog, a park bench, a hat – is painted in aesthetically familiar colours and graphics, images that may remind the viewer of advertisements or images in children's books. The easily identifiable shapes and the use of pleasing, often primary, colours make these signs enjoyable to

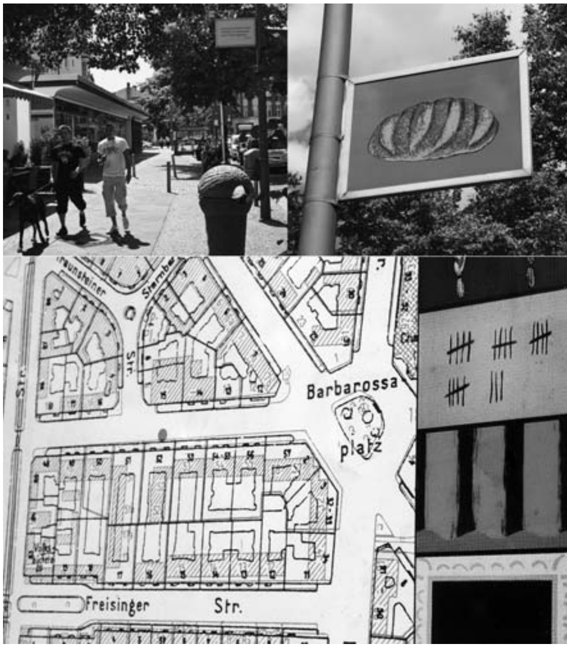

Figure 5.6 *Places of Remembrance*, Bavarian Quarter Memorial in Berlin, © Stih and Schnock, VG Bild Kunst Bonn/Berlin ARS, New York. Stih and Schnock, Memorial in the Bavarian Quarter, Berlin-Schöneberg (1993). Text on reverse side of sign with loaf of bread and in left-upper image reads, in translation: 'Jews in Berlin are only allowed to buy food between four and five o'clock in the afternoon. July 4, 1940'. Photographs of memorial/map by K. Till, 2008; composition by F. Schnock.

look at and encourage the pedestrian with visual reward to look for and find another sign. What are these signs? Why are they here? To find out more, the viewer must come in for a closer look. He or she may choose to read the words on the reverse of each sign that are not so easily consumed visually. The viewer will find a series of 'laws' that, taken in total, describe how everyday actions in one's own neighbourhood led to the social institutionalization of exclusion, and, ultimately, genocide.

Before Hitler's rise to power, this neighbourhood was known as 'Jewish Switzerland' because of the number of professional and well-to-do Jews who had settled there from the late 1800s and early 1900s. A 1933 census counted 16,261 'Germans of Jewish faith' who lived in this residential district. In the 1980s, a local neighbourhood group had also researched the number of people whose homes and belongings

had been confiscated and who had been deported during the Third Reich; when the list grew to well over 6000, the Schöneberg district council voted to erect a memorial to the murdered Jews of the neighbourhood. Using historical documents and an outstanding archival collection from a Jewish historian from Breslau, Joseph Walk, Stih and Schnock interpreted past laws through the contemporary aesthetics of advertisement.

The words used in the memorial employ the present tense to tell a story of loss about the seemingly innocent images on the other side of the sign. Some signs have dates on them, whereas others give only a year: 'At Bayerischer Platz, Jews may sit only on yellow park benches. Eyewitness reports 1939'. Those signs that are connected to an actual place, historic or in the present day, comment directly on a history of violence in the form of everyday life, and what might have happened in this residential district: 'Citizens of German descent and Jews who enter marriages or extramarital affairs with members of the other group will be imprisoned. As of today, mixed marriages are not valid. 15 September 1935'. Located opposite the local civil service office, a sign like this one may even interfere with the memories of older residents, such as the hopeful walk they may have taken on this very street with their loved one to get married. In this way, a resident or guest to the area may unexpectedly encounter the lingering presences of unwanted inheritances.

By following a sequence of signs, residents experience a progression of everyday exclusions that led to the systematic persecution, social exclusion and ultimately murder of social groups in their own neighbourhood and country. Yet the power of this memorial is its subtlety. As a memorial cartography, *Places of Remembrance* depicts histories of displacement through seemingly 'innocent', almost cartoon-like, images, together with past laws. When situated in the spaces of a residential neighbourhood, this mapping permeates the comfortable world of contemporary consumption and everyday routine to communicate a violent past.

Unlike the maps of twentieth century urban planners – territorial strategies that contain subjects and places in Cartesian grids and chronologies – memorial cartographies make the city a haunt by entering it into some corporeal form of memory (as one does a habit). As depicted by the four 'orientation maps' of the network of memorial signs that are located in public spaces, Stih and Schnock's memorial cartography situates the onlooker in both the present and the past. For this mapping locates the Berlin of 1993 through the Berlin of 1933, calling into question the denotation of 'you are here'. This mapping of

the city, of continuities and gaps, invites the viewer who has become curious about these signs to make sense of his or her *Standort*, location or place of standing, in both past and present.

Memorial cartographies of new cities

In cities such as Cape Town and Berlin, when 'new' building sites try to contain spectral ground as property, residents, city officials and even international developers have a responsibility to honour the dead in ways that help the living deal with personal and social trauma. One such way to do so is through a continuous process of mapping and remapping the city through memorial cartographies. By giving physical and aesthetic form to the loss of human life through narratives, performances and other creative encounters, a continuous unfolding past is given a form in the physical realms of the living. Like Walter Benjamin's notion of personal mapping and digging in his 'Berlin Chronicle', memorial cartographies trace the possible contours of past hopes, desires and losses, an interactive process that may encourage individuals to reawaken to their city and recognize the lives that have gone before in order to imagine what a more inclusive urban inheritance might be.[39]

We *in*habit our bodies to remember; it is an intimate, corporeal gesture that relates place and memory.[40] The phenomenologist Edward Casey writes that through the lived body, the intimate relationships between memory and place are realized, for '[t]he body as lived and remembered is crucially interstitial in status. The basic borderline it occupies is traced between *mind* and *place*: it is their middle term, their *tertium quid*. [...] My body not only takes me into places; it habituates me to their peculiarities and helps me remember them vividly'.[41] To listen to bones, to discover remnants, to re-encounter the city through journeys, stories and re-enactments – these are acts of mourning, of emplacing memory. For Derrida, mourning is an attempt to ontologize remains by localizing the dead. One has to know that the dead are in a safe place: 'Nothing could be worse, for the work of mourning, than confusion or doubt: one *has to know* who is buried where – and *it is necessary* (to know – to make certain) that, in what remains of him, *he remain there*'.[42] But in the search for the remains of a violent national past that are simultaneously everywhere and nowhere, confusion is great.

Amid this confusion, memorial cartographies encourage residents to follow the unexpected trajectories along which our collective urban inheritances may take us. Citizens are asked to be responsible for re/mapping,

re/membering and re/imagining the city – a process that may create personal and public moments of discovery, narratives and spaces for witnessing past injustices, and new possibilities for inhabiting the city. Memorial cartographies, in other words, acknowledge and give a space for the trans-generational secrets that constitute the everyday fabric of our cities and nations. Through narratives, juxtapositions and bodies in motion, we may learn to respect spectral ground in new cities, to acknowledge that our shared inheritances are not only located in the realm of the dead, but belong to our everyday lives as well as our imagined futures.

Notes

1. K. E. Till (2005), *The New Berlin: Memory, Politics, Place* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press).
2. S. Nuttall and C. Coetzee (1998), eds, *Negotiating the Past: The Making of Memory in South Africa* (Cape Town: Oxford University Press); A. Coombes (2003), *History after Apartheid: Visual Culture and Public Memory in a Democratic South Africa* (Durham and London: Duke University Press).
3. On the distinction between site and place, see E. S. Casey (1987), *Remembering: A Phenomenological Study*, 2nd edn (Bloomington: Indiana University Press); K. E. Till (2008), 'Artistic and Activist Memory-Work: Approaching Place-Based Practice', *Memory Studies*, 1.1, pp. 95–109.
4. M. de Certeau and L. Giard (1998), 'Ghosts in the City', in M. de Certeau, L. Giard and P. Mayol, eds, *The Practice of Everyday Life: Volume 2: Living and Cooking*, trans. T. Tomasik, rev. edn (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press), p. 188.
5. N. Abraham and M. Torok (1994), *The Shell and the Kernel: Renewals of psychoanalysis*, ed. and trans. N. T. Rand (Chicago: University of Chicago Press).
6. For our earlier reflections on memorial cartography, see J. Jonker and K. E. Till (2009), 'Mapping and Excavating Spectral Traces', *Memory Studies*, 2(3): 1–31.
7. An extended version of this section can be found in Jonker and Till, 'Excavating Spectral Traces'. See also J. Jonker (2003), 'The Silence of the Dead: Ethical and Juridical Significances of the Exhumations at Prestwich Place' (M.Phil. thesis, University of Cape Town).
8. J. Jonker (2005), 'Excavating the Legal Subject: The Unnamed Dead of Prestwich Place, Cape Town', *Griffith Law Review*, 14.2, 187–212. On bio-power, see G. Agamben (1998), *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. D. Heller-Roazen (Stanford: Stanford University Press); M. Foucault (1985), *History of Sexuality*, 1, trans. R. Hurley (New York: Vantage Books).
9. A. Malan, *Public Consultation Process 9 June to 18 August 2003: Report Prepared for South African Heritage Resources Agency and the Developer* (available from: Cultural Sites and Resources Forum, University of Cape Town).
10. Our notion of bare death inverts Agamben's concept of 'bare life', while maintaining Foucault's ideas of bio-power (see endnote 8). We also draw from Mbembe's notion of the haunted colonial archive; see A. Mbembe (2002), 'The

Power of the Archive and its Limits', in C. Hamilton, V. Harris, M. Pickover et al., eds, *Refiguring the Archive* (Cape Town: David Philip), pp. 19–26.

11. A more expansive landscape of unnamed burials has begun to emerge in the Western Cape; see Jonker and Till, 'Mapping and Excavating Spectral Traces'; N. Murray (2003), 'On Remembering and Forgetting: Sites of Memory in Post-apartheid Cape Town', *Architecture South Africa* (Nov./Dec.), 12–15; A. Malan (2004), '"Noises off …": Claiming a Central Role in Reinterpreting South African Cities', *Architecture South Africa* (Jan./Feb.), 13–15.
12. *R v Abduroof* 1906 23 SC 451 (judgement of the Supreme Court of the Cape of Good Hope).
13. N. Worden, E. van Heyningen and V. Bickford-Smith (1998), *Cape Town: The Making of a City* (Cape Town: David Philip).
14. J. Western (1981), *Outcast Cape Town* (Cape Town: Human & Rousseau); S. Field (2003), ed., *Lost Communities, Living Memories: Remembering Forced Removals in Cape Town* (Cape Town: David Philip); L. Platzky and C. Walker (1985), *The Surplus People: Forced Removals in South Africa* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press).
15. S. Jeppe and C. Soudien (1989), eds, *The Struggle for District Six, Past and Present* (Cape Town: Buchu Books); C. Rassool and S. Prosalendis (2001), eds, *Recalling Community in Cape Town* (Cape Town: District Six Museum).
16. In terms of the Restitution of Land Rights Act 22 of 1994, there are now plans to move former residents back to District Six.
17. See Rassool and Prosalendis, *Recalling Community in Cape Town*.
18. District Six Museum webpage, http://www.districtsix.co.za/, (accessed 2002).
19. Hands Off Prestwich Street Ad Hoc Campaign (n.d.). A press statement on the Prestwich Place burial ground. Undated press release distributed at public meetings in 2003. Available from: Prestwich Place Project Committee, Cape Town.
20. V. Layne (2004), 'Towards a Politics of the Emerging Community Museum Sector in South Africa', paper presented at the 68th South African Museums Association Conference, Cape Town, 1–3 June 2004.
21. Jonker, 'The Silence of the Dead'. See also C. Soudien and L. Meltzer, 'District Six: Representation and Struggle', in Rassool and Prosalendis, *Recalling Community*, pp. 66–73.
22. Bushman-Relics Protection Act 22 of 1911; Natural and Historical Monuments Act 6 of 1923; Natural and Historical Monuments, Relics and Antiques Act 4 of 1934; National Monuments Act 28 of 1969; National Monuments Amendment Act 13 of 1981.
23. Y. Henri and H. Grunebaum (2004), 'Re-historicising Trauma: Reflections on Violence and Memory in Current-day Cape Town' (unpublished paper available from the authors, Cape Town).
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28. Jonker and Till, ‘Mapping and Excavating Spectral Traces’.
29. Avery, cited in M. Legassick and C. Rassool (2000), *Skeletons in the Cupboard: South African Museums and the Trade in Human Remains 1907–1917* (Cape Town and Kimberley: South African Museum and McGregor Museum), p. 82.
30. Legassick and Rassool, *Skeletons in the Cupboard*, pp. 1–2. See also N. Shepherd (2003), ‘State of the Discipline: Science, Culture and Identity in South African Archaeology, 1870–2003’, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 29, 823.
31. Zola Meseko has directed two films that document her experience, *The Life and Times of Sara Baartman – The Hottentot Venus* (1998) and *The Return of Sara Baartman* (2003; produced by Mail and Guardian TV, South Africa and Dominant 7, Paris). See also: S. J. Gould (1982), ‘The Hottentot Venus’, *Natural History*, 10, 20–4; C. Rassool and P. Hayes (2002), ‘Science and the Spectacle: Khanako’s South Africa, 1936–1937’, in W. Woodward, P. Hayes and G. Minkley, eds, *Deep HiStories: Gender and Colonialism in Southern Africa* (Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi), pp. 117–63.
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33. Funded by a British Academy Small Research Grant (40456) and the District Six Museum, four workshops were developed by B. Bennett, C. Julius, M. Sanger and K. E. Till. T. Chalef and J. Jonker helped conceptualize the first workshop; T. Jonas and R. Liang assisted with subsequent workshops.
34. Edited excerpt from Chalef’s programme note for *site*, used with generous permission of the artist. *site* was performed in Melbourne’s Old Watch House in April 2006. For a video-clip and further details see http://www.talyachalefcom/performance-site.html (last accessed 17 June 2007). See also Till, ‘Artistic and Activist Memory-Work’.
35. Edited excerpt from Chalef’s 2005 Australian National Trust grant application for *site*.
36. Ibid.
37. Renata Stih and Frieder Schnock, http://stih-schnock.de/ (last accessed November 2008). On recent memory mapping work, see R. Stih and F. Schnock (2008), *Zeige Deine Sammlung: Jüdische Spuren in München/Show Your Collection: Jewish Traces in Munich* (Nuremberg: Verlag für Moderne Kunst).
38. R. Stih and F. Schnock (2002), *Orte des Erinnerns: Ausgrenzung und Entrechtung, Vertreibung, Deportation und Ermordung von Berliner Juden in den Jahren 1933 bis 1945/Places of Remembrance: Isolation and Deprivation of Rights, Expulsion, Deportation and Murder of Berlin Jews in the Years 1933 to 1945: Denkmal/Memorial in Berlin-Schöneberg (1993*) (Berlin: Haude & Spenersche

Verlagsbuchhandlung); Till, *The New Berlin*; C. Widmer (1999), *The Claims of Memory: Representations of the Holocaust in Contemporary Germany and France* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press).

39. W. Benjamin (1999), 'A Berlin Chronicle', in *Selected Writings: Volume 2, 1927–1934*, ed. M. Jennings, H. Eiland and G. Smith, trans. R. Livingstone (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press).
40. G. Bachelard (1994), *The Poetics of Space*, trans. M. Jolad (Boston: Beacon Press); P. Bourdieu (1997), *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press); Casey, *Remembering*; Jonker, 'The Silence of the Dead'; Till, 'Artistic and Activist Memory-Work'.
41. Casey, *Remembering*, p. 180.
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6
Designing the Biblical Present in Jerusalem's 'City of David'[1]

Wendy Pullan and Maximilian Gwiazda

In a city where tourist numbers regularly suffer from bleak headlines of political unrest and violence, one set of statistics appears to buck the trend. Just south of Jerusalem's Old City, the City of David archaeological park has surged from 25,000 visitors in 2001 to 350,000 in 2007. The site has developed from a patchwork of excavation pits into a rapidly expanding archaeological park and religious settlement, becoming established as a major Israeli national monument and one of Jerusalem's leading tourist attractions. Jerusalem already has more than its fair share of visited and venerated destinations, so we might ask how and why this 'upstart' has achieved such prominence for both local Israelis and foreign visitors. And at the same time, we might ask why the park has been rooted in claims of land grabbing and injustice from the other major players in this story, the Palestinians.

The answers to these questions appear to rest amongst the Jewish-Israeli ultra-nationalist organizations' use of archaeology and heritage representations as mechanisms of settlement in Palestinian Jerusalem. The City of David represents a leading instance in the growing significance both of far-right settlers in Jerusalem and of the impact of their heritage stewardship on the city's wider urban conditions. The role of archaeological heritage in ethno-national conflicts has a long history in Israel/Palestine and elsewhere in the Middle East, and has been the subject of a growing academic literature.[2] The much-cited study by Abu El-Haj, *Facts on the Ground* (2001), has done most to advance our understanding of the uses of archaeological practice in the formation of a secular Jewish-Israeli colonial-national identity and the claims to territory it has served to instate. This chapter complements such existing studies by highlighting the politicization of archaeological heritage in the ongoing settlement and urban redesign of East Jerusalem,

specifically through the influence of ultra-nationalist religious settler associations.[3] The aim is to analyse the increasing importance of heritage as a key factor in rising religious nationalism in Israel/Palestine. Moreover, while archaeological practice has played a key role in this phenomenon, this chapter emphasizes how archaeology itself has been manipulated by heritage practices in the public presentation of excavations in Jerusalem and draws attention to the importance of the design strategies mobilized to this end, leading to a distinctive form of what has recently been termed 'heritage manufacturing'.[4] As we argue in relation to the City of David, it is the takeover of heritage stewardship by a radical settler group in the past 15 years, and not the 150 years of preceding archaeological work there, which has tipped the site to be one of the most contested in an already fractured city.

Heritage here is treated as a problem chiefly of representation and the contesting interpretations of the past in the light of contemporary concerns. As David Lowenthal has argued persuasively, fabrication is integral to all forms of heritage representation;[5] the concern here is to study the visual and design resources employed in the settlers' heritage fabrications and constructed meanings, and to assess their impact on the urban landscape. The chapter analyzes connections with particular spaces generated by this practice in connection with widespread phenomena of the commodification of heritage sites, nationalist, exclusionary representations of heritage, and their varying spatial registers and ramifications. These dynamics are to be found globally, yet, as Arjun Appadurai has noted, the particular 'layering' in concrete places, both physical and imagined, as well as the specific relationships between local, national and global dynamics, play out differently from case to case and need to be studied accordingly.[6]

The increasingly prominent role of ultra-nationalist settler groups at heritage sites needs to be seen in relation to the overall pattern of settlement activity in East Jerusalem. Since Israel has agreed in principle to negotiate over the future status of Jerusalem at some deferred stage, the stakes for settlers operating in East Jerusalem have risen considerably. The Israeli far right has responded to the uncertainty surrounding Jerusalem's future through intensified, unilateral settlement expansion aiming to make a redivision of the city impossible by fragmenting Palestinian areas and establishing contiguity between settler-controlled sites. It is possible to distinguish between two interrelated yet distinctive arenas within the overall focus of this settlement activity. We can speak of on an outer and an inner ring of settlements. The outer ring is made up of the newly built, large suburban settlements and their

support infrastructure, such as French Hill and Gilo, officially planned soon after 1967 and built from the early 1970s on the metropolitan periphery of the municipal borders expanded into the West Bank in 1967. The inner ring consists of the Old City and its bordering Palestinian neighbourhoods, enclosed topographically by the surrounding hills. Apart from the reconstruction of the Jewish Quarter, settlement activities here began in the 1980s and have focused on taking over and reconfiguring existing built fabric. This area around the Old City is commonly referred to as the Historic Basin, a concept central to Israeli planning in Jerusalem. The area of the basin is defined by its visual connections to the Old City wall and understood to hold special 'historical, architectural and landscape values'.[7] The degree to which settler groups will succeed in transforming the character and settlement pattern of areas like Silwan, situated in the heart of the Historic Basin, could have a significant impact on future negotiations over the city.

The construction of a national monument: From excavation pit to 'City of David'

The City of David archaeological park is located in Palestinian East Jerusalem where a steep and narrow spit of land extends southward from Dung Gate in the Old City wall.

The park is sited on the slope, facing east into the large Kidron Valley, in an area known to Palestinians as Wadi Hilwa; the Palestinian urbanized village of Silwan covers both sides of the valley. Today, the estimated population in the area is around 16,000 Palestinians and about 400 Jewish settlers.[8] Named 'City of David' by Israelis, archaeological evidence indicates an early Iron Age date, so that the first settlement of the area has been attributed to the biblical conquest of King David. This Israelite leader is believed to have turned his capital into a united kingdom in 1000 BCE, inaugurating what is considered a unique golden age in Jewish history. To Christians it contains the place of one of Christ's miracles, the Siloam pool, where Jesus returned sight to a blind man. From the Palestinian point of view the City of David is an area that is part of Silwan, one of Jerusalem's oldest villages with a very long tradition of Arab habitation as well as a modern Palestinian neighbourhood.

Despite its claim as the site of the primordial Israelite capital, the popular idea of the City of David is a remarkably recent phenomenon. Following the annexation of East Jerusalem after the 1967 War, 12 areas of a total of 4000 square metres were declared state lands and slated

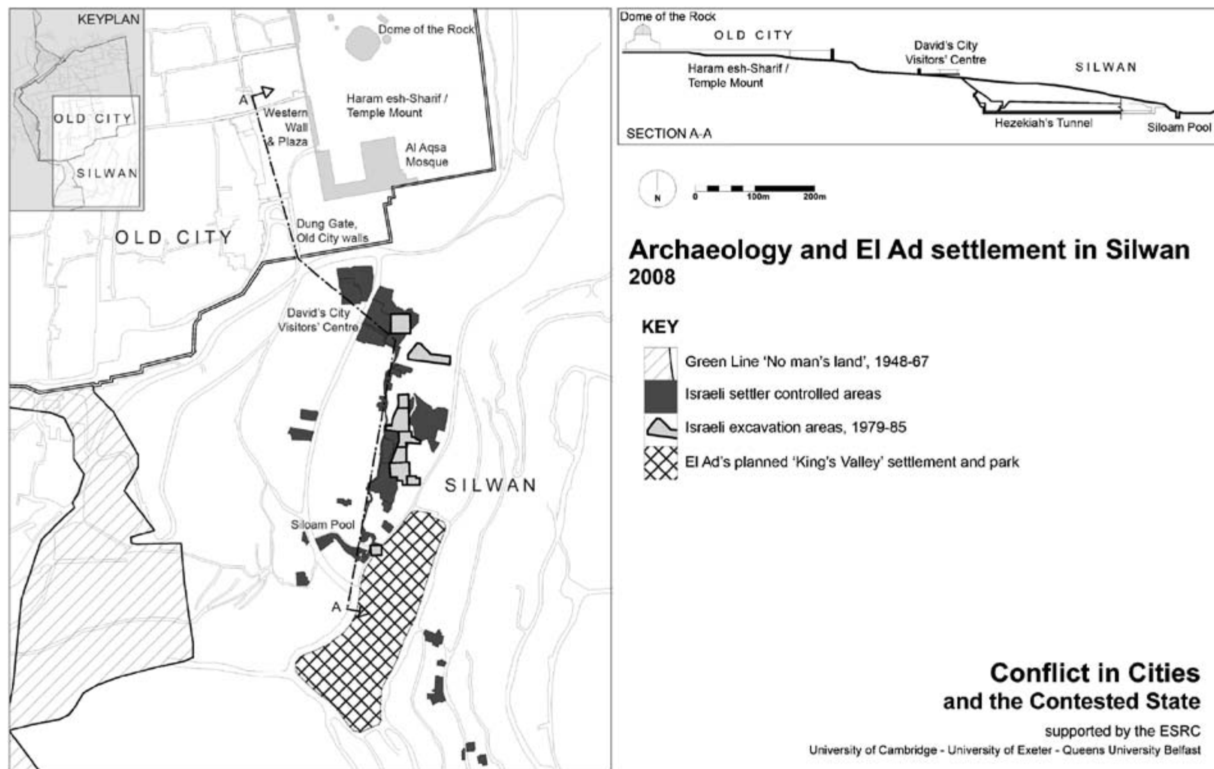

Figure 6.1 Map of Silwan site.

10.1057/9780230246959 - Memory Culture and the Contemporary City, Edited by Uta Staiger, Henriette Steiner and Andrew Webber

for excavations. Israeli archaeology in Silwan followed over a century of successive Western excavations, which had continued through Jordanian rule in 1948–67 under the British archaeologist Kathleen Kenyon; from the beginning the focus remained almost exclusively on the biblical period. During 1978–85, Israeli archaeologists identified evidence of 21 strata dating from the Chalcolithic period in the fourth millennium BCE through to the late medieval period in the fifteenth century CE, focusing again on evidence which may be ascribed to events and sites mentioned in the Bible.[9] Yet, despite its archaeological importance, the City of David area remained relatively obscure, only sporadically visited by Israelis or tourists. In fact, it was known primarily among the wider public as a hotspot in the controversy over secular Israeli archaeologists defending their right to pursue scientific research against attacks by the ultra-orthodox community opposing the potential desecration of Jewish tombs. Archaeology and heritage were not yet at the core of Israeli-Palestinian tensions in Silwan. Rafi Greenberg, an archaeologist participating in excavations of this period, described the relationship with the residents of Silwan during this period in the following terms: 'understanding was reached with the Palestinians residing near the excavation areas: houses and plots were rented for the duration of the season and there was a degree of friendly – if almost entirely commercial – interaction'.[10]

The site's obscurity did not change significantly after the municipality opened two archaeological sites to the public in 1985, then under the management of the East Jerusalem Development Company. With the onset of the first intifada, in which Silwanese were known to play an active role, Israeli and tourist visitor numbers dropped sharply and further plans for excavations and park design were temporarily abandoned; for some, the area was no longer considered safe. It is at this point that the small, private not-for-profit organization, El-Ad, took the initiative and filled the vacuum left by the municipality's withdrawal. El-Ad is the Hebrew acronym for 'To the City of David'. Today El-Ad manages and exercises tight control over the park, excavations areas and Jewish settlement. The Palestinian think tank, PASSIA, estimates that El-Ad's control extends to about 50–55 per cent of the land that they consider as belonging to the City of David.[11] The official limits of the park are quite consciously left ill-defined. El-Ad has been planning to expand the archaeological park and construct further residential homes for settlers in the neighbourhood of al-Bustan, known to Israelis as the King's Valley. While there is a visitors' centre there are no visual indications demarcating where the park ultimately begins and ends.

Settlers' land claims are based on a combination of limited purchases from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and further purchases after 1967, as well as a series of contested expropriations that have been de facto handed over to El-Ad through complex channels involving a number of state authorities and public organizations since the late 1980s. The primary claim is, however, based on the unique biblical significance of the site and the need to salvage its archaeological remains, for which El-Ad has taken quasi-exclusive responsibility.

In terms of modern representations of heritage, it is in many respects unsurprising that the promotion of the concept of the City of David has been so successful. It contains many of the most potent ingredients of national heritage, catering tangibly to widespread modern fascinations with origins, antiquity, a nation's glorious past, ethnic continuity and the issue of precedence, of 'who was here first', a motif of particular emotional and political poignancy in Israel/Palestine.[12]

The rise of El-Ad

While a small group of critical Israeli archaeologists, as well as members of the local Palestinian community, have made efforts to counter El Ad's monopolization of the site, the radical settler group remains the hegemonic agent in reaching the public and transforming the physical reality of the ground. This development is one of the most powerful current examples of a trend evident since the mid-1980s, which has witnessed the steady consolidation of the settlers' position in Jerusalem's Historic Basin and the acceptance of their basic aims as mainstream policies within the Israeli political establishment. El-Ad was founded in 1986 with the explicit goal of settling Jews in Silwan, which they understand to be the work of returning the land to the Jewish people. El-Ad is inspired by and has direct connections with Gush Emunim, the principal force at the heart of the settler movement in the West Bank. A key dimension of the settlers' ideology is their neo-fundamentalist, quasi-exclusive focus on territorial sacredness.[13] The settlers' ultimate goal is to redeem the land of Israel by returning it to the Jewish people. Reclaiming the land hastens, and is the precondition for, the coming of the Messiah, which will require the rebuilding of the Third Temple on the site of the Dome of the Rock on the Haram esh-Sharif al-Sharif/ Temple Mount. The close proximity of the City of David to the Temple Mount, as well as Silwan's status as a Palestinian neighbourhood, has ensured that the area is a prime target in the so-called Judaization of Jerusalem by settlers and the right-wing establishment.

Like Gush Emunim, far-right settlers in Jerusalem combine ideological rigidity with a modern, pragmatic and action-based political outlook, which draws as much on intense and highly successful lobbying of the political establishment as on resorting to illicit and violent actions. The overarching territorial goal of the settler associations in Jerusalem is to achieve spatial contiguity between different settler sites in the city, with a particular focus on creating Jewish-controlled connections to and from the Western Wall and Jewish Quarter area.[14] The related fragmentation of Palestinian neighbourhoods serves the further goal of making any type of redivision of Jerusalem impossible.[15]

An important change from previous settler operations in and around the Old City is El-Ad's proactive heritage stewardship. In Silwan El-Ad has pursued its settlement agenda principally through exploiting changes in Israeli heritage and tourist policies. Right from the outset El-Ad has sought to reshape the presentation of heritage sites on an urban scale and co-determine their public reception. The reconstruction of the Jewish Quarter and the creation of the Western Wall Plaza after 1967, for example, were conceived on the basis of an essentially secular ideology, and only subsequently fell under the increasing control of the ultra-orthodox. While El-Ad purchased its first houses in Silwan in 1991, the decisive turning point came in the mid-1990s when the Israel Nature and Public Parks Protection Authority subcontracted El-Ad to run the Jerusalem City Walls' Park of which the City of David is a part. El-Ad's coup in Silwan fully exploited the privatization policies of the Likud government in the 1980s. El-Ad's heavy emphasis on tourism testifies to its successful adaptation to the shift in policies of the Israel Antiquities Authority since 1990, which moved from research-driven archaeology to large-scale excavations for tourist development. Global trends towards Disneyfication in heritage management, increasingly prominent in Israel and in Jerusalem in particular, are clearly evident in The City of David. This comes to the fore in El-Ad's emphasis on a single concept, the general sense of adventure in its multimedia virtual reconstructions with little historical or archaeological basis,[16] prop-like designs at the visitors' centre such as King David's lyre, and the general concern for easy consumption and avoidance of all difficulty or complexity.[17]

El-Ad has established a diverse political and financial support network to sustain its control over parts of Silwan, which is largely similar to those of other settler groups active in the Historic Basin, such as Ateret Cohanim and Beit Orot. Within the public administration, El-Ad has received active, coordinated support from the Israel Lands

Administration, the Jewish National Fund, the Office of the Custodian of Absentee Property, the Ministry of Housing and Construction, the Ministry of Tourism, the National Police and members of the Municipal Council. Israeli legal rulings that have gone against the settlers are generally not acted upon by authorities.[18] Through a direct allocation of public funds, El-Ad, along with the other settlers of the Old City, are also provided with the services of a private security firm. In the private sector, El-Ad benefits from extensive funding from a number of Israeli companies and foreign donors; this allows it to commission, fund and effectively control all archaeological work conducted in Silwan.[19] The settlers' support network is to some extent interpersonal, based more on shared tactics and a common ideology or occasional common practical goals than a clear hierarchy or stable political relationships. Its operations and institutional relationships are opportunistic, pragmatic and quite deliberately shrouded in secrecy.[20] Like other settler groups in the Historic Basin, El-Ad takes considerable advantage from partisan planning policies and practice in Jerusalem, which are carried out in a highly covert and non-transparent manner involving national as much as municipal decision makers.[21] To what extent El-Ad benefits from hidden agendas of policy-makers is difficult to establish because of the very secrecy and complexity of the planning process. What is clear and of principal concern here, however, is that El-Ad acts with a large degree of impunity, and that it is looking to appeal to a much a wider public, both national and international, than that of its own far-right settler milieu.

Actualizing the neo-biblical narrative

El-Ad's presentation of the park to visitors is animated by a single underlying narrative. It presents a glorious tale of David's conquest of Jerusalem, the establishment of the city as the unique religious and political centre of a united monarchy and a vast empire. In both the film and the website, El-Ad tacitly implies that what its calls the residential revitalization of the area represents a sort of rebirth of this golden age. This narrative is clearly instrumentalizing the Zionist pedagogic traditions, which promoted archaeology as a kind of civic religion; it was particularly supported by government policies in the 1960s and 1970s. The encounter with the physical evidence of the Jews' intimate and age-old ties to the land was meant to bind together a society made up in large part of heterogeneous immigrant communities.[22] Through the unprecedented control over large parts of an entire Palestinian

neighbourhood in the Historic Basin by a private settler association, El-Ad has assumed a leading role in the settlers' long-standing goal of inscribing their sites outside the Jewish Quarter and the Western Wall plaza into Israeli society's historical imagination as major religious and national sites.[23] El-Ad's international director of development, Doron Spielman, conveys the simple essence of the particular excitement his organization seeks to instil in the visitors, even beyond the nationalist basis of its narrative: 'this is a biblical Disney World that's actually real. […] You can touch the stones. You can touch the texts. And you can [almost] see the people in front of you. [King] David walks with you through this tour'.[24] What is of particular concern is the element of forgetting, belonging to this tradition, which gains particular force in El-Ad's reworking of the meaning of Silwan. Alternative or pluralistic narratives are discarded entirely. The narrative intentions in many respects reveal themselves most clearly in, and to a large extent are reliant upon, the different visual registers employed in El-Ad's presentation of the site. They also constitute the most significant factor in terms of their urban implications.

The efficacy of the visual techniques is based both on where they are used and on where they remain conspicuously absent. Throughout the park there is a minimal use and distribution of signposts or panels with explanatory text, which would offer historical background on, or even basic identification of, archaeological sites and findings. The existing indications are not even sufficient to offer orientation within the paths through the park; the independent visitor is effectively left to his or her own devices and whatever information can be taken from the single brochure provided in multiple languages by El-Ad. The map of the park within the brochure is characteristically ambiguous; despite its level of detail it is only partly accurate and in many ways misleading, while indicative of El-Ad's own representational intentions. The plan paints an idealized vision of the park and the settlement based on a selective inclusion of existing realities on the ground, as well as projecting an imagined architectural homogeneity and topographic evenness conveyed through the watercolour quality of the drawing. The number and density of Palestinian houses within and bordering the park are grossly understated despite the purported architectural and topographic detail of the map. The extent to which it deliberately falsifies the experienced urban character of Silwan and the stark oppositions embedded within its topography is discussed in the final part of the chapter.

