NEOLIBERALISM, POSTMODERNITY, AND THE CONTEMPORARY MEMORIAL-BUILDING BOOM

NICOLA CLEWER

Neoliberalism, Postmodernity, and the Contemporary Memorial-Building Boom

Neoliberalism, Postmodernity, and the Contemporary Memorial-Building Boom

Nicola Clewer

ROWMAN & LITTLEFIELD
Lanham • Boulder • New York • London

Published by Rowman & Littlefield
An imprint of The Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, Inc.
4501 Forbes Boulevard, Suite 200, Lanham, Maryland 20706
www.rowman.com

86-90 Paul Street, London EC2A 4NE

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Information Available

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Clewer, Nicola, author.
Title: Neoliberalism, postmodernity, and the contemporary memorial-building boom / Nicola Clewer.
Other titles: Memorialisation in the postmodern-neoliberal conjecture
Description: Lanham : Rowman & Littlefield, [2022] | Revision of the author's thesis (doctoral)—University of Brighton, 2016. | Includes bibliographical references and index.
Identifiers: LCCN 2022001704 (print) | LCCN 2022001705 (ebook) | ISBN 9781786612991 (cloth) | ISBN 9781786613004 (ebook)
Subjects: LCSH: Memorials—Social aspects—United States. | Memorials—Social aspects—Germany. | Memorialization—United States. | Memorialization—Germany. | Nationalism and architecture—United States. | Nationalism and architecture—Germany.
Classification: LCC NA9347 .C59 2022 (print) | LCC NA9347 (ebook) | DDC 720.973—dc23/eng/20220426
LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2022001704
LC ebook record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2022001705

The paper used in this publication meets the minimum requirements of American National Standard for Information Sciences—Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials, ANSI/NISO Z39.48-1992.

Contents

Illustrations

Acknowledgements

This book has been a long time in the making, and I owe much to the friends and colleagues who have supported me over the years. In particular, I'd like to thank my PhD supervisors at the University of Brighton, Professor Bob Brecher, Dr. Cathy Bergin and Dr. Louise Purbrick. I'd like to thank my BA Philosophy, Politics, Art and MA Cultural History, Memory and Identity students for the energy and insight they have brought to discussions of some of the material covered in the book. For his unfailing love and support and assistance with turning the thesis into a book, I'd also like to thank my partner Dr. Raphael Schlembach. Finally I'd like to thank everyone I've worked with at Rowman & Littlefield.

Introduction

The often overlooked rhetorical and symbolic power of public art has recently been pulled into focus by the 'Rhodes Must Fall' and the Black Lives Matter movements' concerted efforts to have statues to colonialists and slavers removed.[1] At the same time, from 9/11 to COVID-19, catastrophic contemporary events are quickly met with calls for memorialisation and pained debates over the forms it ought to take. Indeed, over recent decades, calls for the removal and for the construction of monuments and memorials have become a persistent thread in contemporary political debates about history and social justice. Although such calls emerge from social movements and political forces which have their own complex dynamics, the wider context within which they are articulated has been shaped by a memorial-building boom which dates back to the early 1980s. This boom has seen a marked and widely acknowledged growth in the perceived value and significance of – and public, political and academic interest in – monuments, memorials and related symbolic markers of the present's relation with the past.[2] This book explores a particular trend within this larger phenomenon and seeks to situate it within a broader context of socio-economic transformations and crises.

Historically, intensive spates of monument-building have occurred at times of crisis and transition when public art is called on to give symbolic form to the hegemonic vision of a society's proclaimed values.[3] Since the 1980s, the memorial form has been enjoying something of a renaissance in the US and Western Europe and increasingly across the world. Locating the origins of the current memorial-building boom in the crises associated with postmodernity and the rise of neoliberalism, this book analyses the complex interplay among neoliberalism, postmodernism and nationalism in some of the most well-known memorials and memorial-museums to have emerged in the US and Germany over the last four decades. Rather than offering a survey of con-

temporary memorials, it traces a specific trajectory (and certainly not the only one ripe for analysis): from the postmodern memorials of the 1980s to the increasingly monumental and authoritative memorials and memorial-museums being constructed today. The book offers a critical analysis of the relationship among the memorials' form, the 'visitor experience' they're intended to offer, and the understanding of history and our relation to it which underpins their philosophical, ethical and political stance. It aims to debunk the notion, prevalent in much of the literature, that contemporary memorials are ambiguous and non-ideological and that they no longer perform the traditional role of the national monument: symbolising and reaffirming national identity.[4] In contrast, I argue that they are engaged in rearticulating nationalism in line with the contradictory demands of the current conjuncture. Critically analysing the political function of national memorials, the book is equally concerned with interrogating the aesthetic means they employ. I argue that the rhetoric of ambiguity which pervades contemporary memorial discourses belies the power of the sublime aesthetics which are employed to generate particular affective responses.

The shift under discussion is born, in part, of a critique of traditional memorial forms and their apparent lack of efficacy and, in part, as a response to the notion that traumatic historical events cannot be understood and must therefore be 'experienced'. What has emerged is a form of memorial architecture which combines the old aesthetic language of the sublime and the modern discourse of trauma to render history as mysterious and unknowable but, crucially, open to aesthetic experience. Philosophically, this shift is inextricably linked to the nature and limits of the postmodern-neoliberal political imaginary and the way in which it frames dominant understandings of the past, present and future. Alongside performing this core ideological role of framing historical understanding and its limitations, contemporary memorials also have a significant symbolic-economic dimension. Although they emerge within the context of complex dynamics of contestation and negotiation, in line with some of the shifts in the role and character of the city in postmodernity, memorials have become increasing economically significant as tourist attractions and markers of the symbolic cultural capital of the cities in which they reside.[5] The motivations for supporting and funding their construction are therefore not simply commemorative and ideological but also economic.

Erika Doss uses the term 'memorial mania' to describe the frenzied drive to memorialise in contemporary America. Doss argues that it 'parallels the "statue mania" that gripped nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Americans and Europeans alike'.[6] Like statue mania, memorial mania is symptomatic of a period of rapid social change and uncertainty ripe with anxieties re-

garding the future of the nation and the question of national unity.[7] Crucially, and perceptively, Doss contends that

> Despite their stylistic differences, their general reliance on modernist aesthetics, and their embrace of contingent and even contradictory meaning, contemporary memorials are as much engaged in the ideological concerns of national identity as were representational monuments of the statue mania a century ago.[8]

If intensive spates of memorial-building are symptomatic of the crises born of social transformation, what is the nature of the crisis which is propelling the contemporary memorial-building boom? And, notwithstanding the international character of this renaissance, what is the relationship between contemporary memorials and nationalism and national identity in the current conjuncture?

The contemporary memorial building-boom began in the 1980s and coincides with the wider 'memory boom' that began in the previous decade.[9] Growing interest in the past in and beyond Western Europe and the US has been attributed to a range of factors including the marking of a series of Second World War anniversaries; decolonisation; the growth of various social movements and their engagement with history; and the loss of historicity and general turn away from the future associated postmodernity.[10] This focus on the past comes in many forms, including the bourgeoning of the heritage industry and dark tourism, the growth in and commercialisation of nostalgia, as well as serious attempts to expose the historical roots of contemporary forms of oppression, inequality and injustice.

The rise of 'memory' is commonly viewed as a postmodern response to the relentless pace of modernity as well as its crimes and injustices.[11] Although, cognisant of the various ways in which it is being commodified and spectacularised, Andreas Huyssen argues that the postmodern embrace of memory is an essentially progressive corrective to modernity which acts as a kind of defence mechanism against the homogenising and atomising effects of globalisation.[12] More than that, he argues that in postmodernity the question of memory is intimately linked to that of political legitimacy:

> If, in the earlier twentieth century, modern societies tried to define their modernity and to secure their cohesiveness by way of imagining the future, it now seems that the major required task of any society today is to take responsibility for its past.[13]

What does it mean to 'take responsibility for the past'? How does the question of 'memory' relate to that of political legitimacy? And what role do memorials play in all of this in the context of the contemporary neoliberal state?

While the memorial-building boom and the turn to memory more broadly are often perceived as symptomatic of the cultural shifts associated with postmodernity, little has been said about the relationship between contemporary memorials and neoliberalism. Although the commercialisation of memorials and the commodification of 'memory' have attracted attention, the ideological relationship between 'memorial mania' and neoliberalism has received little attention in the literature on memorials.[14] Nor does the literature on neoliberalism address the question of memorialisation in neoliberal societies. Over the past three decades the process of neoliberalisation and the growing hegemony of neoliberal ideology have been transforming the way people live and work, the institutions and role of the state and the very ways in which we think. What Stuart Hall has referred to as the 'long march of the Neo-liberal revolution', which began in the late 1970s and continues to this day, coincides with the renaissance in memorial-building with which this book is concerned – untangling and understanding this coincidence is one of its central aims.[15]

In tracing the trajectory from the postmodern memorials which emerged in the 1980s through to the increasingly authoritative memorials and memorial-museums being constructed today, the book explores a number of significant case studies from the US and Germany which address distinct historical events, namely the US war in Vietnam, the Holocaust and 9/11. Focusing primarily on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington DC, the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe in Berlin and the National September 11 Memorial & Museum in New York, I also analyse the counter-monuments phenomenon in West and, then later, reunified Germany in the 1980s and 1990s, the United States National Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington DC, and the Jewish Museum Berlin. Analysing not only the memorials and memorial-museums in question but also the ways in which they are understood, I have specifically chosen to focus on well-known, popular national memorials because they have received much academic as well as public attention. Reading these memorials as symptomatic of a broader cultural and political shift over the last few decades, the language and theoretical frameworks through which they have been interpreted are as significant to my analysis as the memorials themselves because the ways in which they are framed is symptomatic of the wider cultural shifts with which this book is concerned.

I have limited my focus to case studies from the US and Germany for a number of reasons. First, they are home to some of the most iconic contemporary national memorials. Secondly, there has been a great deal of cultural exchange between the two nations around questions of memorialisation, with a number of key figures working in both contexts and ideas flowing between them. As well as providing points of comparison, this focus enables me to home in on some of the developments in the memorial form which exceed

national boundaries. Third, while I could have brought in examples form elsewhere – such as Yad Vashem World Center for Holocaust Research in Israel – given the specifically *national* character of these projects, opening up to case studies from other parts of the world would have resulted in a less detailed and thorough engagement.

While paying close attention to the national and local contexts of the memorials in question, the book is also concerned with tracing and analysing international trends and how these have developed over time. Huyssen has argued that, because 9/11 and the Holocaust are so different, a comparison between the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe and the September 11 National Memorial would be 'egregiously misplaced'.[16] 'The most plausible register of comparison' is, he suggests, that of style. Huyssen dismisses such similarities as essentially questions of fashion which reflect 'an expanded field of memorial practices and politics of signification that is by now transnational, highly professionalized, controversial to some, but evidently successful'. He adds that such a comparison 'only carries so far. It is valid only if one limits one's register of analysis to the stylistic features of memorials, forgetting the content of what is to be remembered by whom, where and for what purpose'.[17]

Huyssen's emphasis on content suggests that one could only compare two memorials if they were to the same or to similar things. We need to be clear that although their historical referent remains important to any analysis, discussing a memorial is not the same as discussing the event it memorialises. The national memorial is a cultural form with its own history and its own specific genres and symbolic language and, as such, remains open to various forms of analysis, including comparison. The question of 'style' here bears some serious analysis because, of course, no question of style is ever *just* a question of style. That an internationally recognisable memorial aesthetic which is used in a variety of different contexts has emerged in recent decades raises a whole series of questions about the meaning and purpose of contemporary memorialisation. I am less interested in comparing these and other contemporary memorials than in analysing some of the questions which Huyssen, either implicitly or explicitly, dismisses. Not least here, the question of the relationship between style and content, or between the aesthetics and the politics of these memorials.

While recognising the distinct nature of these memorial projects and the national and historical contexts within which they emerged, I argue that it is possible to trace through them a direction of travel which is illustrative of a broader set of cultural developments. Since the 1980s, the formal and aesthetic qualities of the memorial have shifted with an increasing emphasis on the supposedly unrepresentable nature of history and on experiential over dialogic or

cognitive forms of engagement. This book explores the nature of this shift in relation to a series of debates about the nature of representation and memorialisation and the changing ideological demands of the current conjuncture.

In seeking to investigate the meaning and significance of the contemporary memorial-building boom, it is, I contend, necessary to begin from a sense of the totality – of where we stand in relation to the whole – not to offer a totalising account which exhausts the meaning of the memorials under discussion but as a way of orientating our approach to their specificity and its relation to the bigger picture. As Fredric Jameson argues 'totality is not something one ends with, but something one begins with . . . it is capitalism as a new global system which is the totality'.[18] If global capitalism is the social totality, neoliberalism is here understood as the dominant ideology at play within this totality while postmodernism is, to use Jameson's term, its cultural dominant.[19] The character of the contemporary conjuncture is explored in detail in chapter 1. In pointing to (although necessarily failing fully to grasp) this totality as the context for the contemporary boom in memorial-building, this book highlights the necessity of developing an approach capable of reading memorials in their complexity without allowing that complexity to distract us from the essential question of the ideological and political purposes they serve. If monuments and memorials have traditionally been concerned with symbolising and helping to foster and reaffirm national identity, can they still be said to perform this role today? If so, how? If not, then what is their role and purpose? If at the level of subjectivities we associate neoliberalism with promoting competitive rather than cooperative or solidaristic relations and interpellating self-serving entrepreneurial subjects, how, if at all, do contemporary national memorials fit into this? Against those who argue that contemporary memorial practices act as a bulwark against the homogenising thrust and amnesiac nature of global capitalism, I argue that viewing these things as simply oppositional is a mistake. We must instead offer due consideration to their dialectical interpenetration.

Essential to understanding the nature of the current conjuncture, the aesthetic concept of the sublime – always complex, always ideological – is a recurring theme throughout this book. Simon Morley has referred to the sublime as 'an experience looking for a context'.[20] If nature once inspired the feelings of awe, wonder, respect and even fear associated with the sublime, today it is perhaps more commonly inspired by human-made phenomena.[21] Manifest in different ways in the case studies under investigation, as well as paying attention to the specific ways in which it is evoked in different memorial projects, I also argue that the sublime plays a pivotal role within the postmodern-neoliberal conjuncture. I explore the ideological work it performs

in two distinct but related contexts. The first concerns the nature of history and the limits of historical understanding. Emerging from debates regarding the Holocaust and from certain strains of postmodern thought (discussed in chapter 3), the notion that history is not only characterised by but also structured in the same way as trauma and that it is, therefore, in some sense both unknowable and unrepresentable underpins the rationale of the later case studies (explored in chapters 5, 6 and 7). As well as exploring its specific manifestations, I tease out and critique some of the philosophical, ethical and political implications of this conception of history *as* sublime. The second is the reach and complexity of global capitalism, which is seen to exceed not only our ability to understand and represent the world but also our power to transform it. The rendering of the capitalist status quo as immutable is also read as the ideological subtext of the memorials analysed in chapters 6 and 7.

If the sublime, in these two senses, frames the current conjuncture it is also central to contemporary memorial aesthetics. Tracing the dialectic between the (supposed) unrepresentability of traumatic historical events – and indeed of history as such – and the felt need nevertheless to represent them, I argue that we are witnessing the emergence of memorials, and memorial-museums in particular, which attempt to compensate for the (supposed) failures of historical knowledge – epistemological and ethical – by generating new affective forms of 'knowing'. As I argue in chapters 3 and 5, the generation of this form of knowledge has become one of the primary objectives of contemporary memorialisation. It is justified as necessary precisely on the basis that we cannot understand history by cognitive means and must therefore be made in some sense to 'feel' it. While motivated by a desire to ensure that history is not repeated, founded on a liberal individualist framework, this approach assumes that it is through engaging and transforming individual subjectivities that we best ensure a responsible relationship with the past and its ongoing legacies. This liberal framework – which underpins not only the rationale behind the memorials in question but also how they are understood in much of the dominant literature – is subject to sustained critique. And so too are the often manipulative and potentially coercive means through which memorials and memorial-museums seek to generate affective responses which render history sublime and, ultimately, draw the visitor-subject into an essentially reaffirmative national narrative.

One final methodological and thematic point to highlight here is the emphasis placed on the urban contexts of the memorials under discussion. Often read in isolation, the approach developed here insists that account must be taken of how memorials sit within, and generate meaning in relation to, the urban contexts within which they reside. As well as looking at the historical contexts of the memorials, the ways in which they have developed over time

and how they have been debated and interpreted, I will, therefore, also be exploring how they operate as significant material presences in their respective urban contexts.

STRUCTURE

Chapter 1 situates the memorial-building boom within the postmodern-neoliberal conjuncture. Although the relationship between postmodernism and neoliberalism is complex, I argue that, among other things, crucially they both share a profound epistemological scepticism regarding what we can know and represent and that this has far reaching implications. Neoliberalism's zealous enthusiasm for the market is founded on an epistemological scepticism regarding our powers to understand and represent the world. Seeking to limit the proper remit of politics, which is substituted by the invisible – indeed sublime – mechanisms of the market, neoliberalism seeks to bring into being a social totality defined by market principles. Postmodernism – which is likewise founded on a profound epistemological scepticism – renders this totality sublime; that is, as both beyond our powers of imagination and comprehension and, consequently, immutable. The chapter also explores the place of nationalism within the current conjuncture. While often seen to be antithetical to the nation-state and nationalism, in reality neoliberal capitalism requires the continuation of both, albeit in a modified form. I end by opening up the question of the place of national memorials in this context.

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington DC opened in 1982 amid much controversy but quickly became a huge popular and critical success. Acclaimed as the nation's most powerful monument, it is widely recognised as having reinvigorated the memorial genre while transforming the terms of the debate.[22] To what are we to attribute this resounding success? And, indeed, what does 'success' mean in this context? Chapter 2 situates the memorial within the context of a hegemonic crisis in the US precipitated by the disastrous and deeply divisive war. Employing a postmodern aesthetics of ambiguity and mobilising a therapeutic discourse of healing and reconciliation, the memorial has contributed to a wider process through which the veterans have been transformed into victims and the war has been depoliticised. More than that, reading the memorial in relation to the memorial structures around it, I argue that it has helped to rehabilitate the war itself and to restore pride in the nation and its military.

Chapter 3 explores the Holocaust representation debate which began just after the Second World War and continues to this day. The chapter contextualises the philosophical, aesthetic and ethical questions raised in the case

studies explored in subsequent chapters. Rather than offering an exhaustive account or a broad overview of the debate, the chapter identifies and explores the dialectical relationship between the supposed impossibility of representing the Holocaust and the felt need to represent it nevertheless. I argue that the contradictions here see a push towards a distinct notion of historical knowledge and understanding, a shift away from the cognitive towards the affective. The Holocaust is rendered as that which is unthinkable and must therefore be felt. In this dialectic – between the unthinkable and the unrepresentable, on the one hand, and the desire to represent and make the Holocaust in some sense knowable, on the other – we see the emergence of a form of 'knowing' which gains authority through affect and, as I go on to argue in subsequent chapters, has come increasingly to characterise contemporary memorial architecture.

Chapter 4 analyses the rise and significance of the counter-monument phenomenon in the 1980s and 1990s in West and then reunified Germany.[23] Born when postmodernism was at the height of its subversive powers, the counter-monuments rejected the mainstays of traditional memorial architecture and were aesthetically radical, probing and dialogical. Well-suited to small scale local commemorative projects this approach has not, however, found favour when it comes to the kind of large-scale national memorials with which this book is primarily concerned. Although the language of the counter-monument is commonly invoked in the literature on these larger national memorials, the spirit of them is, as I shall go on to argue in subsequent chapters, quite distinct.

Chapter 5 focuses on the National Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington DC and the Jewish Museum Berlin. The first opened in 1993 and is designed to encourage identification with the victims and induce a vicarious experience of their trauma. The central conceit here, and what we are expected to take on authority, is that the Holocaust 'must be *felt* because it can never be *understood*'.[24] At the same time, the museum is constructed around an explicitly Americanised narrative and serves, ultimately, to reassure visitors of the superiority of the nation and its values. Daniel Libeskind's Jewish Museum Berlin opened in 2001. Reflecting on the architect's own meditations on the building, its form and the 'visitor experience' it offers, I argue that it gives form to trauma but not – as in the Holocaust Memorial Museum – by seeking to induce vicarious trauma. Rather, the Jewish Museum gives form to the idea of history *as* trauma; to Auschwitz as a metonym for the 'crisis of civilization' it has been seen to have initiated, or of which it represents the apotheosis. In contrast, the contents of the museum and Libeskind's own reflections are infused with hope. In the end, the historical rupture to which the building gives form is recuperated as part of a broader post-Cold

War cultural and sociopolitical project of 'coming to terms with the past'. In both of these memorial-museums we see a marrying of postmodern forms and discourses with a new form of monumentalism which serves as a means by which the Holocaust is ultimately recuperated in the interests of positive national identity formation.

Chapter 6 focuses on the Memorial to the Murdered Jew of Europe in Berlin that opened in 2005. Situating the memorial in relation to German reunification, it explores the memorial and accompanying Information Centre's form and the kinds of visitor experience they offer in the context of the redevelopment of Berlin after the Cold War. The chapter analyses the memorial in relation to its historical, political and urban contexts as well as in terms of how it reflects and partakes in debates regarding the representation of the Holocaust. A significant symbolic gesture which was intended to signify a shared understanding of and relation to the nation's past, the memorial now stands as a dominant physical presence and a popular tourist attraction at the heart of the reunified city. I argue that the memorial renders the Holocaust sublime and that, even as it marks the nation's greatest shame, it obfuscates the continuities between that past and our present, inviting a sense of a nation having overcome, even triumphed over, its troubled past.

The final chapter explores the ways in which the interplay among economic 'realism', patriotism and sentimentality have shaped the National September 11 Memorial & Museum and the redevelopment of the World Trade Center site within which they are situated. The memorial represents a somewhat predictable cobbling together of some of the key tropes of contemporary memorial architecture and relies for its impact on its sheer scale and its location. In contrast, the museum is the apotheosis of what I refer to in previous chapters as 'trauma architecture', which uses every available strategy – museological, visual, metaphorical and architectural – to 'move' visitors and hammer home its message of innocence, trauma, heroism and renewal. Always intended to act as an agent of economic regeneration, the memorial and museum are incredibly successful tourist attractions which invite visitors to 'experience' the trauma of 9/11 and the rebirth of the World Trade Center as a spectacle. Sentimental and nationalistic as well as pragmatic, drawing on and developing existing trends in contemporary memorial architecture, the development melds together memory and profit, creating a new kind of memory theme park and new model for the national memorial appropriate to the demands of the contemporary conjuncture.

NOTES

1. A rich literature is emerging on this subject, see for example: Beetham, 'From Spray Cans to Minivans'; and Drayton, 'Rhodes Must not Fall?'.
2. Doss, *Memorial Mania*.
3. In the US context, see Ibid. In the German context, see Lang, 'Monumental Unease: Monuments and the Making of Identity in Germany', in *Imagining Modern German Culture 1889–1910*, ed. Foster-Hahn, 274–99.
4. Examples of this dominant consensus include Michalski, *Public Monuments*; Blair, Jeppeson and Pucci, 'Public Memorializing in Postmodernity'; and Wilson Baptist, 'Incompatible Identities: Memory and Experience at the National September 9/11 Memorial and Museum'.
5. On the postmodern city and the significance of the symbolic economy, see Harvey, *Spaces of Capital*, 394–411; Allon, 'Ghosts of the Open City'; and Cronin and Hetherington, eds., *Consuming the Entrepreneurial City*.
6. Doss, *Memorial Mania*, 20.
7. Ibid., 27.
8. Ibid., 46.
9. See, for example, Huyssen, *Present Pasts*, 1–29; Klein, 'On the Emergence of Memory in Historical Discourse'; and Radstone, 'Memory Studies: For and Against'.
10. Huyssen, *Present Pasts*, 11–29.
11. See, for example, Ibid.; and Rogoff, 'The Aesthetics of Post-History'.
12. Huyssen, *Present Pasts*, 19–20 and 26.
13. Ibid., 94.
14. On the commodification of 'memory', see, for example, Arnold-de Simine, *Mediating Memory in the Museum*; Huyssen, *Present Pasts*; and Sturken, *Tourists of History*. On neoliberalism and memorialization, Doss is an exception here, although neoliberalism is only mentioned twice in her book (Doss, *Memorial Mania*, 54 and 375).
15. Hall, 'The Neo-Liberal Revolution', 705.
16. Huyssen, 'Memory Culture at an Impasse: Memorials in Berlin and New York', in Breckman et al., eds., *The Modernist Imagination*, 153.
17. Ibid., 156–57.
18. Jameson, *Valences of the Dialectic*, 15.
19. Jameson, *Postmodernism*.
20. Morley, 'Introduction/The Contemporary Sublime', in *The Sublime*, ed. Morley, 21.
21. Ray, *Terror and the Sublime in Art and Critical Theory*, 5.
22. Simpson, *9/11*, 77.
23. The term 'counter-monuments' was first coined by J. E. Young, 'The Counter-Monument: Memory Against Itself in Germany Today', *Critical Inquiry* 18, no. 2 (Winter 1992): 267–96.
24. Gross, 'Holocaust Tourism in Berlin', 81.

Chapter One

The Postmodern-Neoliberal Conjuncture

This chapter offers a provisional sketch of the contours of our current conjuncture. Hall has described the period from the early 1970s to today as the 'neoliberal conjuncture'. Although this period has been punctured by distinct crises, he argues that each of them 'seem to share some consistent underlying features, to be connected in the general thrust and direction of travel'.[1] Here I develop the concept of the postmodern-neoliberal conjuncture to draw attention to the significance of the relationship between neoliberalism and postmodernism in determining the cultural and ideological context of the contemporary memorial-building boom.

While the popularity of postmodernism as a critical term has waned in recent years, the conditions of postmodernity which were diagnosed in the 1980s and 1990s have not been superseded but rather extended, intensified and normalised. These include the socio-economic shifts associated with the rise and globalisation of neoliberal capitalism; the growth of digital technologies and their multifarious implications; the fragmentation and loss of certainty and identity associated with rapid social transformation; the commodification of all aspects of life; the onslaught on categories of truth, value and reason; the loss of historicity; and so on.[2] Critical, celebratory or indifferent, postmodern culture emerges from, reflects on, contributes to and intervenes in this state of affairs. The contemporary renaissance in memorial-building cannot be understood outside of these broader cultural shifts which have shaped and reshaped conceptions of, among other things, the place of the past in the present, the nature of the subject and the horizons of the political.

Neoliberalism is perhaps best understood as a constructivist project which aims to transform all aspects of social life and the subject in accordance with the logic of the market. While first conceived in the 1930s, the ascendancy of neoliberalism as a dominant ideology began in the 1970s and reached its

heights in the 1990s and early 2000s. The death of neoliberalism has been heralded on several occasions: the 2007–2008 financial crisis, the recent rise of right-wing populism around the world and, more recently, in light of government intervention in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. Neoliberalism has, however, proved itself to be highly adaptable and resilient. The future of neoliberalism remains a question of debate, but the academic consensus appears to suggest that it isn't dying as such but mutating.[3] To understand what it is and why it persists we need to look beyond how neoliberalism operates at the level of policy to understand how it conceives of and seeks to transform the social realm. This will be the focus of the first part of this chapter.[4] Part two focuses on postmodernism and draws out the affinities it has with neoliberalism. The chapter ends with an exploration of the place and nature of nationalism and national identity in the postmodern-neoliberal conjuncture.