In its presentation of the site, El-Ad relies heavily on highly selective storytelling mediated in the film shown in the visitors' centre and by

the well-trained El-Ad staff. El-Ad clearly monopolizes the narrative, perfectly aware that the archaeological sites hardly speak for themselves. El-Ad's strategy here is effectively a culmination of the wider selective amnesia, which the popularization of archaeology has served to engender in the Israeli historical imagination, whereby events of two thousand years ago are remembered more vividly than everything that happened between this ancient past and the present. This is particularly evident in the interactive timelines of El-Ad's website, where one can shift exclusively from the biblical 'then' which ends with the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 BCE to the neo-biblical 'now', which El-Ad begins with the Yemenite settlement of the 1880s.[25] The scroll function on the timeline presents what would historically be the Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine, and most dramatically 1400 years of Islamic culture and rule over Jerusalem as a momentary flash, which gets no visual or narrative mention whatsoever.[26] It is needless to say that El-Ad's timeline is selective to the point of delusion, and that it contrasts sharply with the diverse strata Israeli archaeologists have uncovered in their excavations in 1978–85. At the end of the film, the narrator exclaims, 'now, after two thousand years, children play again in the streets of the City of David', implying that centuries of Arab children playing in the streets of Silwan is simply not real, as if it never bore any relationship to the place. This particular strategy of forgetting expresses itself as a radical form of 'repressive erasure'.[27]

El-Ad, furthermore, treats the real places of Palestinian life which surround their settlement as a temporary glitch or illusion on the face of the exclusive religious-national content of the site. This covert blanking out of Palestinian history, present and future exemplifies the difference that David Lowenthal has drawn between history and heritage, the latter tending to clarify and ascertain present purposes in conscious avoidance of the opaque, pluralist difficulties raised by the former.[28] El-Ad's particular tie to its present settlement activity leads it to revive the motif of 'restoration from desolation' central to nineteenth-century colonial archaeology in the Middle East,[29] which El-Ad also links to its own narrative of material progress and regeneration. El-Ad describes Silwan (never mentioned by name) as resembling a wasteland prior to its settlement activities.[30] Erasure of Islamic and Palestinian material heritage occurs not only in El-Ad's representation. The excavations sponsored by El-Ad have been subject to increasingly severe criticisms within Israeli academia.[31] Until now, even left-wing Israeli archaeologists had rejected much-voiced Palestinian allegations of the systematic and wilful destruction of Islamic artefacts and remains. The recent

removal and seeming destruction of fifteenth-century skeletal remains from Islamic tombs, however, suggest a return at the City of David to a type of particularly destructive biblical archaeology.

Building and inhabiting frontier heritage

The monopolization of memory advanced in El-Ad's exclusionary narrative re-articulates the site in spatial as much as in temporal terms.[32] The City of David is formally treated as a settlement; making homes for Jewish people is seen as an integral part of El-Ad's heritage stewardship.[33] As the film's title, 'Where it all began ... and still continues', suggests, the active inhabitation of the site by El-Ad settlers is seen as a direct re-enactment of the paradigmatic, biblical narrative into which the site's meaning is locked. While visual techniques help to convey the narrative, El-Ad in turn takes its own narrative by the letter as the architectural and urban programme for the park. The character of the resulting habitation is highly ambiguous if clearly identifiable through some overt signs (most prominently, flags and high-security doors), as well as a palette of architectural features, which are more subtle, and more banal, in effect. The nature of such architectural representations and their significance in altering urban conditions in physical and symbolic terms have only recently come into clearer focus.[34]

El-Ad has inserted two distinct types of dwelling in the middle of the archaeological sites, which together compose the neo-biblical city. One the one hand, there are temporary shack houses, similar to the settler caravans in the illegal outposts of the West Bank. On the other, there are carefully restored houses. This latter residential type embodies El-Ad's long-term vision most clearly. These restorations draw directly from the architecture developed in the Jewish Quarter.[35] What are effectively brand-new constructions are meant to adapt and belong to the landscape through a series of salient features. They are simple, low-rise elevations stepped into the sloping topography of the hill, adopting a typology which Israeli architects extrapolated from the Arab village and systematically reconfigured as a so-called biblical or Mediterranean vernacular in the late 1960s.[36] Exterior walls are carefully clad with the local Jerusalem limestone, a sure sign of post-1967 Israeli planning influence.[37] All windows are modestly sized and arched avoiding a strong sense of facade and any modernist references. Close proximity to archaeological sites is actively sought. One of El-Ad's most ambitious plans envisages a synagogue and communal facilities immediately above an excavation area beside the visitors' centre. This physical

overlap with archaeological sites leans on the symbolic programme of the Jewish Quarter, in which the insertion of carefully selected and exposed archaeological finds is used as a means of authentication, a form of restoration simultaneously embodying preservation and regeneration of the original and immutable meaning of a primordial relationship to the land established in the biblical era.

The appeal of settlers' houses works in a number of different registers. On one level, the neo-biblical character of the Jewish Quarter, originally developed in a secular ideological context in the 1970s to create a sense of belonging for Jewish Israelis, has been readily accepted as appropriate by the religious right, unmoved by the subsequent doubts of its original proponents. The municipality has endorsed this neo-Oriental style as basically desirable, and settlers are pragmatic in subsuming the national mainstream practice into their fundamentalist agenda. By the same token, El-Ad is thereby creating more permanent, acceptable dwellings for well-to-do supporters, especially from abroad, as is increasingly common in the Jewish Quarter.[38] On another level, this aesthetic lends itself equally well to providing a suggestive backdrop for the theme-park character developed at the visitors' centre. Originally borne out of a very specific Israeli strand of postmodernism's search for locale and tradition, the Israeli vernacular serves as a prop in El-Ad's narrative redesign of Silwan as the City of David, with wide-ranging Western appeal. International visitors can identify settlers' houses with the virtual representation of buildings in the ancient David's City of the film. They take the architectural similarity as evidence of continuity and the veracity of the rejuvenation story they are being told.

The spatial character of the City of David is postmodern in one further respect, which problematizes its concocted neo-biblical evenness. The provisional shack and restored house both rely on a heavy infrastructure of security arrangements.

Security is in fact the only visible way in which the presence of the Palestinian population is implicit in El-Ad's design of the park.[39] Watchtowers, tall fences above walls, heavy steel doors and CCTV cameras are ubiquitous aspects of all settlement homes in the City of David. El-Ad's ambivalent discretion in displaying its control over the site is manifested in the fact that the private security guards, put in service by the state, wear no uniforms or tags identifying them with El-Ad. The level of security stands out even by the stringent standards of West Jerusalem, the Old City and East Jerusalem settlements. Securitization goes hand in hand with privatization as a mechanism of control over movement within the park and settlement. Points of access

Figure 6.2 Fortified entrance to a settler house inside the archaeological park.

to previously public archaeological areas are increasingly controlled by El-Ad. Since the area is part open to the public and part Palestinian, the settlement is, however, not so much of a homogeneous gated community as the Jewish Quarter appears today; rather, it constitutes a terrain of gated houses and mini-complexes, which dominate and fragment the area through their control of security infrastructure. Security is not concentrated merely along hard borders at the periphery; rather, it pervades every alley and path adjacent to settler-controlled spaces.

In its quest to alter the character and meaning of Silwan as a whole, El-Ad again draws on urban design practices found in the Jewish Quarter. Jerusalem stone is not restricted to buildings but is also used to clad sections of free-standing walls in the park. As is common in other high-profile parts of Jerusalem, paths and streets within the City of David and leading to the visitors' centre from Dung Gate (next to the Western Wall Plaza) are paved with Jerusalem stone. Here, the stone surfaces extend into the Palestinian neighbourhoods as settlers take over houses there. Seemingly banal facilities such as municipal bins installed along improved paths through the park feature the municipal crest with its Lion of Judah; the installation of street lamps associated exclusively with Jewish and tourist parts of Jerusalem cements the transformation of the urban backdrop. El-Ad has also recently encouraged the municipality to systematically replace existing Arabic street names in Wadi Hilwa with Hebrew names with strong biblical connotations.

Installing municipal bins and street lamps, as well as renaming street signs, represents a well-established and contested practice marking out national territory in ways immediately recognizable to both Israelis and Palestinians in everyday life.[40] Finally, great care is selectively invested in green areas adjacent to archaeological excavations and El-Ad-controlled terrain. Sprinkled lawns and flower beds complement the iconography and narrative of rebirth. The deep ambiguity of the gardens' olive trees, symbolizing rootedness as much as dispossession,[41] represent the horticultural pendant to the neo-biblical architecture of settler homes. These instances of systematic beautification again work independently for both Jewish-Israeli and international visitors. Israelis are made to feel at home through an environment increasingly bearing the face of the Jewish Quarter. Western tourists can feel less threatened or alienated than they might by the 'messiness' and density of other parts of the Old City. Equally, they may be more likely to feel comfortable contemplating a polished face of heritage characteristic of increasingly homogeneous tourist-historic cities across the globe. These spatial extensions of affinity are in many respects more effective than narrative constructions in cementing connections between Jewish-Israeli and global-biblical heritage.

However, just beneath the surface El-Ad's urban design also deepens the fragmentation and contradictions observed above in relation to the combination of purist neo-biblical architecture and a heavy-handed security apparatus. This is true both within the core area of contestation, Wadi Hilwa/City of David, and in the topography of Silwan as a whole. Carefully restored houses are but a stone's throw from rundown Palestinian houses and courtyards. El-Ad's shining visitors' centre is only 30 metres away from the beleaguered plot of land on which local activists have set up a tent exhibiting a banner, criticizing the ongoing excavations. It states that 'to dig a tunnel means to destroy a village', referring, in English and Arabic, to an El-Ad project to link different parts of the site. The aesthetically upgraded green zone separates El-Ad-dominated Wadi Hilwa from the historical and contemporary core of Silwan on the other side of the Kidron Valley.

El-Ad's gardens face the uncollected rubbish piled up before the tightly stacked Palestinian houses climbing up the slope of the Mount of Olives. The Silwan area also continues to be used as a waste and sewage drainage basin for the city, yet many of its houses continue to lack access to their own sewage systems, as well as proper electricity supply and other amenities. Severe overcrowding combined with systematic municipal neglect, which is characteristic of Palestinian East

Figure 6.3 View of Silwan from excavation area.

Jerusalem in general, contributes to slum-like conditions in Silwan. El-Ad is constructing a deeply antagonizing topography, a new subtype of 'frontier urbanism' developed in the settlements of East Jerusalem's suburban periphery,[42] in which heightened visual confrontation is combined with absence of any form of everyday interaction.

The City of David is in many respects a dramatic testimony to the malleability of heritage sites in general and historic sites in Jerusalem in particular. In the space of a few years an entire neighbourhood has been reconfigured to conform to a very particular hegemonic ideological and territorial project. El-Ad's heritage management is not merely selective; it distorts and confuses the situation to a point which may be considered extreme, even by Jerusalem's levels of contestation. The site's rapid transformation makes it increasingly difficult to disentangle what identifications and material findings are grounded in a degree of

archaeological evidence, and what is almost completely fictive. Being more distant and potentially paradigmatic, older sites can be especially malleable in their contemporary representations for a keen but often uninformed public wishing to quickly understand and even to believe. On this level its potency as a heritage site also appears proportional to the negative excesses bound up with the modern cult of heritage, which David Lowenthal has called an 'eclipse of reason and a regression to embattled tribalism'.[43] Clearly Silwan/City of David is not the only world example to be harnessed and distorted by a nationalistic agenda, but its central place in a bitter and enduring conflict zone makes it especially volatile and worrying. While Silwan had been able to withstand 150 years of archaeological excavations, far-right heritage stewardship combined with a concerted urban design strategy needed only a fraction of this time to threaten its very existence as a Palestinian neighbourhood. The act of inhabiting, of familiarizing through urban design, is key to the profounder effect that heritage representation is having in Silwan. The spatial resources employed by the private fundamentalist association El-Ad show strong elements of continuity with those a secular generation of architects developed for official government-led designs after 1967. In their effort to put its particular concept of the City of David on the map, El-Ad has opted for an architectural design strategy both familiar and appealing to a wider Israeli and Western tourist public. The urban design of heritage is both a condition and an opportunity for the settler movement in the Historic Basin. The fact that visitors from Israel and tourists from abroad seem relatively blind both to the physical fragmentation of Silwan and to the violent territorial project which underlies it certainly speaks of the modern power of what Lefebvre calls 'conceived space' over lived experience in urban heritage design.[44] Seen in this light, it is perhaps not surprising that the relative shift from secular to religious and from public to private agency in heritage management in Jerusalem has led to the design of a largely corresponding urban character.

Notes

1. This chapter forms part of the research done on the project 'Conflict in Cities and the Contested State', funded by the ESRC (RES-060-25-0015).
2. See, for instance, N. Masalha (2007), *The Bible and Zionism: Invented Traditions, Archaeology and Post-Colonialism in Palestine-Israel* (London: Zed); L. Meskell (1998), ed., *Archaeology under Fire: Nationalism, Politics and Heritage in the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East* (London: Routledge).
3. Interest in far-right settler archaeology in Jerusalem has so far principally come from journalists and activists. Meron Rapoport and Nadav Shragai

(the latter more sympathetic to settler ideology) of the Israeli daily, *Ha'aretz*, and the Jerusalem-based NGOs, Ir Amin, ICAHD and PASSIA, have most regularly reported on the activities of settler groups operating in the historical basin of Jerusalem. Rafi Greenberg, who heads a group of Israeli and Palestinian activists, is leading the debate among Israeli archaeologists on the political use of their work. See R. Greenberg (2009), 'Towards an Inclusive Archaeology in Jerusalem: The Case of Silwan/the City of David', *Public Archaeology*, 8.1, 35–50. Greenberg's group has made important information available specifically on Silwan/City of David; see www.alt-arch.org (date accessed 30 January 2009).

4. See N. Alsayyad (2001), 'Global Norms and Urban Forms in the Age of Tourism: Manufacturing Heritage, Consuming Tradition', in N. AlSayyad, ed., *Consuming Tradition, Manufacturing Heritage: Global Norms and Urban Forms in the Age of Tourism* (London: Routledge), pp. 1–33.
5. See D. Lowenthal (1996), *Possessed by the Past: The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History* (New York and London: Free Press).
6. See A. Appadurai (2001), 'The Globalization of Archaeology and Heritage: A Discussion with Arjun Appadurai', *Journal of Social Archaeology*, 1.1, 35–49, p. 39.
7. See A. Sharon (1973), *Planning Jerusalem: The Old City and Its Environs* (Jerusalem: Weidenfeld and Nicolson).
8. Ir Amin (2008), 'State of Affairs – Jerusalem 2008', p. 27, www.ir-amim.org.il/eng/?CategoryID=254 (date accessed 15 February 2009).
9. See J. M. Cahill and D. Tarler (2000), 'Excavations Directed by Yigal Shiloh at the City of David, 1978–1985', in H. Geva, ed, *Ancient Jerusalem Revealed* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society), pp. 31–45 (pp. 38–40).
10. See R. Greenberg (2007), 'Contested Sites: Archaeology and the Battle for Jerusalem', *Jewish Quarterly*, 208, 20–6. Greenberg's account is confirmed by a Palestinian resident of Silwan, Jawad Siyam. A. Hoffman (2008), 'What Lies Beneath', *The Nation*, 18 August 2008.
11. See PASSIA (2007), 'Israeli Settlement Activities & Related Policies in Jerusalem', Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs, Jerusalem.
12. See S. A. Scham (2001), 'The Archaeology of the Disenfranchised', *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory*, 8, 183–213.
13. See E. Sprinzak (1991), *The Ascendance of Israel's Radical Right* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp. 21–2.
14. Written and audio-visual material available on the website of Beit Orot is particularly explicit in naming the first two objectives, www.beitorot.org/English/ (date accessed 30 June 2008). El-Ad is fairly explicit in subscribing to these same goals. See M. Rapoport, 'The Republic of Elad', *Ha'aretz*, 23 April 2006.
15. See M. Dumper (2002), *The Politics of Sacred Space: The Old City of Jerusalem in the Middle East Conflict* (London and Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner); also the reports on settlement activity in the historical basin by PASSIA, Ir Amin and the FMEP.
16. Adina Hoffman aptly situates the character of El-Ad's film between a 'Cecil B. DeMille and Lara Croft Tomb Raider Video Game'. See Hoffman, 'What Lies Beneath'. The music of the film and the costume of the main narrator could equally be likened to the world of Spielberg's Indiana Jones, which also drew heavily on biblical tales.

17. See J. Urry (1994), *Consuming Places* (London and New York: Routledge); J. Urry (2002), *The Tourist Gaze* (London: Sage).
18. See M. Rapoport (2008), 'Jerusalem's Demolition Derby', *Ha'aretz*, 2 June 2008.
19. Israeli archaeologists working for the IAA at the City of David dispute that El-Ad interferes with their scientific work. See H. Watzman (2007), 'Deep Divisions', *Nature*, 443, 22–4. Few would, however, dispute that the *presentation* of the sites, which is the concern of this paper, is firmly under the control of El-Ad.
20. See Dumper, *The Politics of Sacred Space;* Sprinzak, *The Ascendance of Israel's Radical Right.*
21. See A. Cheshin, B. Hutman and A. Melamed (1999), *Separate and Unequal: The Inside Story of Israeli Rule in East Jerusalem* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press).
22. See A. Elon (1997), 'Politics and Archaeology', in N. A. Silberman and D. B. Small, eds, *The Archaeology of Israel: Constructing the Past, Interpreting the Present* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press), pp. 34–47. A measure of El-Ad's self-proclaimed dedication to educational purposes is the fact that the Israeli army sends all its soldiers on a visit to the City of David, often with significant funding support from settler sources. See S. Freedman (2008), 'Digging into Trouble', *Guardian*, 26 February 2008.
23. See Dumper, *The Politics of Sacred Space*; Sprinzak, *The Ascendance of Israel's Radical Right*, pp. 138–40. El-Ad is pushing its message in an aggressive public relations campaign through radio, TV and the Internet. El-Ad's official, English/Hebrew, state-of-the-art website with interactive and multimedia features is an indication of their public relations know-how and ambition. See www.cityofdavid.org.il/hp_eng.asp (date accessed 6 July 2008).
24. Quoted in C. Mitchell (2008), 'Scripture Comes Alive in the City of David', *CBNnews*, 22 May 2008.
25. For the interactive map see www.cityofdavid.org.il/hp_eng.asp; for the timeline see www.cityofdavid.org.il/timeline_eng.asp (date accessed 6 July 2008).
26. This does contrast with the timelines presented in the Davidson Centre, for example, which is part of the Jerusalem Archaeological Park, managed directly by the Israel Nature and Public Parks Protection Authority. There, non-Jewish periods of Jerusalem are included, even though they hardly form the focus of exhibits and explanatory panels; see www.archpark.org.il/ (date accessed 30 June 2008).
27. See P. Connerton (2008), 'Seven Types of Forgetting', in *Memory Studies*, 1.1, 57–71, pp. 60–1.
28. See Lowenthal, *Possessed by the Past.*
29. See N. A. Silberman, 'Desolation and Restoration: The Impact of a Biblical Concept on near Eastern Archaeology', *The Biblical Archeologist*, 54.2, 76–87, p. 78.
30. See www.cityofdavid.org.il/IrDavidFoundation_Eng.asp (date accessed 6 July 2008).
31. See I. Finkelstein, Z. Herzog, L. Singer-Avitz, D. Ussishkin (2007), 'Has King David's Palace in Jerusalem Been Found?', *Tel Aviv*, 34.2, 142–64.
32. See E. Said (1999), 'Palestine: Memory, Invention and Space', in I. A. Abu-Lughod, R. Heacock and K. Nashef, eds, *The Landscape of Palestine: Equivocal Poetry* (Birzeit, Palestine: Birzeit University), pp. 3–30.

33. Settlement is referred to as 'residential revitalization' and stated as one of El Ad's core commitments in its management of the site. See www.cityofdavid.org.il/IrDavidFoundation_Eng.asp (date accessed 10 May 2008).
34. See A. Nitzan-Shiftan (2004), 'Seizing Locality in Jerusalem', in N. AlSayyad, ed., *The End of Tradition?* (London: Routledge), pp. 231–55; A. Nitzan-Shiftan (2006), 'The Israeli "Place" in East Jerusalem: How Israeli Architects Appropriated the Palestinian Aesthetic after the '67 War', *Jerusalem Quarterly*, 27, 15–27; W. Pullan (2004), 'A One-Sided Wall', *Index on Censorship*, 33.3, 78–82; W. Pullan (2006), 'Locating the Civic in the Frontier: Damascus Gate', in M. Miessen and S. Basar, eds, *Did Someone Say Participate? An Atlas of Spatial Practice* (Cambridge, MA and London: MIT Press; Frankfurt am Main: Revolver), pp. 109–22; E. Weizman (2007), *Hollow Land: Israel's Architecture of Occupation* (London: Verso).
35. See S. Ricca (2007), *Reinventing Jerusalem: Israel's Reconstruction of the Jewish Quarter after 1967* (London: I.B. Tauris).
36. See Nitzan-Shiftan, 'Seizing Locality in Jerusalem', pp. 241–4. The appropriation and biblical reinterpretation of Arab vernacular (particularly that of the traditional village in Palestine) was cultivated as early as the 1950s and became influential among Israeli architects and planners after 1967 as part of Israel's own adaptation of postmodernist thinking and practice. Well before the rise of messianic settlement in Jerusalem's historical basin, Israeli planners had considered preserving Silwan as part of the green belt (another concept inherited from British Mandate planning) around the city, as its 'character gives us a good idea of how the landscapes and villages of Biblical times looked', in the words of a publication by the Ministry of Defence (cited in Nitzan-Shiftan, 'Seizing Locality in Jerusalem', p. 242).
37. Although it was the British Mandate that made obligatory the use of Jerusalem stone on the exterior of all buildings, the Israeli authorities have adopted the law, and its use – today as thin, non-structural cladding – is redolent of Jerusalem settlement architecture. See Weizman, *Hollow Land*, Chapter 1.
38. See R. Nachum-Halevi (2008), 'The Cost of a Home near the Wall', *Ha'aretz*, 14 January 2008. This is a trend, which is increasingly found beyond the Old City in the historical basin. The website of Nof Zion, a settlement under construction south-east of Silwan in Abu Dis, explicitly targets an upper-middle-class Diaspora clientele; see www.nofzion.co.il/indexp8.asp (date accessed 6 August 2008).
39. While El-Ad stresses its friendly and professional relations with local Palestinian residents, the level of security is indicative of El-Ad's actual attitude towards the Palestinians.
40. See Y. Suleiman (2004), *A War of Words: Language and Conflict in the Middle East* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 159–75.
41. See A. Alwazir (2002), 'Uprooting Olive Trees in Palestine', *Inventory of Conflict and Environment*, ICE Case Number 110; Nitzan-Shiftan, 'Seizing Locality in Jerusalem', p. 248; W. Pullan (2007), 'Contested Mobilities and the Spatial Topography of Jerusalem', in L. Purbrick, J. Aulich and G. Dawson, eds, *Contested Spaces: Sites, Representations and Histories of Conflict* (London: Palgrave Macmillan), pp. 49–73.

42. See W. Pullan (2007), 'Spatial Discontinuities in Contested Jerusalem', paper delivered at Power and Space Conference, University of Cambridge, 6 December 2007.
43. See Lowenthal, *Possessed by the Past*, p. 3.
44. See H. Lefebvre (1991), *The Production of Space*, trans. D. Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Basil Blackwell).

7
Historical Tourism: Reading Berlin's Doubly Dictatorial Past

Mary Fulbrook

Berlin was in many ways both symbol and flashpoint of much of twentieth-century German, European and Cold War history; it is now arguably one of the most historically self-aware cities in the world. Berlin appears, on a cursory visit, to be a city that bears even the lowest points in its history not only openly but brazenly, self-consciously, almost obsessively – certainly in contrast with a city like Vienna, where the Nazi past is remarkably quiescent. There is barely a street in Berlin's centre that does not have a plaque, a memorial, a sign telling passers-by about what previously stood or occurred on a particular site: from imperialism and industrialization, through Weimar modernism, into the depths of terror and persecution under Nazism; and through Cold War division and Communist repression to, finally, the capital of the united Germany of today.[1]

These physical sites of memory (*lieux de mémoire*) may be 'read' in both contemporary and historical contexts: chronologically, sequentially, and as both witness to and intervention in ever-changing, contested patterns of historical consciousness and public memory.[2] Each 'authentic' but in fact constructed and re-presented 'site of memory', each specially designed memorial, however intrinsically bound to a historical referent in the past, is at the same time a situated construct of a later present: those commanding resources and power over space thus also contribute to new forms of collective identity through public representations of selected features of the past.

History, then, is ever-present in Berlin. Or so it would appear. But what general narratives of the past are made manifest in this way? My focus here is neither on individual sites of memory in isolation nor on the sequential construction of changing memory cultures, though these occasionally require some comment. Rather, I want to sketch the

overall historical pictures that are present in a state of synchronicity: to explore the general interpretations of the German dictatorships that are implicitly presented, collectively coexisting in a state of simultaneity, and together producing a broader meta-narrative of an imagined past.[3]

Here, the concept of a 'historical tourist' may be helpful. What broader interpretations are made manifest through a cursory tour of the highlights (and historical low points) of the sights and sites of Berlin? What is highlighted as central to public memory, and what is in the process downplayed and distorted? Collective memories or intersubjective discourses about the past, with their distinctive topoi, emplotments and cast lists, are constantly being produced, contested and recreated, varying across families and social milieus, across eastern and western sectors, as well as across larger historical and political contexts; yet these often fit uneasily with the emphases and absences in the visual narratives of the tourist trails.[4] For casual tourists, debates about cultural memory are perhaps not top of the agenda. They are hardly likely to engage intensively with the complexities of recent German history, let alone with controversies over public memorialization. But questions must arise about the almost obsessive historical navel-gazing in Berlin's public arena, and the resulting construction of implicit narratives which are at odds with both private memorial cultures and with historians' accounts.

It is important, then, to 'read' Berlin as a whole, exploring the meta-narratives of the two German dictatorships that are cumulatively produced by the selection, balance and juxtaposition of aspects highlighted in the well-trodden tourist routes. In this sense, perhaps, it would be legitimate to talk of reading the city as a text, or treating Berlin as a palimpsest, to echo Huyssen.[5] But to remain at this level would be to misread Berlin; or, rather, to ignore the multiplicity of conflicting historical significations. For no physical site of memory has significance without participating witnesses, for whom the site has emotive and cognitive potential. And the meanings associated with particular sites are not merely individual; rather, they are patterned in ways requiring as much investigation as political or aesthetic debates. The historical pictures presented through Berlin's sites of public memory sit somewhat uneasily with conflicting collective memories in other spheres. If Berlin is to be read as a palimpsest, it is not one that makes for easy reading.

No one could accuse Berlin of covering up its horrendous past as the capital of two dictatorships; and the complexities of representing Nazism and Communism are far from lost. But the highlighted histories of Berlin today become more problematic from a historian's point of

view. If we look at the ways in which structures of power, repression and resistance have been represented, and at the selection of opponents and victims of the two dictatorial regimes, a very odd picture indeed emerges.

Misplacing power

There is a degree of sensationalization of the apparatus of repression in both dictatorships. For both dictatorships, selected sites of terror emphasize power as physical force, while remaining out of focus in the political arena. Perhaps because of the longer time period which has elapsed since the demise of the Nazi dictatorship, however, representations of power in the Third Reich are by now rather more differentiated than is (as yet) the case for the succeeding Communist dictatorship in the German Democratic Republic (GDR).

The epicentre of power in the Third Reich, Hitler himself, has received least by way of physical commemoration (or potential shrines for former Nazis): there is merely an extremely belated, even dull, explanatory board above the site of the bunker where he committed suicide, in an area which was for decades in the no-man's-land between East and West. Public interest in the Führer is, however, more than compensated in the sphere of popular culture, where an excessive Hitler-centric focus distorts understanding of political complexities, and allows for easy evasion of questions about broader responsibility. Some other sites of memory clearly emphasize sheer physical brutality in the Third Reich, as in Plötzensee prison, where in the closing months of the war prisoners were put to death for 'crimes' such as making political jokes or uttering defeatist sentiments. The former concentration camp of Sachsenhausen, despite difficulties in layout and altered terrain, also provides an overwhelming sense of physical oppression. Yet this site has a complex post-war overlay: Soviet reuse as an internment camp after 1945, and subsequent political instrumentalization by the GDR, have been integrated into the post-unification exhibit. For the uninitiated, the effect of multiple layers of representation is perhaps to render Communism on a par with Nazism – reinforced by the ways in which power in the GDR is represented elsewhere.

Although the complicity of lower-level functionaries and the roles of ordinary Germans in the Third Reich have been underemphasized, there are now gestures towards investigating the involvement of significant elites in the Nazi regime. Thus the exhibition Topography of Terror in the ruins of the Gestapo headquarters – initially opened

only as a temporary site, against much political opposition, as late as 1987 – includes industrialists, financiers and others who supported and profited from the Nazi regime.[6] The House of the Wannsee Conference, where the logistics of the Final Solution were hammered out in January 1942 – a contested site which was also opened extraordinarily late – makes it clear that participants in the infamous Wannsee Conference were essentially second-rank functionaries rather than the real decision makers and wielders of power.

A comparable service has not as yet been performed for the GDR. Instead, there is an almost self-contradictory combination of sensationalism and trivialization, even what Germans describe as rendering harmless (*Verharmlosung*). Decisions about the destruction, preservation or selective representation of historical sites have emphasized a distorted view of the GDR's power structure.

The repressive aspects of the GDR have long been sensationalized in the Museum at Checkpoint Charlie, with dashing Cold War stories of escape to the West by tunnel, boat or air balloon, and hands-on exhibits of cars with false floors and hidden compartments. The Wall has become the iconic tourist symbol of Berlin; yet the Wall itself is almost unimaginable to historical tourists today. An authentically broad if not very extended section of the Wall has been preserved and partially reconstructed in Bernauerstrasse, with a small museum providing an overview. Elsewhere, remnants of the Wall are generally isolated, often brightly painted individual segments, even transformed, in the so-called East Side Gallery, into an extended art exhibition, with no sense of a mined and barren hinterland. The sinister atmosphere of the former Friedrichstrasse crossing point has gone entirely, without any gesture towards memorialization: not even the smallest of plaques between the stores and cafes serves to remind passing customers what was previously there; contemporary commercialization entirely overrides historical tourism here.

If the GDR has been largely crystallized into the Wall as symbol, then its structures of power have been veiled and displaced. The Palace of the Republic (*Palast der Republik*, often fondly termed the 'ballast of the Republic' or *Ballast der Republik*) was officially both a place for leisure and the supposed location of popular sovereignty in the 'People's Parliament' (*Volkskammer*) – a claim treated with cynicism by critics of 'democratic centralism' in the GDR. Yet it was, ironically, precisely this Palace of the Republic that was selected for demolition, amidst great controversy, while the real centre of political power, the Politburo headquarters, was quietly re-appropriated for use by the German Foreign Ministry.[7] There is

now no indication that this latter building, originally constructed for the German Reichsbank in the mid-1930s and hence less directly associated with GDR self-representations, was where Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED) General Secretary Erich Honecker, economic boss Günter Mittag, Stasi Chief Erich Mielke and other Politburo members met to make the real decisions, which were subsequently merely ratified by the 'People's Parliament'. So political priorities dominated the destruction of the asbestos-ridden Palace of the Republic and the planned resurrection of older, monarchical traditions through the reconstruction of the Prussian *Schloss* on this site; pragmatic considerations allowed the German Foreign Ministry to appropriate the Politburo's headquarters; and commitment to historical education appears to have played little part in this area of Berlin's physical rescripting of its identity.

Differentiated representation of political power in the GDR has also been displaced by a massive focus on the sinister surveillance apparatus of the State Security Service, or Stasi. In the centre of Berlin, just off the main avenue of Unter den Linden, close to the Brandenburg Gate and the Holocaust memorial, is a major exhibition about the Stasi. The Stasi headquarters at Normannenstrasse in Lichtenberg and the Stasi remand prison at Hohenschönhausen have extended exhibits and guided tours designed to show just how the Stasi afflicted the lives of its victims. In these historical tourist sites – unlike in films such as *Goodbye, Lenin!* – concentration on physical repression and malign manipulation allows little space for sympathetic depiction of ordinary carriers or supporters of more positive aspects of the GDR, or for open-minded exploration of the complexities of the system, implicitly portraying Communism as a form of totalitarianism on a par with Nazism. Insofar as GDR ideology is represented – as in Sachsenhausen, where the GDR's former 'anti-fascist' exhibition is itself framed as another historical exhibit – it is written off as manipulative propaganda. The participation of ordinary functionaries in East German networks of power is entirely omitted from the historical sites of memorialization. And although the German Historical Museum (DHM) makes a valiant effort at sober depiction, while the neighbouring GDR Museum seeks to be more 'accessible' in its presentation, nowhere are the complex webs of participation in the state trade union or the mass organizations for youth, women, culture, and the like, adequately represented.

Heroes of the opposition

Memorialization of opposition in the two dictatorships similarly continues to bear witness to different historical understandings in

East and West within and beyond the era of division.[8] West German emphasis on the conservative nationalist resistance of the July Plot to assassinate Hitler, with its high percentage of Prussian aristocrats, was counterbalanced in the GDR by an overwhelming focus on Communist resistance to Nazism. The West German homage to conservative elites was located in the Gedenkstätte Deutscher Widerstand, in the renamed Stauffenbergstrasse close to the Kulturforum on the western fringes of the Potsdamer Platz area. The East German regime appropriated significant sites across the GDR: most notably the former Nazi concentration camps of Buchenwald, where the Communist leader Ernst Thälmann was put to death, earning him the status of Communist martyr, and Sachsenhausen. In Berlin itself, the emphasis was on memorialization in multiple smaller sites and statues, as well as the naming of streets, squares, factories and, of course, the Young Pioneer youth organization, the Ernst Thälmann Pioneers. Sites memorializing resistance changed over time, and were re-evaluated in the post-unification era. Revisions to the former West German presentations were gradual, as in the progressive extension of those valued as legitimate resistance: not only Hans and Sophie Scholl, of the 'White Rose' resistance group, but also many other ordinary Germans eventually joined the ranks of the nobles and notables. Recalibration of the East German historical picture (as with most aspects of the defunct GDR) was by contrast far more rapid and radical after 1990. Thus the memorial in the Lustgarten park to the Herbert Baum group of young Communists was, after unification, simply overlaid by explanatory see-through plaques indicating just how distorted the GDR's representation had been with its omission of what precisely the group had done or the fact that many members were Jewish. Again, the Western understanding was superimposed on and served to frame the former East German interpretation of the common Nazi past: not merely a memorial, but an exhibit of an exhibit, serving simultaneously to memorialize resistance and effectively condemn both German dictatorships in one small space.

The Third Reich was, of course, eventually brought down not by resistance from within but by military defeat by the Allies. Commemoration of the end of the war is yet another story of dissonance and conflicting narratives. In the western zones defeat was merely defeat; but the subsequent economic upswing with the currency reform of 1948 and the Berlin Airlift of 1948–49 inaugurated a transformation of attitudes, consolidated by US President John F. Kennedy's famous declaration of solidarity during the later Berlin crisis. The 1954 Berlin Airlift Memorial is more a memorial to the American protection of Berliners from

Soviet domination than to the end of Nazism. Such a transformation in attitude towards the 'liberating' power was never fully achieved in the GDR, despite the best efforts of the SED and the German–Soviet Friendship Society, until Gorbachev's reform programme in the 1980s gave a more popular meaning to the slogan 'Learning from the Soviet Union means learning to be victorious!' The massive memorial to soldiers of the Red Army in Treptow Park was merely the largest outward symbol of a theme repeated throughout the GDR: that of liberation of the allegedly innocent workers and peasants by Soviet troops. While Treptow Park, with its Stalin quotations and Soviet references, is now largely empty of all but the most determined visitors, and while an isolated and slightly incongruous memorial to the Soviet role still sits splendidly in the Tiergarten, west of the former Wall, Berliners' own ambiguous experiences of 'liberation' – a difficult life among ruins with relief from air raids, but marred by severe hunger, worries about missing loved ones, and widespread experience of robbery and rape by Soviet soldiers – are not themes which have received much by way of visible memorialization.

Awkwardly, what had been heroic Soviet military opposition to Nazism soon became the oppressing force itself. Memorializing resistance to the Communist state forcibly imposed under Soviet colours is complex; there is as yet neither a central site nor an acceptable narrative. During much of the Cold War, the June Uprising of 1953 served in West Germany as the iconic symbol of opposition to the GDR and rallying cry for reunification – however unwilling to act the Adenauer government of West Germany had actually been, preferring Western integration to risky intervention. For West Germans, '17 June 1953' conveniently served to demonstrate both widespread rejection of the new Communist state – scarcely surprising, given continuing traditions of anti-Bolshevism among Germans – and, less plausibly, endorsement of Western democracy. Given that in the mid-1950s around half of West Germans thought that 'if it had not been for the War, Hitler would have been one of the greatest German statesmen ever', and 42 per cent agreed in 1951 that the 'best period for Germany' had been the peacetime years of the 1930s, it is unlikely that support for democracy was much more advanced in the GDR.[9] Nevertheless, this first of the popular uprisings in the Soviet bloc served to symbolize the Western view that all East Germans were basically opposed to the Communist regime. Following German unification in 1990 the West Berlin 'Street of the 17 June' running through the Tiergarten was renamed, and the Day of German Unity on 3 October displaced 17 June as the Federal Republic's

national holiday. A new memorial was installed at an 'authentic' site of memory outside the former GDR House of Ministries (previously Goering's Reich Air Force Ministry headquarters) to which the demonstrators had marched, precipitating the strike. The Western interpretation of 1953 was here cleverly carried over into the post-unification era: a well-manipulated photomontage – subtly exaggerating the number of demonstrators by repeating well-merged photographs of the same group – was placed in strategic contradiction to a GDR mural portraying a more idyllic view of a harmonious socialist society.

The widely televised mass demonstrations of the autumn of 1989, culminating in the breaching of the Wall on 9 November, further reinforced, if only implicitly, the suggestion that just about every East German who was not a Stasi informer or SED party bigwig was in opposition to the GDR regime. Although the German Historical Museum and the Normannenstrasse Stasi museum provide accessible overviews of the evolution of opposition, sites on the major tourist tracks suggest simply widespread anti-Communism, with little differentiation. Genuine sites of memory for those actively engaged in political organization, testing the boundaries of the regime in the early and mid-1980s, tend to be almost ignored and certainly underfunded. The Zion Church in Prenzlauer Berg, for example, where the Environmental Library (*Umweltbibliothek*) was based, devotes relatively more space to a life-size photo of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who led a youth confirmation group here in 1932, than it does to the environmentalists and human rights activists who campaigned here in the 1980s. The site is of considerable historical significance for the collapse of the GDR: the Stasi raid on the Environmental Library in the autumn of 1987 presented something of a turning point in the overt use of force, while the Stasi tolerance of neo-Nazi thugs beating up peace demonstrators after a church service illustrated some of the odder aspects of power in the anti-fascist state, as well as having been extraordinarily frightening for those involved at the time.[10] Yet this site is totally off the beaten tracks for the casual historical tourist in Berlin. Effectively, the framing of GDR history by 1953 at one end, and the 'We are the People!' banners at the other, reinforces a rather simplistic narrative of constant widespread opposition to the East German state, with little sensitivity to changes over time.

Inflations of victimhood?

Victims of the Third Reich are largely represented as 'other', with associated complexities of identification and suppressed 'equations of suffering';

and despite the far less virulent character of the regime, virtually all East Germans were posited as victims of Communism. In spite of widespread interest in the controversial theme of the 'Germans as victims' of warfare, its resurgence in popular culture (as in the film *Der Untergang*) and in the outpourings of a newly articulated 'war children generation', the experiences of non-Jewish Berliners have been barely registered in the physical memory-scape. The few remaining bunkers either serve to commemorate the exploitation of slave labour (as at the Sophie Scholl school in Pallas-Strasse) and hence reiterate the theme of others' victimhood and German shame, or serve commercial purposes, as in the case of a former bunker appropriated by a private entrepreneur as an art gallery.

Memorializing the Jewish victims of Nazism was far more significant, yet deeply problematic. In the GDR, despite favourable pensions and other measures to support those deemed 'victims of fascism', active left-wing political resistance to Nazism was heavily prioritized over the allegedly passive victimhood of those persecuted on 'racial' grounds. The resulting lack of pre-1989 memorials in East Berlin to the deported and murdered Jews is striking. The sufferings of the Jews were barely commemorated during the entire Communist period, with questions about anti-Semitism, guilt and shame being barely and belatedly addressed. Underlying racial prejudices lived on alongside a continuing anti-Communism among the grumbling members of the older generation of East Berliners.[11] The Jewish cemeteries of East Berlin were largely neglected, although Honecker's plans to build a main road right through the huge Weissensee cemetery were successfully averted. And it was only in the last years of the GDR that the Oranienburger Strasse synagogue, attacked by the Nazis in the 1939 pogrom but surviving the war with relatively minimal damage, was finally given some state assistance for reconstruction. Only at the very end of the 1980s did the Jewish members of the Herbert Baum anti-Nazi resistance group receive a memorial in the Berlin Lustgarten, and this only because they were also (and in the official view primarily) Communist. Victimhood was not really a chord on which the GDR's official emphasis on the continuing class struggle cared to play.

In striking contrast to the relative absence of official discourse about anti-Semitism in the East, a highly sensitive gulf between 'Germans' and 'Jews' – sharply distinguished from one another, even or perhaps especially in a wilfully philo-Semitic post-war climate – beset public West German commemorations and professions of responsibility.[12] In Chancellor Adenauer's influential formulation, couched anonymously in the passive tense, 'immeasurable suffering [...] was brought upon the Jews in Germany and in the occupied territories during the time

of National Socialism' and 'unspeakable crimes were committed in the name of the German people'.[13] Such a clear demarcation – essentially a continuation of Nazi racist distinctions – persisted through, for example, to Phillip Jenninger's infamous speech to the Bundestag in 1988, on the 50th anniversary of the November pogrom. The almost obsessive visual commemoration of Jewish victims of the Holocaust in Berlin since the 1980s gathered pace massively after unification. Everywhere there are plaques commemorating former Berliners who were murdered, such as the lists of deportees at Rathaus Steglitz, or the little inset brass paving stones (*Stolpersteine*) throughout Berlin; outside that symbol of both Nazi Aryanization policies and capitalist materialism, the massive department store KaDeWe, there are boards listing the murder camps in which so many of Berlin's Jewish citizens perished. An extraordinarily rich attempt to display the lives and experiences of Jewish communities over the centuries before the Holocaust, also managing to integrate and commemorate that massive rupture while yet not allowing it to overshadow and displace other aspects of Jewish history and continuing traditions, has been achieved in Libeskind's Jewish Museum. But for those visitors who do not make it this far, being detained perhaps at Checkpoint Charlie or other sites of interest along the way from the Brandenburg Gate through Berlin's extended 'memory quarter', the overriding impression to be gained from the ubiquitous commemoration of former Jewish residents of Berlin is one of absence. The visual recognition of their absence, and of the memorialization of their absence, in a city full of ghosts, has been highly ambivalent.

The ambivalence is perhaps most evident in what is essentially a huge symbolic cemetery, the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, straddling 4.7 acres of territory right next to the Brandenburg Gate, within a stone's throw of both the Reichstag and the plaque commemorating the site of Hitler's Reich Chancellery, bunker and suicide. The product of highly controversial processes of debate and competition, this memorial was strongly pushed by a West German journalist, Lea Rosh (born in 1936), seemingly impelled by a desire to identify with the victims of Nazi genocide – even changing her name from Edith, which sounded 'terribly German' (*schrecklich Deutsch*), to the more Jewish-sounding Lea. The Holocaust memorial arguably represents an attempt on the part of the generation of '1968ers' to establish their identification with the victims and not the perpetrators of the Nazi regime.[14] Curiously, the memorial does precisely allow only an engagement with the victims: the underground visitors' information centre barely presents any analysis of perpetrators, or any explanation of how such a system of

mass murder functioned over several years and over a huge geographical area; it even downplays the presence of Jewish Germans among the victims, implicitly continuing the sharp distinction between 'Germans' and 'Jews', while yet expressing overwhelming contemporary German identification with victims.[15] From one point of view, such a proposed identification with victims, without accompanying exploration of the roles of facilitators and perpetrators, appears almost outrageous: arguably serving more to indulge a desire for atonement and redemption than to educate those coming to learn about this past. Even so, the resultant memorial seems to have irritated many who were just a few years older than the 1968ers, however little personal responsibility they needed to have felt for Nazi crimes. One of the most outspoken critics of a continuing public culture of shame was the writer Martin Walser, born in 1927, whose Frankfurt speech accepting the German book trade peace prize in 1998 protested 'against being shown our shameful deeds without respite'. This speech clearly struck a chord: despite the articulate protest of Ignaz Bubis, at that time President of Germany's Central Council of Jews, it was received with a standing ovation on the part of around 1200 people attending the ceremony. In a long line of such incidents, this was yet another variation on the claim by some post-war Germans that they were themselves being victimized by constant reminders of mass murder: survivors and former victims, or their later representatives, are in this twist cast as perpetrators.

Although on a very different plane of suffering, former citizens of the GDR have in Berlin's tourist memory-scapes been widely cast as victims of Communism. In this case, however, there is no need to construct the victims as 'other', no awkwardness with respect to perpetrators. The mere existence of the Wall has been read to mean that all East Germans not merely were, but consciously registered and felt that they were, incarcerated: that East Germany was 'one big concentration camp' from which physical escape was, after 1961, almost impossible; and was at the same time an ideological 'big brother state' seeking, if it could not persuade, then to dupe its citizens into a stupefied escapism, often accompanied by an alcoholic haze. The ubiquitous emphasis on the Wall and the Stasi conveys the impression that virtually the entire population of the GDR was under constant fear of the spying apparatus (apart, of course, from those actually doing the spying). Such generalizations are reinforced by works such as Anna Funder's journalistic *Stasiland*, and the emotive fiction of West German film-maker Henckel von Donnersmarck's 2006 box office success, *The Lives of Others* (*Das Leben der Anderen*) – a film implicitly representing the oppression of

the cultural intelligentsia as typical for the whole population, and portraying an emotionally compelling story of redemption through the implausible tale of one (extremely well-acted) Stasi officer with a heart, occupying a role which would in actuality have been impossible.[16] In the exhibits of the GDR Museum on Unter den Linden, attempts are made to portray 'ordinary lives': but even here, domestic life in the home and the allotment garden (*Schrebergarten*) is portrayed as a form of flight into the niches of private life, allegedly tolerated only because the daily escapism of watching Western television or drinking in the garden was politically preferable to real flight to the West. Even the more ironic portrayals of the GDR as comedy find difficulty in reconciling the possibility of happiness in family life with fulfilment at work or engagement in societal activities sponsored by the mass organizations or political parties. 'Victimhood' is thus essentially generalized to every GDR citizen in one way or another.

Historical tourism, by cashing in on Berlin's status of a previously divided city at the front line of the Cold War, implicitly reproduces simplistic Western prejudices against a 'totalitarian' GDR, in which all who were not oppressors must by definition have been either actively oppressed, or successfully duped, leaving little or no space for the roles of non-victims, active agents or the complexities of seeking to make one's own life and living it as best one could.

We were not the *Volk*: Awkward absences

The constructed memory-scapes of Berlin thus present, cumulatively, a somewhat simplified picture of its doubly dictatorial past. There are also some startling omissions and highly sensitive silences. Involvement in mass murder and war provide the most striking examples. Despite the massive focus on power and physical repression, there is a notable absence of functionaries and facilitators of Nazism, and of the (inappropriately termed) 'bystanders' who colluded in the racist practices which ultimately made the Holocaust possible.[17] Processes of stigmatization, exclusion, unwelcome exile or forcible deportation of Berlin's Jewish citizens were not simply imposed 'from above': they were proactively sustained by large numbers of Berliners. These included the civil servants who dealt with the progressive removal of Berliners with the 'wrong' ancestry or religious beliefs from educational and professional positions, from places of physical and cultural recreation, from access to adequate food, transport, housing, leisure; and, while after 1945 there was a relatively high degree of turnover in East Germany, many of Hitler's civil servants continued their

careers in the West.[18] Low-level functionaries receive barely a mention in the sites of terror, thus echoing the ways in which the West German juridical system dealt with Nazi crimes as essentially face-to-face crimes of physical brutality, the prime perpetrators being the SS, with little conception of broader involvement or system responsibility.

Historical representations also barely cast a glance at the former friends, colleagues, employers, teachers, landladies, shopkeepers and others who distanced themselves from those designated as pariahs in the 'racial' *Volksgemeinschaft*, thus assisting in the progressive isolation and exclusion of Germans with the 'wrong' ancestry. Precisely this turning away, this no longer wanting to know fellow Berliners and former neighbours, was one of the prerequisites for subsequent deportations and murder. Only a courageous few were willing to take risks, in face of Nazi terror, to hide Jews, give them extra food, or assist them in developing false identities, which allowed some Berlin Jews, remarkably, to escape or survive in hiding.[19] And it was of course among precisely the surviving Berlin 'Aryan' population that later memorials to the victims were erected: thus many who had been complicit in the persecution of Jews subsequently faced uncomfortable reminders when urged to commemorate the sufferings of former victims, however downplayed their own role might be in this memorial culture of shame rather than guilt.

Yet at the same time there was a sense that the suffering of 'Aryan' Germans in wartime was being inadequately memorialized. Also, former supporters wanted a status among Hitler's victims, or at least as victims of Allied air raids caused by Hitler's war.[20] Similarly, claims to unacknowledged victimhood among refugees or expellees from lost eastern territories have recently led to major controversies over collective remembrance of 'flight and expulsion'.[21] The emotional complexities of attempts at 'equations of suffering' continue to dominate public debates over physical sites of remembrance.

Claims to victimhood and questions of historical guilt stand in an uneasy relationship with each other in any German site of memory, however apparently anodyne. The castles and palatial residences of the former Prussian aristocracy in and around Berlin may now be hotels, leisure centres or tourist attractions, with brief historical outlines of 'centuries of tradition' and terrible tales of expropriation and flight from the Russians in 1945; but there is no mention of roles played by many former aristocratic inhabitants in the Nazi regime. The 1944 July Plot, which included members of the Prussian aristocracy, serves as symbol of noble conservative nationalist opposition to Nazism; one looks in vain, however, for explicit mention of the leading roles of so many more

aristocrats in the brutal occupation policies and massacres of millions of civilians (not only Jews) in Nazi-occupied Europe.

'The Crimes of the Wehrmacht' was the one exhibition that did portray the role of the German army (*Wehrmacht*) in mass murders. Its first showings in the mid-1990s reawakened suppressed memories and broke long-standing taboos, opening up a conversation across generations; but after the discovery of a handful of misattributions, the exhibition was closed and subjected to rigorous scrutiny. The sanitized second version, radically purged and reconstructed, lost the emotive impact of the original; the momentary rupture in the decades-long camouflage of the 'decent army myth' was sealed over.[22]

Attempts to remember the war in other ways have proved no less controversial. The Neue Wache on Unter den Linden, which under the GDR served as a 'Memorial to the Victims of Fascism and Militarism', was renamed and reconstituted after unification to commemorate more generally the loosely referenced, anonymous 'victims of war and tyranny'. The major 'exhibit' in this space, the moving but awkwardly enlarged statue of a 'Mother with dead son' by the socialist artist Käthe Kollwitz, rooted in her own experience of loss of one of her sons in the early months of the Great War, serves to tug emotional chords (again helping to cast 'ordinary Germans' on the home front as victims); but it was never intended to clarify the roles of German soldiers in Hitler's genocidal war, a question which is thus again successfully evaded.[23]

There is no central memory site for war behind which different communities arguably could unite. Evoking myths of 'comradeship', 'military virtues', 'patriotic defence of the fatherland', 'heroic sacrifice' and the like, while seeking to distance the military from the Nazi regime, might pacify the few remaining former soldiers, as well as conservative nationalists. But it would be historically distorted, repeating nationalist topoi: outrageously offensive not only in view of the 55 million or so war dead, but also for all those of opposing political and moral persuasions then, now and in the future. It may perhaps take another generation before Berlin could consider the equivalent of London's Imperial War Museum: a sober attempt at distanced historical representation and education.

However repressive the subsequent Communist dictatorship, the GDR, may have been, it was far less involved in physical violence and military aggression than its predecessor; yet oppression dominates the physical portrayal. The absence here is that of portraying any 'normalization' in Cold War conditions. If at all, the experiences of ordinary East Germans are represented in the 'theme park' or 'doping through bread and circuses' mode, evident not only in the GDR Museum but also in the

lightly ironicizing tone of documentaries such as *Damals in der DDR*, as well as popular films such as *Goodbye, Lenin!*, or *Sonnenallee*. Meanings are imputed from without to people who remain absent subjects; and insofar as meanings are represented, they are portrayed as a form of what might ironically be seen in Marxist terms as a form of false consciousness, or in Western colours, ideology. Yet the realities were more complex than this picture of universal victimhood, which fails to do justice to the memories of East Germans, which are not merely misplaced nostalgia or commercially driven *Ostalgie*.[24]

There is a major problem here, however, of how such absences might be addressed for touristic purposes. While the dilapidated remnants of life in the GDR are all too obvious for anyone prepared to take a tram or S-Bahn out to the high-rise *Plattenbau* housing estates in the suburbs, the possibility of happiness among friends and family on lakeside outings around the outskirts of Berlin is less easy to represent; while political conformity in the official youth organizations (Ernst Thälmann Pioneers, Free German Youth) is easy enough to display in slightly mocking tones in museum exhibits, the sense of 'renewal' and 'reconstruction' (*Aufbau*) amid the rubble of the 1950s, or enjoyment of fresh air, train rides and camping in the Wuhlheide youth park, are similarly hard to recreate for the casual historical tourist.

In united Germany then, oddly, there is little attempt at representing lives of ordinary Berliners in the two German dictatorships. The visible role of 'ordinary Berliners' for the historical tourist has been partially filled by the now ubiquitous cartoons of turn-of-the-century working class life by Heinrich Zille. Representations of '*Berlin damals*', the city of yesteryear, produced for the tourist industry perhaps inadvertently serve to deflect attention from widespread complicity in Nazism and from non-malign experiences under Communism. Insofar as experiences of 'ordinary Germans' in these periods are belatedly entering popular historical consciousness, it is through emphases on 'German suffering' in wartime bombing and the 'treks' at the end of the war, while downplaying any possibility of 'normality' under Communism – further variants on the competition for victimhood status, further affirmations of historical innocence.

Berlin is not a palimpsest: Visual evidence and the historical imagination

For the casual historical tourist, then, a distorted picture emerges. Even if the crimes of the Third Reich were greater, its machinery of mass murder and warfare on a wholly different scale, the everyday experience

of GDR Communism is portrayed as worse – for all Germans. While both were dictatorships, the victims of Nazism were a small minority of 'others' (Jews); but in the GDR there was allegedly no freedom for anyone. All were apparently in opposition, all were in some sense victims, whether of physical constraint or ideological repression. Debates about complicity, compromise, conformity, which are so significant from the point of view of historians, are not adequately represented in the meta-narrative provided by the memorial sites of Berlin.

One cannot 'read' Berlin's historical tourist trail as a balanced representation of the two German dictatorships, however sophisticated individual exhibits might be. The overall pictures conveyed by the combination of memorials and exhibitions in apparently authentic physical remains – which are themselves, of course, not simply innocent remnants – are not adequate as historical representations. Nor are these sites of memory appropriate to the often conflicting patterns of private memories or 'non-public collective memories'. In part, this is of course intended: sites of memory are often constructed precisely against the grain, in order to educate or re-educate – and this particularly in periods after a dictatorship. One would hardly want historical memorials simply to reproduce rather than reflect on and challenge the messages and morals of an overcome era. They are, after all, not only (or even at all) attempts at differentiated representation of the past, but (also) interventions in a contested present and a desired future. And a modern city, all the more so a vibrant capital city as a place for living, working and relaxing in, is and has to be about a great deal more than attempts to represent 'the past as it really was', let alone to represent multiple, overlapping, simultaneously present pasts.

Yet there is nevertheless a problem if, in apparently challenging a problematic past, sites of memory and commemoration at the same time distort informed understanding of that repudiated past, and even perpetuate some of its prejudices. A historical site is significant only when it evokes memories, facilitates enhanced knowledge and understanding, or has the potential to be used to this effect. And the power to decide on what is to be preserved, what ignored and what destroyed is a matter of position, resources, alliances: a political question rooted in the configurations of the present. The representations embedded in 'reading Berlin' as historical tourist are not the product of a single author – nor even of a concerted 'author collective', although GDR representations of Nazism come closer to this than do Western variants. GDR representations are readily condemned as 'propagandistic' or 'ideological', while on the Western side the diversity of voices and the relative freedom to engage in protest, or to compete to be heard, serve somewhat to obscure the fact that here, too,

processes of selective commemoration and suppression were at work. It is a convenient myth to assume that, while the GDR's instrumentalization of the past was manipulative, Western approaches were 'objective': on both sides, although in different ways during the Cold War and since unification, questions of politics and identity have played a role alongside pragmatic considerations about utility, alternative potential purposes and conflicting pressures. Representations of power are always shaped by those commanding the power of representation.

Even a cursory survey reveals that these processes – however open to debate, however laudable individual memorials or exhibits may be – do not culminate, collectively, in an adequate repository of 'public memory', but rather propagate jarring or convenient myths. One could hardly expect the wide range of motives – wanting to kick over the traces of a hated system or to repress awkward memories, seeking to express emotions or educate subsequent generations, pragmatic considerations of utility or profit (tourism, after all, has to pay) – really to amount, in a 'simultaneity' across the historical sites of Berlin, to the kind of sophisticated and subtle meta-representation that would reflect current historical debates or meet the conflicting needs of affected groups. What is 'made manifest' inevitably amounts to a distorted historical picture.

But is all this missing a key point? The city of Berlin may itself be no substitute for serious historical research, or for forms of cultural representation, intervention and debate; but the spaces Berlin offers are stimulants to reflection, to controversy; and the plurality of voices and contexts opens the way to far wider attempts at representing the past. Perhaps the simpler joys of historical tourism will stimulate our imaginary tourists towards deeper exploration of Berlin's – and Germany's – complex and multiple engagements with its problematic past.

Notes

1. See for example: A. J. McAdams (2001), *Judging the Past in Unified Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press); W. J. Niven (2002), *Facing the Nazi Past: United Germany and the Legacy of the Third Reich* (London: Routledge); K. E. Till (2008), *The New Berlin: Memory, Politics, Place* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press); D. Verheyen (2008), *United City, Divided Memories? Cold War Legacies in Contemporary Berlin* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield).
2. P. Nora (1984–92), *Lieux de mémoire*, 7 vols (Paris: Gallimard). See also, for example, J. E. Young (1993), *The Texture of Memory* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press); and P. Reichel (1999), *Politik mit der Erinnerung: Gedächtnisorte im Streit um die nationalsozialistische Vergangenheit*, 2nd edn (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag).

3. See also E. Soja (1989), *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (London and New York: Verso), pp. 1–2.
4. See the still seminal: M. Halbwachs (1992 (1925)), *On Collective Memory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press). The distinction between cultural memory and communicative memory made by J. Assmann (1992), *Das Kulturelle Gedächtnis: Schrift, Erinnerung und Politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen* (Munich: Beck) is of little help beyond a preliminary typology.
5. A. Huyssen (2003), 'The Voids of Berlin' and 'After the War: Berlin as Palimpsest', in *Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory* (Stanford: Stanford University Press).
6. See R. Rürup (1987), ed., *Topographie des Terrors: Gestapo, SS und Reichssicherheitshauptamt auf dem "Prinz-Albrecht-Gelände". Eine Dokumentation* (Berlin: Willmuth Arenhövel).
7. R. Schneider (1987), ed., *Historische Stätten in Berlin* (Frankfurt am Main and Berlin: Ullstein); P. Neumann and F. Wengler (1990), *Wo war was in Berlin* (Berlin: Dietz); M. Uschner (1995), *Die zweite Etage: Funktionsweise eines Machtapparates*, 2nd edn (Berlin: Dietz).
8. See also M. Fulbrook (1999), *German National Identity after the Holocaust* (Oxford: Polity Press).
9. E. Noelle and E. P. Neumann (1956), eds, *Jahrbuch der öffentlichen Meinung* (Allensbach: Verlag für Demoskopie), p. 277; E. Noelle and E. P. Neumann (1958–64), eds, *Jahrbuch der öffentlichen Meinung*, 3 (Allensbach: Verlag für Demoskopie), p. 230.
10. See V. Wollenberger (1992), *Virus der Heuchler* (Berlin: Elefanten Press); more generally, M. Fulbrook (1995), *Anatomy of a Dictatorship* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), Chapter 8.
11. See, for example, A. Kahane (2004), *Ich sehe, was du nicht siehst: Meine deutschen Geschichten* (Berlin: Rowohlt).
12. See, for example, N. Frei (2002), *Adenauer's Germany and the Nazi Past: The Politics of Amnesty and Integration* (New York, Columbia University Press); F. Stern (1992), *The Whitewashing of the Yellow Badge: Antisemitism and Philosemitism in Postwar Germany* (Oxford: Pergamon Press).
13. Adenauer's speech to the Bundestag on 27 September 1951, 'Aussöhnung mit dem Staate Israel und den Juden in aller Welt'.
14. U. Jureit (2005), 'Generationen als Erinnerungsgemeinschaften: Das "Denkmal für die ermordeten Juden Europas" als Generationsobjekt', in U. Jureit and M. Wildt, eds, *Generationen* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition), pp. 244–65. On similar lines, see A. Körner (2000), '"The Arrogance of Youth" – a Metaphor for Social Change? The Goldhagen-Debate in Germany as Generational Conflict', *New German Critique*, 80 (Spring–Summer), 59– 6.
15. Ironically, a similarly sharp distinction between 'Germans' and 'Jews' is made by a second-generation survivor in D. J. Goldhagen (1996), *Hitler's Willing Executioners* (London: Little, Brown and Co.).
16. For a critique of this film by an expert on the Stasi, see J. Gieseke (2006), 'Der traurige Blick des Hauptmanns Wiesler: Ein Kommentar zum Stasi-Film "Das Leben der Anderen"', *Zeitgeschichte-online. Zeitgeschichte im Film* (April), http://www.zeitgeschichte-online.de/zol/portals/_rainbow/documents/pdf/gieseke_lbda.pdf (date accessed 18 March 2008). For a sympathetic view by a former dissident, see W. Biermann (2006), 'Die Gespenster treten

aus dem Schatten: "Das Leben der Anderen" Warum der Stasi-Film eines jungen Westdeutschen mich staunen läßt', *Die Welt On-Line* (22 March), http://www.welt.de/data/2006/03/22/863268.html?prx=1 (date accessed 18 March 2008).

17. But see the Stih and Schnock exhibition in Berlin's 'Bavarian quarter', Schöneberg, discussed in Chapter 5 of the present volume.
18. W. Gruner (1996), *Judenverfolgung in Berlin 1933–1945: Eine Chronologie der Behördenmassnahmen in der Reichshauptstadt* (Berlin: Stiftung Topographie des Terrors); N. Frei (2003), ed., *Hitlers Eliten nach 1945* (Munich: dtv).
19. For example, I. Deutschkron (2005), *Ich trug den gelben Stern* (Munich: dtv).
20. See J. Friedrich (2004), *Der Brand: Deutschland im Bombenkrieg 1944–1945* (Berlin: List); W. G. Sebald (2004), *On the Natural History of Destruction* (New York: Random House).
21. See M. Brumlik (2005), *Wer Sturm sät: Die Vertreibung der Deutschen* (Berlin: Aufbau).
22. H. Heer and K. Naumann (1995), eds, *Vernichtungskrieg: Verbrechen der Wehrmacht 1941–1944* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition); H. Heer (2004), *Vom Verschwinden der Täter: Der Vernichtungskrieg fand statt, aber keiner war dabei* (Berlin: Aufbau Taschenbuch Verlag).
23. See for example, Harold Marcuse's paper presented at the German Studies Association Conference 1997, http://www.history.ucsb.edu/faculty/marcuse/present/neuewach.htm (date accessed 19 March 2008).
24. M. Fulbrook (2009), '"Normalisation" in Retrospect: East German Perspectives on their own Lives', in M. Fulbrook, ed., *Power and Society in the GDR, 1961–1979: The 'Normalisation of Rule?'* (Oxford: Berghahn), pp. 278–319; and M. Fulbrook (2005), *The People's State: East German Society from Hitler to Honecker* (London: Yale University Press).

8
Sacralized Spaces and the Urban Remembrance of War

Janet Ward

Ruined memory

It is at the point of rebuilding highly symbolic sites after urban trauma that problems of signification can occur, converging concerns of public history, memory studies, and architecture alike. Reconstruction can fall prey to an overly redemptive and cathartic sense of closure: it can signal the loss of memory, an over-inscription of the memorialization that the ruined site called forth. In Germany's case, fears about urban reconstruction appearing too seamlessly constitutive of a past prior to the Nazi regime and the urban bombardments caused by the Second World War amount, on the most basic level, to fears about a collective loss of inherited responsibility for the Holocaust. The restitution of German urban icons destroyed in the air war has had to be measured (whether directly or indirectly) against this call to Holocaust memory, and has generally been found wanting by comparison. Germany's reunification process and its concomitant reconstitution of the German capital as well as the myriad urban, economic, and cultural infrastructures of the former East German state – all still ongoing after 20 years – have only highlighted this set of comparisons. In his account of reunified Berlin's architectural transformations, for example, Gavriel Rosenfeld has usefully demonstrated how the 'Architects' Debate' of the 1990s (about the role of historical authenticity in post-war and now post-Wall rebuilding) is itself an offshoot of West Germany's longstanding 'Historians' Debate' of the 1980s (when conservative scholars advocated a comparative genocidal relativity over an understanding of the uniqueness of the Nazi Holocaust, and left-wing scholars stressed the consequences of any loss of uniqueness for German collective memory and responsibility).[1]

In this way, the Holocaust's impact on aesthetic-ethical judgments or sensibilities concerning what constitutes the most fitting and authentic form of historical witnessing has entered other representational realms, including the remembrance of civilian suffering in the perpetrator nations of the Second World War. Representations of guilt for war atrocities are being extended to include a sacrificial understanding of even the perpetrator-nation civilians.[2] Since the millennium, in particular, the need has been growing to commemorate the deaths of German civilians in the Allies' aerial war campaigns. In reunified Germany's case, this has become an undeniable facet of the Berlin Republic's reconstructive challenges. As moral philosopher A. C. Grayling points out, even though the aerial bombings by Britain and the U.S. against Germany and Japan are 'dwarfed by the Holocaust and other Axis-committed aggressions and atrocities', they still constitute a significant wrong that the sheer scale of the Holocaust has permitted the victor nations to effectively silence, at least until recently.[3] Since even the war's aggressors are now being permitted to share the ruins of the memory stage of trauma, it stands to reason that any physical or textual monuments of this new victimhood status should also be measured in terms of, and should in turn have an impact on, the yardsticks of Holocaust representation.

The ethical hermeneutics of the Holocaust

In acts of Holocaust commemoration, a self-critiquing tendency can be identified wherein absolution for the past is neither wanted nor permitted. Instead, an ongoing questioning is called for. The wound is to be kept open. This purposefully self-critical approach to the memorialization of the war crimes of the Second World War is more than just a 'pretentious ideology of the tragic' that admittedly 'elevates despair to a permanent condition', according to German sociologist Ulrich Beck – although he clearly recognizes the scholarly temptation to disregard the less obsessively scrutinizing needs of the public.[4] The new, cosmopolitan Europe is, for Beck, a chance to display this experimental conduct. Here Beck is tapping into the counter-monumental strand of Holocaust-based visual culture that has provided a powerful response to Theodor W. Adorno. Adorno is perhaps most misunderstood for his reaction, in 1949, to the magnitude of the Holocaust – that an aestheticization of Auschwitz would amount to barbarism after the deed.[5] Adorno did not mean aesthetic silence – but he did advocate that the events leading to the Nazis' attempted destruction of European Jewry and other targeted groups should be subject to a secular, essentially modernist 'extreme

allegiance to the *Bilderverbot*' or anti-graven-image rule (*Exodus* 20: 4–5) in attempts to reach for the roots of the atrocities' causality and experience. This call is supported by his pragmatic stance that the Holocaust's extreme epistemic significance should lead us 'to arrange [our] thoughts and actions so that Auschwitz will not repeat itself, so that nothing similar will happen'.[6] In all the versions of this rearrangement of the Kantian categorical imperative whether for art or politics, a certain emphasis remains on the philosopher's first response to the trauma's sheer incommensurability.[7]

Adorno's moral philosophical injunctions are echoed in deconstructionist psychological interpretations of historical trauma: here it is found that survivors themselves generally open up rather than close the fissures at the centre of their experiences when they attempt to testify and narrate their pasts. In this acting out of trauma, what is conveyed, as Cathy Caruth has noted, is 'both *the truth of an event*, and *the truth of its incomprehensibility*. But this creates a dilemma for historical understanding'.[8] The conundrum of necessarily falling short, of standing before the unrepresentability of an unreachable core of traumatic experience, has marked not just the narrated but also the visual representations of collective, genocidal trauma. It is a sentiment that has been made into a filmic yardstick by director Claude Lanzmann in his interviews of survivors, bystanders, and perpetrators in the documentary *Shoah* (1985), where victim-survivors' memory fragments were assembled by the director into a loosely structured series of recognizably themed collages (such as the rail deportations), but given limited visual and narrative reconstruction. The historical break of the Holocaust remains an unadorned, and hence even idealized, aporia in the film.