NEOLIBERALISM

Neoliberalism was forged in response to the crisis of capitalism and of liberalism which was precipitated by the Great Depression of the 1930s and as a reaction against the rise of the welfare state, socialism and fascism and their attempts to reformulate the relationship between the state and the economy in its wake.[5] After the Second World War, the Keynesian model of the centrally planned economy – which sought to achieve economic growth through public spending and investment, prioritised full employment and promised the more extensive provision of welfare – came to dominate as governments sought to rebuild their economies while staving off the spectre of communism. This compromise was sufficient, for a time at least, to create a kind of equilibrium: balancing the contradictions of capitalism for long enough to secure the economic growth and material advances of the so-called 'golden age' which ended with the next major capitalist crisis in the early 1970s.[6]

The history of neoliberalism runs parallel and in contradistinction to, or as reaction against, this compromise. United in their shared opposition to Keynesianism and other forms of state intervention, in the 1930s theorists, economists and policy makers from the US and Europe came together with the shared aim of revitalising liberalism.[7] Marking the publication of Walter Lippmann's *An Inquiry into the Principles of a Good Society*, the 1938 Walter Lippmann Colloquium in Paris was a pivotal moment in the establishment of the new international school of economic and political thought.[8] Shortly after the colloquium, economist, philosopher and neoliberal ideologue Friedrich Hayek set up the Society for the Renovation of Liberalism.[9] Interrupted by the Second World War, this initiative was resurrected with the foundation

of the Mont Perelin Society in 1948.[10] For those who coalesced around the society, the welfare state and communism represented two sides of the same coin: both were anathema to 'freedom'.[11]

Determined to revitalise liberalism in the face of the threat posed by 'collectivist politics' (fascism, communism, socialism and the social democratic welfare state), Hayek advocated the free market on the anti-rationalist basis that we are inevitably ignorant of the numerous complex factors which shape our lives.[12] The centrally controlled state and top-down economic planning assume that we can know how best to distribute wealth, goods and services. For Hayek this belief is both mistaken and dangerous because it assumes knowledge we do not and cannot possess, and based on this flawed knowledge and the notion of common purpose, it reduces the individual merely to the means through which the collective interest (mandated from above) is pursued. For Hayek collectivism and top-down planning lead *necessarily*, therefore, to totalitarianism. In contrast, a 'free society' is one which is pluralistic and free from any common hierarchy of particular ends and where social order emerges spontaneously as a result of individual human actions.[13] Hayek refers to this social order as a catallaxy:

> the order brought about by the mutual adjustment of many individual economies in a market . . . a special kind of spontaneous order produced by the market through people acting within the rules of the law of property, tort and contract.[14]

In summary, in Hayek's utopian neoliberal imaginary, the market – protected by the rule of law – generates a spontaneous social order, creating wealth and promoting innovation it likewise acts as the guarantor of peaceful collaboration and individual freedom. And yet, the functioning of this complex catallaxy must remain opaque: for 'All man's mind can effectively comprehend are the facts of the narrow circle of which he is the center'.[15] For Hayek, the freedom of the individual relies on the recognition of our ignorance of the manifold factors that shape our ability to achieve our goals: 'The case for individual freedom rests chiefly on the recognition of the inevitable ignorance of all concerning the great many of the factors on which the achievement of our ends and welfare depends'.[16] We live in a world of such complexity that we cannot know what all the factors pertaining to a particular situation are and our hubris in assuming such knowledge inevitably results not only in failure but also in a creeping totalitarianism as we seek to forge the world in line with our vision. Evoking Adam Smith's sublime metaphor of 'the invisible hand', Hayek argues that while the human mind is limited, the market is capable of acting as a mechanism through which the complex actions and desires of vast numbers of people can be processed, delivering the best possible results for all concerned. So, however well intended, government planning

assumes forms of knowledge that we simply do not have. It is incapable of taking account of and processing the information required to ensure that each individual gets what they want, when they want it, at the right price – for this we need the market. In this sense then, as Ned O'Gorman argues, for neoliberals freedom 'entails a form of submission, submission to the unknown'.[17] The market is at once rational and beyond reason: operating behind our backs, the workings of the market are inscrutable; and yet (so the argument goes) it produces the best possible outcome for all.

The idea that there is something enigmatic, mysterious and unknowable about the functioning of the capitalist economy is a recurring theme in analyses of capitalism. From Smith's 'invisible hand' to Karl Marx's 'hidden abode', through Hayek's advocacy of ignorance to Fredric Jameson's 'postmodern sublime', many have pointed to the manner in which it challenges our powers of comprehension and representation. As Jameson writes,

> No one has ever seen that totality, nor is capitalism ever visible as such but only in its symptoms. This means that every attempt to construct a model of capitalism – for this is now what representation means in this context – will be a mixture of success and failure . . . Every representation is partial.[18]

Here and elsewhere Jameson points to the aesthetic problem – which is also a political problem – of how we understand and situate ourselves in relation to capitalism. As Alberto Toscano and Jeff Kinkle argue, what we need are:

> ways of representing the complex and dynamic relations intervening between the domains of production, consumption and distribution, and their strategic political mediations, ways of making the invisible visible.[19]

And yet, rendering capitalism *visible* is a fiendishly difficult task. As Moishe Postone argues in his reading of Marx's account of commodity fetishism, the commodity form itself 'both expresses and veils social relations' so that they appear 'not to be social at all, but natural'.[20] This gap between the essence and the appearance of capitalism – expressed in the distinction between value and use-value or the abstract and the concrete – opens up the space for the mystification of social relations and the development of a foreshortened critique which takes aim at capitalism's abstract and destructive power rather than the system as a whole. Jameson and Postone point to the problem of representation as essential to any attempt to understand and transform the world. In contrast, neoliberal ideology seeks to persuade us that 'another world is *not* possible'. Revelling in the sublime and asserting its authority, it insists that we are and must remain ignorant – for the pretence that we can know and therefore change the world is not only mistaken but dangerous.

Responding to the threat posed by collectivist politics, Hayek's attempt to revitalise liberalism has at its core an authoritarian argument for the protection of the market. *The Constitution of Liberty* develops what Ray Kiely refers to as an 'openly authoritarian liberalism' which 'protects the liberal individual and the free market from collectivism'.[21] Underpinned by epistemological scepticism, then, neoliberal theory rejects both political deliberation and planning in favour of the market as the mechanism through which human ends are best served. The market becomes the unquestionable authority to which all other considerations must submit. While parsed in the language of (individual) freedom, neoliberalism is *necessarily* authoritarian not only in practice (because it must impose its vision on the majority against their interests) but in principle.[22] Why? Because it must protect the market at all costs from the pernicious threat posed by demands to know, to make visible, to take control of and transform the processes which govern our lives. Hayek was clear on this, insisting that his concept of freedom has nothing to do with 'what is commonly called "political freedom", the participation of men in the choice of their government, in the process of legislation, and in the control of administration'.[23] From Augusto Pinochet's Chile, through to Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan in the 1980s, to the imposition of structural adjustments by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and the European Union (EU), neoliberalism has a long history of authoritarianism; a history of market mechanisms, international institutions and the power of the state being mobilised to institute and, where necessary, impose neoliberal reforms.[24]

The role of the state in protecting the market from political demands for justice and equality has been crucial in all of this. Often and erroneously associated with the shrinking of the state, neoliberalism is, in fact, concerned not with the diminution of the state but with its transformation. As neoliberal theorist Milton Friedman makes clear in *Capitalism and Freedom*, the aim of the neoliberal state is precisely that of establishing and maintaining the rules, institutions and social conditions required for the market to flourish unimpeded by calls for justice and equality.[25] More than simply fostering the right conditions for the flourishing of the market, however, the neoliberal state takes up the logic of the market as its very own. As Michel Foucault observed in 1978, what is at stake in neoliberalism is 'whether a market economy can in fact serve as the principle, form, and model for a state'.[26] As Wendy Brown argues, neoliberalism is a constructivist project: rather than assuming that economic rationality pervades all domains of human life, it extends and disseminates market values with the aim of ensuring that 'all dimensions of human life are cast in terms of a market rationality'.[27] It is important to note, however, as William Davies does, that far from ceding power and authority

to the market, the neoliberal state justifies its actions and policies 'in terms that are commensurable with the logic of markets'.[28] Suspicious of – indeed antithetical to – politics, neoliberalism replaces political judgements with forms of economic evaluation.[29] Far from receding then, the state becomes the chief instrument through which social and economic practices and institutions are restructured in accordance with the anti-political, market and competition orientated logic of neoliberalism. Increasingly contracting out what were once seen as its essential functions and devolving responsibility to non-state actors, the state nevertheless retains ultimate authority.[30]

Neoliberalism strenuously rejects material equality as a political aim because this, it is argued, is anathema to 'freedom'. It also of course goes against the political aims of the neoliberal project which, as well as ensuring the survival of capitalism, aims: 'to re-establish the conditions for capital accumulation and to restore the power of economic elites'.[31] Underpinned by a ruthless social Darwinist logic, neoliberalism seeks to promote competition over cooperation, dividing the world into winners and losers. Inequality is figured not as an injustice or a social ill, but rather as a marker of the worth of individuals. Rather than viewing subjects as citizens, members of communities or bearers of class, gender or ethnic identities, neoliberalism projects and seeks to interpellate a very particular kind of subject: radically atomised, rational economic actor who sinks or swims by their own light and bears full responsibility for the consequences of their own actions and choices.[32] Of course, this subject doesn't predate neoliberalism, but must be forged through it. Part of this process requires a transformation of expectations: for example, the replacement of the 'cradle-to-grave' notion of the welfare state with a discourse of personal responsibility, where individuals are expected to make the right 'choices' and 'invest' in themselves throughout their lives. Neoliberalism uses 'freedom' – the freedom to 'choose' – as a means of control and discipline.[33] Failure is subject not only to moralising condemnation – as whole groups are deemed suspect if not downright abject for their failure to succeed – but also punitive forms of discipline which exclude, impoverish and incarcerate those who fail to make the right 'choices'.[34] And here the state remains essential, although it may contract out the mechanisms of discipline and punishment, it nevertheless retains the power and moral authority to penalise the weak, the vulnerable and the criminalised.

In contrast to the rhetoric of individual freedom, the 'winner-take-all survivalist ethic' which structures neoliberal social and political theory and policy is necessarily authoritarian.[35] No stranger to outright dictatorships – Pinochet in Chile and Mubarak in Egypt – it has also taken the form of 'authoritarian populism' under Thatcher and Reagan in the UK and the US

and, more recently, with the likes of Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil, Donald Trump in the US and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in Turkey.[36] Indeed, Ian Bruff argues that we are witnessing the rise of authoritarian neoliberalism which, as well as using force and coercion is 'reconfiguring of the state and institutional power in an attempt to insulate certain policies and institutional practices from social and political dissent'.[37]

From the forgoing analysis it is possible to point to the authoritarian nature of neoliberalism in two distinct but related senses. Underpinned by epistemological scepticism, neoliberal theory rejects both political deliberation and planning in favour of the market as the mechanism through which human ends are best served. 'The market' ceases to be one means among many which might guide human behaviour and becomes the unquestionable authority to which all other considerations must submit. The authority of the market in principle is reflected in the practices and policies which guide actually existing neoliberal regimes, even when the application of this principle is uneven, impure and replete with contradictions.

At the same time, neoliberalism's ascendency cannot be attributed merely to its success at the level of policy, institutional transformation and its power to inflict its vision upon the majority against their interests. As, if not more, important has been its ability to transform expectations, to reconfigure 'common sense' and, indeed, convince people that such reforms are not only inevitable and acceptable but commonsensical and, indeed, even desirable.[38] As David Harvey, drawing on Gramsci, puts it, it is at the level of common sense and everyday experience that 'we begin to see how neoliberalism penetrated 'common-sense' understandings' with people coming 'to see it as a necessary, even wholly 'natural', way for the social order to be regulated'.[39] In other words, neoliberalism needs to be understood not simply as a political project but as the dominant ideology of our time. As such, as I have argued, it entails both the radical restructuring of society and the transformation of subjectivity; it has to interpellate subjects who can operate within the socio-economic world it is bringing into being and postmodernism has had a crucial role to play here.

POSTMODERNISM

If, as Jameson argues, capitalism poses an aesthetic problem – a problem of representation – which is also a political problem – the problem of how we understand the world and situate ourselves in relation to it – it is one with which postmodern culture and theory have, arguably, largely failed to engage.

Instead, postmodern cultural practice and theory have seen a renaissance in the discourse of the sublime. This is perhaps not surprising. At moments of great transformation, when capital expands into hitherto uncolonised realms (geographical, social and psychological) new forms of representation and new ways of thinking about representation and its limits emerge as we seek to make sense of a world in flux. The re-emergence of the sublime as a central category of analysis in aesthetic theory – and the ways in which it is employed and evoked in contemporary cultural practices – is symptomatic of these transformations. It also has a number of philosophical and political implications which are manifest in the developments in memorial architecture and discourse explored in this book.

First coined in the 1870s, the contemporary use of the term *postmodern* dates back to the 1960s in the field of literature but really took off in architecture and architectural criticism in the late 1970s and early 1980s before spreading across to other disciplines and into common parlance.[40] Charles Jencks was instrumental in popularising the term and concept. In *The Language of Post-Modern Architecture*, he argues that postmodern architecture emerges in response to the failures of modernism which stem from its universalism, its failure to communicate taste, wealth and status and its connivence with state and corporate power.[41] In contrast, 'the new paradigm' in architecture is shaped by a 'world view' that is:

> committed to pluralism, the heterogeneity of our cities and global culture, and acknowledges the variety of taste cultures and visual codes of the users. . . . It sends complex messages, ones that often carry ironic, dissenting or critical meanings, those that challenge the status quo.[42]

Jencks celebrates postmodernism as a liberating release from the constraints of modernism's monotone and puritanical grasp. Although manifest in a variety of different ways, for Jencks all forms of postmodernism are united in their commitment to pluralism and *différance* (Jacques Derrida's notion of incommensurable difference).[43] Rather than imposing its will, this 'sensibility thrives on dispositions different from its own . . . it has rediscovered an old truth; meaning consists precisely (if only partly) in difference'.[44] Celebrating the heady new world of difference and plurality, consumerism and the pursuit of novelty, Jencks writes that the 'post-modern situation',

> cultivates a sensibility that is a compound of previous ones. . . . We now have the luxury of inhabiting successive worlds as we tire of each one's qualities, a luxury which previous ages with their lack of opportunity did not have. There is no dictatorship of the cognitariat, nor is there an exclusive aristocracy or bourgeoisie, but rather the first paraclass to have it all ways.[45]

Jencks articulates a notion of the postmodern as flighty and fun, ironic and not to be taken too seriously. His vision of multicultural consumerism focuses on the privileged western 'cognitariate': a paraclass made up of 'clerks, secretaries, insurance people, stockbrokers, teachers, managers, governmental bureaucrats, lawyers, writers, bankers, technicians, programmers, accountants and ad-men'.[46] While he acknowledges the growing structural inequalities which went hand in hand with the rise of postmodern culture, he does so in only a cursory fashion.[47]

Postmodernism's ascendency in the field of architecture and architectural criticism would be replicated in other fields from the late 1970s through to the mid-1990s when debates regarding and contesting its meaning and significance came to dominate in the arts and humanities. The term has long since gone out of fashion; arguably, however, postmodernism has not been substantially disregarded or superseded but in fact normalised as the 'common sense' of our era. As Owen Hatherley argues, the 'conditions of postmodernism – the onward march of neoliberalism across all corners of the globe, the decline of socialism, the relentless expansion of the mass media' remain in play.[48] Aesthetic irreverence, the picking and choosing and mixing of styles in art and fashion, the prevalence today of moral and cultural relativism and the suspect way in which the concept of 'truth', for example (as something distinct from individual opinion) is regarded, all suggest that far from being irrelevant postmodernism has now become so thoroughly normalised that it no longer requires the name.[49]

Jameson insists that while they may have fallen out of favour as critical terms of analysis, 'postmodernism' and 'postmodernity' remain indispensable to our understanding of 'the shape of the new historical period we had begun to enter around 1980'.[50] Reiterating what he had already made clear in his 1984 essay 'Postmodernism. Or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism', Jameson insists that with 'postmodernism' he is not referring to a particular style but to an historical period. Postmodernism is the cultural dominant which corresponds to a particular mode of capitalism described in his work as either 'late' or 'global'. As a historical rather than a stylistic concept, it is inseparable from a 'fundamental mutation of the sphere of culture in the world of late capitalism' and is not, therefore, something which we can simply choose to reject.[51]

For Jameson the expansion of the logic of capitalism – which now seeks to colonise not only the entire globe but also all aspects of social life and every last corner of the human psyche – has destroyed the 'semiautonomy' of culture. Although it may once have provided a space outside, or to the side of, the instrumental logic of capitalism, it is now hopelessly infected by it. This does not mean that culture has been destroyed. On the contrary, he argues,

its loss of autonomy has led to an explosion of culture which has expanded 'throughout the social realm, to the point where everything in our social life . . . can be said to have become "cultural"'.[52]

Jameson outlines five constitutive features of postmodernism as a cultural dominant: its depthlessness/superficiality; its inversion of the utopian impulse of modernism; the waning of effect and the death of the subject; the crisis of historicity which results in the loss of temporality and 'schizophrenic' modes of experiencing the present; and, finally, the relationship between these features and new forms of technology and the global economic system. Our inability to grasp, and passivity in the face of, this bewilderingly complex nexus he names 'the postmodern sublime': a crisis in our ability to understand and act in a world where all forms of cultural and political intervention appear to be absorbed and recuperated by a system from which we seem unable to gain any distance.[53] For Jameson 'it is precisely this whole extraordinarily demoralizing and depressing original new global space which is the "moment of truth" of postmodernism'.[54] Our consciousness of this moment of truth is 'the postmodern sublime'. For Jameson the unrepresentable nature of global capitalism poses a profound political and aesthetic challenge. He implores us urgently to develop new forms of political art and culture. This 'aesthetics of cognitive mapping' must 'hold to the truth of postmodernism . . . its fundamental object – the world space of multinational capital' while enabling us to 'begin to grasp our positioning as individual and collective subjects and regain a capacity to act and struggle which is at present neutralized by our spatial as well as our social confusion'.[55]

Crucially, Jameson points to the 'fundamental ideological task' of postmodernism within the context of the changing requirements of capitalism: 'that of coordinating new forms of practice and social and mental habits . . . with new forms of economic production and organization thrown up by the modification of capitalism'.[56] This is a cultural revolution directed at producing new people; 'the "postmodern" is to be seen as the production of postmodern people capable of functioning in a very peculiar socioeconomic world'.[57] The self-creating, multiple identified, choosing subject championed by Jencks is not distinct from, but rather represents the other side of, the radically atomised, self-regarding, entrepreneurial subject that neoliberalism dreams of. As Jodi Dean argues, neoliberal ideology 'enjoins subjects to develop our creative potential and cultivate our individuality . . . have a good time, have it all, be happy, fit, and fulfilled'.[58] Here Dean echoes negatively what Jencks celebrates, linking the injunction to enjoy and consume to a neoliberal ideology which joins postmodernism in celebrating difference and choice while benefiting not simply in terms of the proliferation of new market opportunities but also in terms of gaining consent through seduction.

It is then not simply the lowering of expectations but the imperative of competitive self-creation and the pursuit of individual 'happiness' that form the ideal neoliberal subject.

Like Jameson, Harvey similarly points to there being 'some kind of necessary relation between the rise of postmodernist cultural forms, the emergence of more flexible modes of capital accumulation, and a round of "time–space compression" in the organization of capitalism'.[59] Analysing the relationship between these transformations in the cultural and economic spheres since the 1970s, Harvey also points to a shift at the level of ideas which is intimately linked to the abandonment of what Jürgen Habermas terms the 'project of modernity';

> formulated by the philosophers of the Enlightenment in the eighteenth century [this project] consists in the relentless development of the objectivating sciences, of the universalistic foundations of morality and law, and of autonomous art.[60]

Elevating human reason, proclaiming liberty and equality, breaking with history and tradition and embracing the idea of progress, the Enlightenment 'sought the demystification and desacralization of knowledge and social organization in order to liberate human beings from their chains'.[61] Although Enlightenment thought held out the promise of human liberty and equality, it cannot, at least not in any intellectually honest way, be divorced from the histories of capitalism, colonialism, racism, sexism, the persecution of minority groups and the subjection of the poor which, among other things, have accompanied the project of modernity since its inception. Although they were certainly not the first to criticise the Enlightenment and modernity, from the mid-twentieth century a number of European philosophers and theorists began to seriously question the value and legacy of the Enlightenment, not least in the wake of Stalinism, Nazism and the atomic bomb. Rather than offering a survey of the various strands of postmodern and poststructuralist thought that emerged in this period, here I focus on the work of Jean-Francois Lyotard whose work has been crucial in shaping debates regarding postmodernism and the ways in which postmodern theory has been popularised. Crucially for our purposes here and in subsequent chapters, both the Holocaust and the sublime, and the relationship between them, are central to his analysis and he is widely credited with helping to precipitate the aforementioned revival of the discourse of the sublime late in the twentieth century.[62]

Lyotard was the first European philosopher to use the term *postmodernism* when he published *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* in 1979.[63] Writing in the wake of the failures of liberalism and communism and the horrors of early in the twentieth century, he takes aim at the Enlightenment and modernity and their legacies. *The Postmodern Condition* explores

the status of scientific knowledge which is, Lyotard contends, undergoing a crisis of legitimation. Previously, he argues, two distinct narratives of human progress had served to legitimise science. Growing out of the French philosophical and political tradition, the first is concerned with the liberation of humanity. Political and militant, it demands the right of all to the knowledge and benefits of science. The second, associated with G. W. F. Hegel and the German philosophical tradition, is speculative and contemplative and values knowledge for its own sake.[64] For Lyotard, in contemporary postmodern societies – and in the face of technological developments, the failure of communism and the shift towards instrumental rationality – these emancipatory and speculative narratives of legitimation have ceased to be credible.[65] In particular, he argues that the horrors of the twentieth century call into question the grand narratives of progress with which Enlightenment and the project of modernity are associated. Elsewhere Lyotard argues that these grand narratives,

> look for legitimacy . . . in a future to be accomplished, that is, in an Idea to be realized. This Idea (of freedom, 'enlightenment', socialism, etc.) has legitimating value because it is universal. It guides every human reality. It gives modernity its characteristic mode: the *project*.[66]

This project has, he insists,

> not been forsaken or forgotten but destroyed, 'liquidated'. There are several modes of destruction, several names which are symbols for them. 'Auschwitz' can be taken as a paradigmatic name for the tragic 'incompletion' of modernity . . . It is the crime opening postmodernity. . . . How can grand narratives of legitimation still have credibility in these circumstances?[67]

If modernity sought to understand, categorise and transform the world, in response to its failures, Lyotard evokes the sublime nature of history and the limits of human understanding. Defining the postmodern as 'incredulity towards metanarratives' he rejects the legitimacy of any narrative, or set of foundational principles, that might ground collective human intellectual or political endeavours.[68] There is, he argues, nothing beyond the small narratives, local knowledges and language games in which we all engage which can confer legitimacy on human thought and action. Each claim, each utterance finds its own legitimacy and there are no grounds on which we can judge between them. Politically this means the end to any project for radical social transformation. Rejecting both liberalism and in particular Marxism – which he deems to be both universalising and totalitarian – he argues that 'there is no question of proposing a "pure" alternative to the system' since this would simply 'end up resembling the system it was meant to replace'.[69] And so in rejecting the master narratives of modernity, Lyotard also waves goodbye to

the idea that something beyond and radically different from capitalism is possible. Indeed, if we take him seriously, the grounds on which such a collective political project might be founded disappear.[70] Instead the remit of politics is confined to questions of justice – conceived here in terms of equal access to information and a level playing field in communication – and with resisting the totalising power of capitalism, rather than overthrowing it.[71]

Lyotard clearly articulates the essential thrust of postmodern theory which can be summarised in the following terms: its anti-humanism (the rejection of the Enlightenment faith in progress and human perfectibility); anti-universalism (the rejection of the universal claims of Enlightenment), anti-foundationalism (the rejection of any basic principle or foundation, such as reason, as the basis of human knowledge), relativism (the notion that all claims to knowledge are equal) and epistemological scepticism (scepticism regarding what we can know and represent).

Although the relationship between neoliberalism and postmodernism is far from straightforward, they share two core, underlying characteristics which are essential to understanding both, the relationship between them and the nature of the current conjuncture. First, their scepticism regarding what we can know and represent and second, following on from this, their narrow notion of the proper remit of politics. As I have argued, neoliberalism – the ruling ideology of contemporary global capitalism – is deeply sceptical about the limits of human knowledge, our capacity to represent the world and, therefore, circumscribes – arguably even seeking to eliminate – the place of politics. At the same time, it seeks to construct a social totality defined by 'the market' which is both unrepresentable and unquestionable. Similarly sceptical about what we can claim to know, postmodernism – the cultural logic of contemporary global capitalism – renders this totality unrepresentable or sublime, beyond not only our powers of comprehension but also of human control. In place of reckoning with the really existing totality that is global capitalism in its current neoliberal form, postmodernism instead focuses on the local and the specific, on difference and plurality. Often seen in this sense as a bulwark against the totalising, homogenising and destructive power of global capitalism and the onslaught of the market, in fact, postmodernism's anti-universalism and abandonment of the notion of radical social transformation has proved more than a little conducive to the requirements of neoliberal capitalism. Rejecting the notion of a collective human subject that seeks emancipation – and jettisoning the grounds on which such a politics might be based – postmodernism informs a politics which is more concerned with recognition than structural transformation or even material redistribution.[72] At the same time, postmodern relativism

makes it impossible to judge between competing claims because all claims to 'truth' – however spuriously grounded – are equally valid. Equivalence – the law of the market – is extended to the realms of thought, speech and judgement while the troubling consequences of relativism are downplayed or ignored. Narrowing of the horizons of the political and lowering expectations, postmodernism shares a secret affinity with neoliberalism. Both agree: 'there is no alternative'. And it is the prevalence of this notion – the idea that, like it or not, we are stuck with what we've got – which takes us to the heart of the nature of the postmodern-neoliberal conjuncture.

NEOLIBERAL NATIONALISM

Often associated with the shrinking of the state, as I have argued, neoliberalism is, in fact, concerned not with the diminution of the state but rather with a radical restructuring of society and the relationship between states and those who reside within them. What of nationalism and national identity in these circumstances? In the context of the current conjuncture we have, on the one hand, the challenge posed by postmodern scepticism regarding collective identities of any kind and its cultural correlate in the idea that today identities are variously constructed, multiple and fragmented. On the other hand, neoliberal globalisation and the transformation – although not erosion – of the role of the state have been seen to undermine the relationship between citizen and state and between different groups of people within states.[73] And yet, in so far as neoliberal capitalism still requires the nation-state, and in so far as states are still required not only to coerce but also, to some extent, to charm and persuade those who reside within them, finding ways of getting people to identify themselves with the nation remains essential. The aim of this section is to demonstrate that nationalism is a fundamental aspect of the functioning of neoliberal societies and, far from undermining neoliberalism, an extension of its social Darwinist logic.

Although the role of the state in protecting and bolstering the market while promoting the extension of its logic to all aspects of human life is now broadly recognised, it is often assumed that because it is a globalising force, neoliberalism is antithetical to the nation and nationalism. A growing body of research questions this assumption, arguing that neoliberalism is developing its own distinct brand of nationalism.[74] Since it rose into being alongside capitalism and the modern nation-state, nationalism has been both a necessary and an adaptable ideology – and so it remains.[75] While some neoliberals have fantasised about a 'flat world' of fair and open competition, the globalisation of neoliberal capitalism has come about through the nation-state structure, not

against it.[76] Although capital flows across the globe with ever-greater freedom and speed, the world remains divided into nation states and, even while it may undermine national sovereignty in some respects, the globalisation of capitalism has intensified competition between national capitals.

Adam Harmes charts the rise of what he describes as a distinct neoliberal form of nationalism which 'advocates fiscal and regulatory sovereignty within the context of international capital mobility'.[77] While they embrace global markets, he argues, wealthy and powerful nations nevertheless seek to curtail the impact of international rules and regulations to ensure their own competitive advantage. As Neil Davidson argues, because neoliberal capitalism is based on competition and because capitalists require not only the infrastructure of the nation-state but also its protection 'like all forms of capitalism . . . [it] needs both the territorial nation-state form and the ideology of nationalism'.[78] Close ties between global corporations and national governments and the influence of non-state actors may complicate this picture. At the level of culture and ideology, however, the neoliberal state continues to *require* nationalism because it needs to maintain and reproduce a national citizenry which identifies itself with the interests of 'the nation'.

The central ideological task of nationalism is that of unifying disparate national subjects, often with opposing interests, who are interpellated as members of a single 'imagined community'.[79] Often associated with the far-right and separatist political movements, nationalism is in fact a pervasive ideology. Michael Billig coined the term *banal nationalism* to describe the normalised and often unnoticed form of nationalism that underpins the whole nation-state system – an ideology that is so powerful and so taken-for-granted that it often goes unnoticed, as if the division of the world into nation-states were somehow entirely natural.[80] While nationalist language may come to the fore during times of crisis, nation-states and national subjects must be constructed and reproduced on a daily basis through a complex web of practices, beliefs, representations and ideological habits.[81] Although this everyday nationalism may be banal, Billig stresses that it is neither benign nor innocent. As well as structuring the social and cultural dynamics of exclusion and vilification, it produces forces that can be quickly and effectively mobilised in moments of crisis, real or perceived.[82]

Understanding the world through a simple 'us'/'them' binary, nationalism relies on constructing enemies within and without, providing a reservoir of emotion and commitment which can be called on in a wide variety of circumstances: from the apparently harmless competitive rivalry of international sports tournaments to the call to bear arms in defence of the nation. Nationalism, in this everyday sense, continues to fulfil a crucial ideological role which is and will remain indispensable so long as the nation-state system persists. Billig's

argument thus remains persuasive. That said, much has changed since his book was written in 1995, including the rise of neoliberal nationalism, on the one hand, and the growth of avowed and often vitriolic nationalism in a range of different national contexts across the globe, on the other.[83] In the last decade or so, nationalism has shifted centre stage even as it continues to be underpinned by the normalised and banal assumptions and habits described by Billig.

If Davidson, Harmes and Billig are correct to suggest that capitalism and the nation-state system require nationalism, how then should we understand the nature of nationalism in the contemporary conjuncture? Neoliberal nationalism does not simply consist in the 'rational' pursuit of national economic self-interest. It is in fact underpinned by a particular understanding of what humans are and how we ought to live. Founded on competitive individualism, neoliberalism conceives of social life as a battle for survival and supremacy. The neoliberal subject is constructed as a self-creating, self-serving, entrepreneurial and competitive individual who is solely responsible for the consequences of their own actions and choices.[84] Those who fail to 'succeed' are condemned as lazy, feckless, inept or even malevolent. Like all forms of nationalism, neoliberal nationalism constructs both internal and external enemies and it does so along precisely these lines. Positioning the nation as a competitor in a global struggle for survival and supremacy, neoliberal nationalism understands the nation-state as a competitive economic unit. As part of this larger unit each individual is enjoined to 'do their bit' and make the right choices not only for themselves but also for the greater good. The ideal neoliberal subject contributes to the health and wealth of the nation by pursuing their own economic interests, which of course marry those of the nation. In contrast, the poor and the marginalised are abjected as drains on the nation's collective resources and morale and marginalised, disciplined and vilified accordingly. An essential component of what Henry Giroux describes as the 'winner-take-all survivalist ethic' of neoliberalism, this politics of abjection is demonstrative of the social Darwinist logic which lies at the core of neoliberalism and underpins its faith in competition.[85]

While they operate within the context of everyday nationalism, born of specific national crises, the memorials and memorial-museums analysed in this book do not quite fit Billig's description of *banal* nationalism. Traditional monuments and memorials, national flags and symbols may provide a backdrop for everyday life, helping to form *national* subjects who identify with the nation and who can be mobilised in supposed times of need. The contemporary memorials under discussion here are clearly part of this broader context of signs, symbols and rituals that help to form the idea of the nation and identification with it. At the same time, however, they are more spectacular than mundane (although they may, of course, fade to banality with

time). Neither are they straightforwardly overt statements of national pride and superiority (although I shall argue that they are certainly not free of these things either). Employing postmodern aesthetic strategies, emphasising plurality and diversity as well as spectacle and awe, designed to attract tourists and make a splash in the media, they nevertheless remain *national* memorials, intended to speak to and of the nation.

As a powerful ideological force, nationalism has a long history of inventing traditions and interpellating 'imagined communities' in the interests of securing popular consent, loyalty and even nationalist fervour.[86] Essential to this success is its ability – like any successful ideology – to adapt to new times and different challenges. Neoliberal global capitalism requires the postmodern/neoliberal subject: atomised, self-creating, self-serving, competitive, creative and entrepreneurial. At the same time the nation-state system and nationalism remain essential to the functioning of global capitalism. Nationalism, if it is to remain relevant and effective, must speak to these kinds of subjects by adapting itself to the challenges that neoliberalism and postmodernism pose to its more traditional forms, aesthetics and modes of address.

If the current conjuncture is characterised by crises generated by the economic, social and cultural shifts associated with postmodernity, what is the place of nationalism in these circumstances? How can it speak to the fragmented, self-serving, atomised subjects that neoliberalism and postmodernism imagine and seek to realise? How does it make itself relevant and what role do national memorials and memorial-museums play in this context? How do their postmodern aesthetics – commonly associated with pluralism, openness and ambiguity – contribute to the construction of subjects which are amenable to the requirements of neoliberal nationalism? And how does the question of the sublime fit into all of this? These are some of the questions which will be explored in subsequent chapters.

NOTES

1. Hall, 'Neo-Liberal Revolution', 705.
2. On the nature of postmodernity, see: Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition*; Jameson, *Cultural Logic*; and Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity*. On the continuing relevance of postmodernism/postmodernity as critical terms, see, Jameson, 'The Aesthetics of Singularity'; and McManus, *The Rise of Post-Modern Conservatism*.
3. Davies and Gane, 'Post-Neoliberalism?'.
4. The first and final parts of this chapter draw on an argument developed in Clewer, 'The Sublime Authority of Ignorance, Neoliberal Nationalism and the Rise of the Demagogue'.

5. Andrew Gamble draws a useful distinction between ordinary financial crises, which are part of the functioning of the system, and crises of capitalism (e.g. in the 1930s) which gave rise to new institutions, policies, and ideologies. Gamble, *The Spectre at the Feast*, 6–7.

6. Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*.

7. Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics*, 78–95.

8. Ibid., 132–33.

9. Ibid., 133.

10. Harvey, *History of Neoliberalism*, 19–22.

11. This is the central thesis of Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom*.

12. Ibid., 59–64.

13. Hayek, *Law, Legislation and Liberty*, 109.

14. Ibid., 108–9.

15. Hayek quoted in O'Gorman, *The Iconoclastic Imagination*, 205, from Hayek, *Individualism and Economic Order*, 14.

16. Hayek, *The Constitution of Liberty*, 29.

17. O'Gorman, *Iconoclastic Imagination*, 205.

18. Jameson, *Representing Capital*, 6.

19. Toscano and Kinkle, *Cartographies of the Absolute*, 24–25.

20. Postone, 'Anti-Semitism and National Socialism', 302–14, 307.

21. Kiely, 'From Authoritarian Liberalism to Economic Technocracy', 730.

22. There is a growing body of literature which explores the authoritarian nature of neoliberalism in practice. See, for example, Hall, et al., *Policing the Crisis*; Bruff, 'The Rise of Authoritarian Neoliberalism'; and Burak Tansel, 'Authoritarian Neoliberalism and Democratic Backsliding in Turkey'.

23. Hayek, *Liberty*, 11–20, 13.

24. See, for example, Klein, *The Shock Doctrine*; and Traverso, *The New Faces of Fascism*, 41.

25. Friedman, *Capitalism and Freedom*.

26. Foucault, *Biopolitics*, 117.

27. Brown, 'Neoliberalism and the End of Liberal Democracy', 40.

28. Davies, *The Limits of Neoliberalism*, 6.

29. Ibid., 3.

30. On the growth of the privatised military industry, for example, see Eichler, 'Citizenship and the Contracting out of Military Work'.

31. Harvey, *History of Neoliberalism*, 19.

32. I here draw on the work of Brown, 'Neoliberalism'; Fisher, *Capitalist Realism*; Giroux, 'Beyond the Biopolitics of Disposability'; and Dean, *Democracy and Other Neoliberal Fantasies*.

33. Brown, 'Neoliberalism', 43.

34. On the moralisation of freedom, see Ibid., 44. On the criminalisation of social problems, see Giroux, 'Disposability', 600–1. On neoliberalism and abjection, see Tyler, *Revolting Subjects*.

35. Quote from Giroux, 'Disposability', 591.

36. Bruff, 'Authoritarian Neoliberalism'.

37. Ibid., 115. Also see Myers, 'Ideology After the Welfare State'.
38. Harvey, *History of Neoliberalism*, 39–40.
39. Ibid., 41.
40. Rose, *The Post-Modern and the Post-Industrial*.
41. Jencks, *The Language of Post-Modern*, 19–25.
42. Jencks, *The New Paradigm in Architecture*, 2.
43. Jencks, *What Is Post-Modernism?*, 29.
44. Ibid., 61.
45. Ibid., 61.
46. Ibid., 51–52.
47. Ibid., 54.
48. Hatherley, 'Post-Postmodernism?', 160.
49. On the normalisation and intensification of postmodernism, see, for example, Fisher, *Capitalist Realism*, and Dean, *Neoliberal Fantasies*.
50. Jameson, 'Aesthetics of Singularity', 103.
51. Jameson, *Cultural Logic*, 47–48.
52. Ibid., 48.
53. Ibid., 6.
54. Ibid., 49.
55. Ibid., 54.
56. Ibid., xiv.
57. Ibid., xv.
58. Dean, *Neoliberal Fantasies*, 67.
59. Harvey, *Condition of Postmodernity*, vii.
60. Habermas, 'Modernity: An Unfinished Project', in *Habermas and the Unfinished Project of Modernity*, eds. Passerin d'Entrèves and Benhabib, 38–55, 45.
61. Harvey, *Condition of Postmodernity*, 12–13.
62. On Lyotard and the revival of the discourse of the sublime, see van da Vall, 'Silent Visions: Lyotard on the Sublime', in *The Contemporary Sublime*, ed. Crowther, 68–75, 68.
63. Lyotard, *Postmodern Condition*, xxiii.
64. Ibid., 31–32.
65. Ibid., 37.
66. Lyotard, 'Letter to Samuel Cassin, 6 February 1984', in Lyotard, *The Postmodern Explained to Children*, 29–30.
67. Ibid., 30–31.
68. Lyotard, *Postmodern Condition*, xxiv.
69. Ibid., 66.
70. Jameson, Foreword to Lyotard, *Postmodern Condition*, xix
71. Lyotard, *Postmodern Condition*, 66–67; and Lyotard, 'Presenting the Unpresentable', 67.
72. On the politics of redistribution versus that of recognition, see Fraser, 'Feminist Politics in the Age of Recognition: A Two-Dimensional Approach to Gender Justice', Fraser, *Fortunes of Feminism*, 159–174.

73. Giroux, 'Disposability'; Lazzarato, 'Neoliberalism in Action'; Myers, 'After the Welfare State'; and Tyler, *Revolting Subjects*.

74. See, for example, Davidson, 'Nationalism and Neoliberalism'; Harmes, 'The Rise of Neoliberal Nationalism'; and Cozzolini, 'Trumpism as Nationalist Neoliberalism'.

75. On the emergence of nationalism alongside capitalism and the modern nation state, see Anderson, *Imagined Communities*; and Hobsbawn and Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*.

76. Friedman, *The World Is Flat*.

77. Harmes, 'Neoliberal Nationalism', 61.

78. Davidson, 'Nationalism and Neoliberalism', 38.

79. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.

80. Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, 5.

81. Ibid., 6.

82. Ibid., 6–7.

83. On the growth of the far-right and its links to neoliberalism, see Traverso, *Faces of Fascism*; Fassin, 'The Neo-Fascist Moment of Neoliberalism'; and Cozzolini, 'Trumpism'.

84. I here draw on the work of Brown, 'Neoliberalism'; Fisher, *Capitalist Realism*; and Giroux, 'Disposability'.

85. Giroux, 'Disposability', 591. The specifically national and nationalist framing of this ethic appears to have received little attention. Tyler, *Revolting Subjects* is a notable exception here.

86. Hobsbawn and Ranger, *Invention of Tradition*; and Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.

Chapter Two

Memorialising in Postmodernity

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial has been described as both 'a prototype of postmodern memorializing' and as having established a 'therapeutic model of commemoration that has become the new common sense of our era'.[1] Although it was highly controversial when it was first opened, today the memorial is almost universally praised as a genre-transforming popular and critical success.[2] It has also been incredibly influential not only in terms of its design but also in shaping the dominant framework through which memorials are conceived, designed and interpreted. This chapter offers a critical reading of the memorial which explores its history and evolution over time; the ways in which it has been interpreted; and how it generates meaning in relation to its specific urban context. I argue that its success hinges on the ideological work it performs in response to the specific hegemonic crisis precipitated by the Vietnam War in the US and the more general crises generated by the transformations associated with neoliberalism and postmodernity explored in the previous chapter.

HISTORY

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF) was founded by Jan Scruggs in 1979 to campaign for a permanent national memorial for the US veterans of the Vietnam War. A working-class veteran who'd been injured in the war, Scruggs succeeded in creating a media image of himself as an authentic, non-political and non-establishment figurehead for the campaign. He was not, however, as Patrick Hagopian argues, quite so naive as this image suggests. After serving in Vietnam, Scruggs took an MA in counselling psychology, and it was then that he first came up with the idea of building a

memorial which would, in honouring the dead veterans, comfort the surviving veterans and help to heal a divided nation.[3] The VVMF would become the 'principle popularizers' of a discourse of healing that became increasingly influential in the late 1970s.[4]

During and after the war, veterans had campaigned for recognition of the suffering they had endured as a result of serving in Vietnam, as well as government support in securing medical and psychological treatment, drug-addition therapy and welfare. Many campaigned against the war, highlighting the wrongs perpetrated not only against, but also by, US veterans. Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW) – which had twenty-five to thirty thousand members at its height – organised self-help group therapy sessions, held mass protests against the war, performed guerrilla street theatre and medal-throwing ceremonies, produced numerous anti-war publications and organised public war-crimes hearings where veterans spoke of the atrocities they had witnessed and participated in.[5] They also held memorial services in which the names of both US and Vietnamese victims of the war were read aloud.[6] Andrew Hunt describes them as an organisation formed primarily of working-class veterans:

> neither 'baby killers' nor the angry victims of an unjust policy. They were actors who fashioned their own histories, brought together by the common experience of service in the armed forces during the Vietnam era and a shared assumption that the Vietnam War was morally wrong.[7]

A left-wing movement which opposed the war on political and moral grounds and linked it to the logics of capitalism and imperialism, the VVAW was seen as a threat by Richard Nixon's administration, which went to great efforts to infiltrate the group and thwart their activities.[8]

During and directly after the war, veterans were commonly viewed as dangerous and unhinged social outcasts. As Kathleen McClancy argues, in the late 1970s a shift in perceptions saw veterans 'transformed from violent threats to American society to victims of that society whose suffering stood in for the pain of America at large'.[9] The diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) was critical to this transformation.[10] Psychiatrists dealing with veterans who displayed a whole range of symptoms, from drug addiction to violent behaviour, campaigned for recognition of a 'post-Vietnam syndrome'. The more general diagnosis of PTSD was developed in the early 1970s and, after years of campaigning, was added to the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* in 1980.[11] While some question its clinical coherence, the diagnosis allowed forms of behaviour which fell outside the norm and disrupted the hegemonic order – including not only acts of violence but also criticism of US society and political activity – to be dismissed as

symptoms of psychological disturbance.[12] Although it undoubtedly helped many to secure state support, PTSD also transformed veterans into victims. Absolving them of responsibility for acts committed during the war, it also arguably depoliticised their grievances and undermined their agency.

After the US failed to claim victory in the war, Ronald Reagan and others on the right peddled a 'stab-in-the-back' conspiracy which held that the war was lost not because the imperialist adventure was ill conceived or doomed to failure and certainly not because US forces had failed in any way, but rather as a result of weakness, division and a lack of determination at home. While Reagan sought to embrace veterans as good men and good soldiers who'd been failed, as political actors veterans, because of their class position and radical critique of US society, posed a threat both to conservative/pro-war forces and to liberal/anti-war forces.[13] As victims, however, veterans could be embraced by both sides of the dominant political debate, and as Martin Barker argues, PTSD served as 'a common ground where pro- and anti-war speakers can meet, to care about the soldiers'.[14]

In contrast to the forms of self-help and political activism many veterans had engaged with during the war, the new state-backed therapeutic model, rolled out by Jimmy Carter's administration through the 'Vietnam Veterans Outreach Programme', excised politics from therapy, shifting attention to the individual psyche.[15] The decision to create a national memorial to the Vietnam veterans must be viewed in this context of a process of rehabilitation and normalisation which depoliticised the war, embracing the once maligned veterans, while at the same time marginalising their political grievances. Wary of inflaming old divisions, the VVMF set out to create a memorial which would transcend the pro- and anti-war divide. Focusing on the veterans as victims and adopting the 'supposedly apolitical discourse of "healing" and "reconciliation"', the VVMF 'formulated competition rules that barred any representation of Vietnamese people or the anti-war movement; but they also ruled out any explicit justifications of war itself'.[16]

The therapeutic discourse taken up by the VVMF reflected the interests of the Carter administration, with which it shared the desire to separate the war from the warriors, to honour the veterans and unify a divided nation.[17] This was to be a memorial to the soldiers and not the war. Intended to heal and console, it was to be 'politically neutral' symbol of national unity; 'a focal point of all Americans regardless of their views on Vietnam'.[18] On signing the 'Vietnam Memorial Bill', President Carter recognised both the divisiveness of the conflict and the mistreatment of the veteran:

> Our Nation . . . was divided by this war. For too long we tried to put that division behind us by forgetting the Vietnam war and, in the process, we ignored those

> who bravely answered their Nation's call, adding to their pain the additional burden of our Nation's own inner conflict.[19]

A controversial and divisive war in which the US failed to claim victory, Vietnam had helped to precipitate a profound hegemonic crisis, as the gap between the nation's preferred self-image and its actions became ever more evident during and after the war. For this crisis to be resolved, or at least ameliorated, the war would have to be subsumed into a broader national narrative. Any national memorial would need to tread carefully to represent a war without victory, recognising the veterans' sacrifice without drawing on traditional notions of heroism. The need to strike this fine balance shaped the manner in which the memorial would be formed and reformed over subsequent decades.

The memorial was to be located on the National Mall in Washington DC, the symbolic and political centre of the nation's capital. The highly guarded public space of the Mall is federally controlled land, preserved for the presentation – through museums, monuments and memorials – of what are deemed to be the nation's most significant historical events, political figures and ideals. Any addition to the Mall must be voted through Congress and signed into law by the president of the day and the form must be approved by a series of federal agencies including the Commission of Fine Arts, the National Capital Planning Commission and the National Park Service. As Hagopian notes, although it emerged as a result of the complex machinations of powerful men in Washington, headed up by Scruggs, the VVMF has nevertheless managed to build around itself 'the myth of the little guy triumphing over the odds'.[20]

The memorial design competition was funded by Texas-based billionaire H. Ross Perot. An important figure within and funder of the VVMF, Perot would later become heavily involved in campaigns around the prisoners of war/missing in action (POW/MIA) supposedly abandoned by the US state and twice ran for president on a right-wing populist, 'anti-Washington' ticket in the 1990s.[21] He would also prove to be a formidable opponent of the chosen design.

The basic guidelines of the competition stipulated that the names of all US veterans killed or missing in Vietnam be displayed and that 'the design must be apolitical, harmonious with the site, and conciliatory'.[22] Maya Lin, then a young architecture student, won the competition with a simple design consisting of two black granite walls carved into the earth. Forming a V-shape, the walls stand at more 10 feet where they join at the centre, almost 250 feet in length, they taper to ground level at either end. The highly polished surface is engraved with the names of those who died, displayed chronologically, by date of death, and without reference to rank or the circumstances of death (figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1. Maya Lin, Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Washington DC, US.
Photograph by the author, May 2010.

Against Lin's wishes, the VVMF added a two-part inscription at the centre of the memorial:

> In honor of the men and women of the armed forces of the United States who served in the Vietnam War. The names of those who gave their lives and of those who remain missing are inscribed in the order they were taken from us.
>
> Our nation honors the courage, sacrifice and devotion to duty and country of its Vietnam veterans. This memorial was built with private contributions from the American people.

As Kirk Savage argues, this rather awkward inscription 'justifies the soldiers not as heroic agents but as honorable victims who deserve our recognition'.[23] It thereby fulfils the intentions of campaigners and government officials alike in honouring the veterans, acknowledging their sacrifice while avoiding the controversy over the war or any mention of victory or defeat. The form and positioning of the memorial and the journey visitors take through it provide an additional symbolism of national unity and redemption.[24] The walls of the memorial point to two closely located iconic national monuments. On the side from which most visitors enter the memorial, stands the Lincoln Memorial: honouring the man who held the Union together through civil war, it symbolises national unity.[25] On entering the memorial visitors descend below ground level and come face to face with the dark chronicle of death. Visitors

Figure 2.2. Vietnam Veterans Memorial with the Washington Monument.
Photograph by the author, May 2010.

are invited to reflect on the loss of life as they see themselves reflected in the highly polished surface of the memorial. As they then ascend into the light, they are met by the vision of the Washington Monument, the city's greatest icon, marking the founding of the nation and symbolising freedom (figure 2.2). Lin explains that: 'By linking these two strong symbols for the country, I wanted to create a unity between the nation's past and present'.[26]

Nevertheless, despite Lin's attempt to symbolically reintegrate the war into the national historical narrative, the redemptive symbolism and the memorial's supposed political neutrality, the design was highly controversial. Central points of contention included its dark colour, low stature and subterranean position, its lack of a clear valorising narrative and the fact that the designer was an Asian American woman.[27] Powerful figures within the VVMF objected to the design because it failed to valorise the dead and the cause for which they fought. Perot used his connections with veterans' groups to mobilise opposition against the proposed memorial design.[28] Thomas Carhart, a veteran with good connections in the Republican Party, described the memorial as an insult

and 'a black gash of shame and sorrow' when giving testimony at a meeting of the Fine Arts Commission.[29] James Webb, a Vietnam veteran and member of the House Committee on Veterans Affairs, complained that:

> Watching then the white phallus that is the Washington Monument piercing the air like a bayonet, you feel uplifted. . . . That is the political message. And when you peer off into the woods at this black slash of earth to your left, this sad dreary mass tomb, nihilistically commemorating death, you are hit with that message also.[30]

Despite such opposition, the VVMF stood by the winning proposal. The election of Ronald Regan in 1981 put a question mark over the whole project, however, and in the end, it only got the go-ahead after it was agreed that a statue of three US soldiers beside a US flag would be added to the site. The Wall first opened to much fanfare – but with Reagan notably absent – with the National Salute to the Vietnam Veterans parade in November 1982.[31]

Although avoiding the opening of the controversial memorial, Reagan officiated over the unveiling of the statue in 1984.[32] Located at the entrance to the memorial site, the statue, designed by Fredrick Hart, is composed of three bronze figures – one white, one black and one Hispanic – dressed in military fatigues and carrying weapons and ammunition, they stand a short distance from and gaze endlessly at the Wall (figure 2.3).

Figure 2.3. Frederick Hart, The Three Soldiers (Vietnam Veterans Memorial).
Photograph by the author, May 2010.

Unlike the Wall, and because of the furore that it caused, the statue was purposely intended to appeal both to surviving veterans and to popular, conservative tastes. Working in consultation with veterans, who expressed their wish that they be represented in an accurate and realistic manner, Hart went to great ends to research and represent the clothing, ammunition and weaponry in meticulous detail.[33] And yet the figures are not heroic in any traditional sense and do not, or not in any simple way, answer the call for a memorial that valorises the war and the cause for which it was fought. The statue is in fact far more subtle than that. Slightly raised from ground level, slightly larger than life but not much, in keeping with the increasingly dominant discourse of the veterans as victims, they look bemused, the honourable and innocent victims of a war they don't understand and a nation that failed to embrace them. They are, then, more likely to elicit sympathy and compassion than evoking heroism.

Focusing on the figure of the US veteran and making no mention of the death and destruction wreaked on Vietnam, the Wall and the statue portray the veterans as the prime victims of the war. Although this message is already implicit in the Wall, the statue interacts with it to bestow an additional sense of pathos, innocence lost and honourable victimhood. The inscription at the base of the flag accompanying the statue reads:

> This flag represents the service rendered to our country by the veterans of the Vietnam war. The flag affirms the principles of freedom for which they fought and their pride in having served under difficult circumstances.

Unlike in the original inscription on the Wall, here the dead are reclaimed in the name of the fight for freedom. While here they are ascribed pride – notably absent in the first inscription – there is also recognition of the 'difficult circumstances' under which they fought. Banding all veterans together under the literal and metaphorical cloak of the national flag, this addition to the site belies the rather more complex and messy history of resistance and rebellion within the armed forces.[34] Here, in the spirit of 'reconciliation', history gives way to myth and all who died are cast as good soldiers and good Americans, proud to have served even if their efforts were not fully appreciated.

The flag and statue echo the reading of the war articulated by Reagan and others on the right. Critical of both former administrations and the American people for their mistreatment of the veterans and their lack of moral courage in failing to pursue victory, Reagan had long campaigned for the rehabilitation of the war, its cause and its veterans. There are, he insisted, worse things than war: 'The decayed and degraded state of moral and patriotic feeling which thinks nothing is worth a war is worse'.[35] For Reagan: 'Nothing is more important to the soul of America than remembering and honouring

those who gave of themselves so that we might enjoy the fruits of peace and liberty'. The opening of the memorial was a decisive turning point which would, he said, put the 'ingratitude and injustice of the past' and the 'divisiveness of the war behind us'.[36]

Although the addition of the statue and flag were intended to quell criticism, the memorial nonetheless remained a site of controversy and a focal point for battles over representation. In 1984 Diane Carlson founded the Vietnam Women's Memorial Project (VWMP) to campaign for a statue to mark the contribution of US women who served in the conflict.[37] The idea finally gained congressional acceptance in 1988. A design was selected in 1991 but was not finally approved until the artist, Glenna Goodacre, agreed to remove a representation of a Vietnamese baby. The PR firm representing the VWMP said:

> The baby represented an accurate portrayal of the war: Many of the women who served over there . . . cared for orphans. But given the location of the memorial, I think the board members had to be careful not to make any political statements.[38]

The fact that 'an accurate portrayal' could not be represented is itself of course a clear political statement and one which accords with the push towards recuperating the image of the United States at war. Indeed, it fits neatly with the more general cultural and political shift towards viewing Americans as victims of the war. As Kalí Tal argues: 'Soldiers as victim representations depend on the invisibility of the soldiers' own victims, namely Vietnamese soldiers and civilians'.[39]

The Vietnam Women's Memorial was finally unveiled in 1993. Set back and separated from the rest of the memorial by trees, it consists of three female figures: one looks up to the sky, another (presumably the one that would have been holding the baby) is crouched on the floor looking down, while the third tends an injured soldier whose languid body dominates the scene. The memorial evokes the classic Christian iconography of the *Pietà*, although here, unlike Christ, the soldier is alive and the care that is provided to him evokes a sense of both suffering and hope, which again ties in with the dominant discourse of victimhood and healing. Once again, the male veteran is represented as victim, whereas woman is represented in her traditional role as carer: a figure of comfort and salvation. While acknowledging the role women had played in the war, the memorial is both heavily gendered and dominated by a man who evokes the suffering of the US male veteran.

In 2004 a small plaque was unveiled: 'In memory of the men and women who served in the Vietnam war and later died as a result of their service. We

honor and remember their service'. This plaque is the result of a long-fought campaign by the relatives of those who died after and as a direct result of the war, from suicide or health problems related to their service, but who are excluded from the Wall.[40] The Department of Defense is responsible for deciding who is and who is not classified as 'killed in action'. It therefore determines who is and who is not included on the Wall. As Kirk Savage argues, the wording on the plaque is somewhat disingenuous because it 'suggests, falsely, that the timing of death is the criterion [for inclusion], when the type of death is really the issue'.[41] Those who 'died later' from combat injuries are counted, whereas those who 'died later' because of exposure to Agent Orange or from suicide are not. The question of who gets to be on the Wall is a political question about whom the Department of Defense is willing to admit responsibility for. The plaque represents a limited victory for campaigners and although it did not achieve the ultimate aim of having those names added to the Wall, it does provide a form of recognition. Situated by the statue at ground level, flush with the paving slabs, it is easily overlooked and suggests a hierarchy in which deaths defined as having resulted from combat command a level of respect and dignity not afforded to those whose deaths are otherwise defined.

Contested and adapted over time the Vietnam Veterans Memorial has been a site of struggle over the meaning of the war. It is then anything but 'apolitical'. Indeed, to claim that something is apolitical is itself a political act – an attempt precisely to fence off the thing in question, to move it beyond criticism. First approved by the Democratic Carter Administration but finalised and inaugurated under Reagan and arguably neither pro- nor anti-war, the memorial has served the interests of both main political parties. Both Democrat and Republican Administrations were involved in pursuing the war, and by the early 1980s, both parties shared a desire to reconcile old divisions and move on. Conceived of in the language of pain and division, rather than rage and injustice, and presented as a necessary act which transcends politics, in reality, the construction of the memorial has served this prime, shared political aim.[42] While the war had a profound impact on US society, the US remained an Imperialist superpower. What would it mean in this context to say that the war was wrong, that these lives were wasted? It wasn't about to give up on war and therefore, had, somehow, to redeem it to overcome the so-called 'Vietnam syndrome': the reluctance on the part of the US public to see the nation engage in military operations. As Hagopian argues, drawing a line under this conflict was an essential policy aim for the Reagan administration as it sought approval for its operations in Central America.[43] Although the memorial may be many things to many people, its significance cannot be divorced from these larger questions regarding the place of war in US society.

CRITICAL RESPONSES

Writing in 1986, Sonja Foss argues that despite the initial controversy, since opening the memorial has been received positively by visitors regardless of their views on the war. Focusing solely on the Wall and disregarding the statue, Foss argues that the memorial's broad appeal stems from five of its key features: its formal violation of conventional expectations; its 'welcoming stance'; the fact that it provides little information; the emphasis on those who died; and finally, the fact that it 'generates multiple referents for its visual components'.[44] She argues that the memorial transcends differences:

> Whether visitors are veterans of the war, relatives of those who died in it, supporters of it, or former protesters against it, we are encouraged, at the memorial, to put aside political, ideological, and nationalistic perspectives . . . to look at the personal consequences of war – death of individuals – and to oppose such a method of the destruction of life.[45]

Foss argues that the memorial functions as an 'effective anti-war symbol'. Indeed she goes as far as to suggest that it provides a model for anti-war movements which should avoid confrontation, accept 'that everyone is right to some degree and that all kinds of "rightness" can be accorded room and value', and focus 'less on ideological and ethical arguments against war and more on what war is in essence – death'.[46] Foss argues that this openness and plurality ultimately leads to unity. The prime response to the memorial is, she argues, a universal form of grief that enables 'differences to be transcended'.[47]

In emphasising diversity and refusing the possibility that some people might be wrong, Foss's argument represents an early postmodernist reading of the memorial which oscillates (somewhat incoherently) between relativism and an anti-war position. Rejecting both ideological and normative grounds for opposing war as confrontational and inimical to diversity and plurality, she instead appeals to the supposed universality of grief as the common ground on which 'we' can all come together. This is essentially an appeal to sentiment and one which in universalising the experience of some (and certainly not all) Americans, obliterates the multitude of different kinds of death that resulted from the war and the different forms of loss and suffering left in its wake. We all die, but not all deaths are the same; nor do we all respond in the same way to loss. Moreover, while some deaths are publicly marked and mobilised for political purposes, others – in this case those of the non-American participants in and victims of the war – are ignored or erased. Foss's notion of 'the universal' is, therefore, strictly limited along national lines.