The immediate as well as long-term after-effect of these anti-mimetic rules of Holocaust representation in creative and academic arenas should not be underestimated. Indeed, the commercial success of Steven Spielberg's popularization of the Holocaust story and imagery in the film *Schindler's List* (1993) only proved the alternative Adorno-Lanzmann trajectory of trauma's representational form to be even more 'politically correct' as a non-mainstream, countercultural alternative: authentic historical representation of the atrocities of the Second World War was simply not containable within Hollywood mechanisms of visual pleasure. The exemplifying criteria according to which the Holocaust ought to be memorialized continue to wield influence; they have determined that unless a visual or textual representation of trauma self-consciously extends towards its own unsolvable task, towards an unreachable muteness or inconceivable terror at its core, it is usually

found wanting in some way. The *Bilderverbot* has come to be utilized, then, as a hermeneutics of suspicion that detects any hint of redemption and closure in Holocaust representation. It is an unofficial yet underlying neo-commandment, and it is being sustained despite – or because of – the prevailing mass cultural trends towards the voyeurism of screen violence and the sentimentality of historical cause and effect to which the 'Shoah Industry' has fallen prey.[9] Redemption and closure, then, should not be sold so easily to the consuming public.

The multiple achievements of Holocaust counter-monuments by such artists as Jochen Gerz, Horst Hoheisel, Renate Stih and Frieder Schnock, Micha Ullman, and Rachel Whiteread have been both corrective and cognitive.[10] Counter-monuments and the counter-memorials of former sites of genocidal trauma have adopted the *Bilderverbot* and essentially replaced monumental architecture as the cultural yardstick for charting the genocidal loss of civilian life. Counter-monumental artists seek to create ways of remembering that interrupt and even quite literally stand in the way of the flow of post-traumatic healing-as-sealing. To be sure, not all counter-monuments have succeeded as such: Berlin's Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe (Peter Eisenman, 2005) ought to inspire an equally meaningful response among the public rather than seemingly inviting visitors to lie down on, or jump between, its massive grid of cement stelae – yet its sheer scale of monumental abstraction distracts rather than informs.[11] But for the most part, counter-monumental art and architecture are consciously positioned to become metaphorical 'stumbling blocks' against collective ignorance and forgetting. Think here of the *Stolpersteine* (stumbling-stones) project by artist Gunter Demnig: the 16,000 cobblestone cubes (2000 in Berlin alone) topped with brass plates, that since 1995 have been placed on the pavements of European cities outside the homes of deported Jews and other individuals targeted by the Third Reich. Passers-by stop, lean over, or even kneel down to read the plates' inscription of the victims' names and fates. Thus the counter-monument, at its best, demands renewed links between past victimization and present-day forgetfulness: it continually interrupts.

But the self-consciously critical commemorative artwork or counter-monument of historical trauma is no longer, especially in the early twenty-first century, an innocent tableau. Contrary to expectation, the *Bilderverbot* does not offer an antagonistic function to the sacralization of space. The experience of the sacred cannot be excised from the public's encounters with sites of historical trauma. To some degree, some aspect of religious reverence (as opposed to severance) has been

involved in practically all sites of memory that are dedicated, as in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, to publicly mourning past acts of destruction and preventing future ones – in the sense of one of the German words for memorial, *Mahnmal*, with its link to the term *Mahnung* as warning, exhortation. Far from being removed from the religious experience, the silent, voided centre of the historical atrocities experienced by targeted individuals, groups, or entire societies has itself become elevated into a form of reverse mythologization, affecting the ways in which art, literature, and architecture have attempted to capture and lend meaning to the events themselves. Adorno, in fact, had seen this coming almost immediately: 'The [image] ban [*Bilderverbot*] has been exacerbated: the thought of hope is a transgression against it, an act of working against it. [...] Yet demythologization devours itself, as the mythical gods liked to devour their children. Leaving behind nothing but what merely is, *demythologization recoils into the mythus*'.[12] In other words, the act of recording the epistemic break, apparently without recourse to any redemptive moment, has itself undergone a process of inadvertent sacralization.

In this way, the purportedly unsayable, unshowable aspects of trauma have become a goal in and of themselves. With the success of the counter-monumental trend (at least in arenas other than Hollywood-style film), a secular version of sacralization has thus occurred as a negative form of iconography. One architect whose work demonstrates an intuitive awareness of this increasingly double function of the *Bilderverbot* is Daniel Libeskind. Libeskind's Jewish Museum in Berlin (1999) is a superlative building, inspiring both shock and reverence in its visitors; it is designed to signify the achievements of German Jews as well as the spatial-temporal caesura of the Nazis' murderous voiding of Jews in Berlin – and, indeed, in occupied Europe – in literal, and uncannily effective, three-dimensional form, as well as in the contents of its exhibits. A decade after German reunification, Herbert Muschamp, the late architectural critic for *The New York Times*, felt that the 'soul' of the New Berlin could be found within the voided space of the Holocaust tower in Libeskind's Jewish Museum.[13] Visitors to this Holocaust tower void have been heard crying while they stand there, in the semi-darkness, before the guide reopens the door and lets them back into the building – as if the architectural experience first made them complicit or guilty, and then cathartically redeemed.

It is important to recognize that such redemptive qualities of Libeskind's counter-monumental museum in Berlin are far from contradicting the *Bilderverbot*'s basic meaning. As theologian Elizabeth A. Pritchard

recognizes in Adorno's 'emancipatory praxis', at no point did the philosopher consider his *Bilderverbot* to signify an infinite continuity of suffering for victimized groups or individuals; rather, his texts reveal a constant advocacy of a practical redemption in material and societal terms. In short, then: redemptive reconstruction and the *Bilderverbot* do not necessarily cancel each other out, after all.[14] Acknowledgement of this neglected role of the sacred in the Holocaust-related *Bilderverbot* enables a memory-work to be built out of the rubble. This can lend new historical and ethical meaning to the signs and sins of reconstruction.

Sacralized spaces and the Second World War

Holocaust epistemology with its increasing critical and public awareness has forged an evolution in the critical reception of formally as well as informally sacralized spaces of traumatic memory. Adorno's indirect manifesto for Holocaust representation has essentially functioned as a secular, negative theology, and so it is not surprising that it has to some degree outpaced sacrality itself. How, then, did the inverted theology of the *Bilderverbot* acquire such resonance; that is to say, what is its relation to the more officially hallowed memory sites of war trauma? Despite the structural and aesthetic intertwining of the Holocaust and the air war in Germany, obvious sacred sites like churches have not been sufficiently intersected to the memory-work of the Second World War. Indeed, Christian attempts at piety in representing mass atrocities of the twentieth century, with the Holocaust at their centre, have been associated with a general sense of inadequacy.

Urban churches were among the most obvious iconic structural targets of the air war by and against Nazi Germany. The near-obliteration of German downtown cores and hence also churches by the RAF contained a clear retaliatory motif after the Luftwaffe's destruction by incendiary bombs of St Michael's Cathedral in Coventry in November 1940, and the attack one month later on St Paul's Cathedral in London. The loss of Germany's sacred structures appeared to lend credence to Sir Arthur 'Bomber' Harris's directive of saturation bombing, which was intended to break *'the morale of the enemy civil population'*.[15] The buildings most associated with the religious identity as well as medieval heritage of German cities were wiped out along with the 500,000–600,000 civilians who occupied the same spaces. In post-Holocaust retrospect, it also resembles a form of justice for the Germans' own destruction of hundreds of Jewish synagogues during the Night of Broken Glass (*Kristallnacht*) of 9–10 November 1938.

When Catholic and Protestant German churches were rebuilt in the post-war years (at least across West Germany, with private funds often infused from the international community), they did not for the most part seek to attain status as sites of Second World War memory – in the manner, say, of the rebuilt Coventry cathedral (1962), where the new structure designed by Basil Spence incorporated the ruins of St Michael's as an equal and conjoined site of hallowed ground. There are several causes for this apparent deflection in post-war Germany. Christianity's complicated and conflicted bystander status vis-à-vis the war crimes of the Second World War only adds to the reasons why Christian sacred sites in the German arena commemorating the war were not an obvious choice. The degree to which Christian leadership can be considered to have failed to resist not just Nazism but the ensuing total warfare extends beyond the Germans themselves, and is epitomized by the still-ongoing debates concerning Pope Pius XII and the plight of European Jews. When a booklet by pacifist Vera Brittain criticizing the lack of proportionality in the Allied air war against Nazi Germany was published in the United States in 1944, it met an overwhelmingly negative response, including among American clergy, who felt duty bound to attack Brittain's critique, since it had been signed by some pacifist clergy in the first place. One authoritative voice quoted in Brittain's essay was Visser t' Hooft, Secretary of the World Council of Churches, who asserted in 1943 that total warfare was in the process of emptying out any vestiges of morality in the rules of war: '[T]these bombardments create the impression that the whole world has gone totalitarian'.[16]

Before and at war's end, reports like Brittain's of the horror of Germany's bombed-out cities reached the world, but the true extent of the survivors' physical and psychological conditions was not broadly acknowledged at the time. As German expat writer and critic Sebald reflected in his landmark essay 'Air War and Literature' (1999), Germany's ruins constituted the 'terra incognita of the war';[17] Germans who lived among, in, and even under these ruins in makeshift basements had been made passive and inarticulate by the combined calamitous shame of the fall of the Third Reich, Allied occupation, and war crimes. This state of stultified maturation (in Kantian terms, *Unmündigkeit*) was not a condition that empowered a public to revisit its own trauma in terms of making memorials. The air war's destruction was repeatedly described in terms of a natural disaster of fire and even Biblical flood. Rudy Koshar has demonstrated in his leading study of Germany's preservation efforts before and after the air war that churches belonged to a 'damaged, thin thread of cultural artifacts', and reconstructing them constituted

(from the first West German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer on) a permitted path of redeemable collective identity.[18] When people went to what remained of their places of worship or other structural collective icons, they sought solace and community out of the fragments, and this entailed rebuilding rather than commemorating.

A sacred site that is rebuilt after war ought to include within itself a spectre-like memorial of its former destruction, but in the case of post-war German society rebuilt and reconsecrated churches could and often did suggest a sanctified forgetfulness of the other, less welcome aspects of Nazi Germany that had produced the war in the first place and had carried the responsibility for the Holocaust. In the rebuilding of the vast majority of Catholic and Protestant churches throughout West Germany after the war, as historian Raymond C. Sun has indicated, it was in fact by no means a given that full and complete 'memory-construction work' took place at the same time as the reconstruction work itself. Sun cautions that amidst the 'building blocks of a usable past' that were utilized in the restoration and re-creation of sacred structures – such as the 'victimization and suffering' of Germans in the air war alongside their post-war 'perseverance, faithfulness, and new life' – a sense of responsibility for the former regime and the ensuing war did not usually feature among them.[19] Where churches did address the collective memory-work of war, it did not always pertain to the twentieth century's second global conflict. Koshar points out, for example, how the First World War had given rise to a desire to commemorate the war dead in German churches, a practice resumed during the Second World War.[20] Hence both sets of commemoration of the military echoed in the myriad churches that were being rebuilt. Far from facing any open acknowledgement of German war crimes, churches remained, rather, unconsciously linked with the honouring of the sacrificial German military, a theme that had been overtly re-sculpted by the Nazis in the 1930s, and then put to renewed practice during the Second World War itself.

In the newly founded Federal Republic and German Democratic Republic alike, the 'de-rubbling' (*Enttrümmerung*) of cities took precedence over preservation, and accompanied during the first two post-war decades a fiercely modernizing *tabula rasa* policy of urban planning. This became the mantra for capitalist even more than for Communist purposes. Ruins served as the most obvious memorial spaces of the Allied air war's destruction, and yet they were not welcome; a 'sanitized [urban] history' was.[21] Given this thread of amnesia woven into the fabric of Germany's rebuilt churches, it is perhaps understandable that many of these sites of worship, which ought most obviously to represent civilian losses suffered in the

wars of the twentieth century, became not the sort of *lieux de mémoire* that might reflect a sense of collective heritage (no matter how emptied out, or Cold-War-divided, Germany's in fact was), but *lieux d'oubli*.

In West Germany the remnants of only a few valuable structures, including churches, played at least for a while the role of urban iconic ruins of the air war. The ruins of the Catholic church of St Kolumba in Cologne, for example, included a 'Trümmermadonna', a medieval statue that had survived the bombing.[22] The most famous exception to the tendency to avoid linking churches to war commemoration is the Wilhelmine-era Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church (Gedächtniskirche) in Berlin-Charlottenburg, destroyed by Allied bombs in November 1943 and by Soviet-Nazi artillery fire at the end of the war. It was reconstructed with an adjoining campanile and house of worship (Egon Eiermann, 1959–63) as a site of commemoration for the air war attacks and the civilian dead.[23] Only by public demand was the church's ruined tower retained. Already at the ceremony of its rededication, the Gedächtniskirche monument morphed into a symbol for West Berlin's tenacity during the Cold War. The brochure accompanying the rededication ceremony of the Gedächtniskirche in 1961 stressed that with the church-as-memorial 'a new chapter for West Berlin is opened up' as a 'showcase of German possibilities'.[24]

Given this overall path of avoidance, West German attempts at Holocaust memorialization from the 1960s to the 1980s were admirably well-intentioned but often inherently flawed. The initial postwar decades were witness to a domestically redemptive memorial style – indicating a promise of (often but not necessarily Christian) release, no less, from the guilt of the Holocaust itself. Christian religious experience – including, most obviously, the act of prayer – moves necessarily towards inclusion and atonement, wherein the act of faith signifies that not just guilt is shared by all but so is redemption. If shown too glibly in spatial form, however, the Christian experience can suggest that no further action is necessary, no further penance in the form of collective recall and public education. In short, as with a too seamlessly mimetic reconstruction of a destroyed building that would deny its own destruction, the danger is the cessation of the memory-work itself. The self-limiting consequence can be that a sense of atonement, and hence closure, is too easily conferred upon the viewer-participant of Christian sites of commemoration of the Holocaust.

Any hint of cathartic redemption through aesthetic-spatial encounters with the memory of the atrocities of the Second World War is what has been most adamantly rejected by critics. For example, in his study of the shortcomings of the German memorial constructs at the Dachau

concentration camp, which had included 3000 clergy (including Martin Niemöller) among its prisoners, sociologist Dariuš Zifonun critically assesses the tendency toward a collective 'discourse of consternation' (*Betroffenheitsdiskurs*) that he finds typified in Dachau's churches, particularly its Protestant chapel (Church of Reconciliation, 1967). Zifonun finds fault with how such memory-sites become a potpourri of symbols not just of 'blame appropriation and hatred, sacrifice and suffering, but also of redemption and new beginnings […] Universalism-oriented religious or humanistic communities identify the victims as part of their own group. They seize the ecstatic self-stigmatization of the victims and assume the role of the victims' descendants'.[25] A false appropriation thus occurs.

Another site that was found wanting in this regard was the Neue Wache's post-Wall restyling as a war memorial befitting the newly reunified Berlin and country, namely for *all* victims of the Third Reich and the Second World War. It is small wonder that intellectuals protested against the mixing of victim significations as a form of silencing of the fate of the Jews in the far heavier strata of German-Christian symbolism of penance and salvation contained within the large-scale duplicate of Käthe Kollwitz's autobiographical pacifist sculpture of a grieving 'Mother and Dead Son' (1937–8; dubbed the Pietà). This universalization of Christian mourning in what has become the official war memorial in the reunified German capital disrupts the anti-war commentary that the monument was meant to suggest in its post-Wall reincarnation, because it offers the possibility of an overly comfortable cathartic release for the perpetrator nation.

The commemorative signs/sins that have been diagnosed at Dachau or inside the post-Wall Neue Wache are, however, far from being a uniquely German shortcoming in the post-war representation of a national or collective guilt. An earlier form of stasis-inducing, universalizing sacralization in the memorial space of collective trauma can be identified in Hiroshima's city-run Peace Memorial Park and Museum.[26] Given Japanese society's conflicted self-understanding regarding its combined aggressor and victim roles in the Second World War, this is perhaps hardly surprising. Conceived shortly after the American occupation ended, the exhibits of Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park and Museum have remained relatively unaltered, and hence unburdened, over the decades.

Redemptive reconstruction: The Church of Our Lady in Dresden

Can sacralized space truly bear an historically authentic burden of war memories, and can post-war reconstruction ever avoid erasing the

trauma on which it is based? Perhaps the most significant architectural 'working through' of this combined conundrum is Dresden's Church of Our Lady: the Protestant Frauenkirche, originally built between 1726 and 1743 according to the design of George Bähr, and rededicated in October 2005 after decades of rubble existence. Acknowledging the need for broad and bold solutions, urban scholars have long recognized that one effective way to heal collective psychological wounds is to concentrate on salvaging the fate of a city's key material symbols and central iconic structures.[27] The absence of such objects provides a perennial marker of a city's disaster, and hence their re-creation can signify a new era of both memorializing and yet also recovering from urban trauma. The Frauenkirche's collapse, along with its famous sandstone dome, on 15 February 1945, after burning for two days in the wake of the bombing raids upon the city, symbolized the ferocity of what even Sir Winston Churchill realized were 'acts of terror' enacted by the RAF and USAAF upon German civilians and continued long after military victory was already assured.[28] Dresden's victims numbered anywhere between 25,000 and 40,000. The city suffered 80 per cent residential damage and 65 per cent destruction of its old centre; 25,000 buildings were destroyed in total.

A large proportion of the church's old stones were extant when Germany was reunified. Exceptions to the rubble-removal exigencies of post-war Europe, these stones had lingered thanks to preservationist efforts among so much urban erasure on each side of the Iron Curtain. By the early 1980s, the remnants were commemorated by candlelight every year on the anniversary of the firestorm, both as an official GDR peace symbol and, significantly, as a protest for East Germans' civil rights. When the Wall fell, an international fund-raising effort worked to promote public support for the church's rebuilding, which took nine years and cost 180 million euros (with over half from private donors like the British-based Dresden Trust). Ultimately, after electronic testing for structural integrity, 3800 facade stones and many lining bricks proved salvageable, totalling 4500 sqm recycled materials overall.[29] The degree of honesty in the rebuilding extends to the replication of the church's original building method, which could be identified in Bähr's documents as well as those used for renovations in the 1920s. Steel reinforcing 'anchors' were added to the load-bearing sandstone dome (replacing the 300 original iron ones); and the new stones were even quarried from the same local source, just outside the city, that had provided the originals. All this was achieved, ironically enough, by the most sophisticated architectural technology, namely, CATIA, a leading

Figure 8.1 The dome of the reconstructed Dresden Frauenkirche. Photo © Janet Ward, 2006

CAD software donated by IBM and usually reserved for aerospace and the designs of Frank Gehry.

Due to the unique integrity of a structure that literally combines the past and present within itself, the reconstituted and reconsecrated church serves as the reunified country's strongest sacralized memory site to date of the urban trauma of the Second World War. As a gravestone marker for the victims of one of the worst attacks of the Allied air war against Germany, and a demonstration of a city's rebirth, the Frauenkirche does not eradicate memory because it depends on it. It shows that reconstruction can be understood as a form of seeing anew: a redemptive, *sacralized re-cognition* of the past made suitable for the needs of the present. Unlike the temporal and ultimately cognitive stasis of the church's former rubble site (akin to the stopped watches at 8.15 a.m. in Hiroshima's museum), Dresden's new Frauenkirche evokes the various phases of its pre-war existence, destruction, ruin, and stages of reconstruction. Most significantly, the Frauenkirche suggests the ultimate futility (as well as utter lack) of *jus in bellum* of total warfare against civilians.

Hence the outcome of the Frauenkirche's reconstruction is not quite as many cultural critics had predicted.[30] The rebuilt church does not avoid Germany's historical discontinuities. Neither does it replicate a universalizing stasis of memory, as found at the Hiroshima museum. At odds, in fact, with the *Bilderverbot* is not the reconsecrated church but what can be termed the *lady-churching* (*Frauenkirchisierung*) of Dresden. Here, the critics' assault on the rebuilding project for the city is resting its case, because the success of the baroque church's reconstruction has led to an over-reliance on one fixed image and era of the city that is

then copied and spread out into other, less well justified architectural retrievals. Such is the recognizable route of mimetic heritage rebuilding (e.g., in post-war Munich, Nuremberg, or Warsaw). The ongoing Disneyfication of the city's centre in the wake of both the hot and cold wars of the twentieth century applies, then, to the retail area going up around the Frauenkirche, a replica of the bombed-out baroque New Market (Neumarkt). "An example of such travesties against German preservation work occurred when the extant foundations of the former buildings were not integrated into the new 'Quartier 1', where the architecture now merely 'looks' old." This aspect of the Dresden *Altstadt*-renewal has little in common with the original cosmopolitan impulse behind the baroque restylization of Dresden under Saxony's Elector Friedrich August II. It appears likely that the same danger will apply to the future rebuilt Stadtschloss (City Palace) as the Humboldtforum in Berlin.

The Frauenkirche, while not subsumable within such theme parks of highly selective architectural history, seems nonetheless destined to function within a sea of memory abuses regarding Dresden that have unfolded in the wake of the country's reunification. Indeed, the extreme right-wing movement has made so much mileage out of the mythologization of Dresden as a site of bombed innocence, even an Allied Holocaust, that it had to be met with a counter-demonstration by Dresdeners on the 60th anniversary of the air raid in 2005. Unfortunately, the political left provided the neo-Nazi movement with its own argument: German peace protests in early 2003 against the American war in Iraq made unveiled references paralleling the Dresden bombing with that of Iraq, making America and Britain war criminals in each instance.[31] Ironically, the left's findings against the Allies' firestorm are being fruitfully utilized by neo-Nazis, because the topic ties in well with their own brand of victim nationalism for Germany. After all, Holocaust denier David Irving's book on Dresden as a grave for over 130,000 has been in circulation for over 40 years.[32]

Despite such urban and political pitfalls, the memory of Second World War trauma is still evolving *towards*, rather than *away* from, the need for a type of sacrality that cannot be neatly subsumed within regular confines. Dresden's Frauenkirche constitutes one step towards a regained German *Mündigkeit* or maturity concerning the air war; and this articulation affects Holocaust representational boundaries, as well. To adapt Saul Friedländer's phrase, the 'limits of representation' are there to be 'probed' in such a way as to most effectively reconnect the public to the memory-work that emerges in the aftermath of genocidal

trauma. The reconstruction of the Frauenkirche, Germany's icon of civilian losses in the Allied bombings, presents a new phase in the evolution of the commemoration of the Second World War in Europe – a phase that takes reconstruction toward sacralized re-cognition. As such, the new Frauenkirche constitutes a substitution of sorts, a new stage evolving from the *Bilderverbot*. Over the next several decades, as the Frauenkirche's yellow new stones merge in colour with the blackened old ones, collective memory itself will have been therapeutically altered by the church's resuming its former place within the fabric of the city – even if post-war and post-Communist Dresden is no longer containable as the holistic city of art contained within Canaletto's riverscape art of the city.

It is in fact inevitable that a post-traumatic stage of the memory-work, like the mended Frauenkirche, should eventually emerge out of the wounded city. The detritus of traumatic memory discerned by the Angelus Novus in Paul Klee's artwork, a melancholic trope used by Walter Benjamin and subsequently also by Sebald in his memory-work of the air war as a preferred mode of remembrance, negating Hegelian progress, ultimately peters out to urban recovery.[33] Critics have feared any sacralization of memorial space lest it become a site where, precisely, the historical event is not engaged with cognitively but only emotionally, and cathartically, performed. But it is precisely this performative aspect that must be recognized as a vital part of public commemoration, whether religiously, architecturally, or museally. In Dresden's reconstructed Frauenkirche, we are finally encountering a new form of sacralized re-cognition that will befit the twenty-first century's perspective of the Second World War.

Notes

1. G. Rosenfeld (1997), 'The Architects' Debate: Architectural Discourse and the Memory of Nazism in the Federal Republic of Germany, 1977–1997', *History and Memory*, 9.1–2, 208–16.
2. See S. Lindquist (2001), *A History of Bombing*, trans. Linda Haverty Rugg (New York: The New Press).
3. A. C. Grayling (2006), *Among the Dead Cities: The History and Moral Legacy of the WWII Bombing of Civilians in Germany and Japan* (New York: Walker), p. 116.
4. U. Beck and E. Grande (2007), *Cosmopolitan Europe*, trans. C. Cronin (Cambridge: Polity Press), p. 134.
5. T. W. Adorno (1981), *Prisms*, trans. S. and S. Weber (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press), p. 34.
6. T. W. Adorno (1977), 'Vernunft und Offenbarung', in *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. R. Tiedemann, 10 (Frankfurt am: Suhrkamp), p. 616; T. W. Adorno (1994), *Negative Dialectics*, trans. E. B. Ashton (New York: Continuum), p. 465.

7. See E. A. Pritchard (2002), 'Bilderverbot Meets Body in Theodor W. Adorno's Inverse Theology', *Harvard Theological Review*, 95.3, 291–318, p. 314.
8. C. Caruth (1995), ed., *Trauma: Explorations in Memory* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press), p. 153.
9. See M. B. Hansen (1996), '*Schindler's List* is Not *Shoah*: Second Commandment, Popular Modernism, and Public Memory', *Critical Inquiry*, 22, 292–312; and A. O. Scott (2008), 'Never Forget. You're Reminded. Collective Tragedy Becomes a Cinematic Genre That Plays to Hearts, Minds and Awards', *The New York Times* (23 November 2008), AR 1, 13.
10. See J. E. Young (1993), *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press); J. E. Young (2000), *At Memory's Edge: After-Images of the Holocaust in Contemporary Art and Architecture* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press); K. E. Till (2005), *The New Berlin: Memory, Politics, Place* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press).
11. For a comparison of Eisenman's memorial design with Libeskind's Jewish Museum and other counter-monuments, see J. Ward (2005), 'Monuments of Catastrophe: Holocaust Architecture in Berlin and Washington', in A. Daum and C. Mauch, eds, *Berlin – Washington, 1800 – 2000: Capital Cities, Cultural Representation, and National Identities* (New York: Cambridge University Press), pp. 155–200.
12. Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, p. 402 (emphasis original).
13. H. Muschamp (1999), 'The New Berlin: Building on the Rubble of History. Once Again, a City Rewards the Walker', *The New York Times* (11 April 1999).
14. Pritchard, 'Bilderverbot', pp. 317–18.
15. C. Webster and N. Frankland (1961), 'Official History', in *The Strategic Air Offensive Against Germany 1939–45* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office [HMSO]).
16. Quoted in V. Brittain (1944), 'Massacre by Bombing: The Facts Behind the British–American Attack on Germany', *Fellowship*, 10.3 (March), 62.
17. W. G. Sebald (2003), *On the Natural History of Destruction*, trans. Anthea Bell (New York: Random House), p. 31.
18. R. Koshar (1998), *Germany's Transient Pasts: Preservation and National Memory in the Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press), p. 218.
19. R. C. Sun (2008), 'Sacred Ruins: Reconstructing Catholic Memory in Postwar Germany', 12. Paper presented at the German Studies Association conference, St. Paul, MN, October 2008.
20. Koshar, *Germany's Transient Pasts*, pp. 104, 194–5.
21. Ibid., p. 216.
22. H. Beseler and N. Gutschow (1988), *Kriegsschicksale Deutscher Architektur. Verluste – Schäden – Wiederaufbau: Eine Dokumentation für das Gebiet der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, 1 (Neumünster: Karl Wachholtz Verlag), pp. 541–52. The remnants of this church, including the post-war 'Madonna in the Ruins' chapel, have since been embedded into the new Kolumba Art Museum designed by Peter Zumthor (2007).
23. Ibid., pp. 139–40.
24. Cited by H. Rudolph (2007), 'Der Kampf um die Ruine – bis heute im Gedächtnis', *Der Tagesspiegel* (4 November 2007).
25. D. Zifonun (2004), *Gedenken und Identität: Der deutsche Erinnerungsdiskurs* (Frankfurt am: Campus Verlag), p. 187.

26. D. Selz (2004), 'Remembering the War and the Atomic Bombs: New Museums, New Approaches', in D. J. Walkowitz and L. M. Knauer, eds, *Memory and the Impact of Political Transformation in Public Space* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press), pp. 127–36.
27. Comparative historical evidence of this is charted in L. J. Vale and T. J. Campanella (2005), eds, *The Resilient City: How Modern Cities Recover from Disaster* (New York: Oxford University Press).
28. The phrase originates with Sir Winston Churchill, who in a secret memorandum to his Chief of Staff, General Ismay, on 28 March 1945 changed his mind about the morality of the air war as a result of the Dresden raid. Memorandum cited in F. Taylor (2004), *Dresden, Tuesday, February 13, 1945* (New York: HarperCollins), pp. 375–6.
29. F. Wenzel (1997), 'Vom Mahnmal zum Denkmal: Die bautechnische Konzeption zum Wiederaufbau der Frauenkirche zu Dresden', *Deutsche Bauzeitung*, 131.8, 73–82.
30. The debate over the Frauenkirche's reconstruction project arose over doubts that the church could deliver sufficient authenticity for Germany's post-war as well as for the city's post-communist memory: see for example, J. Trimborn (1997), 'Das "Wunder von Dresden": Der Wiederaufbau der Frauenkirche. Ein Kritischer Blick auf das "größte Rekonstruktionsprojekt des Jahrhunderts"', *Die Alte Stadt*, 97, 127–50; A. Ruby (2000), 'Las Vegas an der Elbe', *Die Zeit*, 46; A. Bartetzky (2003), 'Nach der Frauenkirche: Rekonstruktionslust und Abrißwut in Ostdeutschland', *Kunstchronik*, 56.6, 278–84; S. Vees-Gulani (2003), *Trauma and Guilt: Literature of Wartime Bombing in Germany* (Berlin: de Gruyter), pp. 57–64; M. Jarzombek (2005), 'Disguised Visibilities: Dresden/ "Dresden"', *Log*, 6, 73–82; H. Rauterberg (2005), 'Steine zum Anstoßen', *Die Zeit*, 44 (27 October 2005); G. Lupfer (2006), 'Dresdner Imitationen im Schatten der Frauenkirche: Vom Historischen Neumarkt zu den Sandstein-Tapeten am Altmarkt', in B. Klein and P. Sigel, eds, *Konstruktionen urbaner Identität: Zitat und Rekonstruktion in Architektur und Städtebau der Gegenwart* (Berlin: Lukas), pp. 33–48; R. Goebel (2007), '*Gesamtkunstwerk* Dresden: Official Urban Discourse and Durs Grünbein's Poetic Critique', *The German Quarterly*, 80.4, 492–510.
31. A. Huyssen (2003), 'Air War Legacies: From Dresden to Baghdad', *New German Critique*, 90, 171.
32. D. Irving (1968), *The Destruction of Dresden* (New York: Ballantine).
33. W. Benjamin (1969), 'Theses on the Philosophy of History', *Illuminations*, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken), pp. 257–8; Sebald, *Natural History of Destruction*, pp. 67–8.

9
Paradise for Provocation: Plotting Berlin's Political Underground

Charity Scribner

After the end of the Second World War and in the ensuing shifts in international relations among the former Allies now known as the Cold War, the German Left re-emerged and took on new forms.[1] First, it was institutionalized as social democracy in the West and state socialism in the East. Then, in the late 1960s and 70s, when world conflict reached maximum pitch in South East Asia, there developed an increasingly violent strain of leftist militancy in West Germany. In the context of these changes and the ideological struggles of the first post-war decades, Berlin became a prime battleground. In the 1950s and 1960s 'antifascist' blocs emerged on either side of the city, but they took strikingly different forms. Eastern officials erected the Berlin Wall – conceived as an antifascist barrier – in August 1961. The German Democratic Republic's attempts to protect its citizens through the most brutal sort of urban planning shaped the lives and collective memories of most Germans, even after the Wall's destruction in 1989. In the mid- and late 1960s, many young West Berliners advanced a separate version of antifascist resistance, as they revolted against the generations that had enabled and abetted Hitler's genocidal dictatorship.

These two expressions of German leftism – one institutional, the other radical or 'Far Left' – could not, it has long seemed, have contrasted more strongly with each other. What could an East German bureaucrat have had in common with a dropout from West Berlin? Yet recent findings demonstrate that ties between these two blocs kept the two Berlins in covert communication throughout the Cold War period.

These findings dismantle many of the assumptions regarding Berlin that have long seemed self-evident. The general consensus was that the Wall divided not only the city's built environment, but also the culture and politics of the Soviet system and the liberal democracies

of the West. East Berlin, the nerve centre of socialist administration, was seen as a model city in itself. The Western sectors, occupied by American, British and French forces, became a haven for students and activists seeking a countercultural lifestyle. The communes and collectives of Kreuzberg and Moabit served as testing sites for democracy and tolerance in post-war Germany. East was East, and West was West.

But new evidence of Berlin's recent history unsettles these assumptions. Files of the Ministry of State Security, or Stasi, of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) now being made public expose the secret links that connected the West's 'alternative scene' to the Eastern regime. At the same time, the recently publicized testimonies of members of the Red Army Faction (Rote Armee Fraktion, or RAF) and other militant organizations disclose strains of anti-Semitic fervour that shot through radical leftist circles in Berlin, especially in the late 1960s – the early days of the West German Armed Struggle (*Bewaffneter Kampf*). This militancy soon turned to terror and set off shock waves that continue to resonate across Germany and abroad.

A number of writers and artists have produced novels and films that survey the left-wing underground of Berlin in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. Among them Christoph Hein and Volker Schlöndorff have dramatized the stories of the RAF, focusing on the militants' traversals of the limits that divided East from West. Their work establishes a critical tension with our sense of Berlin – both the received knowledge of its leftist legacies and the latest revelations that test these commonplaces. This chapter examines both the new histories of Berlin and the aesthetic representations of its leftist legends. How do these accounts inflect the city's politics of memory?

A map of far left activity in post-war Berlin would chart a new pattern of violence and corruption, one that differs from the favoured urban imaginary – the idea of West Berlin as an archetype of tolerance and transparency and East Berlin as an urban architecture of hermetic restraint. Yes, the city's structures gave rise to some of the best that the Federal Republic had to offer: democratic dynamism, ethnic diversity and advanced art and culture. And it must also be affirmed that the East was the headquarters of the GDR's violently repressive topographical system. But in the 1960s and 1970s these same structures – the buildings, borders and passages – were activated as a matrix for complexity and contradiction. A variety of sources map out the radical underground of Cold War Berlin: photographs and legal depositions, autobiographies and fictions. This chapter draws upon these disparate sources to propose a partial counter-history of post-war Berlin. The focus on home-grown

terrorists is not what counters convention. Rather, it is the retrospective arc that the chapter traces, as it moves from the current cultural fascination with the Armed Struggle back through the flashpoints of the 1970s to survey the ground zero of left-wing militancy in Germany.