Foss appeals to what Lauren Berlant terms the politics of 'true feelings' which relies on 'the notion that the feeling self is the true self'.[48] This politics

of true feeling 'claims hard-wired truth, a core commonsense . . . beyond ideology, beyond mediation, beyond contestation' dissolving 'contradiction and dissent into pools of basic and also higher truth'.[49] In such a politics, 'feeling organizes analysis, discussion, fantasy and policy . . . mediates personhood, experience, and history; takes over the space of ethics and truth'.[50] As Foss makes clear, within this framework principled and ethical objections to war are irrelevant, replaced instead with a supposed diversity of responses which are unified by shared feeling. War itself is depoliticised, as one of the consequences of war – death – is elevated to its 'essence'. The question of its causes and consequences, of the rights and wrongs of the war – and indeed even the notion that something might be right or wrong – are put to one side as visitors are prompted to identify with and be moved by the loss of *American* lives.

This privileging of sentiment and 'diversity' is an essential feature of the ways in which the memorial has come to function within, and to reflect, a broader hegemonic process in which we see the knitting together of both sentiment and patriotism along with some of the key tropes of postmodernism. It is also crucial to the memorial's critical and popular success and the influence it has had over memorial forms and discourses in recent decades.

Subsequent postmodern readings similarly praise the memorial's ambiguity but, in contrast to Foss, others see it as antagonistic rather than unifying. W. J. T. Mitchell, for example, argues that the power of the memorial comes from its 'cunning violation and inversion of monumental conventions'. He describes the memorial as 'anti-heroic, antimonumental, a V-shaped gash or scar, a trace of violence suffered, not (as in a conventional war memorial) of violence wielded in the service of a glorious cause'.[51] For Mitchell, the key to the memorial's success lies in the way in which it keeps what he describes as the space between healing and 'critical violence' open 'in the way an indelible scar provokes an indefinite series of narratives and counternarratives'.[52] Like Foss, Mitchell ignores the presence of the statue and its relationship to the Wall. This is decidedly odd given that one cannot visit one without seeing the other. This is significant because the presence statue and the way in which it interacts with the Wall somewhat undermines the interpretation of the memorial as radically ambiguous. As I have argued, the statue and the flag make what is already implicit in the Wall explicit: that is the portrayal of veterans as the innocent victims of a war they did not understand rather than, for example, as the perpetrators of the destruction and havoc wreaked on Vietnam and its people. The inscription and the flag accompanying the statue also tie the memorial inextricably to the symbolism of patriotism and the national narrative of freedom. It is only by simply ignoring this, together with the ways in which the memorial is regularly used as a site for political

and militaristic speeches, that Foss and Mitchell are able to read the memorial as radically ambiguous.

Like Mitchell, Carole Blair, Marsha Jeppeson and Enrico Pucci see the memorial as both ambiguous and antagonistic. For them it is a prototype for postmodern monumentality in that it is formally distinct from modernism, deviates from conventional memorial forms and partakes in what they describe as the 'dissolution of metanarrativity'.[53] Writing in 1991 (before the later additions) they argue that although the Wall has gained much critical attention, the memorial is actually constituted by the Wall *and* the statue and that its meaning is to be found in the relationship between the two which they describe as an antagonistic compromise which denies consensus. They argue that the Wall denies heroism precisely as the statue proclaims it. This is a rather simplistic reading of the statue which, as I have argued, evokes pathos and sentimentality rather than any traditional notion of heroism. For them the two structures present opposite and irreconcilable positions on the war and thereby articulate its contested nature. Crucially, therefore, it secures 'the cultural legitimacy of the two opposed points of view about the Vietnam war and commemoration of its veterans'. For them the memorial 'eschews metanarrative sanction', instead of 'telling *the* story, it tells multiple stories'.[54] The notion of 'multiplicity' here is a somewhat limited one. They speak of multiple stories while referring simply to two stereotypical responses to the war – one which sees it as heroic and one which does not – and two different groups of visitors – those who identify with the Wall and those who identify with the statue. In reality, of course, visitors respond to the memorial in a variety of ways which do not necessarily imply a mutually exclusive, let alone antagonistic, taking of sides.

The idea that the memorial is open to a plurality of interpretations is of course true but somewhat banal. In so far as the meaning of any cultural artefact is a product of the relationship between the object, the subject position of the interpreter and the context within which they encounter it, all cultural objects can be said to tell multiple stories. The point, however, is to try to understand how an object such as this memorial is put to use within a given cultural and political context and to analyse the dominant narratives that emerge as to its meaning and significance. That it could mean many different things to many different people is true but not the point. The point, rather, is that there is a hegemonic process taking place, a battle to determine the dominant cultural meaning of the war and one which has profound political consequences. While the memorial is just one part of this process it is nevertheless, as I will go on to elaborate, a significant one in so far as it has acted as a symbolic locus for this battle and embodies the compromise(s) it has entailed.

What kind of story is being constructed here and what does this tell us about the relationship between postmodern aesthetics and nationalist sentiment? To answer this question we need first to further explore the memorial's reputed therapeutic qualities. Marita Sturken follows Blair and her colleagues in viewing the memorial as being open to interpretation and productive of a variety of narratives:

> To the veterans, the memorial makes amends for their treatment since the war; to the families and friends of those who died, it officially recognizes their sorrow and validates a grief that was not previously sanctioned; to others, it is either a profound anti-war statement or an opportunity to recast the narrative of the war in terms of honour and sacrifice.[55]

However, for Sturken it is less an occasion for ongoing disagreement than part of a broader collective psychological process of working through and coming to terms with the traumatic experience of the war.[56] Sturken argues that memory is an important 'device and tool for redemption' which serves the need for 'catharsis and healing', but which nevertheless disrupts the 'master narratives' of 'American Imperialism, technology, science and masculinity'.[57] While Sturken offers a more nuanced reading of the memorial than others discussed so far, I am not convinced that the memorial can at the same time heal a nation *and* disrupt its ability to tell itself a pleasing story. The 'healing', if that is the right word, comes precisely through the process of adjusting the existing national narrative to incorporate the conflicts and contradictions that the war gave rise to. As I go on to argue in more detail, this is precisely the role the memorial has played and why the language of 'reconciliation' is so significant to how we understand the role of the memorial.

Sturken's interpretation of the memorial may be seen to bridge the gap between those who see it as ambiguous and antagonistic, and a second reading of the memorial as therapeutic, which becomes more dominant in the 2000s. Writing in this vein, Savage describes the Vietnam Veterans Memorial as Washington's

> first true victim monument – a monument that existed not to glorify the nation but to help its suffering soldiers heal. Maya Lin's design has bequeathed to us a therapeutic model of commemoration that has become the new common sense of our era.[58]

Elsewhere he writes that the memorial

> has relegitimated the public monument by creating a powerful model for how monuments help traumatized groups heal. It has established a design standard

> for the therapeutic monument . . . [which] is not a fixed text or image but rather a flexible, multifaceted space in which 'to evoke feelings and create memorable experiences'.[59]

Similarly, Joel McKim argues that 'The aesthetic discourse of the memorial shifts from the didactic register of the monument to a therapeutic one . . . increasingly psychoanalytic rather than nationalistic'.[60] While McKim is correct to point to this shift in memorial discourses, in seeking to understand the significance of this we need to go further than simply noting the nature and rise of this therapeutic model and question why it comes about and what ends it serves. In so doing, we might question the assumption that a memorial which is therapeutic does not also serve nationalistic ends.

Kim Servart Theriault likewise argues that the memorial was one of the primary catalysts for national reconciliation, describing it as 'a prototype for mourning and healing' which 'refuses to treat war as anything other than an accumulation of loss and reflection of individual and collective trauma'.[61] Lin concurs with this kind of reading:

> it is up to each individual to resolve or come to terms with this loss. For in the end death is a personal and private matter, and the area contained within this memorial is a quiet place meant for personal reflection and private reckoning.[62]

But death in war is far from 'a personal and private matter', if it were there would be no need to memorialise it on the National Mall. Although the memorial clearly responds to demands for the public recognition of the loss of life at the behest of the state, it also represents the mobilisation of those deaths for political purposes: the purpose of national reconciliation, but also of overcoming the so-called 'Vietnam syndrome' in foreign policy and making war possible again.

The memorial itself walks a fine line between treating and presenting death as 'a personal and private matter' and tying these deaths to an overarching national narrative of the fight for freedom and the sacrifices it requires. As visitors enter the memorial they descend below ground level, surrounded by the seemingly endless names of the dead they walk through the memorial in silence or hushed whispers. Carved into the highly polished surface the names alert visitors to the particularity of death. At the same time, executed in a highly standardised and regimented form and stretching across the whole length of the memorial, together the names evoke the sublime magnitude of the loss. As they look at the names so visitors see themselves reflected and in some sense become part of the memorial. They also, however, see the iconic Washington Monument and the US flag, two of the most potent symbols of American patriotism, reflected on the surface

Figure 2.4. Vietnam Veterans Memorial.
Photograph by the author, May 2010.

of the wall (figure 2.4). While the Wall itself avoids nationalist symbols, as visitors engage with it, it becomes a kind of montage in which the link between those who died, the American mythology of freedom and the visitor as 'rememberer' is established. This charged aesthetic experience invites each visitor to see themselves in the memorial and to identify with the scale, as well as the particularity of death. Crucially, however, this, for many, powerful experience is framed by, even infused with, national symbolism and meaning. In the quiet space of this memorial questioning is silenced as each individual engages in a private act of 'remembrance' which is at the same time a performance of one's patriotic duty.

In emphasising the memorial's originality and even radicality, these two dominant readings downplay the continuities between this and more traditional memorials. This is a permanent national war memorial situated within the most prominent of national public spaces. Dedicated to the US service personnel killed and lost in the war, this is a place where visitors mark the death of their fellow citizens, those who 'gave' their lives for the good of the nation and for 'freedom'. It was designed as a site of pilgrimage which would host official national ceremonies of remembrance. It also acts as a sort of shrine where people come to touch and take rubbings of the names of friends, relatives and loved ones and leave mementoes. Although

public responses to the memorial are complex and varied, according to Robin Wagner-Pacifici and Barry Schwarts, the most commonly left item is the small plastic US flag:

> Through this offering, visitors . . . asserted their patriotism, their loyalty to a nation . . . they could think of no better way to dignify their loved one's memory than to associate his name with his country's emblem.[63]

In keeping with the prime aim of reconciliation and Lin's intention to reintegrate the war into the national narrative, the memorial has become a site for the expression of nationalistic and patriotic sentiment. While this is supposedly an apolitical site at which political protests are explicitly forbidden, the memorial regularly plays host to militaristic speeches. In 1988, for example, Reagan used a speech given at the memorial to recite a favourite mantra: 'Young people must never be sent to fight and die unless we are prepared to let them win'.[64]

Writing in 1986, Charles Griswold offers an early reading of the memorial as therapeutic in which he argues that the memorial is successful in fulfilling its therapeutic ends precisely *because* it is patriotic.[65] With this monument, he writes, 'the veterans can reaffirm their pride in having served their country . . . [and] reconcile their doubts about the conduct and even the purposes of the war with their belief that their service was honorable'.[66] Meanwhile, 'nonveterans can retain some doubts but also affirm the veterans' sacrifice'. For Griswold, as well as being pluralistic and appealing to various constituencies, the memorial affirms American patriotism. It has, he argues, accomplished 'the goal of rekindling love of country and its ideals, as well as reconciliation with one's fellow citizens'.[67] In this sense, he argues, the memorial 'is not 'neutral' – far from it. It neither separates war and politics completely nor proclaims a given political interpretation of the Vietnam War'. Rather, it

> encourages us to question America's involvement in the Vietnam War *on the basis of* a firm sense of both the value of human life and the still higher value of the American principles so eloquently articulated by Washington and Lincoln, among others . . . the VVM is a remarkable philosophical monument, quite in keeping with America's admirable tradition of reflective and interrogative patriotism.[68]

The 'value of human life' referred to here, of course, applies only to humans who happen to be American. The Vietnamese participants in and victims of this war are rarely mentioned in the literature which colludes with their exclusion from the memorial. Picking up on this lacuna, Sturken describes them as 'unmentionable' within the context of the Washington Mall.[69] This of course reflects a broader national cultural and political stance on the status of those

who fall outside the embrace of the nation. It would be a mistake, however, to assume that this is somehow inevitable. The deaths and suffering of the Vietnamese *were* marked in the public sphere during the war, in the media, during protests in Washington and elsewhere and during the VVAW memorial services for the US and Vietnamese victims of the war. The Vietnamese, as both participants in and victims of the war, have been purposely *excluded* from the memorial and marginalised from dominant public discourses about and representations of the war. This is one of the consequences of the way in which the conflict has been refigured as a tragedy *for the United States* the prime victims of which are the 'innocent' and 'honourable' veterans.

Although there is an apparent gap between the two dominant readings of the memorial explored here as, on the one hand, a prototype for postmodern memorialising which promotes diversity and even antagonism and, on the other, as healing and conciliatory, one of the tasks of this analysis is to reveal the commonality between them. In both cases it is the apparent ambiguity of the memorial which is deemed to be central to its success. These readings reflect the VVMF's intention to create a memorial which could appeal to all. This political objective – though it named itself apolitical – of reconciliation, required a memorial which disavowed the imposition of a particular reading of the war which would, the VVMF realised, only prompt further conflict and division. As Hagopian argues, in promoting a discourse which focused on the separation of 'the warrior from the war' and 'the rhetoric of "healing" and reconciliation', the VVMF marginalised those on the right who continued to battle for a memorial that would redeem the war and valorise its cause.[70] The aim of 'healing and reconciliation', and the presentation of the US veteran as the prime victim of the war, provided a means by which the difficult questions of right and wrong, of responsibility and justice could be put to one side. And it is here that we can begin to discern the common assumptions that underlie these interpretations of the memorial.

In interpreting the memorial through the language of plurality, multiplicity and ambiguity the readings of the memorial offered by Foss, Mitchell and Blair, Jeppeson and Pucci reflect – and in the case of the latter proclaim – a certain kind of postmodern world view. Describing the memorial as a prototype for postmodern monumentality, Blair, Jeppeson and Pucci make it clear that viewed within this anti-foundational, anti-universal and relativist framework it is not possible to make political or moral judgements. There is no question of right or wrong understandings of the war; all narratives are legitimate as there are no grounds on which we could judge between them. The therapeutic readings of the memorial mirror this stance. As a 'victim monument', the memorial cannot question the motives behind the war or the

conduct of those who fought in it. Victims are not agents and cannot be responsible; they are beyond reproach and above questioning and must instead be cared for. In focusing on these 'victims', then, the memorial effectively silences all questions about the war, emphasising what Foss describes as the 'essence' of war – death – and the allegedly universal emotions it evokes. In other words, it is precisely the qualities that make the memorial postmodern that also make it 'therapeutic'. The fact that the memorial is open to interpretation, that there is no single narrative proposed and all responses are equal, means that each individual can feel consoled in the knowledge that their response is valid. Because each response must be seen as equally valid, and not all responses are the same, the resultant contradictions are irreconcilable and must be left hanging in the air. The question of right and wrong becomes unanswerable. Thus, the memorial both represents and participates in the construction of the war as undecidable. In so doing, it fulfils the requirement of healing and reconciliation, for we can all agree to disagree as long as no one claims to be right and no one accuses anyone else of being wrong.

The success of Lin's memorial may lie precisely in this, that it chimed so well with the shifting cultural and intellectual climate. Politically, this morally evasive relativist stance is precisely what enables the memorial to be recuperated into a nationalistic and militaristic discourse. In presenting the war as undecidable, the memorial becomes an occasion for an individualised aesthetic and emotional experience which, nevertheless, ties 'remembrance' to patriotism, unifying this diversity under a national politics of sentiment. The memorial may be 'easily appropriated for a variety of interpretations of the war' but it *has* been appropriated and put to work in the interests reintegrating the war back into the narrative of US history. It has, thereby, aided those who wanted to draw a line under the war in the interests of overcoming the 'Vietnam syndrome' which shaped US foreign policy from the end of the Vietnam War to the First Gulf War in 1991.[71]

URBAN CONTEXT

To demonstrate this point we need to shift our perspective and view the memorial in its urban context. As discussed previously, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial is positioned so that it points to both the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument. Although this is noted in much of the literature, the memorial's proximity to two closely located memorials built after and inspired by it has gained little attention.[72] The three memorials are usually viewed as separate entities, different memorials, built at different times, to different wars. And yet they stand in such proximity, in a triangular formation, that as a visitor

to Washington it is unlikely that you would see one without seeing the others or view them and the story they tell as unconnected.

Strongly backed by the Reagan administration and with the president's personal involvement, the Korean War Veterans Memorial was intended from the outset to avoid the pitfalls of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.[73] Although it was seen to wallow in death, the design criteria for this memorial specified that any design 'which has inherent in it an essence of grief is not acceptable'.[74] It also stipulated that although it was not necessary to include the names of the dead, the memorial must incorporate a US flag.[75] To avoid another battle over representation the memorial was to be inclusive, dedicated not only to those who died in combat but also to all Americans who served in Korea. Ensuring the clarity of the message was paramount; this memorial would celebrate patriotic duty, unity and victory in the good fight for freedom.

The memorial is composed of a variety of different elements, including figurative sculpture, a granite wall, graphic images, a reflecting pool and the obligatory US flag. Its most striking feature is the nineteen pale grey ghost-like figures marching towards the flag (figure 2.5). Alert and in motion, these active figures stand in contrast to the more passive and contemplative pose of the soldiers at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Alongside this formation is a 164-foot-long granite wall engraved with anonymous images of military

Figure 2.5. Louis Nelson and Frank Gaylord, Korean War Veterans Memorial, Washington DC.
Photograph by the author, May 2010.

personnel with all the divisions of the armed services, men and women and all ethnic groups represented.[76] Although around thirty-seven thousand US troops were killed in Korea the fact that the names are not listed puts death at a distance making it seem far more abstract than it is at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Rather than grieving for those killed, this memorial offers a solemn but nevertheless unambiguous celebration of the sacrifice made in the name of freedom.

The words 'Freedom is not Free' are emblazoned in stone. The main inscription reads: 'Our nation honors her sons and daughters who answered the call to defend a country they never knew and a people they never met'. This memorial portrays the United States as the guardian of the free world, ready to intervene to defend those too weak to protect themselves. Here the US army is portrayed as a diverse but united force leading an international alliance in the fight for freedom. And yet, the other United Nations (UN) forces – including the Koreans who fought besides the Americans – are excluded from the memorial which focuses solely on US veterans.[77] More than simply a memorial to the veterans of the Korean War; it celebrates both the US's role in the world and its triumph in the Cold War. President Bill Clinton made this clear in the speech he made at the memorial's dedication ceremony where, stood alongside South Korean President Kim Young Sam, he said that those who fought in this first hot war of the Cold War had 'laid the foundations for one of the greatest triumphs in the history of human freedom'.[78]

The National World War II Memorial is far larger than the other two memorials and the only one to be situated on the central axis of the Mall (figure 2.6). Fifty-six pillars that are seventeen feet tall (one for each US state and territorial possession) are arranged around a large plaza with two arches named Atlantic and Pacific. There are fountains, pools of water, quotations and bronze reliefs depicting wartime scenes. The Freedom Wall at the centre of the memorial is decorated with four thousand stars, each representing one hundred military personnel killed in action. Below this lies the inscription 'Here we mark the price of freedom'.

Here the inclusive ethos is stretched further than in the Korean memorial to encompass the whole nation, honouring

> the 16 million who served in the armed forces of the U.S., the more than 400,000 who died, and all who supported the war effort from home. Symbolic of the defining event of the 20th Century, the memorial is a monument to the spirit, sacrifice, and commitment of the American people.[79]

Light in colour and alive with gushing fountains and visitors, the designer, Friedrich St Florian, has described the memorial as 'timeless'.[80] Anything

Figure 2.6. Friedrich St. Florian, National World War II Memorial, Washington DC.
Photograph by the author, May 2010.

but ambiguous, as Savage argues, 'the World War II Memorial splashes its messages of righteous force and moral triumph from one end of the space to another' in celebration of 'the nation's military supremacy'.[81] Quotes and inscriptions which hammer home this message are dotted around the memorial. One from General George Marshall reads:

> We are determined that before the sun sets on this terrible struggle our flag will be recognized throughout the world as a symbol of freedom on the one hand and of overwhelming force on the other.

The words 'Americans came to liberate not to conquer; to restore freedom and to end tyranny' circle the base of the flagpoles which flank the memorial.

The campaign for the memorial dates back to the late 1980s and the bill authorising the construction was signed into law by President Clinton in 1993. After a nationwide competition a winning design was announced in 1996 but underwent a series of adaptations before construction began in 2001. The memorial was dedicated by George W. Bush in 2004, at the height of the war against Iraq and amid a larger World War II memorial-building boom in the US.[82] This triumphant memorial celebrates the unity of the nation, victory and US military and moral supremacy at a time when the US was, once again, engaged in major military operations. Celebrating what is seen to be an uncontroversial war and an incontrovertible victory, this is last of the three

war memorials of the twentieth century to be added to the Mall and it is here, with the war furthest away historically, that we find the most definitive and unequivocal affirmation of the nation at war. Ironically, in all its bombastic triumphalism the memorial suggests a profound sense of insecurity which is compounded by the extensive security measures which have been added to the Mall since 2001.[83]

When read in relation to these accompanying memorials, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial ceases to be a stand-alone structure. Instead, it forms part of a complex of memorials to the major US wars of the twentieth century. If we see the story told by this memorial as a chapter in a larger narrative made manifest in the urban landscape, its supposed ambiguity melts away. This is the tale of a nation's fight for freedom and the price of that fight in terms of US suffering and American lives. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial marks a dark moment in that ongoing battle, but one ultimately redeemed by the righteousness of the cause.

In his 1992 State of the Union Address, President George H. W. Bush said of those who fought in Vietnam and Korea 'back then they were heroes' but that with the end of the Cold War 'they were victors'.[84] Speaking as the President of the VVMF, Scruggs similarly saw the end of the Cold War and the triumph of the West as an ultimate victory for those who fought in Vietnam: 'Vietnam was part of the larger struggle between communism and democracy . . . just a battle in a much larger war, and the final victory of the war is now at hand'.[85] As Hagopian notes, 'Winning the cold war changed everything; now the defeat in Vietnam sublated into ultimate victory'.[86] Today together these three memorials embody this interpretation of the United States at war – righteous, honourable and victorious.

This triumph was also, of course, the triumph of neoliberal capitalism, which has, since the end of the Cold War, spread across the globe with little effective opposition. If neoliberalism has become the ruling ideology of our era, its spread has been achieved not simply through the supposedly peaceful and cooperative mechanisms of the market but also through imposition, dispossession and violent conflict. If neoliberal nationalism sees nations competing for power and advantage within of a global system, since the end of the Cold War the US has sought advantage not simply through its power as a market player and influence within international institutions, but also – as the largest military power in the world – through military means. This larger story must provide an essential point of reference for any intellectually honest reading of the memorial. The memorial deifies traditional expectations of what a war memorial should be and for this it has been viewed as both radical and progressive. As I have sought to demonstrate, however, the memorial

and in particular its relativistic stance, allows for a form of nationalism which eschews didactic certainty in favour of a therapeutic form of coming together which has been all too conducive to the aim of rehabilitating the military and the nation in the wake of this divisive and disastrous war.

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial marks something of a shift in the culture of commemoration in the US. Although local memorials to World War II proliferated across the nation in the post-war period, the trend then was for 'living memorials' – memorial bridges, hospitals, libraries and parks – which would mark the past by way of providing a practical legacy for present and future generations.[87] The memorial-building boom which began with the Vietnam Veterans Memorial marks a shift from this more modest, practical and paternalistic approach to memorialisation to a renewed emphasis on the central symbolic monument as memorial. This shift corresponds, of course, with the broader cultural, political and economic shifts which characterise the current conjuncture where the paternalism of the welfare state has given way to a rather different relationship between state and citizen and between past and present generations. In this brave new postmodern-neoliberal cultural context expressions of gratitude and intergenerational reciprocity have come to take on a more central and spectacular as well as more nationalistic character, as the creation of the World War II memorial in Washington more than half a century after the end of the war suggests. This shift away from paternalism to more symbolic forms of recognition was also evident in the approach to veterans taken by Reagan and successive US administrations who have cut veterans' health and welfare benefits.[88] Like other similar symbolic gestures of appreciation, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial is a means through which this tension – between a state's continual and increasing reliance on its military personnel and its reluctance to support those it sends into battle – is, at least partially, resolved. Although expensive to build and maintain, the building costs were in large part funded by donations and the memorial bears a symbolic weight which speaks of the nation's gratitude while costing far less than the provision of decent services and welfare.

CONCLUSION

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial acts, as it was always intended to, as a means of achieving reconciliation and as a symbol of national unity. If the memorial has had a significant role to play in 'healing' the nation, it is because it has acted as the symbolic locus for a broader hegemonic battle over the meaning of the war and the manner in which it should be 'remembered'. The controversy over the memorial's form succeeded in shifting the debate away from

concerns over the war and its legacy and towards a focus on the aesthetics and the ethics of remembrance. For Daniel Abramson, the memorial is in this sense fundamentally conservative, sublimating and integrating the war and the struggles around it 'into the American historical consciousness' and thus fulfilling the Reagan administration's wish 'to see the still-unresolved struggles of the sixties acknowledged and laid to rest'.[89] In ignoring this aspect of the memorial's cultural and political role, many of the critics analysed here participate in and help to legitimise the post hoc ideological construction of war as a tragic event *for the United States*. Parsed in the language of diversity and therapy, these readings present the memorial as a genre-transforming triumph which speaks to the requirements and sensibility of its age. On this they may be right. 'Success' in this context ought perhaps to be seen as an indictment of the moral and political moment of which the memorial speaks so well, rather than as a term of praise.

The memorial has had a major impact; revitalising and transforming the genre, it remains a key point of reference. The memorial itself and the debates, both political and academic, which it has inspired form an essential part of the context for the later case studies explored in this book. As we will see, some of the key themes and problematics that arise here are played out in distinct ways in these subsequent projects. My contention is that the later projects represent a new genus in memorial forms and that the origins of this genus is to be found, in part at least, in their famous predecessor.

NOTES

1. Quotes from Blair, Jeppeson, and Pucci, 'Memorializing in Postmodernity', 264; and Savage, *Monument Wars*, 266–67.
2. See, for example, Savage, *Monument Wars*; and Servart Theriault, 'Remembering Vietnam'. Counterexamples include Hagopian, *The Vietnam War in American Memory*; and Abramson, 'Maya Lin and the 1960s'.
3. Hagopian, *Vietnam War*, 79–81.
4. Ibid., 70.
5. Hunt, *The Turning*.
6. Ibid., 33.
7. Ibid., 3.
8. This is dealt with extensively in Hunt's history of the movement. Ibid.
9. McClancy, 'The Rehabilitation of Rambo', 503.
10. Hagopian, *Vietnam War*, 49–78.
11. McClancy, 'Rambo', 507.
12. Ibid., 504; and Barker, *A 'Toxic Genre'*, 83.
13. Hunt, *The Turning*, 127–28.
14. Barker, *A 'Toxic Genre'*, 88.

15. Hagopian, *Vietnam War*, 71.
16. Ibid., 110.
17. Ibid., 83.
18. US House of Representatives 1980, 4805, quoted in Wagner-Pacifici and Schwartz, 'The Vietnam Veterans Memorial', 392.
19. Hagopian, *Vietnam War*, 90. Quotation from the VVMF website, http://www.vvmf.org/239.cfm, accessed 27 July 2012.
20. Hagopian, *Vietnam War*, 172.
21. Perot ran as an independent candidate in 1992 and then again as leader of the Reform Party. Livengood, 'Pitching Politics for the People'.
22. Lin, 'Making the Memorial'.
23. Savage, *Monument Wars*, 279.
24. The memorial's redemptive symbolism is discussed in Zapatka, 'All Quiet on the Western Mall', 73.
25. On the relationship among the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial, see Griswold, 'The Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the Washington Mall'.
26. Lin, 'Making the Memorial'.
27. Sturken, *Tangled Memories*, 44–84.
28. Hagopian, *Vietnam War*, 118.
29. Minutes of the Commission for Fine Arts meeting 13 October 1981. Quoted in Hagopian, *Vietnam* War, 102–3.
30. Quote from Sturken, *Tangled Memories*, 53. On Webb's role within the Reagan administration and as an adviser to the Vietnam Veterans Leadership Programme, see Hagopian, *Vietnam War*, 84–85.
31. On the parade, see Hagopian, *Vietnam War*, 140–65.
32. Wagner-Pacifici and Schwartz, 'Vietnam Veterans Memorial', 396.
33. For a more detailed account, see Marling and Silberman 'The Statue Near the Wall'.
34. On opposition to the war among US veterans, see: Hunt, *The Turning*; Franklin, *The Vietnam War and Other American Fantasies*, 47–70; and Cortright, *Soldiers in Revolt*.
35. Reagan, 'We Will be as a City upon a Hill', speech given at the Conservative Political Action Conference, 25 January 1974, http://conservative.org/pressroom/reagan/reagan1974.asp, accessed 1 June 12.
36. Reagan, 'Remarks on Presenting the Presidential Citizens Medal to Raymond Weeks at a Veterans Day Ceremony'.
37. Hagopian, *Vietnam War*, 303–8; and Stanger, 'Glenna Goodacre Sculpts Vietnam Women's Memorial', 66.
38. Ibid., 66.
39. Quoted in McClancy, 'Rambo', 508.
40. See, Savage, *Monument Wars*, 279–81.
41. Schwartz and Bayma, 'Commemoration and the Politics of Recognition', 280.
42. On rage as an alternative response to mourning, see Lloyd, 'Colonial Trauma/Postcolonial Recovery?', 221.

43. Hagopian, *Vietnam War*, 248–49.
44. Foss, 'Ambiguity as Persuasion', 332.
45. Ibid., 337.
46. Ibid., 338.
47. Ibid., 336.
48. Berlant, 'The Subject of True Feeling: Pain, Privacy, and Politics', in *Cultural Pluralism, Identity Politics, and the Law*, eds., Sarat and Kearns, 49–84, 56.
49. Ibid., 58.
50. Ibid., 58.
51. Mitchell, 'The Violence of Public Art: *Do the Right Thing*', in *Picture Theory*, ed. Mitchell, 371–96, 379–80.
52. Ibid., 381.
53. Blair, Jeppeson and Pucci, 'Memorializing in Postmodernity', 264.
54. Ibid., 279.
55. Sturken, *Tangled Memories*, 75.
56. Ibid., 15.
57. Ibid., 16–17.
58. Savage, *Monument Wars*, 266–67.
59. Savage, 'Trauma, Healing and the Therapeutic Monument', 41.
60. McKim, 'Agamben at Ground Zero', 88.
61. Servart Theriault, 'Re-membering Vietnam', 422 and 429.
62. Lin quoted in Ibid., 424.
63. Wagner-Pacifici and Schwartz, 'Vietnam Veterans Memorial', 404.
64. Hagopian, *Vietnam War*, 198.
65. Griswold, 'Vietnam Veterans Memorial', 714.
66. Ibid., 712–13.
67. Ibid., 713.
68. Emphasis in original. Ibid., 713.
69. Sturken, *Tangled Memories*, 62.
70. Hagopian, *Vietnam War*, 233.
71. Sturken, *Tangled Memories*, 75.
72. Savage addresses all three of the memorials and notes the influence the first had on the later two but treats them as separate entities. Savage, *Monument Wars*, 281–82 (Korean War Veterans Memorial), 297–306 (World War II Memorial), and 251–295 (Vietnam Veterans Memorial). Hagopian examines the influence the Vietnam Veterans Memorial had on the Korean War Veterans Memorial but doesn't offer a reading of how the two memorials play off one another to project a particular reading of the Cold War. Hagopian, 'The Korean War Veterans Memorial and Problems of Representation'.
73. Hagopian, 'Korean War Veterans Memorial'; and Schwartz and Bayma, 'Commemoration and the Politics of Recognition'.
74. American Battle Monuments Commission, Memo, 18 December 1989, R. Stilwell to Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board. US National Archives, College Park, MD, quoted in Ibid., 952.
75. See Johnson, 'Granite Platoon', 69.

76. There are more than twenty-four thousand images from the national archive, Zapatka, 'All Quiet', 73. On the effort taken to ensure that all groups were represented, see Schwartz and Bayma, 'Politics of Recognition'.

77. Hagopian, 'Korean War Veterans Memorial', 240.

78. Clinton, 'Remarks at the Dedication Ceremony for the Korean War Veterans Memorial'.

79. National World War II Memorial website.

80. On St Florian's comments, see Doss, *Memorial Mania*, 201.

81. Savage, *Monument Wars*, 298.

82. On the history of the memorial, see Schwartz and Bayma, 'Politics of Recognition'; Doss, *Memorial Mania*, 187–90 and 197–216; and Savage, *Monument Wars*, 281–82. On the boom in World War II memorials, see Doss, *Memorial Mania*, 188–90.

83. Benton-Short, 'Bollards, Bunkers, and Barriers'; and Farrar, *Building the Body Politic*.

84. Hagopian, *The Vietnam War*, 264.

85. Ibid., 264.

86. Ibid., 264.

87. Doss, *Memorial Mania*, 192.

88. See, for example, Danziger and Haveman, 'The Reagan Budget'; Ifill, 'Clinton's Economic Plan'; and Klimas, 'Veterans Groups Say Military Cuts Should Prompt Obama Budget Veto'.

89. Abramson, 'Maya Lin and the 1960s', 681 and 703.

Chapter Three

Representing the Holocaust

From the 'After-Auschwitz' Aporia through the 'Holocaust Sublime' to New Forms of 'Knowing'

If the Vietnam Veterans Memorial has helped to reframe the concept of the memorial, the debate over the representation of the Holocaust has also played a pivotal role in transforming the form. The questions raised by the representation of the Holocaust have been the subject of a long-standing and broad-ranging set of debates, which began just after the Second World War and continue to this day. At the heart of these debates lay a series of epistemological and ethical questions regarding the limits of human knowledge and understanding, the limits of representation and what kinds of artistic and popular cultural representations are and are not appropriate to the subject. This debate concerns then not only what *can* but also what *ought* to be represented and in which ways. How can an event of such scale and horror be represented? Or, what are the limits of representation as such? And what forms of representation are appropriate and permissible? Or, what are the ethical limits of representation? From these two basic sets of questions, and the interaction between them, there follow a series of others which have been variously iterated in response to the plethora of representations of, or which touch on, the Holocaust.[1] The vexed nature of this debate owes much to the nature of the events themselves; the scale and horror of human degradation and destruction the term 'the Holocaust' designates. At the same time, the nature of this debate has both profoundly influenced and in turn been shaped by a broader set of debates regarding the limits of representation and historical knowledge as such.

The naming of the events in question points to the problem of representation. The term *genocide* was coined in 1944 in response to the crimes of the Nazi regime and their collaborators. It names the intent to systematically eliminate a group of people based on their supposed racial, ethnic, religious, cultural or national characteristics. Although such attempts had been made

before, the specific manner and scale of the Nazis' bureaucratic, industrialised programme of genocide was unprecedented. News of these crimes, along with harrowing photographic evidence, spread across the globe and were met with shock. Various terms have emerged as a form of shorthand for the Nazi genocide of the Jews. The term *Judenmord* (murder of the Jews) was commonly used in post-war Germany but not elsewhere.[2] Internationally, Auschwitz is often used as a metonym and yet it places emphasis on a particular site – the camp – and thus obscures the dispersed nature of the crimes in question. S*hoah*, meaning destruction, became the standard secular Hebrew word for the murder of the European Jews and is commonly used in Israel and France. The word *holocaust* is derived from the Hebrew word for a burnt sacrificial offering and is therefore deemed by some to be deeply inappropriate. The term was, however, commonly used in a broadly secular way prior to the Second World War to refer to total destruction, especially by fire.[3] Yad Vashem, Israel's national Holocaust memorial and museum, has been using the term since 1957.[4] The term began to be used to refer to the Nazi genocide in the US in the early 1960s and was popularised through the writings of Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel and the TV mini-series *Holocaust* in the 1970s.[5] The term *Holocaust* (capitalised) now commonly serves as a shorthand way of naming the multiple, geographically dispersed and complex set of events that constitute the totality of the Nazi genocide. While often used to refer specifically to the genocide of the Jews, other uses include Sinti and Roma and other persecuted groups such as homosexuals, people with disabilities and some religious minorities. It has now become the dominant term of reference in English-language academic discourse and popular culture and will be used here for this reason.

During and in the years immediately following the Second World War, the crimes perpetrated by the Nazi regime and their collaborators where extensively represented in various mediums, for a range of audiences and purposes. Inmates drew and wrote of their experiences in the ghettos and the camps, often going to extreme lengths to hide their attempts to communicate what was happening.[6] After the camps were liberated, memorials were quickly constructed on-site, former inmates wrote and published accounts of what they had experienced, paintings were committed to canvas and exhibited and photographs and films were made and circulated around the world.[7] And yet, since then, the idea that it is somehow, and perhaps uniquely, unrepresentable has grown up around the Holocaust.

This chapter explores both the myth of unrepresentability and the real dilemmas of representation to which it points. I argue that at the heart of this debate lay a contradiction between the *supposed* impossibility of representing the Holocaust and the felt need to represent it nevertheless. The unfolding of

this dialectic has been crucial in shaping the intellectual and aesthetic terrain on which the memorial projects explored in subsequent chapters stand.

It is not possible to do justice to the complexity of this broad and long-standing debate in a short chapter. Instead, the aim here is to introduce some of the key issues and to trace a particular trajectory within the wider field of debate. The chapter begins by introducing some of the central terms, protagonists and problematics of the debate to explore 'the "after-Auschwitz" aporia'; the notion that the Holocaust is in some sense unrepresentable and unthinkable but nevertheless demands to be represented.[8] The chapter problematises the notion that the Holocaust is unrepresentable while arguing that it has nevertheless framed the central concerns and trajectory of the debate. Part two explores the relationship between the Holocaust and postmodern theory and, in particular, the emergence of the Holocaust sublime and its implications. The final part of the chapter explores the way in which the dilemmas of representation have been met by the related discourses of memory and trauma and an attempt to develop a distinct notion of historical knowledge and understanding which shifts the emphasis from the cognitive towards the affective. I argue that in the dialectic between the unthinkable and the unrepresentable, on the one hand, and the desire to represent and make the Holocaust in some sense knowable, on the other, we find a push towards a form of knowing which privileges affective and emotional response over cognitive apprehension. The Holocaust is rendered as that which cannot be thought and must therefore be felt. As I go on to argue in subsequent chapters, the privileging of such responses, has come increasingly to characterise contemporary memorial architecture.

AFTER AUSCHWITZ

During and in the immediate years that followed the Second World War, artists, filmmakers and writers, including victims and survivors, used the forms of language (written and visual) that were to hand to try to convey the horrors they either witnessed or learnt of.[9] Although the Holocaust is now strongly identified with a shift towards abstraction in the visual arts, in the immediate post-war period realism dominated artistic responses to the genocide.[10] At the same time, however, the notion that the Holocaust profoundly challenged pre-existing forms of language, both linguistic and visual, began to emerge.

In *If this a Man*, Holocaust survivor Primo Levi wrote of his experience of arriving at Auschwitz and the profound inadequacy of language:

> For the first time we became aware that our language lacks words for this offence, the demolition of a man. In a moment . . . the reality was revealed to us:

> we had reached the bottom. It is not possible to sink lower than this; no human condition is more miserable than this, nor could it conceivably be so.[11]

Language fails. And yet Levi wrote prolifically on his experience, determined that the words he used would make a difference. Angered by what he saw as the trivialisation of the genocide in the 1978 TV series *Holocaust*, survivor, writer and campaigner Elie Wiesel wrote: 'Auschwitz cannot be explained, nor can it be visualized. The Holocaust transcends history . . . [it] is the ultimate event, the ultimate mystery' which is 'never to be comprehended or transmitted'.[12] Insisting that the Holocaust is incomprehensible and beyond representation, Wiesel nevertheless, like Levi, wrote extensively on his experience.

These two authors point to a dilemma which goes to the heart of the debate over Holocaust representation: the inadequacy of representation and the need nevertheless to represent. The claim that the Holocaust is unrepresentable emerges as a shorthand way of pointing to, and often not grappling with, the problems with representation as such which are not unique to, but come to the fore in discussion of, the Holocaust. The idea that the Holocaust is unrepresentable has become normalised and institutionalised but what does it actually mean?[13] Is it an epistemological claim about the limits of human knowledge? Is it that we cannot represent because we cannot know? Is this an ethical claim about what we ought or ought not to do in the face of extreme historical events or forms of human experience? Is it both? Is this a claim about the nature of the event itself? Or does it actually reflect the inadequate nature of representation as such?

It is important to remember that a representation of something is not the thing itself:

> If we assume in any 'representation' a construct that substitutes the representation for an original, then since no representation can ever *be* that original, representation will always be inadequate, however close they may come to the original.[14]

All representation is limited and inadequate and no representation can ever give us a full, complete or exhaustive account of the thing being represented. A photograph of someone we love may represent them in various ways, but it can never truly capture them in their totality for us and nor would we expect it too. As W. J. T. Mitchell writes:

> Representation is that by which we make our will known and, simultaneously, that which alienates our will from ourselves in both the aesthetic and political spheres. . . . Every representation exacts some cost, in the form of lost imme-

> diacy, presence, or truth, in the form of a gap between intention and realization, original and copy.[15]

Representations are then in some sense always imperfect, always lacking, always not the thing itself, for a full and adequate representation would be a recreation and therefore not a representation at all.

What is usually meant when the concept of the unrepresentable is invoked is that the Holocaust cannot be *adequately* represented and, in particular, that *the experience* of the victims cannot be adequately represented. Both things are true and yet neither is specific to the Holocaust and neither can be said to render it unrepresentable. In other words, the notion that the Holocaust, or anything else for that matter, is unrepresentable is based on a misunderstanding of what representation is or it is a kind of (often quite understandable) knee-jerk reaction which recoils from the notion of representation in the face of its necessary inadequacy.

Writing in the context of the resurgence in the language of the 'unspeakable', 'unimaginable' and 'unrepresentable' after 9/11, Mitchell argues that, while asserted as though they were absolute, such claims are in fact temporary and contingent:

> the categories of the unspeakable and the unimaginable are anything but fixed and determinate limits on the domain of words and images. . . . They are, rather, rhetorical tropes that simultaneously invoke and overcome the limitations of language and depiction, discourse and display. The invocation of the unspeakable is invariably expressed in and followed by an outpouring of words.[16]

He goes on to argue that the unspeakable and the unimaginable are always temporary, always *up until now*: 'The law against the representation of something in words or images must, in effect break itself, because it must name, describe, define – that is represent – the very thing that it prohibits'.[17] Although it may register something of the shocking nature of the events to which it is applied, the claim to unrepresentability does not refer to an absolute limit. As Berel Lang argues, virtually all claims regarding unrepresentability 'come embedded in yards of writing that attempt to overcome the inadequacy of language'.[18] Beyond noting this performative contradiction we need to begin to think of this claim as a political claim and, like Mitchell, ask what kinds of rhetorical and ideological work is being performed by the claim that something is unrepresentable. The ways in which the unrepresentable and the sublime manifest in memorials, how they represent history and how all of this relates to the nature of the contemporary conjuncture is, of course, central to the thesis developed in this book.

In reality, few of the key participants in this debate actually argue that the Holocaust is unrepresentable as such, although the likes of Wiesel, Theodor Adorno, Jean-François Lyotard (who's philosophical objections to representation will be dealt with in detail in the next section) and George Steiner are strongly associated with the notion. Within the context of a larger philosophical meditation on the limits of language, Steiner argues that '[t]he world of Auschwitz lies outside speech as it lies outside reason'.[19] For Steiner language is not only incapable of expressing such horror, but it is also both implicated in and exhausted by it.[20] The Holocaust, he argues, constitutes a barbarism so profound that the only appropriate response is a silence which speaks of an inability on the part of language, an impossibility of representation.

Adorno is often taken to hold a similarly anti-representational position. In 1951 he famously wrote: 'To write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric'.[21] Commonly taken out of context and misunderstood, this has often been taken as a dictum against art after Auschwitz and used to justify the emergence of what Yvonne Kyriakides refers to as 'an ideology of silence'.[22] A close reading of Adorno, however, reveals that, far from calling for silence or a taboo on representation, his writings on the subject point to what Elaine Martin has termed *the 'after-Auschwitz' aporia*; the imperative to represent and the impossibility of representation.[23]

Reflecting not only on the Holocaust but also on the wider question of the dialectic of culture and barbarism in modern capitalist societies, in 1962 Adorno affirmed his previous statement, opening up the question of 'whether any art now has the right to exist'. He goes on, however, to argue that suffering 'demands the continued existence of art while it prohibits it; it is now virtually in art alone that suffering can find its own voice, consolation, without immediately being betrayed by it'.[24] At the same time, warning against the dangers of aestheticisation, he contends that the artistic representation of suffering contains within it, 'however remotely, the power to elicit enjoyment out if it'. 'The aesthetic principle of stylization' he continues, makes 'an unthinkable fate appear to have had some meaning; it is transfigured, something of its horror is removed. This alone does injustice to the victims' and yet, he goes on, 'no art which tried to evade them could confront the claims of justice'.[25] Rather than proscribing the representation of the Holocaust, Adorno is engaged in the (negatively) dialectical exploration of the complexities involved in approaching the questions raised by it and likewise by attempts to avoid it. This dialectic between the impossibility of finding an adequate and just form of representation – which neither aestheticises nor instrumentalises suffering – and the requirement to represent nevertheless, animates Adorno's engagement with the subject. In the end he recommends works that approach the subject indirectly (as in the work of

Kafka and Beckett) as the most adequate response. It is then for Adorno not so much silence but a kind of indirect or negative form of representation which may be the most appropriate response.

In contrast to Adorno's call for negative or indirect forms of representation, others have argued that the historical record and the testimony of witnesses must be given primacy. The French filmmaker and director of the critically acclaimed film *Shoah*, Claude Lanzmann, has been a powerful and influential advocate of the importance of witness testimony and engagement with the sites and traces of the Nazis' project of persecution and extermination. Demanding and disturbing, full of slow lingering shots and painfully long silences, the film lasts more than nine hours. Revisiting the sites of the crimes, Lanzmann engages with bystanders, collaborators, perpetrators and victims in an attempt to 'resuscitate the past and make it present, invest it with a timeless immediacy'.[26] Central to Lanzmann's attempt to bring the past to life is his insistence that his interlocutors not only recount but also in some sense re-enact what they remember. As Dominick LaCapra argues, there is a distinct danger here that victim-survivors are being forced to suffer, even to become retraumatised, so that the filmmaker and the audience might, in Lanzmann's words, experience 'a sort of suffering'.[27] For Lanzmann, the Nazi genocide is both unique and incomparable, a metaphysical crime but one which is neither outside of history nor an aberration but rather 'the expression of deep-seated tendencies in Western civilization'.[28] And yet, he insists that we cannot and should not ask 'why?' Making reference to a passage in Levi's aforementioned memoir where a prison guard informs him '*Hier ist kein warum*' ('Here there is no why'), he argues that when it comes to the Holocaust to ask 'why?' is an 'obscenity' and that the refusal of understanding is 'the only possible attitude, at once operative and ethical'.[29] For Lanzmann then it is essential that we engage with the materiality of the Holocaust, identify with the victims and even come to feel 'a sort of suffering'. At the same time, he insists, understanding must be refused: 'No why, but also no answer to why the refusal of why'.[30]

In contrast, Lang argues that knowledge and understanding are (or should be) the goal of all representations of the Holocaust.[31] Lang was writing in 2000 in the context of a boom in popular cultural interest in the Holocaust. If the airing of the aforementioned *Holocaust* TV series in 1978 marked the beginning of a rise in popular cultural interest in the Holocaust, Michael Rothberg argues that it reached its peak in the US in 1993. Dubbed 'the year of the Holocaust' by ABC late-night news show *Nightline*, it saw the release of *Schindler's List* and the opening of the United States National Holocaust Memorial Museum (addressed in chapter 5) amid heated national and international political debates

over Bosnia and the question of intervention, debates in which arguments over the legacy of the Holocaust played a central role.[32] At the same time, and given the US's global dominance in the production and dissemination of popular cultural forms, the 'Americanisation' of the Holocaust also implied its increasingly 'global' reach as a cultural and political point of reference.[33]

Reflecting on this boom in popular cultural interest in the Holocaust, Lang argues that there is more at stake here than simply reaching as many people as possible:

> Does the context (and content) that produces awareness make no difference to the subject? Any such claim would justify a range of educational means extending to physical coercion or bribery a well as to any idiom or form of representation in more conventional 'texts'.[34]

For Lang – given we know little about the impact or effects of representation of any sort – the aim of reaching as many people as possible also raises questions of the consequences of art. Although this does not imply a prohibition on all Holocaust images, for Lang it is 'an argument against justifying all and any of them simply because of the subject on which they are based'.[35] The task then is one of judgement, of how and on what grounds we discriminate between representations of the Holocaust. On this question, Lang defends a position which privileges historical accuracy over aesthetic concerns. There are, he argues, '*extra*narrative, *extra*ideological, *extra*contextual grounds that diverse, even conflicting narratives, ideologies, and contexts must in common confront'.[36] For Lang, all representations of the Holocaust depend on the basic historical record. Conceding that the idea that facts speak for themselves must be open to question, he nevertheless argues that 'if such an antirepresentational statement ever applies, it does so in respect of the Holocaust, and it does so there in respect to both the historical and the ethical limits set by that event for anyone who approaches it'.[37] In the end, for Lang, the real limit to representation is that of silence. This is not the silence Steiner speaks of – an inability on the part of language, an impossibility of representation. For Lang, silence expresses not an impossibility but rather an ethical stance, a response to the question of whether in any representation 'in comparison with the voice heard . . . silence itself would have been more accurate or truthful or morally responsive'.[38]

The terrain has thus shifted somewhat since the debate began and today the question is less whether the Holocaust can be represented – because it is being represented, prolifically – but in which ways it should be represented and to what ends. I will return to these questions in subsequent chapters. For the moment we need to turn our attention to the question of the place of the

Holocaust and its representation in postmodern theory because this has had a profound influence on contemporary approaches to memorialisation.

POSTMODERNISM AND THE 'HOLOCAUST SUBLIME'

The idea that the Holocaust marks a new high point in human barbarism which emerged from 'the core of European civilization' – expressed in different ways by Adorno, Steiner, Lanzmann and Lang – becomes a common thread in debates over the meaning and significance of the Holocaust and how it ought to be represented.[39] For Saul Friedlander, these events force us to rethink the world and the very language we use to describe it: '*the reality and significance of modern catastrophes . . . generate the search for a new voice*'.[40] At the same time, the significance of the debate over Holocaust representation goes far beyond the question of how this particular historical event – or rather the complex set of events commonly bracketed under the term *the Holocaust* – can and should be represented and understood to pose the question of the limits of representation as such. Here the debate over the Holocaust intersects with and becomes a central point of reference for postmodern theory. Cited as evidence of the failure and bankruptcy of the project of modernity and a rupture opening a new era, the Holocaust, it is argued, demands the development of new modes of thought and distinct aesthetic approaches.[41]

As discussed in chapter 1, Lyotard rejects universal principles as the basis for human knowledge and political struggle. Instead, he argues that in the wake of history, we need to develop new ways of thinking about and understanding the world. In *The Differend* he compares the Holocaust to 'an earthquake that destroys not only lives, buildings, and objects but also the instruments used to measure earthquakes directly and indirectly'.[42] As such, he argues that it poses a particular problem – indeed an impossibility – for historians and the framework of knowledge within which they operate. Eluding reason and destabilising dominant modes of understanding, here the Holocaust is understood as a sublime event which

> inspires in the minds of the survivors the idea of a very great seismic force. The scholar claims to know nothing about it, but the common person has a complex feeling, the one aroused by the negative presentation of the indeterminate.[43]

Rather than leading to nonsense, for Lyotard the impossibility of understanding and representing what happened through traditional means demands the development of new forms of knowledge and understanding. Historians

> must break with the monopoly over history granted to the cognitive regimen of phrases, and he or she must venture forth by lending his or her ear to what is not

> presentable under the rules of knowledge . . . Auschwitz . . . marks the confines wherein historical knowledge sees its competence impugned.[44]

Thus for Lyotard the Holocaust marks a profound intellectual crisis and a crisis of representation but one which is ripe for the development of new modes of articulation and understanding. As I will go on to argue in the final section of this chapter, the rise of memory and of trauma as fields of study as well as academic and popular discourses since the 1980s represent two related responses to this perceived challenge.

What is required, Lyotard argues, is a form of art which seeks not to represent the Holocaust but to bear witness to the unrepresentable. Defending the avant-garde against calls for a return to realism, on the one hand, and popular and therapeutic art, on the other, Lyotard advocates a postmodern art of the sublime.[45] For Lyotard, the modernist aesthetic of the sublime is nostalgic. Here the unrepresentable is 'put forward only as the missing contents' while the consistency of form provides solace and pleasure. As such, for him, it fails to constitute the real sublime. In contrast, the postmodern sublime is concerned with putting forward 'the unrepresentable in presentation itself'. Rejecting the solace of good forms and the search for consensus, it looks 'for new presentations' which 'impart a stronger sense of the unrepresentable'.[46]

Significantly, and rather oddly, for Lyotard postmodernism in art has little to do with periodisation. Rejecting much of what goes under the name of postmodern art and culture as commercial, populist and kitsch, he insists that the postmodern is part of the modern; it is that which in modern painting prompts in us the experience of the sublime.[47] This experience is one of rupture rather than solace. Intimately connected to time, the sublime takes the form of an event: 'not elsewhere, not up there or over there or once upon a time, but here, now, "it happens" – and it is this painting'.[48] Distinct from mere novelty, the sublime is productive of an 'intensification of being' which disrupts the normal time of commodity production, circulation and consumption in late capitalist societies. Situating his conception of the sublime in relation to that articulated by Immanuel Kant, Lyotard contends that the sublime is that which exceeds representation. Ungraspable by the imagination it is that of which 'no presentation is possible'.[49] He argues that for Kant, the real sublime sentiment 'is an intrinsic combination of pleasure and pain: the pleasure that reason should exceed all presentation, the pain that imagination or sensibility should not be equal to the concept'.[50]

In the sublime, according to Kant, we come face to face with an object of overwhelming scale or magnitude (the mathematically sublime) or such potential destructive power (the dynamically sublime) that it threatens to overwhelm us. Distinct from terror – which implies a genuine fear of harm or death – the sublime is that sense of exhilaration we feel when we encounter

such power and magnitude from a position of safety.[51] Pushing the capacity of our imagination and understanding to its limits, the mind is both attracted and at the same time repelled; it is less a feeling of pleasure than of admiration and respect, or what he refers to as 'a negative pleasure'.[52] Superseding any determinate concept, the sublime does 'violence . . . to the imagination', which cannot represent it, evoking the infinite and the absolute.[53] The infinite and the absolute belong not to the world of objects but to the domain of human reason. The sublime, then, resides not in the object presented to the senses, but in the mind of the subject. For Kant, the real significance of the sublime lies in its reaffirmation of the superiority of human reason: '*The sublime is that, the mere capacity of thinking which evidences a faculty of mind transcending every standard of the senses*'.[54] And so, while nature may be more mighty than us, our ability to judge ourselves as independent of it, to remove ourselves safely from it, illustrates to us our superiority over it. For Kant the significance of this is that it

> keeps the humanity in our person from being degraded . . . if in judging nature aesthetically we call it sublime, we do so not because nature arouses fear, but because it calls forth our strength. . . . Hence nature here is called sublime . . . merely because it elevates our imagination, [making] it exhibit those cases where the mind can come to feel its own sublimity.[55]

For Lyotard, in contrast, the sublime functions as something more like an ethical space, a space of silence where we contemplate our own limitations which is also – in the face of capitalist modernity's attempt to render everything visible through photography – something like a space of resistance.[56]

Rejecting the totalising power of reason in Kant's formulation, Lyotard's conception of the sublime needs to be situated in relation to his critique of the Enlightenment and modernity and their desire to grasp the world and transform it. In response to the horrors of modernity Lyotard celebrates the sublime and against 'the desire for a return of terror, for the realization of the fantasy to seize reality' he proposes that we 'wage war on totality; let us be witnesses to the unrepresentable; let us activate the differences and save the honor of the name'.[57]

In this sense, Lyotard's conception of the sublime may have more in common with Edmund Burke's classical formulation than with Kant's. For Burke, the power of the sublime relies on confounding human reason and understanding. Ignorance, he argues, is a crucial component of the experience: 'Knowledge and acquaintance make the most striking causes affect but little'.[58] Although for Kant the concepts of infinity and eternity belong to the totalising power of reason and reaffirm its superiority over the senses and the imagination (which cannot perceive or represent them), for Burke they are the most 'affecting' ideas we

have precisely because we know so little about them.[59] The sublime puts us in touch with the obscure and the mysterious and leaves us in no doubt that it cannot be mastered by human reason. Terror, which 'robs the mind of all powers of acting and reasoning', is, for Burke, the ruling principle of the sublime.[60] And it is intimately linked to power and the fear of the pain it might inflict on us.[61] What he refers to as 'delightful horror' is 'the most genuine effect and truest test of the sublime' which also gives rise to the lesser effects of astonishment, awe and respect.[62] Crucially, for the founder of modern conservatism, the sublime also has an essential social and political role. Encouraging awe and respect for power and tradition, against the revolutionary power of the mob, it underpins and justifies hierarchical power and ennobles our willing subordination to it.[63] The intention here is not to argue that Lyotard is a Burkean conservative, nor to defend Kant's notion of the sublime. Rather, it is to begin to think through some of the implications of Lyotard's anti-rational reformulation of the sublime in light of the horrors of the twentieth century and the notion that the Holocaust is both incomprehensible and unrepresentable.