Cold War, hot city

Although radicals were active in Frankfurt, Hamburg and other Western cities, Berlin was a privileged place for their interventions. Leftists located sites on both sides of the Wall and turned them into platforms for what was known as the anti-imperialist struggle. East Berlin also witnessed a small spate of closely watched student protests, but the real focus of the student movement lay in the West. Things accelerated around a series of events staged at West Berlin's Free University and Technical University. When the movement came to a crisis in the late 1960s, some activists splintered off and formed alternative *Wohngemeinschaften*, or communal living groups. The factory turned flat of Kommune 1 was perhaps the most notorious. It has certainly endured as the locus of nostalgic longing among Berliners of a certain age. K1, as it was called, first took up residence in 1967 in Friedenau and later moved to an abandoned factory building in Moabit's Stephanstraße. K1 members shared a single sleeping loft and spent long, strung-out weeks arguing politics and tending the weeds in the back garden. Uschi Obermeier, a fashion model and resident, invited Jimi Hendrix to visit the 'wild life' of Kommune 1. Her ambiguous notions of a new sexuality, developed together with the communard Rainer Langhans, are seen by some Germans to have opened the floodgates for John Lennon and Yoko Ono's declaration that 'all you need is love'.[2] The idea for the leftist newspaper *die tageszeitung* – still a major media source in Berlin and across Germany – was also spawned at Kommune 1.

But so were early plans for several terrorist acts. The commune was a crucible for some of the most sensational experiments of the sixties generation. The proponents of this experimentation will be important for the following discussions. Among them, Michael Baumann, a rebel with a talent for making bombs, found his calling at K1. And Dieter Kunzelmann, an artist and agent provocateur, moved into the space after Guy Debord expelled him from the Situationist International, the Paris-based neo-avant-garde group. From the subculture of West Berlin, Kunzelmann refunctioned the Situationist *dérive* and shaped it into a blunt object of political violence. The actions instigated by Kunzelmann and other radicals rocked West Berlin's fledgling democracy

and sent tremors across the Wall into the socialist East. Incited in the late 1960s, the repercussions of their militancy have endured to the present.

Three flashpoints illuminate Berlin's recent radical past: the rise of left-wing violence in the West, the Stasi's covert support of the militants and the aftermath of these developments in the post-unification present. Just as these events can be read as series of fits and starts, the sites on which they took place can be charted onto a broken map – a topography of terrorism that linked Berlin's two sides during the Cold War – but that is only beginning to come into view. The best way to read this map, remarkably, is to chart a reverse chronology of the city's recent history. Engaging both documents and fictions, this chapter uses this methodology to plot out the margins between the real and imagined terrains of the Armed Struggle.

Post-militant culture

Interest in Berlin's militant past has deepened in recent years. Many bookshops have opened up special 'RAF Studies' shelves that display the wide range of memoirs, historical overviews and literary works that have proliferated, especially in the years since the terrorist attacks on New York, Washington, Madrid and London. The question of how to frame left-wing violence remains hotly debated. In the controversial exhibition 'Regarding Terror' in 2005, curators at Berlin's Kunst-Werke Institute of Contemporary Art worked up a chronology that charted the history of the German Far Left from the late 1960s to the RAF's official dissolution in 1998. Like many attempts to historicize leftist violence, the Kunst-Werke schema started with the student movement and moved towards the present. What might we learn by opposing this trajectory and reading Berlin's terror in reverse? Taking this approach, we detect some truths about German radicalism that have been obscured by the recent waves of RAF fever. That which, in the present, might appear as either a loose cohort of worn-out resisters or the last vestiges of an idealized subculture attains a different colour in the context of Cold War politics. The critical minds of what might be called 'post-militant culture' – the literature and art that responds and reacts to the rise and fall of German left-wing terrorism – have enabled this perspective. Reading the works of Hein and Schlöndorff together with new studies of Berlin's history, we can get a different picture of the city's political landscape in the post-war period.

One good starting point for this reverse reading can be found in the 2008 court decision on the status of the last RAF member remaining in prison. The Frankfurt Court of Appeals denied parole to Birgit Hogefeld,

one of the more prominent of the group's 'third generation' – the militants who continued to fight out the German Armed Struggle long after Andreas Baader, Ulrike Meinhof and other RAF progenitors had died. Hogefeld was serving a life sentence for several crimes, including her role in the 1985 murder of a US military officer stationed in the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG). Evading punishment, Hogefeld had gone underground and lived clandestinely well into the early years of reunified Germany. In 1993 she resurfaced in a shoot-out with a unit of the GSG-9, the federal counterterrorism forces, in a small town in eastern Germany, not far from Berlin. Hogefeld was arrested and sent to a maximum-security facility, but her accomplice, Wolfgang Grams, another RAF member, died in the barrage. In 2001, when the security and intelligence systems of East and West Germany had fully integrated, it became apparent that Grams assisted in the RAF's last known lethal attack: the 1991 assassination of Detlev Rohwedder.[3] The re-emergence of the cases of Grams and Hogefeld in the German media revived the question of the RAF's relationship to the GDR – and specifically to East Berlin – since it foregrounded Rohwedder's career. A Western finance manager, Rohwedder was the first president of the Treuhand Anstalt, the agency established to privatize and, in many cases, decommission the state-owned industries of the GDR. In the first stages of unification, he attempted to advance a kind of 'third way' socialism in the new federal states, but such complicated realities did not compute with the RAF's binary programs. From their reductive standpoint, you were either part of the problem or part of the solution.

Christoph Hein drew heavily upon the covert actions of Grams and Hogefeld in his 2005 novel *In seiner frühen Kindheit ein Garten* (In His Early Childhood, A Garden). The work is narrated from the perspectives of Richard and Friederike Zurek, bewildered parents who lose their estranged, militant son, Oliver, in a skirmish with the GSG-9. In an attempt to come to terms with their child's life and death, the couple calls upon the authorities, asking for documentation of the case. The more they learn about Oliver's arrest, the less clear the circumstances of the final showdown become. Key documents disappear, witnesses provide contradictory testimonies, and government officials thwart the Zureks' efforts to check the details of the incident. When unflattering commentary on Oliver and his relatives appears in the national media, discord breaks out within the family, nearly tearing it apart. Over the course of the novel, Richard Zurek, a retired school principal, has a crisis of conscience: he begins to doubt the democratic system and federal laws that he had spent a career teaching about and defending.

Unlike some of Hein's earlier works – *Der fremde Freund* (The Distant Lover, 1992) and *Willenbrock* (2000), for example – *In seiner frühen Kindheit* became the object of intense scrutiny. Critics derided the novel's sympathetic characterization of a left-wing terrorist and compared it unfavourably to Andres Veiel's *Black Box BRD* (2001), a documentary film that compares the biographies of an RAF perpetrator and an RAF victim: Wolfgang Grams and Alfred Herrhausen, the Chairman of the Deutsche Bank who was killed by an RAF car bomb in November 1989, just a few weeks after the opening of the Berlin Wall. Film, in this instance, seemed to more adequately address the matter of Far Left violence in Germany. *Black Box BRD* reactivated the remembrance of Grams and Herrhausen in a way that Hein's novel did not, attesting to Thomas Elsaesser's argument that cinema has a structural affinity to trauma, as it revisits moments of shock and makes the past seem present again.[4] Comparing *In seiner frühen Kindheit* to other literature and film of post-militant Berlin, we can explore the way each medium performs the work of memory – for both the victims and the perpetrators of left-wing terrorism. We can also examine how the different styles and stances of the writers and film-makers have an impact upon the reception of their works.

The RAF goes East

It is now generally accepted that before Berlin's post-Communist turn, or *Wende*, the RAF maintained a strategic friendship with the Stasi.[5] As a signatory to the Helsinki Accords of 1975, the GDR recognized the sovereignty of the FRG and did not actively attempt to destabilize its security systems. Although some have argued that the RAF and the Stasi shared common 'enemies' in the West German state and its NATO allies, in the 1970s and 1980s the GDR government had more pressing concerns than taking down its capitalist sister. The greatest threats to state socialism at that time were global economic recession, commodity shortages and internal dissent. Nevertheless, the Stasi did hold an elective affinity to the RAF.[6] In the 1970s and 1980s, the East German state welcomed Western terrorists into its bureaucratic embrace. The Stasi allowed West German militants to pass in and out of East Berlin on their way to Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) training camps in Jordan. They also granted covert asylum to 11 *RAF-Aussteiger*: criminal members of the RAF's second and third generations who 'dropped out' from the West, either because they faced incarceration in the FRG or because they had grown disillusioned with the Armed Struggle. The Stasi

gave the RAF dropouts false identities – fake names, fake passports, fake life stories – and installed them across the GDR, where they lived more or less as upstanding GDR citizens until the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Volker Schlöndorff's film, *Die Stille nach dem Schuß* (The Legend of Rita, 2000), is a key work that addresses the RAF's trans-cultural migrations and traversals of identity. Taking Berlin as a point of departure, Schlöndorff tells the story of Rita Vogt, a Western radical who tries to sublimate her terrorist past in the alternative reality of the GDR. Rita is modelled after several militants, but she seems to most closely resemble two RAF women, Ina Siepmann and Inge Viett. Both Siepmann and Viett were initiated into the Armed Struggle through the Berlin-based *Bewegung 2. Juni*, or 2 June Movement. Both later participated in RAF attacks across the country in the 1970s and 80s, and each sought asylum abroad.

An early member of Kommune 1, Siepmann joined Dieter Kunzelmann's guerrilla offensive in the late 1960s and 1970s. In 1977, when the RAF ratcheted up its terror, she broke off from the Berlin militant scene and moved to Lebanon, where she joined forces with a brigade of Palestinian women; she is believed to have died in the Israeli invasion of Beirut in 1982. Inge Viett chose a different exit strategy. Instead of heading into the white-hot core of global conflict, in 1982 she accepted the Stasi's offer to emigrate to the GDR with the other *RAF-Aussteiger*. She moved to Dresden, changed her name to Eva-Maria Sommer, and worked in a photo lab. Within a few years, however, her disguise began to wear through, so she moved to Magdeburg and entered into her third 'life' as Eva Schnell, a counsellor at the summer camp for children of workers at the Karl Liebknecht Collective Plant for Heavy Machinery.

In 1990, when the law enforcement bureaus of East and West Germany began to cooperate, Viett was arrested and sentenced to 13 years of prison for several crimes, including the shooting of a policeman in Paris and assisting in the abduction of Peter Lorenz, the Christian Democrats' candidate for the 1975 mayoral elections in Berlin.[7] From prison, she published her first memoir, *Nie war ich furchtloser* (Never Was I Braver, 1997), which recounts her life as a fugitive, including her brief exile (with Stasi assistance) in Iraq in 1978.[8] When she was granted early parole for good conduct, she started a new career as a writer. Her publications – mostly social critiques – make frequent reference to her own lived experience as an activist, a socialist worker and an incarcerated enemy of the state. In them there is no remorse, no apology for her militancy or criminal actions.[9]

Die Stille nach dem Schuß conforms so closely to real life that Viett was able to win a settlement for plagiarism against Schlöndorff and his

screenwriting team.[10] An early scene is shot in the West Berlin prison (*Frauenhaftanstalt Lehrter Straße*) that Viett escaped from in 1976 before going underground. The Rolling Stones' song 'Street Fighting Man' accompanies the title sequence as the camera pans over the desk and bookshelves of a Berlin commune; we see revolutionary handbooks and ashtrays crowd up against a Hendrix photograph and a poster from *Viva Maria*. The characters begin with a playful bank heist, but their pranks soon degenerate into violence, forcing them underground and limiting the scope of their actions.

When the militants decide to leave the FRG, their intention is to use the Stasi's assistance to move on to Angola or Mozambique, where they might contribute to various humanitarian initiatives. Their first stop is an apparatchik retreat on the outskirts of Berlin – a complex quite like the actual woodland lodge where the *RAF-Aussteiger* spent their first few days in the GDR.[11] Schlöndorff's Rita Vogt decides to stay in the East and to become a factory worker. Following Viett's published accounts of her conversion to the GDR quotidian, Rita studies eastern dialects, vocabulary and body language. Together with the Stasi agent Erwin Hull (expertly played by Martin Wuttke), she rehearses an imaginary biography of the East German alter ego she would assume for the rest of her life – or at least what, at that time, when German unification was nowhere in sight, she thought would be the rest of her life.

As Schlöndorff has noted, few East Germans would have believed that a West German would willingly emigrate to the GDR in the dark days of 'real existing socialism', so the *Aussteiger* had to work up 'legends' to enable their transfer.[12] In *Die Stille*, Rita and Erwin make a telling choice in their false narrative of her life: Rita's fictional parents will have died in a highway accident, they decide. This detail is pitched to deflect unwanted questions about Rita's past. It also signals a persistent desire of many German youths in the 1960s – that of breaking with the genealogy of the authoritarian state. Under the Allied government, West Berlin was the only part of the FRG that exempted its residents from military service. In the 1960s and 70s the walled-off Western Sectors became an almost Edenic enclave for thousands of youths who wanted to evade this federal duty. To move to West Berlin was not just to protest against war; becoming a West Berliner, one took a step away from the dreadful inheritance of the German military. As a woman, Rita would not have had to undergo military service, but her disavowal of her parents functions as a metaphor for her generation as a whole, men and women alike.

Divided Berlin enabled similar sleights by central figures of the German urban guerrilla movement. Two of them – Michael Baumann

and Dieter Kunzelmann – stand out. Turning to them, we wind back the clock of German militancy to its zero hour, to a primal scene that most aesthetic accounts of the RAF legacy – Hein and Schlöndorff's works included – do not engage with. This survey discloses the conflicts of the *Nachgeborenen* (those who came of age after the Second World War) whose backlash against 'the Auschwitz generation', as RAF leader Gudrun Ensslin once called it, interrupted the critique of fascism that was being developed by the New Left and other left-oriented social movements that were emerging in the 1960s.[13] Lacking a coherent analysis, the militants entered a deadlock of historical repetition of xenophobia and violence. As if condensing the condition that Marx described in the *Eighteenth Brumaire*, this history of Berlin repeated itself as tragedy and farce in a single stroke.

How it all began

One of the most astonishing documents of the German terrorist underground – a substratum that went deep beneath the Berlin Wall and connected the two sides of the city – was discovered with the opening of the Stasi archives: a 125-page report written by Michael 'Bommi' Baumann, an army deserter whose path intersected with the Far Left in the 1960s and 1970s. In 1973, when arrested at the German-Czech border for carrying a falsified passport, Baumann was interrogated by East German intelligence. During his detention, he wrote profiles of 94 prominent West German militants. Inge Viett and Ina Siepmann count among them, as do Ensslin's fellow RAF leaders Andreas Baader and Ulrike Meinhof. The profiles cover political and sexual orientation and give detailed information on the type of arms each subject was known to handle.[14] Baumann wrote the profiles by hand and signed every page.

Baumann's interrogation was held at the prison in Berlin-Hohenschönhausen, and the report on it – registered under the code name 'Anarchist' – was forwarded to Markus Wolf, the head of *Hauptverwaltung Aufklärung*, or HVA, the foreign intelligence division of the Stasi. After six weeks of cross-referencing the figures in Baumann's profiles, his interrogators released him into West Berlin through a secret passage at the Friedrichstraße checkpoint – what Baumann has called the Ho-Chi-Minh Passage. But Baumann also wrote books; his best-known work is his autobiography *Wie alles anfing* (How It All Began, 1975), a hard-core chronicle of the Armed Struggle. It touches upon the origins of the Tupamaros-West Berlin and the Haschrebellen (the Hash Rebels) – two of the city's militant groups – and sketches out

the subculture that shaped not only urban guerrillas but also writers, artists, film-makers and even government officials. Although Baumann offers a critique of the German Far Left here, the FRG government banned the book upon its publication in 1975; culture ministers interpreted it as a call for violence.[15] Leftist writers and publishers from across Europe protested against the censorship, and the book was quickly reissued and read with even greater interest. The response to it demands closer attention. Although the book presaged some of the most violent attacks of the late 1960s and 70s, it failed, as the historian Wolfgang Kraushaar argues, to provoke an adequately critical response from the Left.[16] It provides key information on both the assassination of Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympics in 1972 and the bombing of Jewish and Israeli establishments in Berlin in 1969, events that marked the advent of terrorism in post-war Germany.

Counting down to the late 1960s, we find a series of militant events staged in West Berlin. In April 1968 protesters attacked the headquarters of the media conglomerate Axel Springer AG, located right at the foot of the Berlin Wall. An LED monitor on the building's facade, legible in the East, ran headlines and commercial copy that advertised the freedoms of capitalism. But it was the radicals of the West who acted out their aggressions against the Springer publishing empire. Many leftists resisted the conservative slant of Springer publications like the *Berliner Zeitung* and *Bild*. After the near-fatal shooting of Rudi Dutschke, a leader of Berlin's Extra-Parliamentary Opposition, radicals blockaded the Springer headquarters to protest against the tabloids' denunciations of their fellow activists.

In the autumn and winter of 1969–70 at least 14 incidents involving explosive and incendiary devices were reported in West Berlin. A commando led by Dieter Kunzelmann planted bombs at the Berlin Bar Association's Winter Ball on 10 January and at the offices of El Al, the Israeli airline, in the Europacenter on 12 December. The group members disguised themselves in different costumes and hairstyles and often placed women – ostensibly more deceptive – at the front lines of their operations. Some actions targeted US military imperialism, such as the attempted bombing of the Amerikahaus; others, such as Ina Siepmann's bomb-planting at the KaDeWe (the Kaufhaus des Westens, or Department Store of the West), were launched against the *Konsumterror* (consumption terror) that was imagined to threaten real freedom. This wave of bombings touched Berlin's culture-scape when militants threw home-made grenades at the theatre where the musical *Hair* was being performed. As the violence escalated, so did the city

government's alarm; soon the streets of Berlin were papered over with most-wanted posters. The subsequent enforcement of surveillance, in turn, amplified the sense of paranoia and urgency within the West Berlin underground, prompting the most radical elements to take ever greater risks.

The zero hour

On 9 November 1969 an explosive device was planted at the Jüdisches Gemeindehaus, or Jewish Community House, in the Charlottenburg district of Berlin. The bomb – a wad of semtex taped to an alarm clock – was set to go off during a ceremony marking the anniversary of *Kristallnacht,* the anti-Semitic pogrom of 1938. The device failed to ignite, but its discovery provoked widespread alarm nonetheless. As several members of the Far Left have recently attested, this was the zero hour of German terrorism – a moment that summoned forth the violent spectres of fascism and racism.

The perpetrators of this crime, like many others committed in the name of the Armed Struggle, have not yet been found, but a study by Wolfgang Kraushaar lays the blame on Dieter Kunzelmann. Kunzelmann probably did not place the bomb directly in the Gemeindehaus, but he is thought to have masterminded the mission and assigned it to two people: Peter Urbach, who made the bomb, and Albert Fichter, an architecture student who smuggled it in under his trench coat. Kunzelmann laid out the premise for the attack in a letter he wrote while training with Fatah in Amman. During his stay in Jordan, Kunzelmann and the other militants studied guerrilla tactics, practised making time bombs and other weapons and were briefly introduced to Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader.[17] Exposure to the harsh conditions of Middle Eastern life, particularly the camps that housed war refugees, deepened their understanding of Jordan's historical situation and inclined them towards a 'revolutionary' consciousness, as Kunzelmann's letter, published in the 27 November issue of *Agit 883*, a Berlin-based leftist magazine, suggests.

To a great extent, the letter from Amman aligns with the Left's critique of international imperialism and structures of domination. But Kunzelmann's radical position differed from that of the more institutional Left in two respects: first, he demonstrated an anti-Semitism that exceeded the anti-Israel stance which informed a considerable sector of left-wing politics at the time, and second, he showed an alertness to the emphatically urban, visual and even aesthetic

dimension of German militancy. In the letter, Kunzelmann compared the conflicts in the Middle East and South East Asia. 'Palestine is for the FRG and Europe what Vietnam is for the Yanks [*Amis*]', he maintained. 'Why hasn't the Left "gotten it" yet? Because of its "Jewish Problem" [*Judenkna*x]', a reaction born out of guilt for the gassing of six million Jews.[18] Based on a false equivalence between the international struggle against fascism and the defence of the Israeli state, this complex, Kunzelmann argued, blinded Germans to the realities of post-war politics. The imperative of the moment, then, was to cancel out the Left's unexamined philo-Semitism and to replace it with an unequivocal solidarity with Fatah.

Kunzelmann saw Berlin as the ideal screen upon which to enact this shift in the political unconscious of his generation. In his words, the divided city was a veritable 'paradise for provocation'.[19] If Fatah was resisting 'the Third Reich of yesterday and today' in the Middle East, then radicals had to take up the Armed Struggle against neo-fascists in Berlin.[20] But whom, exactly, did Kunzelmann mean? He urged the readers to survey every level of Berlin life – media, architecture, policy – and to look for traces of violence. The task, for him, was 'to make the enemy visible' and to 'bring the war home'. Following the argument of the *Haschrebellen*, 'Berlin [had] to burn so that [the radicals could] live'.[21]

Fortunately, the bomb that was planted in Berlin's Jewish Community House never ignited. A custodian heard the clock ticking near the cloakroom and uncovered the device; local authorities carried it away and the Holocaust memorial ceremony continued as planned. Many from both inside and outside the Berlin radical scene have asked whether the bomb could actually have exploded or whether it was just a fake – a dysfunctional decoy set to trigger panic. But whatever the militants intended, the bomb did have a profound effect. On 11 November, Interior Minister Kurt Neubauer and Heinz Galinski, the head of the Berlin Jewish Community, held an emergency press conference.[22] The Berlin Bureau of Criminal Investigations began a series of shakedowns in suspect sites of West Berlin: not only the communes and clubs of the New and Far Left but also enclaves of guest workers – Turks, Yugoslavs and others. Editors and producers granted broad coverage to the event and set the tone for negative portrayals of leftists that would persist for decades. Already in these early days of the German armed resistance, a fundamental lesson was being taught: city-specific guerrilla tactics provoked a federal backlash that compromised the civil rights of millions across the nation and controverted the larger goals of the Left, both at home and abroad.

Soon after Berlin intelligence agents confiscated the bomb, they modelled a duplicate upon the original, took it out to Grunewald – the large, forested district of south-western Berlin – and set it off. The velocity of the exploded matter was measured at 3.5 kilometres per second; the circle of debris surrounding the point of ignition extended to 50 metres. Had the device gone off as scheduled, many in the Gemeindehaus would have been harmed. The press was invited to the detonation, and a few hours later images of the event were broadcast across the country. In a recent interview, Albert Fichter, one of Kunzelmann's hit men, remarked that the officials seemed to want 'to stage a spectacle'.[23] This, of course, was precisely the kind of repercussion that Kunzelmann, the ex-Situationist, wanted to produce. His 'psycho-bomb' (*Psychobombe*, as Fichter has called it) did not need to actually explode in order to convey its message.[24] Kunzelmann spent most of the early 1970s in and out of courts and jails for a number of offences, but he has evaded formal censure for any hate crimes. He went on to hold several political offices in Berlin, but was ultimately snagged again for throwing eggs at the Berlin Mayor Eberhard Diepgen. He put on a party the night before starting his prison sentence, taking the subway at daybreak to the Tegel penitentiary, where he rattled the gates and shouted 'I want in! That's enough! I want to be locked up!'[25]

Playing dead

In Kunzelmann's career as the factotum of the Berlin Armed Struggle, one incident stands out. In April 1998 an obituary appeared in the *Tagesspiegel*; it read: 'He chose freely, not only for his life, but also for his death – Dieter Kunzelmann – 1939–98'. Shortly thereafter journalists and politicians determined that the announcement was a prank – Kunzelmann was actually alive and well and living in Berlin – but his *Scheintod*, or feigned death, shaped the history of post-war militancy in Germany. It also cast a pall over the collective memories of West Berlin's counterculture. Like the RAF dropouts who, with the help of the Stasi, sought to erase their terrorist legacies so that they could be reborn as GDR citizens, Kunzelmann took the liberty of staging his own death in an attempt to remaster his legacy. These would-be deaths expose the difficulty we still have in coming to terms with German terrorism, the difficulty many on the Left still have dealing with the real violence that the RAF perpetrated in Berlin and elsewhere for an obscure ideal of anti-imperialist revolution.

Volker Schlöndorff has called *Die Stille nach dem Schuß* 'a requiem to the millions who died for the idea of socialism', but the film does

not lay to rest all the spectres of the RAF–Stasi connection.[26] This historical fiction glosses over the contradictions between post-war leftist extremism and the final, desperate years of GDR socialism. As the Berlin Wall falls and the film ends, Schlöndorff goes beyond the strategic liaisons between the RAF and East German functionaries; he suggests a deeper, more constitutive bond than the one that most likely existed. The narrative collapses the two separate projects of militancy and state socialism into a single campaign of terror. This shuts out the question of how the radically different scales and goals of each project advanced distinctive critiques of late capitalism.

Schlöndorff's last sequences lose the cynical edge of some earlier scenes – such as the Stasi director's concession, in the ravaged Berlin archives just after the fall of the Wall, that Helmut Schmidt and Erich Honecker had made a secret pact to hide the *RAF-Aussteiger* in the GDR – and veer off towards a melancholy conclusion. Speeding on a motorbike, Rita tries to blow through a border checkpoint between the two Germanys, but is shot down; the Internationale is intoned, played tempo larghetto on a toy piano. Schlöndorff ends his main character's amnesiac cycle of reincarnation, but he also cuts off the chance for her – or the audience – to squarely confront her terrorist past.

In real life, Inge Viett has not expressed remorse for the crimes she committed, nor has she attempted to distance herself from RAF violence. Responding to the riots around the 2007 summit of the Group of Eight in Heiligendamm (the East German port still struggling with post-Communist transition), she remarked 'how great' it was to witness 'such strong resistance against state repression' and to see the police, for once, 'running for cover'. To her, the GDR was destroyed by 'imperialism', despite the fact that it was always 'on the side of the people'.[27] Schlöndorff's Rita, likewise, never appears to rethink her own violence or to grasp the failures of the GDR. Instead, she always looks forward to a better future.

This lack of memory-based reflection in *Die Stille* sets it apart from *In seiner frühen Kindheit*. Hein's novel can be seen as a work of mourning; the story follows the Jureks' attempts to make sense of the lives and deaths of RAF militants. A shadow of grief falls over this solemn text, as it draws its darkness from Berlin's periphery in the early 1990s. Rita Vogt, meanwhile, does not seem to mourn – either for her fallen comrades or for the victims of left militancy. Her apparent ability or need to repress these deaths thus counters Schlöndorff's proposal that *Die Stille* could play like a requiem. Whereas Hein uses literary experiment – such as shifts in narrative voice and temporal sequence – to describe moments

of pain, impasse or aporia, Schlöndorff lets the momentum of narrative cinema obscure and even obliterate tasks central to mourning work.

What *Die Stille* does deliver, nonetheless, is a finely wrought portrait of private life in Berlin and other GDR cities. Schlöndorff wrote the script in collaboration with Wolfgang Kohlhaase, the prominent East German screenwriter whose own backstory resonates with this essay. Over the course of his career, Kohlhaase worked on many films with the prominent DEFA director Konrad Wolf, the brother of Markus Wolf, the Stasi director who read Michael Baumann's files. The film draws upon these layers of experience as it scans among key moments of the former 'eastern times': infighting and solidarity in a workers' collective, an idyllic holiday on the Baltic coast, sexual passion, alcoholism and anomie. Schlöndorff began work on the film in 1992 and made several revisions before releasing it in 2000. In those same years he moved to Berlin, took over the Babelsberg studios and had to learn to cooperate with a staff that came mostly from the East. One of his priorities was to bring the company into alignment with the Treuhand Agency (once directed by Detlev Rohwedder), but, as he puts it, the extenuating conditions of the *Wende* made him as much an apprentice as a manager. Like Rita, he was a Westerner immersed in another Germany, struggling to learn a new set of coordinates.

Rather than sorting through the shards of the RAF and the GDR in order to develop a new critique, in *Die Stille* Schlöndorff goes for the default and makes it easy for the viewer to consign both legacies to the dustbin of history. But the lingering doubts about Dieter Kunzelmann's militant interventions and the ongoing legal and administrative disputes on the sentencing of the RAF-*Aussteiger* reactivate a series of questions about the relationship between militancy and state socialism – questions that are crucial to our reading of both Berlin's recent history and the cultural memories attached to it that are constantly being reconfigured.

Reading the German Armed Struggle in reverse – from the contemporary debates, back through recent cinematic and literary representations of RAF, and to the primal scenes of leftist terrorism – we get a new angle on Berlin. The premise that the Cold War completely barricaded East from West loses hold. So does the conviction that Berlin leftists were all fighting for tolerance and transparency. Viewed through the composite lens of Kraushaar, Hein and Schlöndorff's work, the landscape of West Berlin, in particular, loses much of its nostalgic glow. The desire to turn the city's enclosures into a militant paradise corrupted the Far Left's claims for democracy. It returned Berlin to the dystopian grounds of violence that had been tended, a generation before, by German fascists.

Notes

1. In Germany the political Left has encompassed an array of progressive, socialist and anarchist movements, organizations and parties since well before the 1871 establishment of Berlin as the modern state's capital. In the Cold War years, West German leftists were central to both the government of the *Bundestag* and the Extra-Parliamentary Opposition (*Außerparlamentarische Opposition*, or APO). The spectrum of leftist politics in the Federal Republic has ranged from centre left (for example, the Social Democratic Party, or SPD), to the New Left, to the extremism of the Red Army Faction and other 'Far Left' and 'left-wing' groups. The German Democratic Republic, in contradistinction, recognized only one political organization, the Socialist Unity Party or SED.
2. One of the more authentic accounts of the communes of Berlin is U. Enzensberger (2004), *Die Jahre der Kommune 1: Berlin 1967–69* (Cologne: Kiepenheuer und Witsch).
3. The Bundesanwaltschaft (Federal Prosecution Service) released findings on Wolfgang Grams's relationship to the assassination of Detlev Karsten Rohwedder in May 2001. See, for example, 'Das "RAF-Phantom" nimmt Gestalt an: Nach zehn Jahren erste heiße Spur im Mordfall Rohwedder', www.123rechtnet.com (16 May 2001) (date accessed 23 June 2007), and 'Mordfall Rohwedder: Hogefeld soll vernommen werden', wdr.de/online/news/rohwedder_mord (17 May 2001) (date accessed 23 June 2007).
4. T. Elsaesser (2007), *Terror und Trauma: Zur Gewalt des Vergangenen in der BRD* (Berlin: Kadmos), p. 17.
5. Two early, conservative accounts of the RAF–Stasi connection are M. Müller and A. Kanonenberg (1992), *Die RAF-Stasi-Connection* (Hamburg: Rowohlt); and J. Schmeidel (1993), 'My Enemy's Enemy: Twenty Years of Co-operation between West Germany's Red Army Faction and the GDR Ministry for State Security', *Intelligence and National Security*, 8.4, 59–72. Gerhard Wisniewski's take on the relationship between the RAF and the Stasi betrays his unreformed commitment to the Armed Struggle. See G. Wisniewski (1997), 'Die RAF-Stasi-Connection', in G. Wisniewski, W. Landgraeber and E. Sieker, *Das RAF-Phantom: Wozu Politik und Wirtschaft Terroristen brauchen* (Munich: Droemer Knaur). T. Wunschik (1997), meanwhile, offers a more tempered account in *Baader-Meinhofs Kinder: Die zweite Generation der RAF* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag).
6. Uwe Backes and Eckhard Jesse call the relationship between the RAF and the Stasi 'ein[e] unübersehbar[e] Geistesverwandtschaft'. J. Backes (1991), ed., *Jahrbuch Extremismus und Demokratie*, 3 (Bonn: Bouvier), p. 200.
7. The spectacular abduction of Peter Lorenz prompted an unusual response from the German government, as it negotiated with the RAF terrorists to free him. The RAF demanded that a group of their members be released from German prisons and granted safe passage to Yemen. The government conceded and Lorenz was surrendered. Ina Siepmann was one of the RAF members included in the exchange. The exchange of prisoners for Lorenz set a dangerous edent; when the RAF called upon it in the autumn of 1977, however, Helmut Schmidt and his crisis management team refused to give in again.
8. As stated in the Stasi file, Ministerium für Staatssicherheit, 'Information zu Aktivitäten von Vertretern der palästinensischen Befreiungsorganisation in Verbinding mit internationalen Terroristen zur Einbeziehung der DDR

bei der Vorbereitung von Gewaltakten in Ländern Westeuropas' (Berlin, 3 May 1979), in *Die Bundesbeauftragte für die Unterlagen des Staatssicherhei tsdienstes der ehemaligen Deutschen Demokratischen Republik*, Zentralarchiv, Hauptabteilung XXII 18613, pp. 277–92, especially p. 287.

9. See, for example, I. Viett (2007), 'Lust auf Freiheit: Unsere Geschichte als Klassenkampf von unten verteidigen', *Junge Welt* (24 February 2007), p. 10, and Viett (1997), *Nie war ich furchtloser* (Hamburg: Edition Nautilus).
10. Viett discusses these negotiations in Viett (2000), 'Kasperletheater im Niemandsland', *konkret*, 4. Among the film's many 'real life' elements, Jenny Schily, who plays a supporting role, is the daughter of Otto Schily, Minister of the Interior under Gerhard Schröder and a former legal counsel to RAF members.
11. Several press accounts of the RAF's visit to the Stasi retreat appeared in 2007; for example, J. Bauszus (2007), 'Terrorismus: Die RAF-Stasi Connection', *Focus-Online* (8 May 2007), www.focus.de/politik/deutschland/raf/tid-5678/terrorismus_aid_55571.html (date accessed 23 June 2007). When Viett and the other RAF dropouts started new lives in the GDR in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the Stasi gave them temporary lodgings in the town of Briesen, 60 kilometres east of Berlin-Schönefeld Airport in Brandenburg. The complex was converted into a privately run holiday guest house in 2003. Today, the renovated complex maintains a website that describes the lodge as '*geschichtsträchtig*', or laden with history, but does not elaborate upon its role in the RAF–Stasi connection.
12. V. Schlöndorff, 'Director's Commentary', *Die Stille nach dem Schuß* (DVD, 2000).
13. Cited in S. Aust (1987), *The Baader-Meinhof Group: The Inside Story of a Phenomenon,* trans. A. Bell (London: Bodley Head), p. 44.
14. Wolfgang Kraushaar calls Baumann's report a 'who's who' of the German Armed Struggle. W. Kraushaar (2005), *Die Bombe im Jüdischen Gemeindehaus* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition), p. 226. See also *Der Spiegel* (1998), 19 January 1998, p. 117.
15. J. Arnold and P. Schult (1979), *Ein Buch wird verboten: Bommi Baumann Dokumentation* (Munich: Trikont).
16. Kraushaar, *Die Bombe*, p. 233.
17. Ibid., pp. 245–6.
18. D. Kunzelmann (1969), 'Brief aus Amman', *Agit 883*, 1.42 (27 November 1969), 5.
19. D. Kunzelmann (2002), *Leisten Sie keinen Widerstand!: Bilder aus meinem Leben* (Berlin: Transit), p. 49.
20. D. Kunzelmann (1969), 'Brief aus Amman'.
21. Ibid.
22. In a letter to *Die Welt*, Heinz Galinski wrote that the attack meant that it was time not just for the Jewish Community but for all representatives of the people to make a stand. H. Galinski (1969), 'Brief', *Die Welt* (12 November 1969), http://suche.welt.de/woa/result.html?multiRessort=&printOnly=false&query=galinski+gemeindehaus&timeframe=&fromDate=&toDate= (date accessed 23 June 2007).
23. A. Fichter, 'Gespräch mit Wolfgang Kraushaar', in Kraushaar, *Die Bombe*, p. 249.
24. Albert Fichter and another of Kunzelmann's followers – Annekatrin Bruhn – have recently attested that he discussed plans to escalate the violence in

Berlin in the weeks following the attack. Talk of putting pro-PLO graffiti on a local monument to Holocaust victims and even attacking the kindergarten of the Joachimsthaler Straße synagogue, as Fichter and others recount, amplified the anti-Semitic charge of the message Kunzelmann wanted to communicate. These crimes were never committed, either because Kunzelmann could not find any willing executioners or because the police soon caught up with him. A. Bruhn, 'Gespräch mit Wolfgang Kraushaar', in Kraushaar, *Die Bombe*, p. 209; Fichter, 'Gespräch', p. 250.