Crucially, what Lyotard shares with Burke is a notion of the sublime as inimical to reason. While Kant attempts not only to rescue reason from the threat of being overwhelmed, but, indeed, insists that this experience reaffirms its supersensible vocation, Lyotard finds an intensity, even a sense of 'joy', in the enigmatic power of the sublime to disrupt and confound. While Kant's elevation of reason and of 'man' is no doubt problematic, Lyotard's celebration of the limits of representation and of human understanding, of the ungraspable nature of the totality, opens up a series of questions regarding the political meaning and significance of the sublime and the authority it has over our conceptions of the past, present and future. If a historical event like the Holocaust eludes representation and understanding, as Lyotard suggests, how then are we to situate ourselves in relation to the past? What do we even mean by 'understanding' in this context? What is the relationship between the sublime and authority? These are some of the questions which structure the inquiry pursued here and in subsequent chapters.

What I have described as the myth of unrepresentability – the idea that the Holocaust is beyond reason, language and representation – is a dominant thread in debates over the Holocaust. Others are, however, deeply suspicious of what they see as the mystificatory and politically dubious implications of this view. Rothberg makes the distinction between the anti-realist position of those like Wiesel and Lyotard – who see the Holocaust as inexplicable, incomprehensible and impossible to represent – and realists, including Hannah Arendt, Christopher Browning and Zygmunt Bauman – for whom the

Holocaust is not a radical aberration or an event outside of history but rather an extreme manifestation of existing social processes which is explicable in the terms of existing language and modes of thought.[64]

Gillian Rose accuses anti-realists of 'Holocaust piety'. That is, a form of mystification and a means of evading that which we ought to confront:

> To argue for silence, prayer, the banishment equally of poetry and knowledge, in short, the witness of 'ineffability', that is, non-representability, is *to mystify something we dare not understand*, because we fear that it may be all too understandable, all too continuous with what we are – human all too human.[65]

'What is it', she asks, 'that we do not *want* to understand? What is it that Holocaust piety . . . protects us from understanding'?[66] What we need, Rose argues, are forms of representation that refuse sentimentality, that force us to reflect on ourselves, that leave us 'unsafe', forced 'to discover and confront our own fascism'.[67] Like Lang, Rose was writing at a time when the Holocaust was coming increasingly into the spotlight of popular culture and was as critical of sentimental portrayals of the Holocaust in films like *Schindler's List* as she was of Holocaust piety.[68]

John Sanbonmantsu posits a direct link between the conception of the Holocaust as unique and incomprehensible and its aestheticisation:

> Once we begin to interpret the Holocaust as a metaphysical event . . . whose ultimate significance therefore lies permanently beyond history and normal understanding, then our every approach to the phenomenon seems cut off, save one: the aesthetic dimension.[69]

Sanbonmatsu argues that the anti-realist discourse of singularity invokes not just any kind of aesthetic experience but, as in Kant's analytic of the sublime, one which reaffirms in us a sense of superiority. For Sanbonmatsu, the discourse of singularity elevates the Holocaust to a metaphysical status, an evil which is beyond human comprehension and yet open to a form of aesthetic engagement which offers us an opportunity to confront and steady ourselves in the face of such horror. In this case it is freedom from history, rather than nature, which provides this sense of overcoming. The Holocaust sublime is thus in danger of invoking 'an unwonted feeling of moral efficacy and even moral superiority over the past'.[70] At the same time, pitting the extraordinary against our everyday, and making the latter appear as nothing compared to the former, it has the potential to relieve us of our responsibility for the atrocities of the present and obscures, rather than bringing into focus, the social structures and ways of thinking that make genocide possible.[71]

The sublime art of abstraction may avoid cheapening suffering, or even rendering it kitsch and is one answer to the dilemma with which we began – the 'after Auschwitz' aporia. But, as Sanbonmatsu suggests, it is replete with dangers. Encouraging the contemporary subject to confront the overwhelming horrors of the past through an aesthetic experience which is potentially reaffirmative, the Holocaust sublime not only aestheticises suffering but also opens the way for its instrumentalisation. The question of the uses to which the sublime is put in contemporary memorials and memorial-museums will be explored in detail in subsequent chapters. Before that, however, it is necessary here to explore the emergence and significance of memory and trauma as both fields of study and wider theoretical and metaphorical concepts. This, not least, because along with the sublime, memory and trauma are the central tropes around which contemporary memorials are formed and through which they are commonly understood.

MEMORY, TRAUMA AND NEW FORMS OF 'KNOWING'

The discourse of memory – and in particular, Memory Studies' concern with traumatic experiences – has offered one response to the challenges that the Holocaust and postmodernism have posed to the discipline of history. Susannah Radstone argues that the impact of the Holocaust 'upon individual and cultural memory arguably initiated perhaps the most continuingly influential strand of research within memory studies'.[72] Elsewhere, she writes of how under the influence of poststructuralist and postmodern theory 'the major focus' for memory studies has been 'memory's capacity to destabilise the authority of the "grand narratives" with which History has become associated'. Although History with a capital H 'has become negatively associated with the "public", and with "objectivity", memory has become positively associated with the embedded, with the local, the personal and the subjective'.[73]

Elusive and difficult to define, as a field of study and as a rhetorically persuasive cultural metaphor, 'memory' is centrally concerned with the ways in which we are shaped by the past 'conscious and unconscious, public and private, material and communicative, consensual and challenged'.[74] It is often concerned less with the veracity of an account than the affective impact of an experience upon the subject. As Karyn Ball argues, focusing on memories enables us to 'validate the events that occasioned suffering' and their 'affective aftermath' 'without recourse to idealist notions of coherent identity and "authentic" experience'.[75] If postmodern anti-essentialism has undermined the 'empirical foundations of bearing witness to historical suffering', memory, itself part of a broader postmodern assault on traditional historiography, at the

same time resists, or seeks to compensate for, the worst excesses of the logical conclusions of its epistemological and moral relativism.[76] In response to this dilemma we see the turn to memory and trauma (grounded in individual experience) and away from history and historical forms of knowledge, as the site of 'truth'. This, not least, as we shall see in the next chapter, in memorials and memorial-museums where the concern today is less with history than with generating forms of identification and understanding which focus on affective rather than cognitive forms of 'knowing'.[77] Silke Arnold-de Simine describes a 'growing remembrance culture' which privileges 'emotional investment rather than historical knowledge'.[78] According to this view, historical knowledge is not enough to prompt us to act responsibly in the present. What we need is to become emotionally invested in ensuring that the crimes of the past cannot be repeated.

In analysing this crucial shift, it is important that we engage with the work of one of its key proponents.[79] Alison Landsberg coined the term *prosthetic memory* to refer to a form of memory which emerges 'at the interface between a person and a historical narrative about the past, at an experiential site such as a movie theatre or museum'. Landsberg describes a process in which 'the person does not simply apprehend a historical narrative but takes on a more personal, deeply felt memory of a past event through which he or she did not live'.[80] Focusing on the kinds of historical experiences which destroy the links between families and communities – immigration, slavery and the Holocaust – Landsberg argues that mass culture plays a vital role in transmitting these memories which cease to belong to any particular group:

> Through technologies of mass culture, it becomes possible for these memories to be acquired by anyone. . . . Prosthetic memories are transportable and therefore challenge more traditional forms of memory that are premised on claims of authenticity, 'heritage', and ownership.[81]

Interested in the shift towards 'the experiential as a mode of knowledge', Landsberg argues that popular cultural forms are productive of 'prosthetic memories' which turn history into memory.[82] Landsberg argues that the cognitive mode of understanding is 'woefully inadequate' and that the 'experiential mode complements the cognitive with affect'. As we will see in chapter 5, Landsberg defends the United States National Holocaust Memorial Museum in precisely these terms, arguing that the experiential museum 'reflects a change in what counts as knowledge', providing visitors with 'an experience that positions their bodies to be better able to understand an otherwise unthinkable event'.[83] Reflecting Lyotard's call for the development of new forms of understanding, Landsberg proposes a form of historical knowledge which is concerned less with what we might think

than with what we can be made to feel. Underpinned by an epistemological and ethical scepticism, Landsberg's position suggests that people cannot be trusted to act ethically and responsibly in light of what they know. Instead, they need to be encouraged to undergo experiences and develop emotional responses which will encourage them to act in a responsible manner. The assumption here is that 'experience' generates emotional identification and that this form of embodied knowing is more efficacious (in making us better people) than cognitive understanding and critical reflection, which are seen as necessary but inadequate.

There are a number of issues with this argument. Founded on a liberal philosophical framework which assumes that social change does or does not occur through individuals, rather than social structures and institutions, Landsberg's analysis places the burden on the transformation of individual subjectivities. This methodological individualism depoliticises the urgent question of how historical and political education might contribute to the kinds of social transformations that are required to ensure that persecution and genocide are consigned to history. Alongside this, I want to point out two other central issues with Landsberg's position. The first is that there is a danger here that we mistake watching a film or visiting a museum with having in some sense 'experienced' the pain and suffering of others. Returning to Lang's point regarding the question of efficacy and of means, the second concerns the potentially manipulative, coercive and authoritative nature of the form of 'knowledge' she advocates. Manipulative, coercive and authoritative, that is, in so far as it may be understood as bypassing our cognitive faculties of understanding and judgement.

Alongside memory, the rise of the concept of trauma and the influence that Trauma Studies has had on the way in which history is understood and represented needs to be addressed. The concept of trauma first emerged when Freud and his peers were working on hysteria (predominantly in women and linked to sexual abuse or repression but also in men who had experienced accidents, often in the workplace) and later war neurosis (found in men involved in combat during the First World War).[84] As indicated in the previous chapter, however, it is not until the late 1970s and 1980s, and in light of the Vietnam War that the concept really begins to take hold in both the medical and wider social and cultural contexts.[85] The formulation of the diagnosis of PTSD was crucial in this regard and so too was the intervention of feminist psychologists who campaigned for the diagnosis to be expanded to incorporate the experiences of female victims of violence and abuse.[86] In the 1990s, the concept of trauma was also increasingly applied to the suffering of Holocaust survivors.[87]

Applied to a whole range of historical events and individual experiences, by now the term, and concept of, trauma has broken out of the confines of the discipline of psychology, gaining increasing common currency in everyday parlance and become a key term in cultural and critical theory and across the humanities. Literature scholar Cathy Caruth played an instrumental role in ensuring the ascendency of the concept. She described trauma as 'a response, sometimes delayed, to an overwhelming event or set of events, which takes the form of repeated, intrusive hallucinations, dreams, thoughts or behaviours stemming from the event'.[88] The pathology cannot, she argues, be defined either in terms of the nature of the event – because different people are affected in different ways – nor in terms of a distortion of an event. Rather it consists 'solely in the *structure of its experience* or reception: the event is not assimilated or experienced fully at the time, but only belatedly, in its repeated *possession* of the one who experiences it'.[89] At the heart of trauma there is

> a delay or incompletion of knowing, or even seeing an overwhelming occurrence that then remains, in its insistent return, absolutely *true* to the event . . . it is not a pathology of falsehood or displacement of meaning, but of history itself.

Thus, for Caruth, PTSD, if it is to be understood as a symptom, is not a symptom of the unconscious but rather of history: 'The traumatized . . . carry an impossible history with them, or they become themselves the symptom of a history that they cannot entirely posses'.[90] For Caruth, then, trauma betrays an enigma that lies at the heart of history and leads to a crisis of truth.[91] This crisis emerges from the fact that traumatic experience implies an inability to witness the event as it happens because the force of the event leads to the collapse of understanding. History can then 'be grasped only in the very inaccessibility of its occurrence'.[92]

What we have here is a concept of history which takes the ability of the witness to fully comprehend and process the event as the marker of historical knowledge. Rather unsurprisingly, this standard of historical knowledge is then found wanting because the individual subject can give an account only of what they've experienced and in which there are gaps – gaps caused by the force of the trauma which made the experience impossible for the mind to grasp when it happened but also, presumably, by the limits of the individual's knowledge of the broader context within which their experience occurred. This inability to fully grasp history as experience at the level of the individual subject is then taken as a symptom of history's inability to grasp the nature of events. History is reconfigured as sublime – structured, at its very core, by trauma. As one critic of her work has put it, not content with exploring the limits of knowledge of past events, Caruth 'highlights the alleged traumatic component in all representations of history' transforming

> the experience of trauma into a basic anthropological condition. In her mind we are all victims and survivors of the trauma of representation, although . . . for many of us that does not seem to be a particularly debilitating experience.[93]

Caruth's methodological individualism focuses on experience as the basis of all knowledge and results in a rather odd notion of historical knowledge. History does not consist merely in witness accounts but brings together a whole range of sources to reconstruct a more or less accurate account of what has happened. Moreover, it is open to, and as a discipline structured by, processes of contestation and re-evaluation. Thus, Caruth's argument appears to be founded on a misconception of historical knowledge which is not dissimilar to some of the misconceptions around the nature of representation discussed previously in this chapter. Nevertheless, this notion of history *as* trauma has become incredibly influential and, as I shall go on to argue, underpins the rationale behind the examples of trauma architecture analysed in chapter 5. Before analysing the case studies in later chapters, however, it is important that we look in more detail at the concept's place and significance in contemporary cultural and critical theory.

Gene Ray follows Lyotard in viewing Auschwitz as marking a 'qualitative break or shift'. This rupture has, he argues, 'mutated into a general second-order trauma that desolates the legitimacy of the capitalist world order and the self-flattering myths of Enlightenment that underwrite it'. This, Ray contends, is 'our' 'common trauma' and we are all 'victims by proxy'.[94] Interested in confronting 'the categories of traditional aesthetics with catastrophic history', he argues that in traditional bourgeois aesthetics the feelings we now associate with trauma went under the name of the sublime.[95] For those writing in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries 'the feeling of the sublime was a complex mix of terror and enjoyable awe, triggered by encounters with the power or magnitude of raw nature'. In the twentieth century, however, human-made genocidal catastrophes have 'displaced the natural disaster as the source of sublime feelings and effect but', he argues, 'with a crucial difference'. For Kant, 'the pain of the imagination's failure before the power or size of raw nature was compensated for by reason's reflection on its own supersensible dignity and destination'.[96] After the catastrophes of Auschwitz and Hiroshima, however, he contends that humanity's capacity for self-admiration has been ruined.

Critical of the over- and misuse of the concept of trauma in contemporary cultural theory, LaCapra, a leading figure in Trauma Studies, draws a useful distinction between 'historical trauma' and 'structural trauma'. 'Historical trauma' is specific, it refers to the traumatic experiences of groups and individuals. In contrast, 'structural trauma' 'is related to (even correlated with)

transhistorical absence (absence of/at the origin) and appears in different ways in all societies and all lives'.[97] Examples include 'separation from the (m)other, the passage from nature to culture . . . the entry into language, the encounter with the "real"'.[98] For LaCapra, although the first can be overcome, for example through processes of mourning, the second cannot. A danger emerges when the two forms are collapsed into one, as often happens with limit events like the Holocaust. There is, he argues, a temptation 'to collapse the distinction and to arrive at a conception of the event's absolute uniqueness or even epiphanous, sublime or sacral quality'.[99] When this happens, historical trauma is transformed into 'founding trauma' where it becomes the basis for both collective and individual forms of identity.

Ray engages in precisely this process when he claims that we are all 'victims by proxy'. Transposing psychoanalytical categories onto the social and looking to trauma, mourning and melancholia to explain global politics, Ray suggests that the US's response to 9/11 is explicable in terms of our failure to mourn:

> we have yet to acknowledge, collectively our task. . . . And so we are repeating: looping and acting out our trauma, today in the form of the 'war on terror'. The perpetual preemptive war for American-style 'Infinite Justice' is no rational search for the conditions of mutual security; *it is the symptom of our global inability to mourn*.[100]

The relationship between 9/11 and trauma will be analysed in further detail in chapter 7. For the moment, however, I want to pursue the question of the place and significance of trauma in contemporary cultural theory and some of its implications. The point here is not to question the traumatic experiences of those exposed to and caught up in violent historical events and the physical and psychological impact this has on their lives. Rather, what is at question here is why the metaphor of trauma as a cultural or even ontological condition has gained such prevalence late in the twentieth and early in the twenty first centuries and the political as well as philosophical implications of the ways in which it is used.

Wulf Kansteiner argues that the concept of cultural trauma, or the 'cultural trauma metaphor', is a category mistake which arises from the conflation of two distinct intellectual and epistemological traditions.[101] Proponents of cultural trauma, he argues, draw on both philosophical reflections on Auschwitz and the limits of representation and on a large body of psychological and psychotherapeutic studies of historical trauma. Drawing on these distinct bodies of work, trauma research 'tend[s] to conflate the traumatic and the non-traumatic, the exceptional and the everyday'. Morally and politically imprecise, the aestheticised concept of cultural trauma posits 'a misleading equivalency

between the allegedly traumatic nature of all human communication and the concrete suffering of victims of physical and mental trauma'.[102] Eliding the distinctions among victims, perpetrators and bystanders, the concept of cultural trauma also fails to sufficiently differentiate 'between trauma and the culture of trauma, or, put differently, between trauma and entertainment'.[103]

E. Ann Kaplan's work on 'trauma culture', which reflects on her own and others' responses to 9/11, provides a useful example here.[104] Interested in the impact of trauma on individuals and national or cultural collectives, Kaplan draws on research into the effects of trauma therapy on therapists. This research revealed that in some cases therapists suffered from a form of empathetic distress which had a serious impact on their own lives with symptoms including nightmares, flashbacks, heavy breathing, gasping for air, shaking, crying and dizziness.[105] Expanding the concept of trauma, she argues that there is a spectrum which ranges from 'the direct trauma victim' through to 'a person geographically far away, having no personal connection to the victim'.[106] Particularly interested in visually mediated trauma, Kaplan argues that viewers can, like therapists, be vicariously traumatised when they experience trauma indirectly through the media and film.[107] Given that 'we' 'generally encounter trauma vicariously through the media rather than directly', Kaplan asks how vicarious trauma in spectators might:

> facilitate or interfere with pro-social individual and cultural change? Arguably, being vicariously traumatized invites members of society to confront, rather than conceal, catastrophes, and in that way might be useful. One the other hand, it might arouse anxiety and trigger defense against further exposure.[108]

In a later text Kaplan suggests that vicarious trauma can lead to emotional over-arousal and instead recommends 'ethical witnessing', a response that involves an element of cognitive distance from the vicarious experience of suffering and allows for reflection and empathetic changes in the viewer-subject.[109] Nevertheless, the notion that we can and should experience something like vicarious trauma and develop 'prosthetics memories', in the way that Landsberg describes, lay at the heart of many contemporary memorials and memorial-museums. Here, as we shall see in subsequent chapters, the central conceit is that knowing is not enough, that we must be made to feel and that exposing individuals to emotionally difficult and even distressing representations of past events engages them in transformative processes which have a desirable social, ethical and political impact. These supposed impacts range from inspiring a newfound or reaffirmed dedication to human rights, anti-racism and democracy to other desired ends including, in the case of the National September 11 Memorial & Museum, reaffirming US patriotism.

Although clearly questionable, I am less concerned with the coherence and veracity of 'vicarious trauma' and 'prosthetic memory' as such. I certainly do not concern myself with proving or disproving their empirical accuracy (for how would one even begin to do so?), although claims to their efficacy will be problematised. Rather, what is primarily at stake here are the ways in which these and related concepts are mobilised and how they have come to dominate discussions over the form and purpose of contemporary memorial architecture and, more importantly, the philosophical and political implications of their rhetorical power. Central to the immersive turn in memorialisation, the notions of vicarious trauma and prosthetic memory are in danger of both undermining the distinction between trauma and entertainment and of being open to manipulative and coercive uses.

Like the 'politics of true feeling', discussed in the previous chapter, the discourse of trauma seeks 'truth' in individual emotional responses and privileges victimhood – whether of the actual victims of historical trauma or the notion that we are in some sense all 'victims by proxy' – over historical agency. Part of the appeal of trauma, according to John Mowitt, is the moral authority it confers on those who make claim to it.[110] As discussed in the previous chapter, trauma renders those who make claim to it, or who it is claimed on behalf of, victims – even if, as in the case of the Vietnam War, the claimant or claimed for may themselves be perpetrators of extreme violence. The status of victimhood confers, somewhat paradoxically, both moral authority ('I am the victim therefore . . .') and absolution ('I am not responsible for what I've done'). Finally, and crucially, the over- and misuse of the language of trauma undermines the proper claim to a certain authority that should be afforded to victims.

CONCLUSION

Exploring the dialectic between the (supposed) impossibility and yet necessity of representing the Holocaust, this chapter has argued that the claim to unrepresentability is founded on a misconception of representation which is misleading and mystificatory. Whether in the form of testimony and fidelity to the historical record (Lanzmann and Lang), sublime art (Lyotard) or attempts to generate 'prosthetic memory' (Landsberg) or 'vicarious trauma' (Kaplan) all the attempts here analysed to find ways of representing the Holocaust are problematic. Lang attempts to circumvent the problem of representation by rejecting aesthetics in favour of the historical record. But, of course, history remains a form of representation. Lanzmann seeks a way through by focusing on testimony and the material traces of history while rejecting the

essential question of how we might come to understand what happened. His attempt to evoke 'a kind of suffering' points to the notion of vicarious trauma as a means though which we might come to 'know' that which it is claimed cannot be understood. Lyotard's postmodern art of the sublime seeks to deny the possibility of representation but fails to avoid the twin traps of aestheticisation and instrumentalisation Adorno warned of. With prosthetic memory and vicarious trauma, we see the emergence of yet another attempt to solve the riddle of the 'after-Auschwitz' aporia which attempts to overcome the purported incomprehensibility and unrepresentability of the Holocaust by proposing, and seeking to initiate, a shift from cognitive to affective forms of understanding. Here the ethical injunction to 'remember' comes up against a barrier of what can be thought: because the Holocaust cannot be understood, it must instead be apprehended at an emotional or affective level. In this dialectic – between the unthinkable and the unrepresentable, on the one hand, and the desire to represent and make the Holocaust in some sense knowable, on the other – we find a push towards a form of knowing which is in danger of undermining our rational capacity to understand the world and our ethical capacity, on that basis, to act responsibly in it. Bypassing critical engagement in the name of moving us at a deeper level, it insists that we cannot know and therefore must be *made* to feel. Of course, we should feel deeply disturbed by what happened. But anyone capable of understanding what happened is equally capable of understanding how absolutely abhorrent it is, of being upset and enraged that such things are possible. One does not need to be deceived into believing that one has somehow 'experienced' the past to know that one ought to act to ensure that it is not repeated. Nevertheless, as I go on to argue in subsequent chapters, a belief in both the necessity and the efficacy of this approach has come increasingly to provide the rationale for contemporary memorials and memorial-museums. This form of knowing reinscribes the sublimity of the Holocaust, and indeed history itself. At the same time, as we will see, this approach can be used to instrumentalise the past and as a manipulative means of generating particular kinds of responses.

NOTES

1. On this debate, see, for example, Friedlander, ed., *Probing the Limits of Representation*; Lang, *Holocaust Representation*; and Rothberg, *Traumatic Realism*.
2. Hoffmann-Curtis, *Judenmord*.
3. Petrie, 'The Secular word Holocaust: Scholarly Myths, History, and 20th Century Meanings', 32–33.
4. Ibid., 39.
5. Ibid., 47.

6. Mickenberg, Granof and Hayes, eds., *The Last Expression*.
7. Hoffmann-Curtis, *Judenmord*.
8. The term 'the "after-Auschwitz" aporia' is borrowed from Elaine Martin's analysis of Adorno's writings of the subject in Martin, 'Re-Reading Adorno'.
9. See, for example, Bohm-Duchen, ed., *After Auschwitz: Responses to the Holocaust in Contemporary Art*; and Hoffmann-Curtis, *Judenmord*.
10. On realism, see Hoffman-Curtis, *Judenmord*. On the relationship between the Holocaust and abstraction, see Godrey, *Abstraction and the Holocaust*.
11. Levi, *If This is a Man* and *The Truce*, 32–33.
12. Wiesel, 'Trivializing the Holocaust'.
13. See, for example, Wenzel, 'The Unrepresentability of the Holocaust'.
14. Lang, *Holocaust Representation*, 19.
15. Mitchell, 'Representation', in *Critical Terms for Literary Study*, 2nd ed., eds. Lentricchia and McLaughlin, 11–22, 21.
16. Mitchell, *Cloning Terror*, 57.
17. Ibid., 63.
18. Lang, *Holocaust Representation*, 18.
19. Steiner, *Language and Silence*, 146.
20. Ibid., 30–54.
21. Adorno, 'Cultural Criticism and Society' (1951), in Adorno, *Prisms*, 17–55, 34.
22. Kyriakides, 'Art After Auschwitz is Barbaric', 441.
23. Martin, 'Re-reading Adorno'.
24. Adorno, 'Commitment' (1962), in *Aesthetics and Politics*, Taylor, ed., 188.
25. Ibid., 189.
26. Lanzmann, 'From the Holocaust to "Holocaust"', in ed., Liebman, *Claude Lanzman's Shoah*, 35.
27. LaCapra, 'Lanzmann's Shoah: "Here There Is No Why"', in Liebman, *Shoah*: 220–21.
28. Lanzmann, 'Holocaust to "Holocaust"', 31–32.
29. Lanzmann 'Hier ist kein Warum', in Liebman, *Shoah*, 51.
30. Ibid., 52.
31. Lang, *Holocaust Representation*, 13.
32. Rothberg, *Traumatic Realism*, 181.
33. On the Americanisation and globalisation of the Holocaust, see Novick, *The Holocaust and Collective Memory*; Rothberg, *Traumatic Realism*; and Levy and Sznaider, *The Holocaust and Memory in the Global Age*.
34. Lang, *Holocaust Representation*, 7.
35. Ibid., 10.
36. Ibid., 12.
37. Ibid., 14.
38. Ibid., 71.
39. Steiner, *Language and Silence*, 14–15.
40. Emphasis in original. Friedlander, 'Introduction', in Friedlander, *Probing the Limits*, 10.
41. Ibid., 3.

42. Lyotard, *The Differend*, 56.
43. Ibid., 56.
44. Ibid., 57–58.
45. Lyotard, *Postmodern Condition*, 73–77.
46. Ibid., 81.
47. Ibid., 79.
48. Lyotard, 'The Sublime and the Avant-Garde', 37.
49. Lyotard, *Postmodern Condition*, 77–78.
50. Ibid., 81.
51. Kant, *The Critique of Judgment*, 81.
52. Ibid., 76.
53. Ibid., 76.
54. Emphasis in original. Ibid., 81.
55. Ibid., 121.
56. Lyotard, 'Presenting the Unpresentable'.
57. Lyotard, *Postmodern Condition*, 82.
58. Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origins of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful*, 50.
59. Ibid., 51.
60. Ibid., 57.
61. Ibid., 64–70.
62. Ibid., 73.
63. Shaw, *The Sublime*, 66.
64. Rothberg, *Traumatic Realism*, 3–5.
65. Emphasis in original. Rose, 'Beginnings of the Day', 244.
66. Emphasis in original. Ibid., 244.
67. Ibid., 247.
68. See Rose's discussion of the film, Ibid., 244–46.
69. Sanbonmatsu, 'The Holocaust Sublime', 106.
70. Ibid., 107.
71. Ibid., 101–2. On the uniqueness debate and why 'unprecedented' might be a better term, see Brecher, 'Understanding the Holocaust'.
72. Radstone, 'Memory Studies', 32.
73. Radstone and Hodgkin, 'Regimes of Memory', 10.
74. Olick and Robbins, 'Social Memory Studies', 112.
75. Ball, 'Introduction', 7–8.
76. Ibid., 6–7.
77. See, for example, Williams, *Memorial Museums*; and Arnold-de Simine, *Mediating Memory*.
78. Arnold-de Simine, 'Memory Museum and Museum Text', 15.
79. I engage with Landsberg's work in a different context, in Schlembach and Clewer, 'Forced Empathy', 832–33.
80. Landsberg, *Prosthetic Memory*, 2.
81. Ibid., 2–3.
82. Ibid., 130.