25. M. Bruhns (1999), 'Kunzelmann im Gefängnis: Der Arzt wollte ihn sofort sehen', *Berliner Zeitung* (15 July 1999), http://www.berlinonline.de/berliner-zeitung/archiv/.bin/dump.fcgi/1999/0715/none/0057/index.html (date accessed 7 August 2007).
26. V. Schlöndorff (2000), 'Director's Commentary'.
27. Anonymous (2007), 'Viett fand Randale in Heiligendamm "toll"', *Focus-Online* (1 July 2007), www.focus.de/politik/deutschland/raf/raf_aid_65094.html (date accessed 7 August 2007).

Part III Art Works

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10
Architecture as Scenography, the Building Site as Stage

Stefanie Bürkle

What is it that attracts people to building sites? What entices us to spend our time looking at these complex processes of deconstruction and construction? Is it the fascination of a child before a gigantic set of toys – a big city that has suddenly become a small model? Or is it the intrinsic knowledge that something real and true is happening there, that something is being undressed, unhidden, undisguised? The building site seems to present a short moment of historical significance, as if history were lifting its curtains and allowing us to look back into the past, revealing the remains of something that preceded us and did not depend on our existence. At the same time, it enables us to anticipate the future as witnesses to the present. The acceleration of events at the building site produces a breathlessness in us: we are unable to take in everything at once, and our glances can recover only fragments of the recently past, as Walter Benjamin describes it in *The Arcades Project*.

Backstage and onstage

I see myself as a Romantic artist in the sense that I am someone who looks for the truth and somehow describes it and reveals it to others. But unlike, say, the German Romantic painter Caspar David Friedrich, I don't insist on the beauty of ruins; I insist rather on seeing the building site as a lacuna, as a hidden or ugly and usually unseen space on the city's backstage or in its wings. As an artist, I have always been particularly attracted to the wounds of the city. The building site exemplifies those wounds: it is the place of fleeting architecture, fragmentary perspectives, accidentally uncovered foundations and deserted urban landscapes. The building site is an area often omitted from glossy tourist brochures, perhaps because it shows another truth, a truth generally

Figure 10.1 *(Left)*: *Rückbau Reichstag*, 1995. *(Right)*: *Palace mock up*, 1993–94.

defined as inconvenient, noisy and ugly – one that interrupts the beautiful, spotless surface of a city.

After working for many years in scenography, I came to see the possibilities of the theatre's black box as more limited than the theatrical dispositive of stage, props, actors and spectators accompanying Berlin's extraordinary construction projects since German unification. So I changed focus, moving from the spectacle of the theatre to the spectacle of the building site and its different modes of urban theatricality. Since then, I have sought to understand the city as a dynamic rather than static event, one that is constructed, built and staged. My artwork has been devoted to uncovering the mutually determining and mutually shaping relationship between the conceptual space of the stage and the real space of the city.

The media of memory: Photography versus painting

I believe that every attempt at documenting a city's construction through the conventional employment of artistic media is doomed to fail. Indeed, documentation itself becomes moot in view of the rapidity of urban transformation, as a building site undergoes countless changes at an accelerated pace. To reach an aesthetic distance able to accommodate the speed of events I selected a combination of oil painting and medium format photography.

My use of the photographic medium is not journalistic or documentary in nature but painterly. There is a moment of shutter release, but the resulting image has nothing in common with a snapshot. The structure and content of my photography have more in common with the process of painting. Much care goes into positioning the camera, setting up the tripod, orienting the camera, framing the image on the

Figure 10.2 (Left): *Downtown Beirut*, oil on canvas, 200 × 300 cm, 1996. *(Right)*: *Red Building Site*, oil on canvas, 210 × 145 cm, 2007.

focusing screen – and then waiting until the disruptive trucks have cleared, the crane is at the right angle, the light is good and a person is at the correct location. Often, the waiting is for nought and I have to return several times before I can get the image I want. I don't create my photographs as digital animations with Photoshop; I approach them as an Impressionist painter who takes brush and easel into the field to patiently capture a motif. My photography plays with the aesthetics of that which has previously gone undetected in the city.

My painting shows interlinking and overlapping perspectives upon the façades of built structures and the backdrops of their construction. Their ephemeral spaces offer views of the past that point to the future. The canvas itself becomes the foundation of an imaginary space for new perspectives on actual urban environments. In the studio I draw on many elements and views of different spaces to create painterly fictions of city views – fictions that are not digitally animated but invented by analogue means.

In these ways, my photography assumes the classical role of painting, while painting assumes the role of photography. In the second half of the nineteenth century, photography began to replace history and portrait painting. Photography was seen as the faster and more accurate way to capture an image and to document reality. This development liberated painting from the slavish imitation of nature while placing the expectation on photography that it should be the source of the 'truthful' image. Even then, of course, this was an illusion; photographers were soon retouching, staging and manipulating their images. But if it is true that photography assumed the 'documentary' role played by pre-photographic history painting, what took over its other role – the staged and idealizing depiction of history?

One answer, I believe, lies in the large format, background focus and detail retouching of the photographs of Andreas Gursky. These works – especially

his images of the Hong Kong Stock Exchange, the Hong Kong building site and the Milan Prada store – amount to history paintings of urban everyday life. My large-scale paintings of building sites pursue similar ends. Their spectacle and size seduce us into looking, focusing attention on that which is passed unnoticed each day and, in the process, transporting viewers into the events of a city in transformation. In their realistic representation these painted buildings sites purport to be about specific places, thus becoming history paintings of a fictive story – the sort of living environments of memory that Pierre Nora described as *milieux de mémoire*.[1] By contrast, the city that is already built only thematizes and museumifies itself. It goes the way of Potsdamer Platz, of the Schlossplatz (with its reconstruction of the original Stadtschloss, the Prussian City Castle) or of Checkpoint Charlie (with its sandbags before a faux border station and an actor in Russian uniform who lets himself be photographed). The image of a finished Berlin ossifies into a souvenir. Without the *milieu de mémoire* all that is left is a dislocated effect of *lieu de mémoire*.

Here, I propose to present a few of the projects in which I have thematized, reflected on and abstracted Berlin's urban transformation, from its post-unification wastelands to its capital architecture. These works, which use photography, painting and interdisciplinary techniques, show the city from new and unseen angles. I have sought to create new sights and perspectives – new dimensions of time, space and identity – which reveal the city as a complex and living space.

Approaching space and surface: Face-Façades

My photographic series, *Face-Façades*, examines the surfaces of the city for the space they contain or hide as well as for the space they create.

Figure 10.3 (Left): *Mock Ups Potsdamer Platz*, 1996. *(Right)*: *Mock Ups Bundespressekonferenz*, 1999.

I understand façadism and place-making as staging elements in an ever-changing political and cultural text. *Face-Façades* questions the legibility and interpretation of the urban centre of a city that is, in Scheffler's famous formulation from 1910, 'condemned always to become but never to be'.[2] The rapid transformation of cities everywhere has not been without breaks and dislocations. The image of the city is marked by disarticulated façades. The architecture of a building's outer shell no longer corresponds to its use. Long before Robert Venturi wrote about the architectural typology of the 'duck' versus the 'decorated shed', in the 1977 *Learning from Las Vegas*, the nineteenth-century architect and art critic Gottfried Semper explained his idea of the façade as a skin that separates inner and outer space.[3] The cityscape orchestrated at Potsdamer Platz imitates a site produced over time; its heterogeneity of façades suggests a successive building process. My *Mock Up* series allows us to see this belied in the simultaneity of their construction. The increasing prevalence of façadism in Berlin's urban landscape since the beginning of the 1990s has transformed it into a veritable 'scenographic' city.

I have discovered and photographed more than 30 such Potemkin villages in Berlin. This work represents a virtual catalogue for a city of backdrops in which we have now come to live. In Berlin and elsewhere, buildings show us the same, mostly interchangeable face. What Paul Virilio calls the 'dissolution of the cityscape' seems to have become reality in Berlin. Though façades today are still designed by architects, they are all developed and represented using the same CAD software. What is built is what computers can render. What you see is what you get. Hence the questions that Virilio asks: Do large settlements have a façade? When can we say that we are located vis-à-vis a city? At what point are we able to observe it?[4]

Today, firms no longer build just because they need new space; frequently, they see large-scale building projects as real estate investments and tax deductions. Calculated as gross floor area, space is reduced to economic criteria. Engineering and economics are the decisive parameters of reconverted space. Companies are interested in the appearance of the architecture – the façades, the interaction of different surfaces – insofar as it serves their own corporate identity and branding. Place-making, a term originally applied in the urban planning of the 1970s to communities coming together to improve their urban neighbourhoods, has nowadays become a slogan of urban identity used by real estate developers to promote their products. 'Place-making' has devolved into the kind of festivalization that Frank Roost describes

Figure 10.4 *(Left)*: Bertelsmann's head office in Berlin; rebuilding of the Alte Kommandatur. *(Right)*: Temporary buildings on Leipziger Platz.

in his *Die Disneyfizierung der Städte* (The Disneyfication of Cities), and which transformed parts of New York's 42nd street into a theme park and created entirely new settlements like Celebration City.[5] Such stagings have brought together set design, scenography and architecture in an aesthetic, functional and commercial bond.

The current focus of creative and commercial energies on the façade as the last free territory of design shows the way in which architects are already applying scenographic techniques to façade design, even if they do not call it by this name. There is virtually no difference between, on the one hand, façades built of thin skins of stone, metal and glass to cover the cement surfaces of interchangeable office buildings and, on the other, façades appearing as printed images on gigantic plastic sheets covering empty scaffoldings.

Behind these two different techniques, which can simulate storefronts, façades in various styles and entire buildings, the urban space of the city is constantly disappearing. Façades are becoming projection screens for spaces of illusions – spaces such as the proscenium (exterior space) and the rear side of the wings (interior space) – and the ways in which those spaces of illusion shape their environment.

Berlin wallpaper: Palast der Republik, 2003–07

During the course of the protracted debate on whether to rebuild the Stadtschloss or preserve the Palast der Republik (the GDR Palace of the Republic), I decided to make an artistic statement about the affair – why not give everyone the opportunity to have some of the Palast der Republik in the form of wallpaper? For the design I choose repeating patterns of the palace's façade emphasizing its appealing copper glass.

The façades of the new Berlin obstruct the open spaces of the city ruins; their new walls close the gaps in Berlin's old block construction. The wallpaper serves the same function for apartments as the façades do for the city, thus enfolding and reversing exterior and interior space. Berlin's public space shows the increasingly interchangeable face of the new façade decor. Is not a façade from a building, one often equated with East German identity, self-sufficient in its function? With every square metre of wallpaper, the identity of the palace is recoded as a monument and made manifest, freeing it from the ballast of public

Figure 10.5 Excavations for the Stadtschloss with Palast der Republik, 1996.

Figure 10.6 *(Left)*: Peter Conradi, 03 September 2003, President of the Federal Chamber of German Architects. Wallpaper hung in his office from 28 July 2003 to 10 September 2004. *(Right)*: Daniel Barenboim, 11 November 2003, Music Director of the Berlin State Opera. Wallpaper hung 29 September 2003.

Figure 10.7 *(Left)*: *Palace Shopper*. *(Right)*: Owners of a *Palace Shopper* in front of the demolition of the Palastder Republik, 2006.

debate and discussion. Adding to the wallpaper work was another creation of mine, a shopping bag with the image of the Palast der Republik sewn onto its side. The goal of the so-called 'palace shopper' was to turn the palace into 'takeaway architecture', a portable devotional to propagate images of the palace.

Luxe, plaisir et liberté: Living in a theme park (a construction project)

As part of the Berlin Volksbühne theatre's Rolling Road Show, I designed and erected a faux construction site billboard. The advertisement, which hung for a week in a no-man's-land next to a highway in Berlin's Neukölln district, read 'Luxe, plaisir et liberté' and displayed an illustration of the planned project: an idyllic living quarters replete with generous pedestrian zones. The catch was that this was no developer simulation but a photograph of the film set of *Marienhof*, a popular German television series. For three days, I played the project's estate agent, gave out postcards with pictures of the site and fielded inquiries for interested investors and buyers.

Model removal reconstruction: Simulation of a building site in public space, Berlin, 1994

Adorno wrote that 'Wrong life cannot be lived rightly',[6] but the artistic play with the perception of urban space can present authentic memories of fake places and make fiction seem real. How do we perceive the city that shapes us? What is the identity of the urban space that surrounds us?

Figure 10.8 *(Left)*: Construction billboard, undeveloped site in Neukölln, Berlin. *(Right)*: Stefanie Bürkle on site, promoting the project *Luxe, plaisir et liberté*, by 'BürkleBau' developers, Berlin, 2003.

Figure 10.9 *(Left)*: Pedestal from which a small model of a building site can be seen. *(Right)*: Model of a building site (1:100 scale).

If it is true that the backstages I thematize in my building-site pieces contain more truth than the standardized, staged façades of the cities we live in, then the identity of the city is more likely to be found in its casual 'in-between' spaces than on its frontal surfaces. The attempt to design urban places and to achieve a representative function for

Figure 10.10 *(Left)*: Backstage next to Potsdamer *Platz*, 1998. *(Right)*: At a distance from Potsdamer *Platz*, 2005.

architecture fails when it seeks to reveal truth by intentionally creating a city's identity.

The city that has emerged in most places – in the places where we now live – is a staged one. The scenographic dimensions of the dramaturgy for real and fictive space are increasingly convergent, while 'face-façades' serve more and more as the backdrops of urban life, as wallpaper on our city walls. Exterior spaces have become interior spaces. City life is not only a function of presentation and representation, but also the everyday dimension in which the non-everyday melts into a backdrop: an urban space of experience where simulation has long since become the norm.

Notes

1. P. Nora (1989), 'Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire', *Representations*, 26, 7–25.
2. K. Scheffler (1989), *Berlin – ein Stadtschicksal* (Berlin: Fannei & Walz), p. 219.
3. See R. Venturi, S. Izenour and D. Scott Brown (1972), ed., *Learning from Las Vegas* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press); G. Semper (1860–3), 'Das Prinzip der Bekleidung in der Baukunst', in *Der Stil in den Technischen und Tektonischen Künsten oder Praktische Ästhetik: Ein Handbuch für Techniker, Künstler und Kunstfreunde* (Frankfurt am Main: Kunst und Wissenschaft).
4. See P. Virilio (2006), 'Die Auflösung des Stadtbildes', in J. Dünne and S. Günzel, eds, *Raumtheorie, Grundlagentexte aus Philosophie und Kulturwissenschaften* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp), pp. 261–73, p. 261.
5. F. Roost (2001), *Die Disneyfizierung der Städte. Großprojekte der Entertainmentindustrie am Beispiel des New Yorker Times Square und der Siedlung Celebration in Florida* (Leverkusen: Leske & Budrich).
6. T. W. Adorno (1978), *Minima Moralia: Reflections from Damaged Life*, trans. E. F. N. Jephcott (London: Verso), p. 39.

11

Buenos Aires 2010: Memory Machines and Cybercities in Two Argentine Science Fiction Films

Geoffrey Kantaris

Memory seems inseparable from our experience of temporality. Memory is the precondition of human perception of the passage of time even as its engrammatic mechanisms seem to presuppose temporal difference and duration. But might it be possible to conceive of memory in *spatial* rather than predominantly temporal terms? After all, the creation of memories seems to involve the laying down or reinforcing of biochemical *markers* and neural *pathways*, of complex spatial networks within the brain, so that it would not be unreasonable to speculate that the experience of temporality is itself spatially encoded and produced. In cultural terms, the spatial image of the labyrinth has long provided an analogue for such mental processes, from the mythology of the Minotaur, whose redeemer, Theseus, must use prosthetic memory (in the form of a skein of wool) to retrace his way through the labyrinth, to Jorge Luis Borges' 'Funes, the Memorious'. In the Borges story, Funes' infinite eidetic memory *is* a labyrinth, and is explicitly compared to the overwhelming of the imagination produced by the burgeoning metropolises of antiquity and modernity:

> Babylon, London, and New York have overawed the imagination of men with their ferocious splendour; no one, in those populous towers or upon those surging avenues, has felt the heat and pressure of a reality as indefatigable as that which day and night converged upon the unfortunate [Funes] in his humble South American farmhouse.[1]

In this chapter I shall take up Borges' cue in order to analyse the spatial metaphors of memory which two Argentine science fiction films create through their representation of the dystopian labyrinths of a displaced and dislocated Buenos Aires.

Of course memory and its failure can become analogues, in film, for the (dys)function of a range of representational processes within urban society. Such processes are more or less explicitly linked to the operations of technology in general and visual technology in particular, with the latter often suggesting a metafictional framework in filmic terms. If the city has traditionally been understood as a technology for moulding the body to the forms of industrial manufacture and consumption,[2] then latterly the massive emergence of cybernetic cultures with their prosthetic memory systems has collapsed at its very base the distinction between the (technological) sphere of industry and the (ideological) sphere of representations. Representations – in the form of information, styles and codes – appear to have become the raw material on which the cyber-economy does its work, while all transformations of the material world (even and most especially biological processes) appear to be codable in terms of a problem of information processing, of obtaining the correct representation, model or simulation.

In this context, cultural forms such as film, originally an imaginary nexus between the individual and the (urban) collective,[3] take on a new and profoundly allegorical character. This is certainly the case with the two principal films which I am examining here as a way of charting the shifting political topographies and socio-spatial transformations of Argentine society at the turn of the millennium: Gustavo Mosquera's Borgesian sci-fi parable, *Moebius* of 1996, and Fernando Spiner's cyberpunk film *La sonámbula* (The Sleepwalker: Memories of the Future) of 1998. In the former, the underground system of Buenos Aires becomes a powerful metaphor for the complex and paradoxical new spatialities and temporalities of contemporary urban existence. In the latter, the overwhelming but socially disavowed presence of the dictatorship, coupled with a cultural current of engagement with cinema as the mechanical simulation of absent bodies, makes the twenty-first-century cybercity and its cyborgs into a figure for prosthetic, celluloid memory processes. But before we can work out the figurative dimensions of these films, it is important to consider the specific meanings and potentialities of the cyborg figure for Latin American cultural practice.

The cyborg is generally understood, following Donna Haraway's pioneering manifesto,[4] as an ambiguous technological artefact which disturbs boundaries – between cultures, between the organic and the artificial – and which collapses temporal and spatial distinctions. Having its origins in late-modern ciphers of body substitution – the mannequin and the robot, or the undead zombie and vampire, which populate the nightmares of the modern metropolis – the postmodern figure of the cyborg distinguishes

itself from these in its modularity. The machine no longer substitutes for the organic as its nightmare, roboticized double; machine and organism instead multiply interfaced in complex networks. In the entangled threads of these networks we can read, among many other things, dramatic stories about the technological production of nature, the conflictual implantation of global power-knowledge systems, the gendering of bodies within the reproductive and replicative scenarios of biotechnology, and the recursive materialization and dematerialization of bodies across the televisual information horizon.[5] The presence of the cyborg as an object of representation in Latin American culture, from sources as distinct as Laura Esquivel's *La ley del amor* (The Law of Love, 1999) to Ricardo Piglia's *La ciudad ausente* (The Absent City, 1992),[6] or the films discussed here, retains these features, but often renders them deeply citational. Latin American cyborgs also seem to condense specific anxieties surrounding the dissolution of collective identities and collective memory. Such anxieties connect historically on the one hand to the experience of colonization and, on the other, to the erasure of the nation as a space of collective agency and memory, an erasure which seems to be inscribed in the very mechanisms that effect the transition from nation state to global market.

Of course, the interspersing of normally distinct temporal frames has long been a commonplace of Latin American cultural analysis at least since Alejo Carpentier's 1949 theorization of temporal discontinuity as the fundamental episteme of societies forged primarily from cultural hybridity.[7] It is therefore unsurprising that the Latin American cyborg should find fertile ground in such variegation, collapsing temporal frames and phenomena as apparently disparate as nineteenth-century independence and twenty-first century prosthetic memory implants in the case of *La sonámbula*.[8] What is perhaps new in these turn-of-millennium urban films, however, is that this traditional Latin American cultural topos of temporal discontinuities and layering is projected onto a set of spatial metaphors which suggest the complex new interconnections and networks of contemporary urban existence. In inhabiting such spatio-temporal breaches, Latin American cyborgs, then, become paradigmatic inhabitants of the Latin American megalopolis. How can we characterize this megalopolitan cybercity, 'globally connected', in the words of Manuel Castells,[9] yet peripheral enough to be subject to the violent swings of speculative investment, its aggressive postmodernity cut through with the shattered fragments of a stalled modernity?

Michael Watts, following Castells, argues that:

> the internationalization of post-war capitalism has produced a lived experience in which 'the space of flows … supersede[s] the space of

> places'. One can productively situate [this] local-global conundrum on the wider canvas of the production of capitalist space [...] Periods of accelerated change and reconfiguration within capitalism – the 'creative' destruction of everything it cannot use – produce what geographers have referred to as space-time convergence [...] The erosion [...] of the glorious age of post-war Fordism, and its displacement by some form of flexible accumulation, represents in this context the most recent modulation in a recursive, wave-like pattern of space-time compressions.[10]

At the best of times, cities in Latin America are beset by fevers of demolition and reconstruction, as new investment money tries to liquidate old assets and speculators awash with over-accumulated capital from US, European or Asian markets, attempt to realize higher profits by making quick investments in peripheral economies, which they are just as quick to withdraw at the slightest hint of trouble. Mexican anthropologist Néstor García Canclini, writing about Mexico City, argues that such powerful de-territorializing forces, coupled with multiple waves of migration, split and disseminate the city's fabric into many splintered cities: the historic city, the industrial city, village cities, migrant cities, globalized information and finance cities. While the knowable community, to use Raymond Williams's term, is atomized, the dominant experience of fragmentation is compensated for, García Canclini argues, by the illusory audio-visual community of the mass media. Yet he qualifies the role of the culture industries in this re-articulation of the local and the global, claiming that these industries are implicated in the *dual* process of transnationalization, or de-territorialization, and the folkloric preservation of local culture through the fiction of national and supranational difference.[11]

Such processes should be understood not only in economic terms. Many commentators, from British sociologist Anthony Giddens to Brazil's Renato Ortiz, have stressed that the culture industries of late modernity are constitutive rather than merely reflective of de-territorialization processes such as dis-embedding and time-space distanciation.[12] In other words, audio-visual culture, which forms one of the central reflexive institutions from the mid-twentieth century onwards, is complicit in the reordering of time and space which aligns the local with the global. This was certainly true of cinema in its heyday in Latin America, particularly in Mexico, where it helped in the consolidation of the post-revolutionary nation, dis-embedding the popular imagination from its enmeshing with the local community and re-inscribing it

within the larger framework of a newly consolidating popular national consciousness. Contemporary televisual and cybernetic cultures accelerate these processes beyond the frame of the nation, so that it is hardly surprising that the representation of the cyborg should, in Latin America as elsewhere, condense anxieties surrounding the citizen's insertion within all-encompassing televisual regimes, nor that the spatio-temporal disruptions of the megalopolis should be the paradigmatic stage for the cyborg's effective agency. It goes without saying that cinematic projections of such anxieties respond to a specifically reflexive moment in visual culture's thought about its own social agency.

My main thesis here is that the Latin American cinematic appropriation of US sci-fi cyborg mythologies and, in the Argentine case, cyberpunk,[13] focuses sharply on the power structures inherent within the disciplinary regimes of global power-knowledge networks, for which the cybercity is the principal stage and film itself, either implicitly or explicitly, becomes a powerful synecdoche. For specific reasons relating to post-dictatorial politics, the cybercity thus becomes a particularly powerful spatial projection of memory within contemporary Argentine culture, linking the dissemination of power in the network society to the politics of de-territorialization and amnesia. I shall now attempt to show how this technological *mise en scène* is played out in the specific cases of *Moebius* and *La sonámbula*.

Argentine cyborgs

In Argentina, a tradition of cultural engagement with cinema as the mechanical simulation of absent bodies or, in more complex terms, as the disavowal of the disappeared body behind the screen fetish of the mechanically reproduced image, becomes an available framework for interpreting the operations of power in the aftermath of the dictatorship of 1976–82, with its 30,000 disappearances and some 300,000 directly affected by repression. Yet it is also the case that the experience of dictatorship tends to reactivate nostalgic narratives of repression and liberation, congealed around repressive fantasies of sexual difference: fetish identities which themselves depend on disavowal as simulation.

The legacy of this interpretive framework in Argentina is certainly traceable back to Roberto Arlt and Macedonio Fernández with their dreams of mechanical replication, of storytelling and forgery machines which would destabilize the fictions of power. But they are first perhaps linked to cinematic disavowal in the work of Adolfo Bioy Casares, whose extraordinary novella, *La invención de Morel* (The Invention

of Morel, 1940), charts, in a very prescient manner, a journey from terrorized dissimulation to post-technological simulation. A strange rewriting and transformation of H. G. Wells's *The Island of Dr. Moreau* of 1896, it concerns a political refugee, escapee from life imprisonment on a trumped-up charge in Caracas, who makes his way to a secret and uninhabited south-west Pacific island. Although the island is rumoured to be the focus of some strange disease, as yet unknown to science, which kills from the outside in, causing the body to lose its substance and crumble slowly away, he prefers to take his chances there than to live a life of dissimulation and hiding, pursued by the world's police forces for a crime he did not commit. What he finds there is a terrifying and seductive new technological invention, created by a mad scientist Morel, a 1940s televisual answer to Wells's Moreau, who, we may recall, fashioned human beings out of pumas in a double allegory of science and colonization, medicine and mission. Morel's invention – a virtual reality machine *avant la lettre* – also transforms bodies, quite literally consuming the real to produce its hyperreal simulacrum. As such, it can now serve as a precursor to a new kind of technologically mediated perfusion – that of globalization – and precursor to a new mode of telematic simulation. Falling in love with a simulated woman on the island, literally seduced by a simulacrum, the protagonist of the novella decides to sacrifice his real existence in order to take a place in the simulation.

One film of the immediate post-dictatorship period draws explicitly on Bioy Casares' allegory of power and simulation to encode its comments on political disavowal through the mode of cinematic disavowal. Eliseo Subiela's *Hombre mirando al sudeste* (Man Facing South-east, 1986) plays on the spectator's splitting of belief in cinema, the incredulity generated by the protagonist Rantés' assertion that he is a simulation, a hologram projected by an invisible machine in outer space, an artefact of extraterrestrial technology. Rantés is a *reaparecido*, having appeared from nowhere in a Buenos Aires mental asylum, and is thus a spectral corollary of the *desaparecidos* or disappeared of Argentina's Dirty War of 1976–83. Of course, we know full well that he is a mere simulation, a condensation of the technologies of vision and of the modern regimes of power-visibility which constitute cinema and which are in turn constituted by televisual imaginaries. But we nevertheless disavow that knowledge in our willingness to invest in the regime of rational belief represented by psychiatrist Dr Julio Denis. This inversion, whereby the reality principle is in fact the simulation and the sci-fi postulate of Rantés' status as cyborg is the strict truth, acts as a powerful critique of

the mechanisms of political disavowal, the bourgeois citizenry's refusal to acknowledge the horror committed in the name of social order and morality during the dictatorship. *Hombre mirando al sudeste* was also remarkable for consciously setting up a cyborg aesthetic through reference to the now classic Ridley Scott film *Blade Runner* of 1982 as well as its literary antecedent in Philip K. Dick's novel.[14]

These cultural antecedents of a cinematic cyborg aesthetic in Argentina are more explicitly concerned with the temporality of memory, as well as with its complexity as a representational apparatus as it intervenes in and disrupts the staging of political power, than they are with its spatiality. The shift towards spatiality in the end-of-millennium films I am examining here perhaps marks the emergence a new conceptualization of power no longer as a vertical hierarchy of repressions but instead as a horizontal network of interdependencies, one which is by no means any less frightening.

Spatio-temporal knots of memory

> As for the Moebius strip, if it is split in two, it results in an additional spiral without there being any possibility of resolving its surfaces (here the reversible continuity of hypotheses). Hades of simulation, which is no longer one of torture, but of the subtle, maleficent, elusive twisting of meaning.
>
> Jean Baudrillard[15]

Moebius (1996) is an exploration of the new spatial and temporal topographies that emerge both in the megalopolis at the turn of the millennium and within increasingly interconnected systems and spheres of everyday life on both the local and the global scales, registering the growing complexity and interconnectivity of what Manuel Castells terms the 'network society'.[16] The film self-consciously brings a Borgesian literary topos to bear on its interpretation of the network as labyrinth, with one particular network – that of the underground or *subte* in Buenos Aires – standing for wider social processes. This is in many ways quite a traditional theme of urban narrative, particularly of the surrealist ilk, stretching back to Aragon's *Le Paysan de Paris* (Paris Peasant, 1926), Breton's *Nadja* (1928), Benjamin's *Passagen-Werk* (Arcades Project, 1927–40), and of course to Julio Cortázar's doubled cities of Paris and Buenos Aires.[17] Another Argentine text which is clearly being cited in the paradoxical topology of *Moebius* is Ernesto Sábato's *Informe sobre ciegos* (Report on the Blind, 1961), a work that

paints a hallucinatory subterranean world which, like the Minotaur's labyrinth, is the monstrous double of the city above.[18]

The film, which is based on a little-known short story by US astronomer A. J. Deutsch entitled 'A Subway Named Möbius' (1950),[19] concerns the mysterious disappearance on the Buenos Aires underground of one complete train together with its 30 or 40 passengers. The credit sequence of the film shows multiple X-ray like maps and blueprints of different parts of a network which appears immense, interspersed with shots of pressure gauges, trains coupling, points switching and hydraulic machines starting up. A voice-over in the opening sequences, which consist of slow-motion shots of passengers getting on and off trains, walking along tunnels and up and down stairways to a soundtrack of Gregorian chants, emphasizes the metaphorical nature of the underground network:

> The underground is, no doubt, a symbol of the times. A labyrinth in which we silently cross the paths of our fellow travellers. [...] There are hundreds of platforms [...] where, far from merely boarding a train, we attempt to embark on a change of life. It is a strange game in which we make our way through infinite subterranean tunnels, without realizing that every time we change trains we are irrevocably changing our destiny.

Gustavo Mosquera, the film's director, has stated that he intentionally expanded the representation of the network by adding new station names to supplement existing ones 'in order to suggest the idea of a future underground railway with a larger extension than the present one'.[20] Unlike the aforementioned surrealist tradition, but in line perhaps with Walter Benjamin's vision of the city and technology, the emphasis on maps and machines in this film is suggestive not only of a Borgesian challenge to rational systems of measurement, indeed to the concept of fixed Euclidian space, but also of a breakdown of 'cognitive mapping' in the increasing complexity of urban networks. Cognitive mapping is a concept used by geographers to name the process by which we make internal representations for ourselves of the spaces which we traverse in everyday life.[21] As the complexity of these systems increases, our mental maps seem to break down and the urban space of the megalopolis, let alone the global space of multinational capitalism, becomes fundamentally unrepresentable. This would then suggest that there are two contradictory impulses at work in the figurative apparatus of this film: on the one hand, a spatial complexity

which challenges the rationality of Euclidean mapping and which introduces the protagonist to a concept of the infinite as a form of liberation, as we shall see; and on the other, a sense of the conceptual and social paralysis that accompanies our immersion in the unmappable new topologies and temporalities of the network society. It is only, I want to suggest, through a realization of the spatial dimension of the politics of memory in Argentina that these two contradictory spatial figures can be resolved.

Despite constant searching, the missing train in the film simply cannot be found, although the odd distant rumblings are heard even when the entire network is supposedly shut down, and the system registers the passage of phantom trains which disrupt the signalling and point mechanisms. Since a new perimeter line was added, no one quite seems to understand the interconnectivity of the system, and, amid the scandal of the disappearance and telephone calls to the Director General's office from concerned relatives of the disappeared, a young topologist, Daniel Pratt, is drafted in to investigate. Pratt discovers that the original plans of the perimeter extension line have disappeared from the archive of the Ministry of Public Works, having been illicitly borrowed by one Hugo Mistein, a brilliant former professor of Pratt's in the field of topology who retired several years earlier. Pratt manages to locate Mistein's flat and, with the help of a young girl, Abril, whose mother is the caretaker, is let into the recently abandoned apartment. There he finds the missing plans together with many scribbled notes and formulae, in among which the words 'NÚCLEO MOEBIUS' stand out. Pratt then attempts to explain to the railway authorities – a triumvirate of men strongly suggestive of a military junta – his conjectures about the way the topology of the network has disrupted conventional Euclidean space:

> I believe that the new branch line is to blame. [...] The system is a network of astounding topological complexity, and it has been ever since previous enlargements. But the addition of the perimeter line made it into something ... utterly unique. I still don't understand it entirely. But I believe that the new branch line has increased the interconnectivity of the system by such a huge order of magnitude ... that I can no longer calculate it. My guess is that it has become infinite. If that's the case, gentlemen, then we might deduce ... that the system is behaving like a Möbius strip. [...] Can you imagine what the properties of such a network would be? Neither can I. To tell you the truth ... the structure of the whole system together with the new perimeter line is beyond my grasp.

Needless to say, Pratt's explanation is rejected and belittled by the authorities, whose main impulse is to cover up and deny the disappearances. But after losing himself in the underground tunnels, Pratt stumbles across a mysterious station appropriately named 'Borges'. A train arrives, which he boards, only to discover that the passengers seem frozen in time and that he is on the missing train. He makes his way to the front, where the driver is none other than his former professor, Mistein. As they talk about the newly discovered topology of the network, the train accelerates along the tunnels to an apparently infinite velocity until, bathing everything in a surreal blue light, it appears to be simultaneously everywhere and nowhere:

> Mistein: What are you afraid of, Pratt?
> Pratt: Vertigo.
> Mistein: That's normal. No-one can look on infinity and not feel vertigo.