83. Ibid., 131.
84. Kaplan, *Trauma Culture*, 24–41.
85. Ball, 'Trauma', 4–5; and Kaplan, *Trauma Culture*, 32–34.
86. Kaplan, *Trauma Culture*, 33.
87. Discussed in Ball, 'Trauma'; Kansteiner, 'Genealogy of a Category Mistake'; and Kaplan, *Trauma Culture*.
88. Caruth, 'Introduction', in *Trauma*, ed. Caruth, 4.
89. Emphasis in original. Ibid., 4.
90. Ibid., 5.
91. Ibid., 6.
92. Ibid., 8.
93. Kansteiner, 'Genealogy of a Category Mistake', 204.
94. Ray, *Terror and the Sublime*, 2.
95. Ibid., 5.
96. Ibid., 5.
97. LaCapra, 'Trauma Absence and Loss', 722.
98. Ibid., 722.
99. Ibid., 724.
100. My emphasis. Ray, *Terror and the Sublime*, 4.
101. Kansteiner, 'Geneology of a Category Mistake'.
102. Ibid., 194.
103. Ibid., 194–95.
104. I develop a similar line of argument (in a different context) regarding Kaplan's work in Schlembach and Clewer, 'Forced Empathy', 834–35.
105. Kaplan, *Trauma Culture*, 39–41.
106. Ibid., 1–2.
107. Ibid., 92.
108. Ibid., 87.
109. Kaplan, 'Global Trauma and Public Feelings', 4.
110. Mowitt, 'Trauma Envy', 282.

Chapter Four

Memorialising in Postmodernity

The German Counter-Monuments

The first memorials to the victims of the Nazi regime's network of concentration and death camps were built on-site quickly after the liberation of the camps within and beyond Germany. As Harold Marcuse argues, these early markers of place used classical forms such as the obelisk and lacked a clear and distinct symbolism and meaning.[1] Later memorial projects, particularly those that were located away from specific sites of persecution, would have to confront difficult questions of both form and intent. If the question of Holocaust representation is fraught with difficulties, then the memorialisation of the victims poses a particular set of challenges. The association between monumentality and fascism is one such challenge: how to convey the magnitude of the Holocaust without lapsing into oppressive monumentality. The question, of concern to Adorno and others, of how to convey something of the suffering without exploiting or cheapening it is another – and is one of the reasons why figuration, although not unheard of, is generally avoided in Holocaust memorials.[2] The question of intent is likewise complex and specific to the context in which a memorial is being built. To whom should it be dedicated? Who is it for? The victims, their descendants, the population as whole? What is the memorial intended to say and to whom? These questions are particularly complex and vexed in Germany, where the question of how the victims ought to be 'remembered' in the land of the perpetrators has been recurring since the end of the Second World War.[3]

In the 1980s and 1990s, first in West and then in reunified Germany, a new wave of memorials emerged that sought to counter the monumentality of traditional memorial architecture and prompt public engagement with the legacies of the past in the present. James Young coined the term *counter-monuments* in response to these works.[4] The counter-monuments explore some of the aesthetic and ethical issues at stake in memorialising the Holocaust and reflect

some of the concerns raised in the debates explored in the previous chapter. Marking something of a shift in the genre, like the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, they have also helped to inform the subsequent memorial forms and discourses explored in later chapters.

Born when postmodernism was at the height of its subversive powers, the counter-monuments represent a probing response to some of the challenges posed by the memorialisation of the Holocaust. Emphasising site specificity, process and the incompleteness of meaning, the approach is dialogical, seeking to engage visitors and the wider community in a dialogue with both the past and one another. Critical and self-reflexive, they are often concerned as much, if not more, with the process and problems of remembrance as they are with the events and the victims they commemorate.[5] Artists have employed a range of approaches which sought to challenge traditional memorial architecture. In place of a fixed permanent presence and silent passive reverence, these projects emphasise process and encourage active forms of engagement while courting publicity and even controversy.[6] Some play with invisibility and inversion and many reject the idea that a memorial ought to have a single focal point. Instead, some sought to shift memorial forms away from civic centres and out into the quotidian spaces of everyday life while others are dispersed across geographic space.[7] This chapter explores works by Jochen Gerz and his collaborators and by Horst Hoheisel, Renata Stih and Frieder Schnock and Gunter Demnig, as well as three counter-monumental proposals for the design competition for the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe. Exploring the nature of the counter-monumental provocation, I also point to some of its limitations and the problematic way in which it has been read through a postmodernist/liberal framework which places the emphasis on their supposed power to transform individual subjectivities.

THE COUNTER-MONUMENT IN HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Although the term *Holocaust* didn't come into mainstream public discourse until the 1970s, as touched on in the previous chapter, the crimes of the Nazi regime and their collaborators were publicly acknowledged in the immediate post-war period. They were also extensively represented: photographs were widely circulated, films were made and the artworks of victims, survivors and witnesses were displayed and archived in both East and West Germany.[8] In the context of the Cold War, distinct cultures of commemoration grew up in the East and West which reflected their differing positions in the great ideological divide. Seeking 'normalisation' and acceptance in the eyes of other Western capitalist-democratic nations, the commemorative and memorial

culture which developed in the Federal Republic tended to focus on the persecution and destruction of the Nazis Jewish victims. In the East, the emphasis was placed less on the Jewish victims and more on the role socialist and communist anti-fascists played in defeating the Nazis.[9] The role of anti-fascists was, in contrast, played down, in the West.

Our focus is on the West. From early on, there existed here a tension between calls to confront what had happened – with public figures such as Karl Jaspers calling for an acknowledgement of guilt and responsibility – and calls to move on and rebuild.[10] What emerged was a split between how the period was 'remembered' in public and in private.[11] In public, the crimes were acknowledged through an official culture of commemoration which emphasised Jewish suffering. In private however, there was a widespread culture of silence and a refusal to accept moral responsibility buttressed by a myth of German victimisation: first at the hands of the Nazis and then the Allies.[12] The 1960s saw an impressive economic recovery which was coupled with a new willingness to accept responsibility alongside growing interest in what had happened. This was fuelled, in part, by the Adolf Eichmann trial in 1961, which took place in Israel but was televised around the world, and the trials of concentration camp guards in Germany.[13] When the leader of the Social Democrat Party, Willy Brandt, a former member of the resistance against the Nazis, became Chancellor in 1970 he called for a sober confrontation with the past. While visiting Poland as part of a trade delegation, Brandt knelt on the ground when attending a wreath laying ceremony at the Warsaw Ghetto memorial in Poland: a move that was seen by some as a powerful, symbolic expression of humility and contrition.

Although the question of the Nazi past and the Holocaust rose to prominence periodically in public discourse, interest in the subject grew in the 1970s and intensified in the 1980s. Part of a wider international 'memory boom', this turn to the past in West Germany was fuelled by the marking of a number of significant anniversaries, including the fortieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War and by a new wave of popular cultural representations of the period, including the US mini-series *Holocaust* which was aired in West Germany in 1979.[14] A third important factor was the growth of 'history from below' through the *Geschichtswerkstätten* (History Workshop Movement) which worked under the slogan *Grabe wo du stehst* ('dig where you stand').[15] Emerging in the 1970s, but only really taking off in the early 1980s, the movement was influenced by social history and poststructuralist theory and brought together non-conventional academic and lay historians, activists and interested citizens. Politically committed to social change, they sought to make history more accessible and to transform public attitudes towards it. Challenging both the focus and methodological approaches of

academic history, the movement placed emphasis on the experiences of the victims and the everyday lives of ordinary people. It also, Rudy Koshar argues, represented an attempt to mourn for the victims and reclaim a usable past as the basis for a diverse and democratic future.[16]

The late 1970s also saw the beginning of a conservative turn in West German intellectual life. Known as the *Tendenzwende* (change of direction) it was a backlash against the perceived radicalism of the previous decade which saw the student movement, the rise of the Green Party and the growing influence of the left in academia. This conservative turn gained strength when the Christian Democrats (CDU) were elected in 1982 and public discourse swung decisively to the right.[17] The Tendenzwende saw a concerted effort to move the discipline of history and cultural memory to the right. Thus, the left's attempt to reclaim a usable past as a basis for a new future was mirrored by those on the right who sought to 'normalise' German history and develop a more affirmative relationship with a national tradition which predated the Nazis. In this tussle over the past, it became increasingly clear that the relationship between the past and the present was essential to the future direction of the nation. Two significant events in the mid-1980s became lightning rods which would be instrumental in shaping subsequent debates over the public use of history in Germany: the so-called Bitburg Fiasco and the *Historikerstreit* (historians' dispute).

In May 1985, President Ronald Reagan and Chancellor Helmut Kohl visited the site of the former Bergen-Belsen concentration camp and a war cemetery in Bitburg to mark the fortieth anniversary of VE day. Intended as an expression of West German-US solidarity and a move towards normalisation, the trip sparked an international political storm. For alongside regular *Wehrmacht* soldiers, members of the *SS* were buried at Bitburg and the leaders stood accused of blurring important historical distinctions between victims and perpetrators.[18]

Slightly more than a year later, and in sympathy with Kohl's normalisation agenda, historian Ernst Nolte published an article in a national newspaper in which he questioned the uniqueness and originality of Nazi atrocities. He explicitly linked the need to relativise the Nazi period to the nation's need to 'move on' and indeed 'appropriate the past, making it our own'.[19] This article sparked off the *Historikerstreit*, which lasted from the summer 1986 until January 1987 and saw right- and left-wing historians arguing in newspapers and on television over the ways in which Nazism and the Holocaust ought to be historicised. Nolte and others on the right argued that the Holocaust was not unique and that there was no moral difference between the crimes of the Nazis and those of the Soviet Union. Germans, therefore, they argued,

carried no special form of guilt and ought to be able to draw a line under the past and reclaim a sense of national pride. In contrast, those on the left insisted that while drawing historical comparisons may be a valid intellectual exercise, the Holocaust ought not to be relativised and railed against the attempt to reclaim a 'useable past' as the basis for a rejuvenated form of German national identity. The dispute involved 136 publications with contributions from most of the leading specialists in modern German history.[20] The philosopher and public intellectual Jürgen Habermas also became involved in the debate. Arguing that the debate was less about historical details than the 'unequivocally political' question of how it should be discussed in the public sphere, he accused Nolte of trying to relativise the Holocaust in pursuit of a revisionist nationalist agenda.[21]

The counter-monuments phenomenon arose in this context of growing interest in and contention around the past and its place in the present. If Kohl and others were hoping to draw a line under the past, this new wave of memorial projects was aimed at prompting a confrontation with the past and exploring its relationship to the present. Young describes the work of a new generation of artists in Germany: 'Ethically certain of their duty to remember, but aesthetically sceptical of the assumptions underpinning traditional memorial forms'.[22] Responding to 'Germany's memorial conundrum', these artists experimented with different approaches aimed at subverting traditional memorial forms and expectations.[23] Retaining the traditional aim of using public works of art to alert visitors to historically significant events, they also drew attention to the processes and problems of remembrance.

Unveiled in 1986, Jochen Gerz and Esther Shalev-Gerz's Monument Against Fascism, War and Violence and for Peace and Human Rights is perhaps the most well-known and celebrated of the counter-monuments. The work consisted of a 12-metre-high hollow aluminium pillar plated with soft dark lead. Although it references the traditional obelisk, the monument was explicitly designed not to stand as a permanent reminder but rather to gradually disappear. Visitors were invited to inscribe their names on the surface; each time the reachable part of the memorial was covered it was lowered – the idea being that the more visitors participated, the more quickly it would disappear.[24] The opening and each lowering were staged as public spectacles, attended by city politicians, dignitaries and the local media. The pillar was lowered eight times before disappearing on 10 November 1993.[25] The staging of these events reflected Gerz's interest in process and 'the aesthetics of publicity'.[26] He explains that, unlike in traditional monuments, the primary aim of his work is to open up discussion:

> A traditional work of art, like a statue or a classical monument, has the tendency to put discussion to rest. I am interested in creative processes that enable discussion . . . Sometimes a discourse is going on but you don't hear a word, it's like a taboo, you have to unsettle the stone and turn it over and it's a very long process.[27]

The Monument Against Fascism sought to reverse the notion that monuments are by their very nature permanent structures that ought to be revered. Encouraging participation – and in a form which would in other memorial contexts be seen as vandalism – the Gerzs' project also questioned traditional ideas about where monuments should be located. Intended by the city of Hamburg to be located in a central park, Gerz and Shalev-Gerz insisted on situating the monument in a shopping area in the suburb of Harburg, where it would confront ordinary people going about their everyday lives.[28] Gerz explains the thinking behind this decision:

> everybody knows what's in a park: art. The inside space of the museum is the museum but outside the building it is a park. So I put the work somewhere where it doesn't have time to be art, where misunderstandings are possible, where error is part of the approach.[29]

Intended to confront the local population, the artists likened the memorial to a great knife slowly being lowered into the back of Germany, a commemorative, communal form of self-mutilation.[30] Although painful, Gerz insists that this process of engaging with the past, recovering memory and dragging taboos 'out of oblivion and denial', is both necessary and healthy.[31] While seeking to force visitors to confront the dilemma of German history, the artists nonetheless denied any didactic intent: 'What we did not want was an enormous pedestal with something on it presuming to tell people what to think'.[32] This is a rather odd statement given the instructive nature of monument's title but it chimed well with the *zeitgeist* of the times which, as we saw in chapter 2, was increasingly characterised by a shift towards ambiguity, openness, plurality and even relativism in the rhetoric of memorialisation. Young also insists that the memorial eschews didacticism, arguing that rather than dictating 'a specific object of memory' this monument 'passively accommodates all memory and response'.[33] This claim hits a similar register to those made on behalf of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and requires some further probing. There is an important difference between not telling people what to think and something being open to *all* possible readings. The memorial does not passively accommodate 'all memory and response'; it is not a mirror simply reflecting the visitors' own thoughts and feelings, as Young seems to suggest. Rather, the meaning of the work is socially

constructed through the various interactions people have with it, whether in person, in conversation or through the media. It is therefore dynamic but certainly not arbitrary. One reason for this is that it remains a *monument*, more specifically it is the Monument Against Fascism, War, and Violence – and for Peace and Human Rights. While the name doesn't exhaust its meaning, it nevertheless shapes its plausible range of meanings within the context of Germany in the mid- to late-1980s.

If the Monument Against Fascism played with the themes of presence/absence, the primary theme in Horst Hoheisel's Aschrott-Brunnen Memorial in Kassel is inversion. In 1984 the Society for the Rescue of Historical Monuments proposed the restoration of a fountain in the city of Kassel which had been destroyed by the Nazis because it had been funded by a Jewish businessman named Sigmund Aschrott.[34] When the city invited artists to put forward proposals for this restoration, Hoheisel responded with a plan to create a hollow replica of the old fountain which would be inverted and sunk into the ground. Water would run down into the darkness of the form which visitors could look down into from above. Hoheisel explained his use of negative form in the following terms:

> I have designed a new fountain as a mirror image of the old one, sunk beneath the old place in order to rescue the history of this place as a wound and as an open question, to penetrate the consciousness of the Kassel citizens so that such things never happen again.[35]

So, rather than restoring the old fountain, an act which the artist feared would encourage people to forget rather than remember what had happened, Hoheisel proposed what Young has described as 'a "negative form" monument'.[36] Hoheisel says of the project:

> The sunken fountain is not a memorial at all. It is only history turned into a pedestal, an invitation to passersby who stand upon it to search for the memorial in their own heads. For only there is the memorial to be found.[37]

As in the Monument Against Fascism, here we see an attempt to subvert traditional forms and engage visitors in questioning their own relationship to history and its relevance to the present. Both projects drew on conceptual and participatory art theory and practice to create thought provoking works which subverted expectation around what a monument-memorial ought to be. Both also intervened at the local level and spoke of a growing interested in West Germany in exploring the legacies of the Nazi period. As we will see, the context would change quite suddenly and dramatically in 1989 with the end of the Cold War and the subsequent reunification of Germany.

REUNIFICATION AND THE COUNTER-MONUMENT

The question of how the Nazi past and its legacies ought to be understood took on a new urgency in the context of German reunification. As we have seen, by the late 1980s the official post-war memorial culture of West Germany was being called into question, with the notion that there was a shared national consensus on how to interpret and deal with the Nazi past becoming increasingly difficult to defend. These questions would become even more urgent and complex in the wake of the sudden and unexpected collapse of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) in 1989. Reunification threw together two populations which had undergone years of separate development in ideologically opposed societies wherein the Nazi past had been 'remembered', and indeed instrumentalised, in quite distinct ways.[38] Along with the wide-ranging social, economic and political consequences of reunification, the crimes of a second 'totalitarian regime' and the question of how they ought to be marked, would also need to be reckoned with.

The opening of the Berlin Wall was initially met with euphoria in both states. Kohl, as surprised as anyone, exclaimed '*Wir sind doch ein Volk*' ('We are one people after all').[39] Disillusioned with the dire economic situation within the GDR, as well as political repression, after the opening of the Wall on 9 November 1989 protesters in the East began calling for reunification.[40] While this call gained popular expression within the political vacuum of the GDR, the sentiment was not shared by all. Nor was it shared by everyone in the West, where many feared the potential consequences of reunification. Despite their shared history, Easterners and Westerners had experienced decades of separation and the differences between them were exacerbated by the fact that reunification had major economic, social and political consequences on both sides of the former divide.

The first free elections in the history of the GDR were held in March 1990. The Alliance for Germany – a coalition of centre right parties led by the East Christian Democrat Party (CDU) – won the election on a platform of speedy reunification. Negotiations between the governments of the East and West culminated in a unification treaty. Rather than the emergence of a new state, however, the treaty saw the continuation of the West German state which essentially took over the running of the former East which lost its political autonomy. The socio-economic impact of the sudden transformation from a state-led to a market economy – with its accompanying loss of jobs and social-welfare – left many bitterly disappointed by the outcome. Resentment also grew from a sense of powerlessness, as the former West stepped in and took control, purging the streets as well as institutions of GDR influence.[41]

The attempt to eradicate the visible signs of GDR influence has been particularly intense in Berlin which has undergone a rapid period of transformation since the end of the Cold War. The German government decided to transfer the capital from its temporary West German home in Bonn back to Berlin and undertook to transform the city through a massive programme of redevelopment and rebranding. Berlin's history and tourists' fascination for it were perceived to be essential to its future as a 'global city' and were placed at the heart of a concerted effort to boost the city's 'collective symbolic capital' and attract large-scale capital investment.[42] As Fiona Allon argues, securing this 'postindustrial economic future' meant creating 'new relationships between memory, history and place, redefining such "assets" in explicitly neoliberal terms as commodities, and explicitly exploiting culture for new forms of capital accumulation'.[43]

Given the city's troubled history as the former capital of the Third Reich and the GDR, this process has been both controversial and contested. While certain aspects of the past have indeed been transformed into 'assets', the creation of 'the new Berlin' also entailed processes of erasure and social exclusion. As it became a focal point of an attempt to forge a new identity for the nation, the monuments and street names of the city became sites of struggle because some fought to preserve and others to eradicate traces and symbols of a troubled past. In the former East of the city, between 1990 and 1998 more than 250 streets were renamed and numerous monuments destroyed. Huyssen has described this attempt to erase the physical and symbolic remnants of the GDR as the 'politics of wilful forgetting . . . a strategy of power and humiliation, a final burst of cold war ideology, pursued via a politics of signs'.[44] At the same time, redevelopment and regeneration have transformed what had been industrial areas into 'creative zones', while working-class and migrant neighbourhoods have been gentrified, with rising rents forcing established communities out of central Berlin.[45]

On 14 November 1993, in an attempt to symbolise and promulgate a shared legacy and destiny for the 'German people', Kohl dedicated a national Memorial to the Victims of War and Tyranny. This memorial was intended to mark Germany's tragic history – from the First World War to the end of the Cold War – and a new beginning in reunification for the nation and its capital. Encouraging Germans to publicly recognise themselves as victims, the manner of its dedication tapped into the myth of victimhood which had long been cultivated in the West and chimed with the aforementioned Tendenzwende in German intellectual and political life.

Kohl chose to repurpose an old memorial, the *Neue Wache* (New Guardhouse), on Unter den Linden, in the former East of Berlin. Dating back to

1816, the building was commissioned by Friedrich Wilhelm III to commemorate the Prussian victory in the Napoleonic wars. During the Weimar Republic it was repurposed as a memorial to the First World War and remained as such during the Third Reich. After restoring the bomb-damaged building, the GDR dedicated it the Memorial to the Victims of Fascism and Militarism. Like each of the proceeding regimes, Kohl intended to repurpose the building to provide a 'unifying image of national legitimation'.[46] The memorial was updated with a new inscription and an enlarged version of a sculpture by Käthe Kollwitz, a Pietà inspired by the death of her son in the First World War. Although prominent groups and individuals – including the three main West German Parties, the Central Council of Jews and groups representing victims of Communism – supported the memorial, it was nevertheless highly controversial. The inauguration ceremony was met by protests and, as with Bitburg a few years previously, Kohl was accused of equating victims and perpetrators and attempting to forge a national identity premised on 'victimhood'.

Not only its intent and dedication but also the form of the memorial and its location were deemed by some to be deeply problematic. The decision to repurpose an eighteenth-century war monument strongly associated with German militarism and the Nazi and Stasi regimes, was condemned as highly inappropriate. At the same time, while Kohl saw the Pietà motif as a universal symbol of sorrow and regret, and thus an appropriate representation of Germany's relationship to its own history, the use of this distinctly Christian iconography came in for sharp criticism. So too did the symbolism of the mother and her dead son which was seen to echo nineteenth-century nationalist imagery. Far from uniting people across the Cold War divide, the controversy around the memorial resulted in Kohl promising that a separate national memorial would be created to commemorate the Jewish victims of the Nazi regime (the subject of chapter 6). It also, unsurprisingly, failed to placate growing bitterness in the East, as the West took control of its future.

In contrast to Kohl's attempt to resolve the new nation's memorial problem with a single central symbolic statement, a number of counter-memorial projects in this immediate post-reunification period looked to create decentralised and dispersed memorials which explored the quotidian nature of persecution and absence. The first to be discussed here is Renata Stih and Frieder Schnock's Places of Remembrance in the Bayerisches Viertel – Exclusion and Discrimination, Expulsion, Deportation, and Murder of Berlin Jews in the Years 1933 to 1945, which was inaugurated in 1993. The work emerged out of a long-standing community history project which began in 1983. Part of the aforementioned History Workshop Movement, a community group based in the Bavarian Quarter of the Schöneberg district of Berlin began

working with the local arts council to uncover the history of the area's pre-war Jewish community.[47] Their research revealed a rich and complex history. The area had been home to a large community of mostly middle-class, assimilated Jews including Albert Einstein, Hannah Arendt and Walter Benjamin. A detailed history of who had lived there and what had happened to them between 1933 and 1945 was compiled and exhibited and the idea of a memorial for the district was conceived. Initially, community activist-historians organised a temporary memorial to the deported Jews which consisted of seventy cardboard signs detailing the names, ages and deportation dates of those who had lived in the area. The signs soon disintegrated but the questions they raised did not go away and in 1992 the Schöneberg Arts Council launched a memorial design competition. The competition guidelines stipulated a decentralised memorial which would not simply commemorate the victims but also highlight the history of persecution and the historical conditions which made it possible and act as an indictment of the perpetrators.[48]

Stih and Schnock won the competition with a proposal to install eighty street signs on lampposts in the area. Each sign was two sided, with a simply drawn brightly coloured image on one side which is either literally or metaphorically connected to the text, usually a Nazi edict against the Jews, on the reverse side.[49] These edicts are dated and many of the signs are site specific. By a playground, for example, there is a sign with a chalk-hopscotch grid on one side and the following words on the other: 'Aryan and non-Aryan children are forbidden from playing with one another. 1938'.[50] Other signs contain fragments from individual testimony. Dispersed across a wide area the standardised street signs fit into while at the same time jarring with the everyday spaces of contemporary Berlin. The signs are mundane in their form and yet the juxtaposition of image and text and their assertion of the past in the present is arresting and unsettling.

Channelling the spirit of Robert Venturi's canonical text on postmodern architecture, *Learning from Las Vegas*, the decentred memorial deliberately uses the aesthetics of advertising to communicate its message: 'It was clear to us that this has to be done in a modern press language: short. Drivers have to read the signs – the form has to be kind of commercial'.[51] While the traditional memorial form invites static contemplation, the signs, and the accompanying explanatory map, invite viewers to take a journey through the neighbourhood and make sense of their place in relation to the past and present. Numerous and geographically dispersed, the meaning and power of the work builds up with the number of encounters that occur over time. 'The deportation of the Jews is depicted not as a single, extraordinary event, but as the culmination of a systematic, and seemly invisible process that occurred over twelve years'.[52] According to Stih, its aim is 'to make visible

the conditions that led in an insidiously logical way to the destruction of the Jewish inhabitants'.[53] The emphasis here is then less on the victims than on the perpetrators and those who stood by.

While the work is powerful and arresting, for one critic, the project's conception of its audience is a narrowly defined one which assumes that Jews exist only in the past. Juliet Koss, a Jewish American living in Berlin found herself 'increasingly annoyed that I am forced each day to see signs that allow me only to sit on benches marked in yellow in my local park'.[54] The signs, she continues,

> divide their audience, once again, into perpetrators and victims . . . and the emotional shivers the signs might provoke among the children of Nazis are nothing compared to those experienced by a Jew, for whom the decrees slip too easily into the present.[55]

Although the project may provide a powerful confrontation with the history of persecution for some it is, Koss argues, 'either insensitive to the feelings of living Jews or misguided in presuming their absence'.[56]

Another example of a counter-monument which draws attention to the Holocaust through interventions into everyday spaces is Gunter Demnig's Stolpersteine (stumbling stones or stumbling blocks) project which began in 1992 and was still ongoing at the time of writing.[57] The first Stolpersteine were laid in Köln after Demnig became involved in attempts to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the deportation of Roma and Sinti from the city.[58] The idea soon grew into a project to commemorate other victims of Nazi persecution including Jews, homosexuals and those classed by the Nazis as physically or mentally disabled. Initially, the Stolpersteine were installed without the permission of local authorities, although permission is now sought and, in most cases, granted (with the notable exception of Munich which banned them in 2004). Stolpersteine can now be found all over Germany and in twenty-three other countries across Europe.[59] On 29 December 2019, Demnig laid the 75,000th Stolperstein in the German town of Memmingen in Bavaria.[60] Each Stolperstein is formed of a 10 × 10 cm brass plaque which is engraved with the words *Hier Wohnte* (here lived) and the name of the victim, their date of birth, the date they were deported and the place and date of death. The plaques are attached to a stone block which is lowered into the ground so that the Stolperstein sits flush with the surrounding paving. Each little memorial is placed outside of the building that was the last known chosen residence of the victim. The Stolpersteine thereby reassert the presence of those who were torn from their homes and communities and whom the Nazis intended to disappear without trace.

Although it is headed up by Demnig, the project both requires and registers the engagement of 'sponsors' – individuals, community groups and often schoolchildren – who volunteer their time to research the life and fate of the individual and pay a fee of €120. The project has inspired the research and writing of tens of thousands of biographies for victims, many of whom may otherwise have been forgotten.[61] The focus on individual victims marks this project out from the other counter-monuments discussed in this chapter which tend to be more concerned with the problems of memory and the relationship between the present and the past than with remembering the victims as such.

Initially controversial, the Stolpersteine have now become part of the urban fabric in cities and towns all over Germany. In this sense the project has been a great success. And yet, as with Places of Remembrance, there are questions to be considered here as to who and what these memorials are for. While the relatives of some victims have been touched to learn that their ancestors have been memorialised in this manner, the Stolpersteine have caused offense to some including Rudko Kawczynski of the Hamburg Rom and Cinti Union:

> The well-meaning *Stolpersteine* project installed nine memorials stones with the names of Sinti victims in the sidewalks of Hamburg, even though it had been pointed out many times that their relatives consider it to be an insult to the dead, when passers-by step on the names of their fathers and mothers . . . none of the survivors were listened to. The victims had to be 'commemorated' at all costs.[62]

Like Places of Remembrance, the Stolpersteine project appears to address a specific constituency: the direct descendants of the perpetrator generation. Ironically, in both cases, this results in a lack of regard for those living in Germany who don't conform to the homogeneous, monocultural conception of German citizenship which was central to the Nazis' vision.

The final work I want to explore from this period immediately following reunification is Jochen Gerz's, Invisible Monument or 2,146 Stones Against Racism in Saarbrücken. The project was undertaken in 1993 in the context of a national debate over immigration and asylum prompted by the eruption of racist violence in 1991 and 1992 (most notably in Hoyerswerda and Rostock-Lichtenhagen, in the former East, but also in towns in the former West) and speaks directly to the turmoil which followed reunification.[63] Targeting the square leading to the Saarbrücken Schloss, the former home of the Nazi Gestapo, Gerz worked with a team of students to remove cobblestones from the square secretly at night. Replacing them with temporary substitutes, Gerz had the stones engraved with the names and locations of former Jewish cemeteries in Germany that had been destroyed or abandoned, before returning them to their original positions, face down so that no trace of what had

happened would be visible.[64] Conducted in secret, the project came to light only when Gerz informed the authorities. News of the covert and illegal memorial project prompted a public debate, inspiring people to visit the square which was renamed the Square of the Invisible Monument.[65] The project links the specificity of its location to the wider geography of persecution, playing with questions of place, presence and absence. It likewise explores the relationship between the materiality of the engraved stones and the conceptual work required to engage with them when they are dispersed and rendered invisible. In its audacity it succeeded in generating the kind of public attention and debate for which Gerz's work has become widely renowned.