Mosquera claims that infinity here takes on a political meaning,[22] as the infinite nature of 'disappearance' in Argentina's dirty war, which is to say a phenomenon which did not have closure and cannot therefore publicly be declared to be finite. If the in-finity of the disappeared is a disavowed truth which must be faced by all sectors of society, then the topological paradox of the Möbius strip – in which the two opposed sides of the strip are in fact one and the same infinite loop – can become a very precise figure for the subterranean spatial encoding of (national) memory. It is this figure – perhaps the very prototype of the labyrinth – that connects the spatial vertigo of the cybercity, its megapolitan labyrinths and globalized networks, to the unfinished temporal work of remembrance of the disappeared in Argentina. The figure can be set free, perhaps this film is suggesting, only when memory can be reclaimed from the vertiginous spatial labyrinths of post-dictatorial globalized capital. But to elaborate this theme further, we must now turn to the dystopian old future presented in *La sonámbula*.

Memory machines in the cybercity

The most important antecedent to *La sonámbula* (1998) is Ricardo Piglia's aforementioned cyberpunk novel of 1992, *La ciudad ausente*. This is not surprising, since Piglia co-authored the script for *La sonámbula*, and director Spiner in fact asked Piglia to be his scriptwriter precisely because of his interest in the novel. Many elements overlap between the novel and the film: a cyborg storytelling woman-machine in *La ciudad ausente* is referred to

explicitly as a future Eve, an 'Eva futura', while the female protagonist of *La sonámbula*, whose visions are captured directly on a giant computer screen and seem capable of foretelling the future, is actually named Eva; both plots are set in a near dystopian future at the time of writing/filming, one in which personal and collective memory and identity have imploded along with nature itself, and one in which a post-dictatorial technocratic state has fused itself with the libidinal control systems of globalized capital.

The repressive overgrown cityscape of Buenos Aires in the film follows in the tradition of *Blade Runner*'s old future in which present, past and future seem to have collapsed, or in which the future simulates the past postmodern style. In *Blade Runner* the cityscape of Los Angeles in 2019 is a baroque fusion of the futuristic and the simulation of ancient pyramids, perhaps Mayan, together with an imploded Dickensian vision of industrialization run riot. In *La sonámbula*, the cityscape of Buenos Aires in 2010 – the bicentenary of Argentine Independence – fuses churches and cathedrals with a jungle of elevated highways and skyscrapers which signify the futurist city not as future but as citation of old sci-fi movies, principally Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* of 1927. The future is thus filtered through a past cinematic imaginary, an inversion which is aided by the fact that the entire futuristic plot of the film is shot in black and white, whereas the flashbacks to the past or present – the visions of the protagonist Eva Rey – are shot in full colour. Like *Blade Runner*, with its startling opening sequence in which the dystopian cityscape is reflected through the close-up mirror-like eye of Deckard, an analogue for the screen which feeds the spectator's eye, so in *La sonámbula* the eye imagery of a sequence which clearly cites *Blade Runner*'s opening (the first traversal of the city) sets in train a self-reflexive focus on the prosthetics of vision throughout the film. The eye is the interface between the organic and the technological, the point of suture between the individual and the visual media as generators of a libidinal economy of prohibition and desire and as manufacturers of memory. In this sense, the future megalopolis is, quite literally, a teleopolis.

In the world of *La sonámbula*, the Lefebvrian vision of the urban consumption of organic time, the compulsion to subsume all vestiges of natural rhythms and cycles into synthetic time and life cycles of the commodity, has been taken to a nightmare extreme.[23] This has a dual focus: that of ecological disaster and the literal loss of that which links us to organic time cycles, memory itself. In the film, the two are intimately linked, since the plot concerns a future in which a huge industrial accident, probably a deliberate explosion at an experimental chemical factory in a popular district of Buenos Aires, has left 300,000 people with wiped-out memories and hence no sense of their own

identity or relationship to the past. All of the affected people in the film bear a highly visible mark, either on the face or on some other part of the body such as forearm or chest, a mark which becomes a substitute for identity and even an erotic fetish within the film's self-consciously condensed dream logic. The principal protagonist, Eva Rey, is one such amnesiac whom we see being captured and taken in for tests and reprogramming at the sinister Centre for Psychobiological Research. The other protagonist, Ariel Kluge, plays an equivocal role as an amnesiac who is in the pay of the state security service, but who falls in love with Eva and helps her to escape from the city in search of the perhaps mythical subversive revolutionary called Gauna (although we never know whether Ariel intends to kill Gauna once she has found him).

The character El Duke (*sic*), friend and substitute father figure for Ariel, having known Ariel's real father in prison before the latter's death, and who helps Ariel and Eva to escape into the countryside, explains the politics behind this literalized vision of the postmodern consumption of memory – in which it should not be too hard to see barely veiled references to the most recent Argentine dictatorship:

> The truth is … a silent technological explosion which affects you up here [*tapping his temple with right index finger*]. Like the stuff they used during demos to control people, but … on a gigantic scale! So, what do the half-arsed bastards decide to do? Conduct experiments in a densely populated neighbourhood! Boom … And what do you think happens? The results aren't what was expected … So … 300,000 people are mentally affected. [*Shouting*] 300,000 people … haven't got a fucking clue who they are!

However this 'silent technological explosion', a clear corollary for the contemporary technological explosion of televisual and cyber culture, appears in the film to have extended beyond the consumption of organic time and memory to the total consumption of nature itself. The countryside outside Buenos Aires is literally a post-industrial desert, a Borgesian-cum-Baudrillardian 'desert of the real', consumed literally by industrial chaos as well as by compulsive simulation as in Borges's and Bioy Casares's story.[24] Even the migration of birds as organic marker of natural time cycles has become disturbed as we are told that the huge flocks of birds which we see merely circle and circle the desert without orientation (a concept that shares a source with another cipher of mechanized nature: the one-winged mechanical bird that appears in Piglia's novel *La ciudad ausente*).

In many ways memory, with its corollary amnesia, is the key theme of *La sonámbula*. In an interview originally filmed for a 'making of' documentary, Piglia explains the importance of this theme:

> We had the idea of a science fiction film in the sense that there is an idea, a speculation about the present which is translated into the future. We took the problematics of memory, what is remembered or forgotten in Argentina, and we converted it into a future world where this is the very problem that defines life.[25]

Indeed, throughout the film cinema, or rather televisual culture more broadly, is self-reflexively figured as prosthetic memory, or simulated memory. The central computer screen in the film, operated by the mad scientist-psychiatrist Dr Gazzar, is represented as a giant cinema screen, with images displayed in colour as against the black and white of the rest of the film. The machine records telepathically, interfacing directly with the mind and reproducing thought televisually. In particular, as in *La ciudad ausente*, the machine records dreams, so that the film figures a total conflation of the spheres of the technological imaginary with the unconscious. In this, it projects forward contemporary analyses of the technological mediation of personal and collective imaginaries, of which the summary given by Jonathan Beller is fairly representative. He writes:

> Metz argues that 'cinema is a technique of the imaginary'. […] However, the scope of today's (counter)revolution […] emerges from a reversal of these very terms: *the imaginary is a technique of cinema*, or rather, of mediation generally. Such a reversal de-ontologizes the unconscious and further suggests that the unconscious is cinema's product.[26]

But of course in *La sonámbula* these programmed memories are a form of programmed amnesia designed to replace memory, and they appear to be part of some ultimate experiment in social programming. In the Centre for Psychobiological Research, where the amnesiacs are brought to initiate their reinsertion into society, the rhetoric of recuperating memory is bound up with a primitive Huxleyan reprogramming with normative memories through televisual technology. We are also shown the process of rehabilitation through gender programming, as the amnesiacs are given reconstructed relationships and families, with the process revealing the coercion that underlies the everyday

performance of gender norms. This is ultimately a critique of the erasure of dissident cultural identities as the intended aftermath of dictatorship in Argentina, where the dissolution of collective memory prepares the ground for a society modelled along the lines of post-industrial corporatism. Furthermore, *La sonámbula* self-reflexively takes up the now traditional projections onto a female figure of anxieties surrounding technology and cyborgs, for which we can perhaps find the prototype in the automaton Olympia in E. T. A. Hoffmann's *Der Sandmann* (The Sandman, 1816). Eva Rey as a literary/filmic figure is no different in this respect to the original android, *L'Ève future* (The Future Eve) of 1886, the robot Maria in *Metropolis*, or the replicant Rachael in *Blade Runner*. Just like these, Eva, who Piglia playfully claims is a kind of 'Peronist Oedipus Rex tangentially suggestive of Eva Perón',[27] finds herself caught in the clutches of competing patriarchal narratives, and slips out of them by adopting the traditionally assigned feminine strategy of simulation.

Is it inevitable that we should find such overtly Oedipal narratives at the heart of a film which has the potential to suggest different and emergent modes of techno-organic kinship? As Donna Haraway put it, 'the most terrible and perhaps the most promising monsters in cyborg worlds are embodied in non-oedipal narratives with a different logic of repression, which we need to understand for our survival. [...] Unlike the hopes of Frankenstein's monster, the cyborg does not expect its father to save it through a restoration of the garden'.[28] Wired up to Gazzar's giant computer which electronically records her dreams of the future, Eva becomes the epicentre of the entire filmic world, simulating the real through dreams which turn out to be the dystopian reality of the film. It is in this sense that Gazzar is able to claim, quite literally, at a moment of revelation, that 'the end of the world is a woman who wakes up'. When Eva does awake, dragging her dream-lover Ariel into the 'real world', it is precisely to restore the garden (of Eden) and the patriarch (who turns out to be one and the same as the subversive revolutionary Gauna) to their rightful roles. This restoration is thus presented in the film as the culmination of the twin logics of repression and amnesia, precisely because it leaves the dream-protagonist Ariel permanently stranded in the desert of the real.

The cyborgs or cyborg-ciphers in Argentine science fiction film are clearly engaging with dystopian projections of imploded social and cultural identities which condense anxieties surrounding the loss of social identities and cultural memory, and the re-inscription of these disembedded identities within global regimes governing the circulation of goods, information and, crucially, images. *Moebius* deploys a paradoxical

topology at the heart of the cybercity: that of the Buenos Aires underground transformed into a Möbius strip. This strange new topology provides a spatial figure of memory, or, rather, provides a method of recovering memory and temporality from the very heart of the deterritorialized spatial labyrinths of the megalopolis. *La sonámbula*, on the other hand, deploys its cyborgs at the threshold of the failure of representation, on the spatio-temporal boundary where representational logic phases into and out of an order of simulation. The technologically mediated dreams of an Argentine *Ève future* are self-consciously bound up with a collective dream of liberation and escape. Indeed, cyberpunk has always had a romantic relationship to dissidence, viewing in the anarchy engendered in the interstices of the capitalist system a dystopian mode of liberation. As the rebel Gorrión puts it to Eva near the end of the film, '[Gauna] is the way to total liberation. If you find Gauna, you will mark the way for all of us, do you realize that?' What is perhaps radical in this film is the suggestion in the end that the dream of total liberation is merely the flipside of total conformity, in that it fixes the rhizomatic operations of power into binary structures. Similarly, in *Moebius* the terms of the binary opposition between temporality and spatiality, focused on memory and displacement, are shown ultimately to inhere one within the other, so that memory can be recovered from the very structure of the labyrinth. It is this realization which, in both films, can perhaps suspend the erasure of dissident cultural identities initiated under dictatorship and which might allow for the circulation of new forms of cyborg kinship within global circuits of power and exchange.

Notes

1. J. L. Borges (1962), 'Funes, the Memorious', in *Fictions*, trans. A. Kerrigan (New York: Grove Press), pp. 83–91.
2. This is a common preoccupation of modernist thought about the city, from T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* (1923) to Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* (1927).
3. In the Latin American context, this is the customary explanation of the role of cinema in helping rural migrants to adapt to norms of citizenship in the metropolis from the 1950s onwards, especially in Mexico. See, for example, C. Monsiváis and C. Bonfil (1994), *A través del espejo: El cine mexicano y su público* (Mexico City: IMCINE/El Milagro).
4. D. Haraway (1991), 'A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century', in *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (London: Free Association Books), pp. 149–81.
5. For further elaboration of some of these ideas, see D. Haraway (1997), *Modest_Witness@Second_Millenium.FemaleMan©_Meets_OncoMouse™: Feminism and Technoscience* (London and New York: Routledge).

6. For an examination of the cyborg figure in recent Mexican literature, see C. L. Taylor (2002), 'Body-Swapping and Genre-Crossing in Laura Esquivel's *La ley del amor*', *Modern Language Review*, 97.2, 324–35; C. L. Taylor (2003), 'Cities, Codes and Cyborgs in Carmen Boullosa's *Cielos de la tierra*', *Bulletin of Spanish Studies*, 80.4 (July), 477–93. For an account of this figure in the work of Ricardo Piglia, see J. Page (2004), 'Writing as Resistance in Ricardo Piglia's *La ciudad ausente*', *Bulletin of Spanish Studies*, 81.3 (May), 343–60.
7. A. Carpentier (1949), 'Prólogo', in *El reino de este mundo* (Mexico City: Siglo XXI).
8. This is even more extreme in the case of Guillermo del Toro's early film *Cronos* (1993), which condenses, in the figure of a Baroque clockwork cyborg, the privations of the colonial period, the deterritorialization of the contemporary megalopolis, and anxieties surrounding Mexico's absorption into the North American Free Trade Agreement of the 1990s.
9. M. Castells (1996), 'The Space of Flows', in *The Rise of the Network Society* (*The Information Age: Economy, Society, Culture*, vol. 1) (Oxford: Blackwell), pp. 376–428.
10. M. Watts (1997), 'Mapping Meaning, Denoting Difference, Imagining Identity: Dialectical Images and Postmodern Geographies', in D. Gregory and T. Barnes, eds, *Reading Human Geography: The Poetics and Politics of Inquiry* (London: Arnold), pp. 489–502, p. 497.
11. N. García Canclini (1995), *Consumidores y ciudadanos: Conflictos multiculturales de la globalización* (Mexico City: Grijalbo), p. 94.
12. A. Giddens (1991), *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age* (Cambridge: Polity); R. Ortiz (1996), *Otro territorio: Ensayos sobre el mundo contemporáneo*, trans. A. Solari, 2nd edn (Bogotá: Convenio Andrés Bello).
13. Cyberpunk, a science fiction genre characterized by the fusion of cybernetics and punk, concentrates on 'marginalized, alienated loners who lived on the edge of society in generally dystopic futures'. L. Person (1998), 'Notes Towards a Postcyberpunk Manifesto', *Nova Express*, 16: n.p., http://project.cyberpunk.ru/idb/notes_toward_a_postcyberpunk_manifesto.html (date accessed 22 October 2006).
14. One of the characters is named Beatriz Dick. For further discussion, see G. Kantaris (2005), 'Holograms and Simulacra: Bioy Casares, Subiela, Piglia', in E. Fishburn and E. L. Ortiz, eds, *Science and the Creative Imagination in Latin America* (London: Institute for the Study of the Americas), pp. 175–89, pp. 180–2.
15. J. Baudrillard (1988), 'Simulacra and Simulations', in M. Poster, ed., *Jean Baudrillard: Selected Writings* (Stanford: Stanford University Press), pp. 166–84.
16. Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society*.
17. J. Cortázar (1963), *Rayuela* (Buenos Aires: Sudamerica).
18. This is a section, which has been published independently, of the novel *Sobre héroes y tumbas* (On Heroes and Tombs).
19. A. J. Deutsch (1958), 'A Subway Named Möbius', in C. Fadiman, ed., *Fantasia Mathematica [Anthology]* (New York: Simon and Schuster), pp. 222–36. The original story is set in Boston.
20. G. Mosquera R. (2003), 'A Few Reflections on the Creation of the Film "Moebius"', in M. Emmer and M. Manaresi, eds, *Mathematics, Art, Technology,*

and Cinema (Berlin and London: Springer), pp. 156–62, p. 157, http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=JKynT5lRdSgC (date accessed 4 December 2008).

21. Kevin Lynch (1960), in *The Image of the City* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press), used the term 'imageability' to denote the susceptibility of (urban) space and lived environments to the formation of mental maps, and this is subsequently developed into a theory of the unmappability of contemporary (postmodern) space by Fredric Jameson (1991), *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press).
22. Mosquera R., 'A Few Reflections', p. 159.
23. H. Lefebvre (1974), *La Production de l'espace* (Paris: Anthropos), p. 114.
24. The story is 'Del rigor en la ciencia' ('Of Rigour in Science'), written as a literary forgery and collected in J. L. Borges (1954), *Historia universal de la infamia* (Buenos Aires: Emecé), pp. 131–2.
25. N. Luppi, ed., 'Ricardo Piglia habla de *La sonámbula*', *Mabuse*, http://www.mabuse.com.ar/mabuse/piglia.htm (date accessed 16 February 2006).
26. J. L. Beller (2002), 'Kino-I, Kino-World: Notes on the Cinematic Mode of Production', in N. Mirzoeff, ed., *The Visual Culture Reader* (London: Routledge), pp. 60–85, p. 64.
27. Luppi, 'Ricardo Piglia habla de *La sonámbula*'.
28. Haraway, 'A Cyborg Manifesto', pp. 150–1.

12
Perpetuated Transitions: Forms of Nightlife and the Buildings of Berlin in the Work of Isa Genzken and Wolfgang Tillmans

Philipp Ekardt

At the centre of this chapter is an interpretation of the 2001 installation, *Science Fiction/Hier und jetzt zufrieden sein* (Science Fiction: Being Satisfied here and now), by sculptor Isa Genzken and photographer Wolfgang Tillmans.[1] Through engaging with each artist's formal vocabulary as well as with their individual work-biographies, the chapter seeks to describe the way in which the *Science Fiction* installation communicates with the activity of architecture in general and with one concrete, historic architectural or urban reality in particular. The reality in question is an episode in the history of Berlin, the decade of the 1990s, which was by all accounts a transitional period. After the Fall of the Wall, large territories in the middle of the city were set free from the control exercised by one system that had just collapsed (the particular socialism of the German Democratic Republic, GDR), while another system (the capitalism of the Federal Republic of Germany, FRG) had not yet taken hold of them. In Genzken's and Tillmans's work one can perceive a formally highly mediated echo of two types of intervention in these urban zones of suspension: first, an administrative and corporate grip that privileges monumental representationalism and the maximizing of profit (as addressed by Genzken in her artistic comments on the development of Potsdamer Platz); second, a dedication of existing architectural structures to a culture of nightlife and its transient institutions (clubs, parties and so on, which are depicted in Tillmans's images, but also referred to in Genzken's sculptures).

One approach to Genzken's and Tillmans's works would consist in describing them as a formally marked-out territory in which two conflicting tendencies resonate. One tendency is oriented towards hegemonic monumental domination, the other towards a practice of non-permanent rededication of the city's given conditions. In taking up

this antagonism, art finds an aesthetic articulation for the experiential reality of life in Berlin during the period in question. In the words of the German author and film-maker Alexander Kluge, this time span might be called a 'moment between times',[2] and art's privilege perhaps consists in finding stable forms that relate to this transitive temporality. While the city is currently well advanced on its road towards reconsolidation, art documents, points to, re-actualizes, or recalls what has vanished, and it articulates it precisely *as* a transient, that is, inherently vanishing entity. We are dealing here with the moment between two historical constellations of transience: the time of interim usages of city zones and buildings, but also the nights out spent at the clubs. Most of the clubs in question are no longer there and were never designed to last, for example when occupying rooms in buildings whose continued physical existence was often uncertain, not to mention relations of property. Through art's intervention, the impermanence of nightlife thus becomes legible as a cipher for a moment in the history of a city.[3]

New buildings for Berlin: A provisional dialectics of cheapness

When the German sculptor Isa Genzken was invited to participate in the 11th *documenta* exhibition (2002), she presented a number of abstract objects, resembling irregularly shaped, truncated hollow column-shafts made from cheap, intensely coloured, often shiny, sometimes translucent strips of plastic. Each object was placed on a pedestal and its components seemed simply to be leaning against each other, hardly forming even planes, let alone 90-degree angles. Using silicone glue and tape as a primary means of securing stability, Genzken's method was anything but complex, nor did it seem to belong to the field of classical sculptural procedures. The work is the product of bricolage rather than of a systematic, constructive treatment of material. As such it does not result from a process of shaping structured by established techniques of craft.

In characterizing the material employed with the attribute 'cheap', we follow a hint from the artist. In conversation, Genzken once carefully distinguished the cheapness of industrially manufactured materials (which she is interested in) from the cheapness of rapidly fabricated objects (from which she distances herself): 'I've become […] interested in a formal language of cheap materials and cheap production. I'm not talking about cheap, hand-made objects, like the self-modelled stuff that's so amateurish you can see it a mile off. When I say "cheap materials" I mean industrially fabricated sculptures that are very

interesting as sculptures in their own right.'[4] The term 'cheapness' thus relates to a mode of production that relies on the instantaneous availability of materials and seeks to generate rapid output on this basis. She also distinguishes between the swift production mode and a related formal language of sculpture.

The formal vocabulary of the objects for *documenta* becomes more understandable if one considers the title of the series: *New Buildings for Berlin*. These works do indeed appear as crossings between abstract sculptures, bricolage objects and architectural models for high-rise constructions. Given their title and the use of transparent plastic components, one might be reminded of Mies van der Rohe's iconic design for Berlin's (unrealized) first crystalline glass skyscraper from the 1920s – a utopian glimpse of a future building practice.[5] Or, on a more dysphoric note, one might think of the recent attempts at generating a representative corporate architecture for Berlin during the 1990s, the most prominent example of which can be witnessed in Potsdamer Platz, a formerly public zone that has now been handed over to a few global corporations. During the 1920s the square formed one of the city's centres of activity (in terms of traffic, commerce, and entertainment). Erased by the bombings of the Second World War and thrown into stasis when relegated to the mere fringes of West Berlin, the former urban square turned into a border-strip along the adjacent wall, only to experience a post-reunification conversion that equalled in Genzken's view (and not just hers) a decline into mediocrity and intellectual as well as qualitative cheapness. In her words: 'The awful thing about architecture here is that everything, almost everything, is done in the cheapest construction style, the cheapest. [...] Just look at Potsdamer Platz, it looks like theatre scenery!'[6]

Taking this into account, one arrives at the fundamental ambiguity of cheapness (perhaps we can call it a miniature 'dialectics of cheapness') in Genzken's architectural sculptures, or sculptural models. On the one hand, they perform an act of critical mimesis vis-à-vis the low-quality building of a public sell-out to global, corporate architecture, while, on the other, they identify cheapness as remedy, that is as the way of achieving a relative independence in production. As Rem Koolhaas has suggested, the architectural structure of these mall-like environments is characterized by an abandonment of complex methods of construction. This is done in favour of a deliberately simplistic strategy of layering, where one stratum, be it horizontal or vertical, is merely added to the preceding one and both are tied to another not through the articulation of joints but by the inarticulate means of gluing and sticking. As Koolhaas writes: 'The joint is no longer a problem, an intellectual

issue: transitional moments are defined by stapling and taping.'[7] If this is the case, we might indeed recognize in Genzken's objects an artistic answer to these developments in architectural and urban practice, which Koolhaas has described as the emergence of Junkspace.

Genzken and architecture: Some precedents

New Buildings for Berlin is not the first occasion on which Isa Genzken has engaged with the realm of the city and the practice of building. One of her most pronounced forays in this direction began about the middle of the 1980s with a series of works which make use of concrete. Cast into rectangular forms, sometimes reduplicating actual architectural elements like windows (*Fenster*, 1990) Genzken combined these objects with the constructive complement of concrete, namely, steel; or she transposed them into rough block-echoes of fragile technical devices which carry the names of cities: *Weltempfänger Toronto* (World Receiver Toronto, 1990) or *Weltempfänger Chicago* (1992). Sometimes Genzken simply isolates a building's components, such as sunblinds, which she attaches to the walls of an exhibition space (*Markisen* (Awnings, 2000)). She names sculptures after existing building types: *Strandhütten zum Umziehen* (Beach Changing huts).[8] She even makes explicit reference to central positions in modernist architecture, as witnessed in her 2000 New York City exhibition *Fuck the Bauhaus*.[9] And, on at least one occasion, she planned to devote an entire film – which was never realized – to two existing buildings: *Empire/Vampire* was to be a movie about the relationship between the Empire State Building and – in Genzken's account – its more uncanny *Doppelgänger*, the Chrysler Building.[10]

The connection to architecture is also created through the numerous photographic citations of high-rise city spaces, especially those of New York City, which are part of the artist's repertoire. She has shown series of architectural photographs; and in 2007 a facsimile version of her 1995–96 collage book, *I love New York, Crazy City*, was published, a volume that organizes visual material and records from the artist's stay in Manhattan.[11] One important structuring method for the book consists in a technique of rough taping employed to paste together layers of photos, flyers, bills, faxes, postcards, tickets, and so on. Haptically smoothed out through photographic reproduction for the purpose of printing, it still recalls the bricolage technique of impromptu making that deals with what is at hand. The shiny and repellent surfaces of much high-rise architecture also find an echo in Genzken's collage series *Soziale Fassaden* (Social Façades).[12]

Genzken has, on a number of occasions, analysed and reinforced the constitutive double bind which characterizes the architecture of the house vis-à-vis the body of the inhabiting subject. In 2002 she attached a set of panels displaying a gigantic ear to an empty, exterior wall of a building in Innsbruck. And in 2003, she topped the roof of a small glass pavilion on Rosa-Luxemburg-Platz in Berlin, which housed the Galerie Meerrettich, with a small field of bamboo-stems (*Haare wachsen wie sie wollen* (Hair grows as it wants to)) – a gesture she also used later for the Italian pavilion at the Venice Biennale. In both cases, architecture is complemented by physiognomic attributes of the human body, thus articulating the underlying metaphorical link by which a building is not just the protecting envelope for the human body but always already a stand-in for the human body, because both – body and building – figure as skin. A series of stelae and columns, which are tall and slim and based on a roughly rectangular layout (their base measures between 18 and 40 centimetres, their height between 215 and 320 centimetres), operates with a similar logic. Carrying the names of friends and artist colleagues as titles (*Daniel, Bill, Dan, Wolfgang,* and so on), their towering structure is an allusion to or a reduplication of the architectural format of the skyscraper *and* a highly abstracted mimetic gesture towards the erect human body – a body that is now articulated as both the building's inhabitant and its double: the house itself.

Genzken has, furthermore, addressed the problematic history of the German Biennale Pavilion in Venice. Planned and executed by Albert Speer, it epitomizes totalitarian architecture, designed to represent to the world the cultural production of National Socialist Germany on the territory of Fascist Italy. The sculptor's approach to the pavilion's facade in the work exhibited during the 2007 Biennale is characteristically direct and effective: she simply clad it with a layer of scaffolding, a technique directly taken from her observations in *I love New York, Crazy City*. In this way, Genzken artistically inscribed the building into a process of reconstruction and remaking by handing the solid block over to a temporary porosity – in a way that precisely did not attack the solid walls with brutal means.

There is, finally, at least one occasion where an indoor sculpture by Genzken aspires to more than a gesture towards architectural measures. In the case of two wall-like blocks, her objects approximate the dimensions of an actual building. They are situated in an exact parallel, with their longer sides facing each other. The mirrored slabs leave a corridor in their middle for visitors to pass through a multitude of refractions and reflections that extends well beyond human height. Each block

is five metres long and one metre across; one is four metres high, the other three. The distance between the two sculptural elements amounts to approximately two metres.[13] The surface of Genzken's mirrored walls is structured by a thin and slightly irregular grid, because the mirroring is puzzled together out of tiles of different size: one format is one metre square, the other 50 centimetres square. The result is an increasingly irregular grid effect. As vertiginous as the reflective taking-apart and recombining of space may appear, there is always a network of lines with increasing density and decreasing exactitude, the deeper one looks into the endless reflective corridors. There is never the irritating purity of clear reflection, and the viewer is always embedded in this increasingly irregular but also somehow orientating linear system.

Genzken's use of this technique of structured, marked mirrors can be found again in her 2007 installation at the German Pavilion in Venice, but this time on the inside. If in 1993 Hans Haacke broke up the surface of the building's floor (a gesture criticized by Genzken), she de-territorialized its architecture by extending it into a perceptual overstretch, a warping.[14] In her work, the sculptural object is always already on its way to becoming architecture; architecture is, conversely, always on its way to becoming something else. Genzken reprograms space and decodes and recodes it; and she carefully avoids stabilizing the spatial transformation around the artwork. Thus, Genzken's achievements here lie in an architecturalization of the art object. In her work, sculpture is always in the process of becoming something that it no longer just talks about in the supposedly detached manner of reduplication and reflection. It becomes architecture as a model (*New Buildings for Berlin*), as material (concrete), as a column, or as a wall (the mirrored blocks). In addition to scale, there is a second aspect that makes the Genzken wall-objects participate in this architecturalization of the art object: namely, the use of tiles, which already appears in a less regular form on some of her stelae. These tiles have been imported from actual building practice. They could have been used to construct a mirror surface in a shopping mall, for example. Actual architecture thus manifests itself in the art object as a material synecdoche and as a *pars pro toto* of the process of architectural labour.

With Wolfgang Tillmans: Post-party architecture

It is the gridded, marked surface produced by mirror tiling which establishes a formal connection to a large-scale work by the photographer Wolfgang Tillmans, with which Genzken's walls have been exhibited since 2001.

Figure 12.1 Isa Genzken and Wolfgang Tillmans, *Science Fiction/Hier und jetzt zufrieden sein* (2001), Museum Ludwig Cologne. Courtesy of the artists, the Friedrich Christian Flick collection, and Galerie Daniel Buchholz.

The title of Tillmans's image is *Wake*, and the collaborative installation is *Science Fiction/Hier und jetzt zufrieden sein*.[15] On Tillmans's enormous inkjet print (545 × 807 cm), we see the artist's studio or, rather, a section of the floor, a wall, and the industrial iron construction that carries the roof. The pictured room is tinged in transparent red light, the source of which might be electric or the very early rising sun. Window grids from the opposite side of the room cast their shadows onto the wall as rays fall through the glass. Additional tiny spots of luminosity come from light-chains that hang from the ceiling, suffusing the upper region of the picture with glowing points of light. Some empty bottles and a couple of plastic cups are scattered around the room; the floor is dirty. To the far left, three chairs are pushed against the wall as if to make room for movement, perhaps for a provisional dance floor. *Wake* must have been taken on a morning after a party. We find here an echo between the light which falls into the artist's post-party studio and the reflected light in Genzken's mirror, thus identifying photo and

sculpture as contraptions for rendering architecture visible. There is also a phenomenal encounter, however, between the hazy grid of interstices, which we see in Genzken's work, and the grid of shadows cast onto Tillmans's studio-wall as the morning light traverses the room's windows which are invisible to us, since they are situated outside the image. The location of the light-source (which, this being a photograph, coincides with the physical origin of the image's condition of possibility) falls roughly into place with the actual position of the sculptor's wall-objects. The constellation of photograph and sculptural volume is thus far from arbitrary: they are joined in a systematic pictorial and spatial (re)production of architecture.

In comparison with reactions to Genzken's *œuvre*, little has been written about the fact that architectural and even sculptural issues also have their place in Tillmans's work. Architecture has figured in Tillmans's images, from his earliest pictures taken in the mid-1980s in Manhattan. There also is a 1984 teenage self-portrait as *Culture Club*-inspired drag, called *Fragile*, in which Tillmans is wearing a rather complex and indeed fragile-looking wooden beam construction as head-gear.[16] In the late 1980s, he began taking *Fenster*-images where the frames of windows shot from inside looking out are roughly reduplicated by the image's edges.[17] There is an entire series of images titled *Isa Genzken, Atelier*, depicting the sculptor in the built environment of the Cologne cathedral (1993).[18] There are shots of public pools and their tile patterns (1995), and aerial shots of urban street and housing patterns whose irregularity renders them as almost organic structures.[19] The year 2001 is the first recorded date of a so-called paper-drop image: a photo taken of a sheet of – probably photographic – paper, one side developed in colour, the other white. The sheet must have been – as the title indicates – dropped on the floor, and one corner and side are now bending inwards, eclipsing the coloured interior in a sculptural curve strikingly reminiscent of Genzken's early 1980s *Hyperbolo*-sculptures, in a treatment of spatial relations such as inside/outside that points in the direction of architectural concerns.[20]

Tillmans has subsequently developed this nearly formalist approach in more paper drops, but also in architectural imagery of stairways and courtyards (*Städelschule Treppe* (Städel School Staircase, 2006), *himmelblau* (sky blue, 2005)) that transpose the elements of building into almost abstract play of form and colour. He has additionally experimented with a mode of presenting his images underneath glass plates on a set of modular wooden desks of different formats (for the 2007 exhibition, *truth study center*). And he has also begun a sculptural project, exhibiting thick sheets of coloured photo-paper, partly monochrome, partly

polychrome, with colours bleeding into each other, in which the papers are folded or crumpled into structures resembling either bent cardboard or thick textiles.[21] In 2007 the photographer also opened an independent exhibition space in the rather narrow stairway-space leading up to the second floor of his London studio.[22] The place is called Between Bridges, an allusion to the building's urban locale between two railway bridges; but this is also the title of a 1999 photo capturing a highway crossed by a double parallel overpass, at the moment when two trucks glide by in opposite directions, each carrying a monochrome, white, block-like volume as their load.[23]

The general reception of Tillmans's work, however, usually foregrounds different thematic aspects. Most of the time it focuses on his depiction of the subcultural, underground scenes which he began to produce on a larger scale in the early 1990s. His deliberately low-tech and casual manner of taking images went hand in hand with the development of a photographic aesthetic that reacted to and evolved in dialogue with the cultures of Rave in Britain and Techno in Germany. Tillmans's photographs record and transpose the looks and styles of their protagonists; they provide close, non-idealizing material analyses of the surfaces on and through which these protagonists interact (textiles, floors, walls, skin). And, importantly, they often seek to indicate and to articulate their origin in moments of social togetherness in which the modes, norms, and regulations of mainstream and everyday sociality are suspended. Tillmans's repertoire includes portraits of the scene's protagonists, often anonymous dancers and clubbers, sometimes referred to in the picture's titles by their first names – friends or acquaintances, perhaps. Other subjects are easier to identify: they are performers, producers, and DJs such as Cle, Moby, Richie Hawtin, Billie Ray Martin, Aphex Twin, Miss Kittin, and Peaches.[24] He has documented club interiors and exteriors such as Hamburg's Front, London's Opera House, The Fridge, Chemistry, Heaven, Nag Nag Nag, Frankfurt's Dorian Gray, Munich's Ultraschall, and Berlin's Planet, Bunker, Tresor, Ostgut, and Panoramabar.[25]

Significantly, these pictures acquired their initial reputation less through their circulation within the art system (although Tillmans has had both solo and group gallery exhibits since the early 1990s), and more through magazines such as *i-D*, a publication that emerged originally in a subcultural context, covering music, clothing styles, and so on. For a brief period in the late 1990s Tillmans was also a member of the editorial collective of the then Cologne-based journal *Spex* (dedicated to pop theory and criticism), and he regularly contributes shoots to publications, such as *Groove*, that report on

electronic music.[26] The artist also dedicated one of his rare videos (*Lights (Body)*) to an almost abstract study of a club's lighting system (with coloured beams and disco balls), and he has made his probably most immediate intervention in the field of nightlife with three large-scale prints which are now situated on the walls of Berlin's Panoramabar.[27]

This part of Tillmans's work emerges out of an aesthetic commute between the system of art and (nightlife) subcultures. Whereas this systemic coexistence is by no means unprecedented (Warhol's Factory is the most iconic example), Tillmans was among the first to occupy such a position regarding the underground electronic music movements in the 1990s (that is, the European extensions and transformations of the initially African American subcultures of House and Techno). In a sense Tillmans was, and largely still is, the first artistic photographer of the DJ and the clubber, and his contribution to *Science Fiction* must be seen in connection with this interest and artistic role. Although the enormous photo-print depicts not an actual club but the artist's studio, the almost life-size reduplication of architectural vastness could serve in either case as a location for the same scenario: the wasted but beautiful morning after a party. The work's title, *Wake*, only leaves open whether this is an image seen after waking up in the morning, or whether, perhaps, we have not gone to bed at all but have partied all night, or whether we have perhaps held a festive wake, and this is what we see after the last guests have left.

In one of Tillmans's portraits of Isa Genzken for the *Science Fiction* catalogue published by the Museum Ludwig in Cologne, we see the sculptor standing in her studio. The floor is covered with loose planks and tiles on which Genzken is standing. Metal and plastic, transparent, translucent, and reflective: their resemblance to the covering of Genzken's wall objects is clear. Other instances come to mind in which Genzken uses mirrored or polished metal tiles, for example on her stele *Justus*, which portrays another of the artist's friends, Justus Köhncke, a Cologne DJ and electronic music producer.[28] It thus becomes apparent that Genzken's mirrored walls communicate with an entire system of material and surface references: it is the world of electronic dance music, the club. Genzken's tiles are material elements of the polished metal dance floor and the shining, reflective surfaces in which glamour is produced under the strictly transitory conditions of nightlife. Genzken's constructive elements must thus also be understood as fragments from this world which store and perpetuate the experience of nights spent dancing, like the one whose aftermath and afterglow we see in Tillmans's *Wake*.

If Köhncke at one point became known for reactivating and continuing the sounds of 1970s pre-mainstream Disco (with records such as *Was ist Musik* (What is Music) or *Doppelleben* (Double Life), Genzken's works go back to an iconic decorative invention of that decade. Her collages and assemblages present strips of shiny tape that can be read as unravelled surfaces of a disco ball, like the one visible in Tillmans's picture.[29] The mirrored walls in *Science Fiction/Hier und jetzt zufrieden sein* (the second half of the title verbalizes the strictly time-and-place-specific promise of happiness that is bound to an unrepeatable night at the club) blow up these formerly tiny shards of glitter into gigantic dimensions; they systematize them and give them the dimensions of architecture. It is on these terms that Genzken's walls reach their artistic consensus with Tillmans's picture. The imaginary spaces opened up through their reflective surfaces correspond to the reconversions and experiential transformations of spaces in dance culture, in which actual glamour and shine are produced collectively not through the display of monetary wealth but rather through a common stylistic practice.[30] We are looking at instances of beauty produced under the temporal and spatial restrictions of a state of suspension that is promised and momentarily delivered by subcultural aesthetics.

In a sense, *Science Fiction* proposes a genealogy for art in general, and sculpture and photography in particular, which points to a series of collective reconversions of architecture through House and Techno as its origin. It wants to participate in the generation of ephemeral architectures that takes place in the warehouse, the derelict power station, or the illegally occupied factory. Neither Genzken nor Tillmans pretends that the museum can produce, or even reproduce, and so memorialize these experiences: there is no false claim to authenticity or to immediacy. They do insist, however, on the relevance of such experience. What shines forth in the interplay between Tillmans's photograph and Genzken's blocks is thus not only the experiential memory of temporary alterations of architectural conditions but also a momentary connection between the museum and those other spaces and practices in which these alternations are produced.

Berlin, again

If Genzken's *New Buildings for Berlin* evoke a planner's approach to architecture and the city, be it artistically utopian or, in the event, disappointing, they also establish a tensional relationship to another approach to architecture and the city. This approach is based on everyday reconversions

of the built environment for the purposes of self-organized temporary dislocations, unhingings of the status quo. After the Fall of the Wall, with so many locales and houses (half-)derelict and evacuated, the control of one political system was in the process of vanishing, while another system had not yet taken hold of them: and Berlin was indeed one of the capitals of this movement. This is where its status as a twin city to the Detroit of crumbling industrial ruins, the birthplace of Techno, emerged. Tillmans was – and still is – its occasional photographer. Genzken's call and proposal for *New Buildings for Berlin* might thus just as well spell out the temporary rededication of old buildings in Berlin.

More precisely, the conversation between the *oeuvres* of Genzken and Tillmans opens art towards the historical reality of urban experience that characterized life in Berlin around the 1990s. Genzken's title, *New Buildings for Berlin*, and her appropriation of architectural forms thematize administrational and corporate interventions; her work counters them with gestures towards the stratum of nightlife, which Tillmans's pictures also show. The photograph's classical function as a document and physical product of past situations throws this juxtaposition into a sharp temporal contrast: whereas the buildings on Potsdamer Platz still stand, club locations such as Ostgut or Tresor have more often than not either vanished or have been subjected to the nightlife industry's profit-driven imperative. Many transitory and ephemeral clubs have not resisted the grasp of a system that privileges the stable and regulated exploitation of urban territory over the more fleeting activities of temporary usages. In dialogue with Genzken's sculptures, Tillmans's photos thus unfold additional layers of meaning. Now, they articulate a triple temporal homology between (i) a night out; (ii) the temporarily limited existence of a club that occupied an existing architectural structure before its dedication to stable usages; but also (iii), the finitude of a moment in the history of a city in which such usages were possible between the collapse of the particular socialism of the GDR and the land-grabbing of capitalism.

One interpretation of Genzken's work upholds the centrality of the philosophical notion of beauty for understanding the artist's sculptures, which more often than not confront the beholder with difficult, seemingly unpleasant features – at least at first sight. Philosopher Juliane Rebentisch writes: 'Even this gesture of negation testifies to the idea of beauty which is indispensable both to modern art and aesthetics, because it constitutes its dynamic centre.'[31] These lines are written with Adorno's *Aesthetic Theory* in mind: 'It is also for beauty's sake that there is no more beauty: because it is no longer. What cannot appear

but negatively mocks its dissolution – which it recognizes as false. Such resolution would dishonour the idea of beauty.'[32] The interpretation in question is also formulated with a gesture toward Charles Baudelaire (whose prose poem 'Le mauvais vitrier' ('The bad glazier') is a declared favourite of Genzken's). Adorno's notion of modern beauty communicates openly with the Baudelairean concept of the beauty of modernity (*le beau moderne*) as that which emerges, artificial and inorganic, from the breaking up of things and the concomitant loss of aura (*perte d'auréole*). As accurate as these connections may appear in the face of Genzken's dialectics of cheapness and beauty, there is perhaps another possible explanation, an alternative unfolding of the beauty that emerges from her sculptures and Tillmans's pictures. Walter Benjamin – who was Baudelaire's reader and Adorno's precursor – once sketched a concept of beauty, partially prompted by the beautiful semblance of the chromatic scales in the images of German Romantic painter Philipp Otto Runge. These dissolves from coloured nuance to nuance, Benjamin holds, present a concept of formal dissolution that differs from 'all destructive empirical decay' ('*allem zerstörerischen Verfall der Empirie*'), and thus also from a definition of beauty as tied to the figure of the fragment. In moments of beauty, Benjamin writes, we behold 'the world in a state of infinite dissolution' ('*in unendlicher Auflösung begriffen*'). This beautiful semblance can be both a dissolution and a becoming. It 'perpetuates the demise which it brings about in an infinite series of transitions' ('*in einer unendlichen Folge von Übergängen*').[33] There is an element in Genzken's sculptures and Tillmans's photographs that has to do with this experience of beauty as perpetuated transition. If the forms of nightlife are at least partially tied to the temporary rededication of buildings, the precondition of which was a political interregnum, this social inventiveness goes hand in hand with a practice that alters existing architectures rather than erecting new monumentalities. Its outcomes are consumed on the spot. It might be part of art's function, as defined in Genzken's and Tillmans's work, to provide a space where these transitions can be perpetuated, not in order to replace them but to show something like their afterglow and to point out that they really took place.

Notes

1. I am grateful for my exchanges with Heike Föll and Jan Kedves, which helped develop the understanding of Genzken's and Tillmans's work presented here. I would also like to thank Jess Atwood Gibson for her editorial interventions, as well as Michael Kerkmann at Galerie Daniel Buchholz for the uncomplicated image support.

2. See for example, A. Kluge (2003), *Die Lücke, die der Teufel lässt* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp), p. 195.
3. The argument presented here has no space for a comparison with one of Tillmans's works which at least through its title proposes a similar summary of the decade, namely, his photo-installation, *Soldiers – The Nineties*. Due to its focus on the artwork, this contribution also neglects explicit references to proper histories of Berlin nightlife in the 1990s. One very recently published book focusing on the aftermath of that decade, but still rich in retrospective views, is T. Rapp (2009): *Lost and Sound – Berlin, Techno und der Easyjetset* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp).
4. Diedrich Diederichsen in conversation with Isa Genzken, in: *Isa Genzken* (2006), cat. (London: Phaidon), pp. 7–29, p. 11.
5. This is not, as Vanessa Joan Müller remarks, a reference *either* to the crystalline aesthetics of Bruno Taut *or* to the verticality of Mies's designs, but to both incorporated in a single design. See V. J. Müller (2007), 'Allegorie und Alltag', in N. Schaffhausen, ed., *Isa Genzken: Oil. Deutscher Pavillon. Venedig Biennale* (Cologne: DuMont), pp. 166–9, p. 166. For Mies's design sketches see B. Bergdoll and T. Riley (2001), eds, *Mies in Berlin*, exh. cat. (New York: The Museum of Modern Art), pp. 180–3.
6. See I. Genzken (2003), 'Ein Gespräch mit Wolfgang Tillmans', in *Isa Genzken, 1992–2003*, exhibition cat./catalogue raisonée. (Cologne: Walther König), pp. 134–6, p. 134, (my translation).
7. R. Koolhaas (2002), 'Junkspace', *October*, 100, 175–90, p. 178. See H. Föll and P. Ekardt (2003), 'Isas House', *Neue Review: Art in Berlin*, 3, 30–3.
8. Both types of work were shown, for example, at the Frankfurter Kunstverein in the context of Genzken's solo exhibition, *Holiday*. Most of the *Strandhütten* are little boxes exhibited on high pedestals and bricolaged from various types of cardboard, plywood, pliable plastic and so on. Some of them integrate photographs, some various types of tiny maritime memorabilia, such as sea shells and sand.
9. The title also refers to the German home depot chain of the same name. See ibid., pp. 162–3.
10. With obvious reference to Warhol's film, *Empire*. See M. Krajewski and I. Genzken (2003), 'Fragilität kann etwas sehr Schönes sein: Gespräch mit Isa Genzken am 28. Juli 2003 in Berlin', *Parkett*, 69, 88–93, p. 89.
11. See illustration in *Isa Genzken: 'Sie sind mein Glück'* (2000), exh.cat (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz), pp. 28–9; I. Genzken (2007) *I Love New York, Crazy City* (Zurich: JRP Ringier).
12. See illustrations in *Isa Genken: 1992–2003*, pp. 175–8.
13. See the catalogue published by the Museum Ludwig (2001), *Isa Genzken, Wolfgang Tillmans: Science Fiction/Hier und jetzt zufrieden sein*, exh. cat. (Cologne: Walther König).
14. See illustrations of Haacke's *Germania*-installation in *Hans Haacke* (2004), cat. (London: Phaidon), pp. 76–7. For Genzken on Haacke, see I. Genzken (2006), '"I hate everything to do with sensation": Interview with Oliver Koerner von Gustorf', in *DB Artmag*, 38, www.db-artmag.de/2006/6/d/2/484. php (accessed 29 July 2009).
15. The sculptures are made of wood and mirror glass: part 1 = 400 × 100 × 500 cm; part 2 = 300 × 100 × 500 cm. On one occasion, a 2003 exhibition at

the Kunsthalle Zürich, *Wake*, was replaced by another Tillmans picture: *Blautopf, Landscape*. See illustration in Krajewski and Genzken, 'Fragilität', p. 99.
16. *Wolfgang Tillmans: If one thing matters, everything matters* (2003), exh. cat./cat. rais. (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz), pp.10–13.
17. Ibid., pp. 19–21.
18. Ibid., pp. 65–6.
19. See *Wolfgang Tillmans: Aufsicht* (2001), exh. cat. (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz), p. 101.
20. *Wolfgang Tillmans: If one thing matters, everything matters* (2003), p. 228.
21. See *Wolfgang Tillmans: Lighter* (2008), exh. cat. (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz), pp. 49–72, 148, 175, 239.
22. See P. Ekardt and J. Kedves (2008), 'Gegenöffentlichkeit im Treppenhaus: Between Bridges/Wolfgang Tillmans', *Spex: Magazin für Popkultur*, 312, 113–7.
23. *Wolfgang Tillmans: If one thing matters, everything matters* (2003), p. 174.
24. This is a random sample from *Wolfgang Tillmans: If one thing matters, everything matters* (2003). A Tillmans photo was used for Miss Kittin's 2004 record, *I-Com*.
25. Again, a very provisional survey from *Wolfgang Tillmans: If one thing matters, everything matters* (2003).
26. One such cover is *Groove: Elektronische Musik und Clubkultur* (2007), 109 – a portrait of Parisian DJ and producer Chloé; another is a photograph of a silver 303 synthesizer lying on green grass which became the title image for *Groove*'s issue 91 (December 2004).
27. *Wolfgang Tillmans: If one thing matters, everything matters* (2003), pp. 261–2; *Wolfgang Tillmans: Lighter*, pp. 354–5.
28. See illustration in *Isa Genken: 1992–2003*, p. 160. See also the non-paginated illustration section in *Isa Genzken, Wolfgang Tillmans: Science Fiction*. One could also mention Genzken's 'Wolfgang'-stele, presumably made with reference to the photographer, whose material combination of dark brown plywood and partially perforated silver metal panels visually echoes the speakers of a sound system.
29. See H. Föll, in Föll and Ekardt, 'Isas House'.
30. Diedrich Diederichsen first wrote about this connection between Genzken's sculptural practice and the realm of electronic music nightlife. See D. Diederichsen (2000), 'Subjekte am Rande der Fahnenstange', in *Isa Genzken: 'Sie sind mein Glück'*, pp. 32–6; D. Diederichsen (2003), 'Die Poetik der Psychocities', in *Isa Genken: 1992–2003*, pp. 24–6. See also Föll and Ekardt, 'Isas House'.
31. J. Rebentisch (2007), 'Dialektik der Schönheit. Zum Werk von Isa Genzken' in *Oil*, pp. 160–5, p. 160 (my translation).
32. 'Auch um des Schönen willen ist kein Schönes mehr: weil es keines mehr ist. Was anders nicht als negativ erscheinen kann, spottet seiner Auflösung, die es als falsch durchschaut, und die darum die Idee des Schönen entwürdigte'. T. W. Adorno (1995), *Ästhetische Theorie* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp), p. 85 (my translation).
33. W. Benjamin (1985), 'Phantasie', in *Gesammelte Schriften*, 6, ed., R. Tiedemann and H. Schweppenhäuser (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp), pp. 114–17, p. 115.

13
On the Road with *mnemonic nonstop*

Lucia Ruprecht, Martin Nachbar and Jochen Roller

Lecturing/Performing

> Jochen Roller: Imagine you are planning to walk from A to B. You are consulting a map which shows potential routes. The map visualises the connection between A and B. You know that this connection exists, but you have not yet followed its path yourself. The map is based on the three-dimensional nature of space, which has been translated into the two dimensions of a plane filled with various symbols. You are able to read these symbols or to decipher them using the help of captions. Before you begin your journey, you are choosing one of various possible routes. Along your way, you are checking it several times on the map. The engraving of the map turns into the engraving of your body.
>
> Martin Nachbar: If you follow the chosen path more than once or twice, your walk becomes a routine. Your neurons form cords of memory and patterns of habit. You are producing an inner map which is superimposed on the printed one and eventually renders it unnecessary. Your route represents a choreography that demonstrates your experience to anyone following your path. A and B denote the margins of a map. Or the beginning and ending of a dance. Imagine now: this lecture performance is a map.[1]

Martin Nachbar and Jochen Roller are performing 'On the Road with *mnemonic nonstop*' in front of an academic audience. Yet are the two presenters, introduced as dancers and choreographers, actually presenting themselves as artists? Their set-up is deceptively similar to the one found in countless lecture theatres: a space with a lectern (a little too

small to be called a proper stage), microphones, an overhead projector, a white screen behind them. Ordinary clothes. No make-up, no curtain. Yet their posture, tone of voice, manner of movement, and the ways in which they illustrate their discourse with minimal technical equipment testify to the fact that this lecture is conscious of its visual and physical staging. The power of performativity which is at work here makes the audience aware of the techniques for *creating* evidence that inform the delivery of any academic paper. Even a detail as small as the reassuring warmth of the firm yet soothing voices of Martin Nachbar and Jochen Roller adds to the winning effect of a presentation that confronts the audience with an unsettlingly unusual format acted out within a well-known setting.

The lines between lecture and performance have become blurred. The academic spectacle mirrors that which it presents: the performative dynamic of forms of supposedly set-in-stone evidence in the urban context. It does so by reporting and re-enacting experiences and experiments that have been assembled in order to produce *mnemonic nonstop*. Each of these instances is concerned with different kinds of mobility in and of cities, from idiosyncratic walking tours to strategies of representation in cartography. Martin Nachbar's and Jochen Roller's engagement with urban space testifies to a long-standing encounter between dancers and cityscapes where physical movement is the privileged means for commenting upon and destabilizing more permanent structures of public and private, official and unofficial, past and present.[2] *mnemonic nonstop* demonstrates such choreographic counter-agency by exploring the map not as finished product but as an ever renewable act that functions as organizing principle for spatial (re)orientation and modification:

> Maps measure cities according to supposedly objective geographical criteria. But in fact, they represent urban spaces only according to the cartographer's ideas: Just as West-Berlin appeared as a white area without any contours on the maps of the GDR, street names on maps of Brussels alternate depending on whether one looks at maps by Flemish or Walloon editors. Thus, the process of cartography comes to equal the reorganisation of the written-upon space. We have initiated this kind of process in the development of *mnemonic nonstop* by superposing different maps. When one copies the map of one city onto a transparent foil, this foil can be placed onto another map and hidden structures appear on them – just like secret ink appears when exposed to its developer agent. When placing a transparent map of Brussels onto the map of the Congolese capital Kinshasa,

for example, the superimposition plainly deconstructs the Belgian colonial past.

This revelatory effect works by associating two systems: On the one hand, there is ancient Greek mnemonic technique, where the orators place the core issues of their speeches in specific places in an imaginary landscape. While speaking they imagine walking from place to place. Their paths, then, represent the orators' thinking process. On the other hand, the patterns that evolve by superposing transparencies in *mnemonic nonstop* simulate urban experiences: choreography reorganizes space and becomes itself a map that describes this very rewriting.[3]

Martin Nachbar and Jochen Roller illustrate their discourse with drawings and overlapping transparencies on the overhead projector. Their lecture points up its own classroom discourse in the shape of old-fashioned projections that display the scrawled lines of overhead markers. By deliberately choosing hand-knitted methods, they not only share but also comment upon their insights. They not only impart knowledge; they offer techniques and strategies of representing and organizing it. It is in this context that one of the performers refers back to his practical experience of map making:

> Martin Nachbar: During one year when I was a student, I worked for a publisher of school maps in Berlin. After the reunification one could observe how the former border areas underwent transformation. The new school maps were to correspond to the new reality of the reunified city. But the changes were so extensive that they exceeded the publisher's capacities by far. So they hired me and nine other hands to survey the changes that occurred in Berlin. Our task was to walk a daily section and note down actual and planned changes of routes or names of streets. My stretch covered the Kieler Bridge and went via the Invaliden Cemetery down to the Brandenburg Gate. At the publisher's there were two camps: cartographers who followed the congruent method and those who followed the metagraphical one. The first ones wanted to erase the sutures from the map of the reunified city, whereas the latter ones wanted to map the suture. Secretly, I sided with the metagraphers, and by chance my information about the Invaliden Cemetery was handed down to a metagraphical cartographer. He turned the cemetery crosses by 45 degrees and thus made them into borderline markers. When one looks at the 1992 edition, one can, depending on one's point of view, see the suture. Or not.[4]

The negotiation of cartography and rhetoric shows how transmission of knowledge implies an art of recording, storage, interpretation, and demonstration, and how art, in turn, demands knowledge.[5] Paula Caspão discusses *mnemonic nonstop* as an 'effective realization of the precarious boundary between documentation and performance', [6] and thus as being representative of the heterogeneous composition of much contemporary performance work that refuses to comply with stratified genre structures. Stage, page, and street, dance, body, and speech are worked into each other to produce a performance which is '*mündig*' – politically mature and eloquent – in both discourse and movement.

Walking/Choreographing

How did the performers arrive at documenting experience through choreography, then, as this question initiated their work towards *mnemonic nonstop*? They dedicated themselves to an exercise that may be called 'chrono-cartography',[7] fusing the spatial aspects of map making with the temporality of movement. Choreography (from Greek *choreia*, dance, and *graphein*, to write), even if only in the shape of the unexpected composition of a walk, produces and documents temporal and topographical trajectories. In doing so, it generates maps of routes which are notated. In *mnemonic nonstop* this notation is shown as pattern on transparencies which register Martin Nachbar's and Jochen Roller's walks. Detachable from their spatial origins, they may or may not fit the official topographical grids onto which

Figure 13.1 Martin Nachbar (right) and Jochen Roller, *mnemonic nonstop*: *Ein kartographisches Duett,* Steirischer Herbst, Graz, Austria, 2005. © Katrin Schoof.

they are being projected. Yet they have become written into the dancers' bodies, and as such can be remembered, re-enacted and performed. The lecture-demonstration is such a performance. Acts of naming places, route-finding, and grid-making are recreated for the audience.

At some point during their lecture, Martin Nachbar and Jochen Roller digress from their route between the lectern and the overhead projector and take position in front of the screen onto which a map is being projected. When they start dancing, their shadows form huge, moving outlines on the map, ghost-like distortions of past walkers. At the same time, the dancers are taking possession of the floor on which they are actually acting out their movement in the here and now of the performance. This movement is made up mostly of angular weight shifts and precisely directed measuring gestures, steps and poses. The deictic choreography does not need much space and displays little purposeful progression; while showing off physical precision, the dancers do not follow along the directions into which they are pointing, instead pacing out a small square of no more than a few metres.

If their dance exposes cartography as a process (non-stop), this process extends beyond the space and time of the performance, which is more than anything else a recollection of experience turned into a script for reactivation. An integral part of the full-scale show on which the lecture is based is therefore an exhibition that documents parts of the working process which preceded the performance on stage.[8]

Figure 13.2 Exhibition accompanying Martin Nachbar's and Jochen Roller's *mnemonic nonstop: Ein kartographisches Duett,* Steirischer Herbst, Graz, Austria, 2005. © Katrin Schoof.

'In various rehearsal phases, distributed over the course of one year', Jochen Roller writes, they visited five cities,

> first Tel Aviv, then Brussels, Berlin, Zagreb, and, eventually, Graz. In each city, we explored urban space by doing *dérives*, a technique developed by the French Situationists, which we had adapted for our work. The concept of the *dérive* suggests an alternative form of moving through urban space: instead of getting from A to B on the shortest or fastest way possible, one follows the traces of another movement concept. It is either based on an algorithm (e.g. 'first right – second right'), or on manipulated maps (e.g. 'use an anatomical chart as city map'). Choreographed movement on stage functions similarly to a *dérive*. If dance was about efficiency, that is to say, about the most direct way to cover the distance between A and B, the movement vocabulary of a dance piece would consist of little more than walking. Instead, the performer enjoys non-efficient movement in the *dérive*, as well as in dance: namely, connecting the two points in space in an indirect way.
>
> The political potential of the *dérive* lies in overcoming the obligation to be efficient. [...] If dance and choreography constitute a similarly 'inefficient' way of locomotion to walking a *dérive*, the following question arises: How could dance and choreography be used to reorganize hierarchical spaces?[9]

The performers have devoted their time to a practice not so much of changing, but of inhabiting and appropriating given urban structures by getting off track. The Situationist concept of psycho-geography – the exploration and experience of the influence which the built environment exerts on our state of mind and behaviour – is tested in the encounter between individual patterns of movement and urban topographies.[10]

The first *dérive* which the performers conducted in order to prepare for their show led them along Berlin's now mostly invisible Wall:

> The outline of the wall, which was recorded on an outdated map of the city, served as our algorithm. Our point of departure was the former Checkpoint Charlie. A coin decided which one of us was going to move towards the northern or the southern parts of the city. For documental purposes, we arranged the following score: take notes every 6 and a picture every 10 minutes, collect an object every 20 minutes, and, at each of these points, consult the pedometer and note down the number of steps taken.[11]

By engaging in such urban practices, Martin Nachbar and Jochen Roller enter a continuum which bridges the political and the aesthetic, citizenship, and art.[12] Their starting point is the locally available, its history, and the encounters and events that it entails. Everyday locomotion becomes the material of choreography or, more precisely, it forms the first stage of the process. Choreo-cartography comes into being in the exchange between dancer and topographical context without aiming for the permanence of fixed new structures.[13] Martin Nachbar comments on this process of aesthetic transformation:

> When embarking on a walk through one of the cities, our attempt is to find holes and cracks in the official maps, so that we can crawl through them and map the city in a different way to the one we might find in our tour guides. We don't literally trespass onto forbidden territory, but we leave the commonly agreed-on passages of a city. The result of our practice is heightened perception and the ability to play with the situations we encounter. We create passages that enable us to leave known territories (of space, but more so of perception); we de-territorialize and ideally our passages become lines of flight. Space becomes perforated, so that our passions can leak into the city and vice versa. […]
>
> But at the same time, our recording of these passages and of the events taking place during them (in notes, photos, by collecting objects and through physical memory) means that there is a form of re-territorialization taking place. The line of flight leads or leaks right into a process of choreographing. At one point we always leave the lines of flight in order to process the collected data and re-organize them in choreography (which in the case of *mnemonic nonstop* includes not only the creation of movement but also the negotiation of language and visual elements).[14]

The audience is faced with layers of maps: official and unofficial ones, discursive, material and performed ones, set into movement by the dancers' bodies. As their bodies mirror topographical experience, the cities, in turn, have become porous spaces impregnated with memory, emotion, and desire to form 'affective anatom[ies]'.[15]

This is not only a metaphor:

> The next city where we rehearsed *mnemonic nonstop* was Tel Aviv. A popular practice of the technique of the *dérive* consists of superimposing the route of a preceding *dérive* onto another city. In the case of Tel Aviv this was possible only by using the northern route across

Berlin, since half of the length of the southern one would lead us into the Mediterranean Sea. We tried another score. An anatomy atlas included a drawing of the arteries of a female body which perfectly fitted our map of Tel Aviv. A system of circulation that provides each part of the body with nutrition seemed to be an appropriate pattern for a city which makes a living out of the permanent influx of new (Jewish) inhabitants. We began our expedition together at the heart of the circulatory system which we placed onto the centre of Tel Aviv, Dizengoff Square. We remained together for the first part of the route, which followed the outline of the aorta. Then our paths separated into the left (Jochen) and the right leg (Martin) respectively.[16]

Memorizing/Route-finding

During the performance, we are watching the results of such urban practices, and while doing so we become implicated in the action

Figure 13.3 Martin Nachbar (background) and Jochen Roller, *mnemonic nonstop*: *Ein kartographisches Duett*, Steirischer Herbst, Graz, Austria, 2005. © Katrin Schoof.

on stage, as onlookers turn into readers, route-finders, and perhaps imaginary walkers of unknown territory. Unknown territory, not least, of *dance-scapes* that complement the discursive and visual demonstration. As opposed to more traditional map making, the trajectories of movement do not leave traces. How can we memorize what we are seeing on stage? How can the dancers find the way back to the 'maps' of their dance?

> Jochen Roller: The invention of mnemonic technique is attributed to Simonides, the classical Greek poet. After he had delivered a tribute to Skopos, he left his house, which happened to collapse shortly thereafter. The dead were so disfigured by the wreckage that they could not be identified by their relatives, and therefore could not be buried. Yet, by his memory of the seating order, Simonides could identify the dead. He was able to reconstruct the conditions before the breakdown of the house to give back to the dead their identities. Choreography functions through similar mnemotic processes. In light of the multitude of productions which contemporary dancers need to have at their disposal, they develop their own techniques for recalling choreographies. Written notations and video prove to be of only marginal use. Written notation lacks complexity, and video distorts spatial relations since it is not taken from the dancer's perspective. Instead, mnemonic devices enable the dancer to reconstruct movement 'out of rubble'. Such devices include, for example, points of orientation provided by the placement of other dancers and the stage set.[17]

While Jochen Roller reads out this passage, Martin Nachbar performs a choreographic sequence as if to illustrate Simonides' story or to demonstrate the success of the techniques about which his co-presenter is talking. The audience accumulates performative evidence in addition to the discursive. Yet one is equally exposed to bodily in-evidence here, entailing as many readings of the choreography as there are audience members. It is at once a comforting and an ironical move, then, when Martin Nachbar starts his movement sequence once again, now adding commentary himself. It is set, he explains, on the beach at Tel Aviv. As much as we enjoy the suddenly revealed iconic referentiality of, for example, a square movement of hands and arms – was it not clear from the beginning that this is meant to be a cool box? – our first, very likely less secure, and much more arbitrary viewing experience is still too near to become erased by the commentary. The offer of ostensible closure which the dancer's captions provide makes us even more aware of

the cracks in our own reading and memorizing of the sequence. But we also realize that we can crawl through these gaps in turn, in order to follow different routes to the one given by our guides.[18] *mnemonic nonstop* leaves us with threads of memory and interpretation that start to form their own patterns in the act of reception. Giving evidence of city-scapes turned into *dance-scapes*, the lecture demonstration proposes points of orientation not so much by producing maps but by enquiring into their making.

Notes

1. M. Nachbar and J. Roller, unpublished lecture notes in German, trans. L. Ruprecht. The present text is not a reconstruction of a single performance of *mnemonic nonstop* but uses material accumulated in the author's own viewing experiences as well as scripts and commentary provided by the performers.
2. See Y. Hardt and K. Maar (2007), 'Bewegte Räume: Zur Verortung des Tanzes im Spannungsfeld von Metropole und Provinz', *Tanz, Metropole, Provinz, Jahrbuch Tanzforschung*, 17, 1–15.
3. M. Nachbar and J. Roller, unpublished lecture notes with slight adjustments by L. Ruprecht.
4. Ibid.
5. See S. Peters and M. J. Schäfer (2006), 'Intellektuelle Anschauung – unmögliche Evidenz', in S. Peters and M. J. Schäfer, eds, *'Intellektuelle Anschauung': Figurationen von Evidenz zwischen Kunst und Wissen* (Bielefeld: transcript), pp. 9–21, p. 10.
6. P. Caspão (2007), 'Stroboscopic Stutter: On the Not-Yet-Captured Ontological Condition of Limit-Attractions', *TDR: The Drama Review*, 51.2, 136–56, p. 149.
7. G. Brandstetter (2002), 'Figur und Inversion: Kartographie als Dispositiv von Bewegung', in G. Brandstetter and S. Peters, eds, *de figura: Rhetorik – Bewegung – Gestalt* (Munich: Fink), pp. 247–64, p. 257.
8. See M. Nachbar and J. Roller, *mnemonic nonstop*, general technical rider, http://www.jochenroller.de/english/_pdf/TechRider_E_mnemonic.pdf (date accessed 16 June 2008_.
9. J. Roller, 'Walking and Dancing', http://www.urbanfestival.hr/06/pdf/Walking%20and%20Dancing.pdf, with slight adjustments by L. Ruprecht (date accessed 16 June 2008).
10. See M. Nachbar and J. Roller, unpublished manuscript of the lecture performance at the conference of the Mary Wigman Society, 10–11 June 2005, Kampnagel Hamburg, trans. L. Ruprecht.
11. Ibid.
12. Apart from Guy Debord's theory of the *dérive*, references to Michel de Certeau's analysis of actions in everyday life such as erratic walking have often been employed in order to gauge the political impact of these kinds of practices. While Martin Nachbar and Jochen Roller do comment on this

background, choreographic and thus aesthetic transformation arguably supersedes the experiential and political levels of their approach. See M. de Certeau (2002), *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. S. Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press); see also Brandstetter, 'Figur und Inversion', pp. 255–6.

13. Compare Kirsten Maar, who inadvertently articulates a fitting commentary on *mnemonic nonstop* without mentioning the piece: 'The [...] tactics of the Situationists can serve as a point of reference for urban appropriation [*Stadtaneignung*] and planning, precisely because they take the regional and the existing as the point of departure for their *dérives* and develop out of these specific events small choreographies of the everyday with significant breaks, which can then spin themselves out like self-organised, flexible systems. Cartography is understood as a process in the reciprocal exchange with the urban context. Movement is thus registered without being bound by inscription'. K. Maar (2007), 'Stadtaneignung als choreo-kartographisches Spiel', *Tanz, Metropole, Provinz, Jahrbuch Tanzforschung* 17, 181–91, pp. 188–9, trans. L. Ruprecht.
14. M. Nachbar, 'How to Become a Trespasser or how to Produce a Crack in the Map: The Dérive and Choreography as Critical Urban Practices', http://www.sarma.be/text.asp?id=1279, with slight adjustments by L. Ruprecht (date accessed 16 June 2008). First published in Dutch: M. Nachbar (2005), 'Hoe word ik een indringer, of: Hoe maak ik een scheur in de kaart', *Etcetera*, 99, 35–6.
15. P. Caspão, 'Stroboscopic Stutter', p. 149.
16. M. Nachbar and J. Roller, unpublished manuscript of the lecture performance at the conference of the Mary Wigman Society, trans. L. Ruprecht.
17. M. Nachbar and J. Roller, recording of the lecture demonstration 'On the Road with *mnemonic nonstop*: Dancing as Recollection of Choreography' at the conference 'InEvidence: Witnessing Cities and the Case of Berlin', Cambridge, 14 July 2007, transcribed with slight adjustments by L. Ruprecht.
18. See M. Nachbar, 'How to Become a Trespasser', 'choreography makes visible an experience through repeatable actions that are engraved in the dancer's/performer's body. This map is read by an audience and ideally there are cracks in the map which everyone involved can crawl through and trespass onto yet unknown areas, probably creating some meaning'.

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