Irit Rogoff argues that Gerz's works 'within the frameworks of postmodernity' to offer an alternative, active form of commemoration which resists imposing a master-narrative on the complex histories of victimisation and responsibility.[66] Concerned that traditional memorials seek to replace an absence with presence, Rogoff draws on Freud's 'Mourning and Melancholia' to argue that the Invisible Monument's 'performs the work of mourning as process'.[67] If traditional monuments aim at redemption and reconciliation, according to Rogoff, the 'blank surface of the Saarbrücken work resists all that: it elicits our desire for wholeness, completion and resolution and sustains it as desire' while denying satisfaction of that desire.[68] For Rogoff, the process of mourning activated by the counter-monuments points to a possibility of a culture in which a variety of 'collective commemorations can be read across one another'.[69] This is arguably exactly what was emerging in Germany in the period under discussion. However, while Gerz emphasises the dialogic function of the counter-monument – its ability to generate new encounters with the past and open up public debate – Rogoff argues that mourning can only occur when 'national traumas can be dealt with at the level of individual subjectivities'.[70] There is then a gap here between the encounter intended by the artist and the theoretical framework of the critic. The work is intended to be collective and dialogical, an active intervention in the public sphere, whereas Rogoff looks to the work as a means through which the visitor engages processes of mourning and individualised reflection. Gerz's work may be capable of doing both these things, but the difference in emphasis is significant.

Reading the work through a postmodern-liberal framework, Rogoff and, to some extent, Young, shift the burden of history from the collective and political level to that of the individual. This is not to suggest that they ignore the social and political questions entirely, but that the methodological individualism which underpins their liberal framework takes transforming individuals as the primary means through which wider social transformations might be realised. Here the burden of history and responsibility for acting ethically in the present is individualised, with the vague implicit hope that this might be

generalised. Just as the Vietnam Veterans Memorial renders questions about the war mute, so too here, shifting the burden of history onto the individual abstracts the events in question from the complex web of social and structural causes in which they are located. The lessons to be learnt about the Holocaust are, according to this view, that we should oppose fascism and racism, but the structural causes of both are neatly swept under the carpet. Liberal ideology – now in its postmodern form – cannot confront these causes, but only wring its hands and insist on the need for individuals to take responsibility for their own attitudes towards the past and their actions in the present. In this context, 'memory' and 'mourning' function as fragmenting and individualising substitutes for politics. Here Rogoff prefigures a shift from the social/dialogical character of counter-monument to an emphasis on the transformation of the individual subject which is key to understanding the later case studies explored in this book. Indeed, after reunification and as the question of national identity gained a new urgency with attention shifting to the national stage, the moment in which there was space for dialogical memorials proved to be fairly short. The rejection of Gerz's proposal for the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, and the reasons given for it, are indicative of this shift.

In keeping with his dialogical conception of commemoration, Gerz proposed an interactive site (including an information centre as well as areas for contemplation and reflection) centred around the question 'Why?' – a question visitors would be prompted to consider and asked to record their responses to. According to Young, who sat on the competition jury, the centrality of this question was the primary reason that the proposal was rejected: '"Why?" seemed here to be answered perpetually by further asking "Why?"'. Drawing on Lanzmann's rejection of the question (discussed in chapter 3), Young argues that

> such a question can be answered only by the perpetrators themselves. . . . Why did the Nazis kill the Jews? Only the Nazis can tell. The rest of us should not be put in a position to provide the rationale for the Nazis.[71]

Although there may have been other good reasons for rejecting Gerz's proposal – and opting for the distinctly non- or even anti-dialogical proposal by Richard Serra and Peter Eisenman – it is telling that for Young it was the centrality of the question 'Why?' that made it untenable. 'Why?' may be an uneasy question to ask – containing within it both the dangers of mystification, on the one hand, and of its opposite, explaining too much, on the other. It may also be the wrong question – loaded as it is with metaphysical implications. That said, the refusal of understanding advocated by Lanzmann is equally problematic and certainly just as mystifying. An exploration of the question 'how come . . .' or 'how could this have happened' may perhaps be

more appropriate to the task of developing public understanding. Reflective of the epistemological scepticism at the core of postmodern thought, this desire simply to outlaw the question of historical explanation suggests a refusal of intellectual inquiry which renders history enigmatic, even sublime, and is in danger of mystifying what we ought to confront.

Alongside Gerz, a number of prominent German artists submitted counter-monumental proposals.[72] Registering his objection to the idea of a central national monument, Hoheisel proposed to blow up the Brandenburg Gate creating a void in the centre of Berlin to mark the void left in the wake of the Nazi genocide.[73] Stih and Schnock's Bus Stop – The Non-Monument, proposed a continuous travelling memorial would have turned the site now occupied by the memorial into a bus depot from which visitors would be taken to various sites associated with the Holocaust, including concentration camps, throughout Germany and across other parts of Europe.[74] With these proposals the artists sought to challenge the notion that a traditional monument was either relevant or desirable, either capable of articulating the horrors of the Holocaust or of inspiring the kinds of engagement with history which might transform attitudes in the present. Their rejection marks something of a shift in Holocaust memorialisation in post-reunification Germany. As I argue in chapter 6, after reunification memorialisation takes on a growing national significance, becoming increasingly centralised and spectacular: less concerned with prompting dialogue and exploring the relationships among place, past and present than with representing the nation and generating tourist foot fall.

CONCLUSION

The counter-monumental impetus explored in this chapter has helped to open up the memorial form. Rejecting the notion that a memorial-monument ought to be a static, central, symbolic statement and the object of quiet reverence, it has complicated the form and helped to fuel a renaissance in memorial architecture. Yet, as with the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, claims regarding their ambiguity are somewhat overplayed, they continue to fulfil the traditional role of drawing public attention to particular historical events. In so doing, they assert the significance of these events and their relevance to the present. At the same time, as critical, self-reflexive interventions in the ongoing debates about German cultural memory, the counter-monuments explore and call into question the process of remembrance. While they may be critical in this sense, against the insistence of both the artists and scholars, they remain didactic, in that they aim to teach their audiences about the past and provide moral instruction for their conduct in the present. If they failed

to do so there would be little point in commissioning and building them. In the next chapter, we will see some of the ways in which the counter-monument has influenced but also been superseded by an approach which emphasises sublime spectacle over dialogical engagement.

NOTES

1. Marcuse, 'Holocaust Memorials', 66.
2. There are of course some notable exceptions such as Nathan Rapoport's heroic and defiant *Monument to the Heroes of the Warsaw Ghetto*, Poland 1948; and Nandor Glid's *International Memorial* in the former concentration camp in Dachau, Germany 1968, which is both abstract and figurative. Ibid., 59–60 and 85.
3. See, for example, Koshar, *From Monuments to Traces*; and Niven and Paver, eds. *Memorialization in Germany Since 1945*.
4. Young, 'The Counter-Monument'.
5. Pickford, 'Dialectical Reflections on Peter Eisenman's Memorial for the Murdered Jews of Europe', 423.
6. Quote from Gerz, 'Interview with Simon Baker, Paris, February 2001', 36.
7. Young, 'Memory, Countermemory, and the End of the Monument', in Young, *At Memory's Edge*, 90–119.
8. Hoffmann-Curtis, *Judenmord*.
9. On Holocaust remembrance in the GDR, see Niven, 'Remembering Nazi Anti-Semitism in the GDR', in *Memorialization in Germany*, eds. Niven and Paver, 205–14.
10. Moeller, 'What Has "Coming to Terms with the Past" Meant In Post-World War II Germany?', 234.
11. Müller, *Another Country*, 31.
12. Moeller, 'What Has "Coming to Terms with the Past" Meant', 231.
13. Ibid., 228.
14. See Huyssen, *Present Pasts*, 12.
15. Fletcher, 'History from Below Comes to Germany'; Koshar, *Monuments to Traces*, 226–85; and Till, *The New Berlin*.
16. Koshar, *Monuments to Traces*, 230.
17. Eley, 'Nazism, Politics and the Image of the Past', 178.
18. Harman ed., *Bitburg in Moral and Political Perspective*.
19. Nolte, 'The Past That Will Not Pass: A Speech That Could Be Written but Not Delivered', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 6/06/1986, in *Forever in the Shadow of Hitler?*, ed. Knowlton, 19–23. On the 'normalization' agenda, see Herf, *Divided Memory*.
20. Eley, 'Thoughts on the West German *Historikerstreit*', 177.
21. Habermas, 'Concerning the Public Use of History', 48.
22. Young, 'The Counter-Monument', 271.
23. Ibid., 87.

24. Young, 'Memory Against Itself in Germany Today', in Young, *Memory's Edge*, 120–51, 130.
25. On the opening and lower ceremonies, see Ibid., 135.
26. Gerz, 'Interview with Simon Baker', 36.
27. Ibid., 33.
28. Young, 'Memory Against Itself', in Young, *Memory's Edge*, 127; and Lupu, 'Memory Vanished, Absent and Confined'.
29. Gerz, 'Interview with Simon Baker', 36.
30. Young, 'Memory Against Itself', in Young, *Memory's Edge*, 135.
31. Gerz, 'Interview with Simon Baker', 32.
32. Quoted in Young, 'Memory Against Itself', in Young, *Memory's Edge*, 130.
33. Ibid., 134.
34. Young, 'Memory, Countermemory, and the End of the Monument', in Young, *At Memory's Edge*, 97–102.
35. Horst Hoheisel quoted in Ibid., 98.
36. Ibid., 98.
37. Hoheisel quoted in Lupu, 'Memory Vanished', 150.
38. Fulbrook, *German National Identity after the Holocaust*; and Müller, *Another Country*.
39. Kohl quoted in Ibid., 220.
40. Brockman, 'Introduction', 6–7.
41. Huyssen, 'The Voids of Berlin', 192–215.
42. 'Collective symbolic capital' refers to the special marks of distinction, often historical, which become synonymous with a place and have the power to draw not only tourists but also capital investment. Harvey, *Spaces of Capital*, 404–9.
43. Allon, 'Ghosts', 294.
44. Huyssen, 'Voids of Berlin', 60–62.
45. See, for example, Allon, 'Ghosts'; and Akcan, 'Apology and Triumph'.
46. Pickford, 'Conflict and Commemoration', 139. On the history of the *Neue Wache* also see, Ladd, *The Ghosts of Berlin*, 217–18.
47. Rosenberg, 'Walking in the City', 138.
48. Ibid., 139.
49. More details on the artists' website, http://www.stih-schnock.de/remembrance.html, accessed 20 August 2020.
50. Rosenberg, 'Walking in the City', 140.
51. Venturi, Scott Brown, and Izendour, *Learning from Las Vegas*. Stih quoted in Till, *New Berlin*, 159.
52. Rosenberg, 'Walking in the City', 143.
53. Ibid., 143.
54. Koss, 'Coming to Terms with the Present', 124.
55. Ibid., 124.
56. Ibid., 127.
57. See Demnig's website, http://www.stolpersteine.eu/en/home/, accessed 12 July 2021.
58. Apel, 'Stumbling Blocks in Germany', 182.

59. Apperly, 'Stumbling Stones'.
60. Deutsche, 'Germany'.
61. Apel, 'Stumbling Blocks', 184.
62. Quoted in Ibid., 187.
63. Krell, Nicklas and Ostermann, 'Immigration, Asylum, and Anti-Foreigner Violence in Germany'.
64. For a more detailed discussion of this project, see Young, 'Memory Against Itself', in Young, *Memory's Edge*, 140–45.
65. Ibid., 144.
66. Rogoff, 'Aesthetics of Post-History', 115–17.
67. Ibid., 136.
68. Ibid., 138.
69. Ibid., 139.
70. Ibid., 139.
71. On Young's involvement in the project, see Young, 'Germany's Holocaust Memorial Problem – and Mine', in Young, *At Memory's Edge*, 184–223. On why Gerz's proposal was rejected, see Young, 'Memory Against Itself', in Young, *At Memory's Edge*, quote from 150.
72. For a more detailed discussion of these proposals, see Young, 'Memory, Countermemory, and the End of the Monument', in Young, *At Memory's Edge*.
73. Ibid., 90–93.
74. Ibid., 113–18.

Chapter Five

The Memorial-Museum, Trauma Architecture and the Sublime Authority of Affect

Whereas the counter-monuments' sought to subvert monumentalism, this chapter analyses two national memorial-museums which, I argue, return to and rearticulate monumentalism through a postmodern aesthetics of trauma: The United States National Holocaust Memorial Museum and the Jewish Museum Berlin. The former opened in 1993 and is located just a few hundred metres from the Washington Monument. Like the nearby Vietnam Veterans Memorial, it ostensibly acts to question the optimism of the great monuments to progress which surround it. And yet, I shall argue, the museum ultimately acts, among other things, as a celebration of American values, transforming the Holocaust into an occasion for patriotism. The process by which the museum came into being has been dealt with elsewhere and will not be discussed in any detail here.[1] Instead I focus on the design of the museum, the 'visitor experience' it aims to provide and the ethical/educational function it is intended to perform. Specifically, my analysis focuses on the memorial-museum's explicitly Americanised treatment of the Holocaust and its pedagogical rationale. The latter hinges on the permanent exhibit's narrative structure and the attempt to induce in visitors a vicarious experience of trauma. An early and groundbreaking instance of what Andrew Gross has referred to as 'traumatic architecture'. 'Traumatic architecture' – for trauma architecture – explicitly sets out to induce feelings that are supposed, somehow, to be analogous, in this case, to the feelings of the victims of Nazi persecution.[2]

Daniel Libeskind's Jewish Museum Berlin opened in 2001. Reflecting on the architect's own meditations on the building, on its form and the visitor experience it offers, I argue that the building also gives form to trauma but not – as in the Holocaust Memorial Museum – by seeking to induce a vicarious experience of the victims' trauma. Rather, the Jewish Museum gives form to the idea of history *as* trauma: to 'Auschwitz' as a metonym for the 'crisis

of civilisation' it has been seen to have initiated, or of which it represents the apotheosis. As argued in chapter 3, this crisis is a key reference point for postmodern theory and the radical break on which, according to Lyotard, postmodernism is founded. Fragmented and disorientating, the building interpellates the postmodern subject: destabilised, uncertain and in awe. In this sense then the museum undoes the work of the counter-monument; it is not dialogical but authoritative, not self-effacing but domineering. At the same time, however, the contents of the museum and Libeskind's own reflections on its significance are infused with hope. In the end the historical rupture to which the building gives form is, I argue, recuperated by a broader post-Cold War cultural and sociopolitical project of 'coming to terms with' and, indeed, instrumentalising the past.

The chapter argues that these memorial-museums represent a marrying of postmodern forms and discourses with a return to monumentalism articulated through an aesthetic of the sublime which seeks to give form to trauma. Monumental and authoritative, in both examples, the aesthetics of trauma is employed as a means by which the Holocaust is ultimately recuperated in the interests of positive national identity formation.

THE UNITED STATES NATIONAL HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM

Jimmy Carter's administration established the President's Commission on the Holocaust in 1978. It was headed by Holocaust survivor, author and commentator Elie Wiesel and presented its findings in 1979. The commission's recommendations included the establishment of 'a living memorial' dedicated to 'transmitting the legacy of the Holocaust' to future generations; a primary focus on Jewish suffering but with the inclusion of displays on other persecuted groups; an emphasis on the victims' lives as well as their deaths; that the distinct roles of persecutors and bystanders should be addressed; that it should focus on the 'The American Experience' – including the US's involvement in World War II and the liberation of the camps as well as its failure to intervene earlier; and that the museum be based in Washington DC.[3] Congress unanimously approved the proposal in 1980.[4]

Dedicated to demonstrating the universal 'applicability of the moral lessons learned from the Holocaust', this was, from the outset, intended to be 'a museum of a different kind'.[5] Traditional museums focus on the collection, preservation and display of authentic objects. In contrast the Director Jeshajahu Weinberg, drawing on his experience as the Director of the Museum of the Jewish Diaspora in Tel Aviv, wanted to create 'a narrative museum' aimed

at 'changing and developing . . . visitors mentally, emotionally, or morally'.[6] Based around a plot, the narrative form – as in a novel, film or play – provides 'not only an intellectual but also an emotional experience' which

> triggers identification . . . envelops us mentally and forces us to relate to the meaning of the story. . . . Being gripped by the plot, projecting ourselves into it, identifying with its heroes and developing resentment towards its villains, we get emotionally involved. This emotional involvement opens us to educational influence.[7]

As Michael Berenbaum, the Holocaust Memorial Museum project director from 1988 to 1993, explains, this narrative is an explicitly intentionally Americanised one:

> we recast the story of the Holocaust to teach fundamental American values . . . pluralism, democracy, restraint on government, the inalienable rights of individuals, the inability of governments to enter into freedom of religion.[8]

The rationale here is that to make 'the story' speak to Americans it is necessary to present an Americanised narrative. At the same time, it is argued, the narrative structure helps visitors to become emotionally invested in the story and to identify with the victims. The point here, and what distinguishes its pedagogical approach from that of other museums, is that it is designed to prompt forms of identification and emotional connection so that visitors learn *through their feelings*. It was this objective that guided the way in which the building and the permanent exhibition it houses have been designed.

The museum's architect, James Ingo Freed, was born in Germany in 1930. His family fled from Europe in 1939 and settled in Chicago. Freed studied under Ludwig Mies van der Rohe in the 1950s, before becoming a member of the 'Chicago Seven', an early postmodernist grouping of architects who came together in the 1970s in rebellion against the predominance of modernism.[9] With the Holocaust Memorial Museum he wanted a building that was neither easy or visually pleasing and which would create 'a real sense of discomfort . . . that allows for horror, sadness'.[10] The building is a pastiche of different influences including neoclassicism, traditional Jewish architecture and the architecture of the concentration and death camps. The white marble frontage helps it to blend in with the neoclassical architecture characteristic of Washington, even as its domineering stance marks it out as distinctive. Referring to the Nazis' appropriation of monumental classicism, Freed argues that the building is neither modern nor neoclassical, but rather 'a critique of neoclassicism . . . classicism used as a tool of critical dialogue, a tool for expressing duality'.[11] Behind the marble facade lies a red brick building formed of a

series of towers, an unmistakable reference to the camp watchtowers. Although Freed was given free rein over the rest of the building, the committee requested that the memorial within it, the Hall of Remembrance which stands on the on the south-east corner of the museum, take a hexagonal form which would directly reference traditional Jewish architecture and symbolism.[12]

Having entered the building, visitors find themselves standing in the Hall of Witness, a monumental four-storey atrium. Inspired by the 'Killing Wall' Freed encountered when visiting Auschwitz, the west wall is covered in black granite tiles inscribed with the words, 'YOU ARE MY WITNESS ISAIAH 43:10'.[13] At its base, Richard Serra's *Gravity*, a large square slab of steel, is wedged into the stairs. This is one of four original abstract art works commissioned for the museum.[14] Inspired by the barracks at Auschwitz, the other walls are of red brick. The roof is formed of glass on a heavy dark-grey steel frame and appears to reference Freed's conversations with survivors: 'All Holocaust people said that everything closed in. The only thing they had left was the sky. The Germans could not remove the sky from them'.[15]

The use of dark-grey steel in the skylight, girders and other interior architectural elements was inspired by the steel straps on the doors of the crematorium ovens at Auschwitz.[16] Reflecting on the visual references and use of metaphor, the architect emphasises the ambiguity and multiplicity of the building:

> The multiple readings that occur are sometimes intentional, sometimes not. We consciously didn't want to force the one reading. . . . We wanted an evocation of the incomplete. Irresolution, imbalances are built in. . . . This kind of distancing with ambiguity was also important because every survivor has his or her own story that is so personal, so stripping.[17]

Rather than impose the architect's own view, the building was intended to 'act as a resonator for the memory of others'.[18] And yet the overloading of formal and visual references – the stripped and brutal neoclassical facade, the watchtower forms, the use of red brick and steel along with details such as a brick gate which is shaped to the exact dimensions of the gate to Auschwitz-Birkenau – suggest not ambiguity, but a sombre and oppressive theatricality.

Weinberg and Elieli describe the Hall of Witness as 'awe-inspiring, overwhelming in its monumentality, making the individual feel small and insignificant'.[19] The space, they claim, induces 'feelings of fear, loneliness, helplessness, almost of panic, but also of holiness'.[20] This reflects the architect's own thinking about the Holocaust:

> I don't believe that you could ever understand the Holocaust with the mind. You have to feel it. Feeling may be a better way of getting at it because horror is not an intellectual category as far as I can tell.[21]

According to Freed, the building was not intended:

> to be an architectural walk, or a walk through memory, or an exposition of emotion, but all of this. I want to leave it open as a resonator of emotions. Odd or quiet is not enough. It must be intestinal, visceral; it must take you in its grip.[22]

For all the talk of ambiguity, then, the building was clearly designed to have a direct emotional and visceral impact on visitors. Rejecting the idea that we can understand the Holocaust, Freed insists on ambiguity when it comes to how we reflect on this building and its various visual references, despite the fact that these are familiar references to a well-known set of visual tropes. When it comes to how visitors *feel*, however, the architect and the exhibition designers have done everything in their power to ensure a specific kind of result.

The exhibition designer, Ralph Appelbaum, describes how the exhibition spaces were created with the explicit intention of simulating for visitors the experience of the victims:

> We knew early on that one of the extraordinary parts of the event was that Europe was in flux and the victims were in flux. . . . We realized that if we followed those people under all that pressure as they moved from their normal lives into ghettos, out of ghettos onto trains, from trains to camps, within the pathways of the camps, until finally to the end. . . . [i]f visitors could take that same journey, *they would understand* the story *because they will have experienced* the story.[23]

What becomes clear in the architect's and exhibition designer's accounts, as well as that of Weinberg and Elieli, is that the memorial-museum embodies and seeks to project a reading of the Holocaust as inexplicable and closed to intellectual understanding. As Gross argues, 'What visitors are encouraged to take on authority is that the Holocaust must be *felt* because it can never be *understood*'.[24] Interestingly, here the supposedly sublime nature of the Holocaust becomes an occasion not for a call to silence or indirect or negative form of presentation, as in the positions articulated by Adorno, Steiner and Lyotard, but rather for the production of a particular kind of visitor experience. This approach is based on two key assumptions. First, that it is possible to create a museum environment which will produce in visitors an emotional effect that is akin to that experienced by the victims – as if taking a stroll through a contrived emotional rollercoaster of a narrative museum could provide understanding what it felt like. It therefore deceives visitors while also doing a great injustice to the victims. Second, it equates understanding with knowing what it was like *to be there*. Understanding is equated with personal and emotional experience. To know how something feels is a kind of understanding and not one to be dismissed. For example, to

have experienced bereavement may help one to understand the experience of another in a similar situation. But historical understanding – understanding how and why something happened – is something quite different. And, given that most people have not lived through a comparable experience, it is the only form of understanding open to most visitors. Not knowing how it felt is not the same as not understanding what happened. And being made to feel *as if* you have had an experienced which somehow approximates that of the victims is no kind of understanding at all; it is simply a delusion.

The intentions of those involved in conceiving and designing the museum are borne out in the visitor experience on offer. The relentless journey through the narrative begins when visitors are issued with ID cards – containing the details of a person who was persecuted and, in many cases, killed by the Nazi regime – as they enter the lift to the top floor and the start of the permanent exhibition. The identities are primarily those of the Nazis' Jewish victims, although there are also some which refer to homosexual and Roma and Sinti victims. The cards are handed out according to (presumed) gender to aid 'identification' and there are interactive points throughout 'the story' where visitors can access updated information of the progress of their 'character'. In the lift a screen shows film footage of US GIs arriving at one of the camps with the voice of a soldier recalling the horrors which awaited them:

> The patrol leader called in by radio and said that we have come across something that we are not sure what it is. It's a big prison of some kind, and there are people running all over. Sick, dying, starved people . . . Such a sight as that, you . . . you can't imagine it. You, you just . . . things like that don't happen.[25]

As Philip Gourevitch notes, in these first few minutes visitors are, paradoxically, called on to identify with both the hero-liberators and the victims but certainly not with the perpetrators – and nor, for that matter, with bystanders.[26] Exiting the lift, visitors find themselves in a low-lit room packed with photographs, artifacts, written information and audiovisual displays. The interior spaces are designed to ensure that once you enter the exhibition you are forced to follow the predetermined narrative, there are no opportunities for deviation, no exits, except for fire escapes, nor is there any opportunity for turning back. The interior spaces are dark, oppressive and overloaded with artifacts, information and multimedia displays; the whole experience is designed to induce feelings of claustrophobia and anxiety, feelings that are supposed to in some sense to mimic, or offer visitors some sort of access to, the feelings experienced by the victims.

The path through the exhibition is arranged over three floors. The first, 'Nazi Assault – 1933 to 1939', details the rise of the Nazis and their programme of persecution. Here information is for the most part displayed

behind glass in the form of text panels, photographs, artefacts and video. As visitors move down to the next floor, 'The "Final Solution" 1940–1945', the focus and feel of the spaces shifts. The exhibit is entered through a replica of the notorious Arbeit Macht Frei gate, made from a cast taken from the original gate at Auschwitz. The spaces through which visitors pass narrow as they move through the exhibit. In one section the floor is made up of cobblestones from the Warsaw ghetto, which make it uneven and tricky to navigate. Visitors must also pass through a genuine train cart from Poland. Arresting and disturbing, this dramatically lit artefact is at the same time, something of a cheap theatrical trick designed to garner the maximum possible emotional impact. As visitors pass into the spaces dedicated to the camps, the lighting dims and they are confronted with a set of bunk beds from a concentration camp; a film showing graphic and disturbing footage of medical experiments (set out of the sight of young children); and a scale model of a death camp complete with meticulously detailed human figures at the various stages of the process from arrival at the camp to the gas chambers and crematorium.

Passing through the exhibition also entails walking past a display of thousands of shoes, removed from the victims before they were killed, held in storage after the war and then later purchased and transported by the museum. The three-storey 'Tower of Faces' is packed with hundreds of images all taken between 1890 and 1941 in the Lithuanian town of Eishishok where a Jewish community that had existed for nine hundred years was destroyed when its members were killed by an SS mobile killing squad in 1941.[27] The individual images are poignant and moving; however, the manner in which they are curated is troubling. The images are piled up to emphasise the scale of destruction and they are displayed in a tower designed to evoke the crematorium towers of the death camps. While aesthetically powerful, as a visitor this struck me as an inappropriate and far from respectful treatment of the victims.

The final floor, 'The Last Chapter', addresses the liberation of the camps, rescue and resistance, the pursuit of justice and the founding of the state of Israel. The question of how the exhibit should end was subject to heated debate. With a leading member of the museum council 'strongly opposed an ending without hope', the decision was taken to end with a film of fragments of interviews with survivors with an emphasis on stories of survival, hope and resilience. In contrast to the dark, tight spaces of the forgoing exhibitions, the curved seating area in which the film is screened is bright and open and the walls are clad in yellow stone from Jerusalem. In the context of a discussion of the museum's supposedly universal interpretation of the Holocaust, Poole writes that the main lesson here is not universal but specific, 'that the visitors should, as Americans, recognize an involvement in the Holocaust as part

of their history and heritage'. This recognition is not simply of 'America as liberator' but also America as ally and protector of Israel.[28]

The Museum opened on 22 April 1993 at a time when the Holocaust was gaining popular cultural attention and, amid calls for military intervention in response to genocide in Bosnia, increasingly becoming a matter for public debate in the US and elsewhere.[29] While this context is significant, given the lead time on this project, its emergence and significance needs to be understood in relation to previous developments. Peter Novick has drawn links between the rise of the Holocaust in American culture to the US's allegiance to and support of Israel after the Yom Kippur War.[30] There is, however, another important facet of the timing which has been largely overlooked in the literature: the Vietnam War and its cultural fallout. The proposal for the museum was approved by Congress in 1980, the same year that the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Bill was passed. If the Vietnam War had damaged the myth of the United States as a bastion of freedom at home and liberator oversees, the commissioning of this museum was, I am suggesting, part of the process of undoing this damage and creating a new hegemonic consensus. Given the US's intervention in the war and role in liberating some of the camps, what the Holocaust and – as we saw with the World War II Memorial in Washington – the Second World War more generally provide is an opportunity for the nation to reaffirm its preferred self-image by casting itself in the role of the hero.

Unlike the genocide of American Indians, slavery or the war in Vietnam, the Holocaust could be, and is, narrativised in such a way that it functions to reaffirm 'American values'. As Susan Sontag writes, the Holocaust Memorial Museum is 'about what didn't happen in America' and so it

> doesn't risk arousing an embittered domestic population against authority. To have a museum chronicling the great crimes of slavery in the United States of America would be to acknowledge that evil was *here*. Americans prefer to picture the evil that was *there*, and from which the United States . . . is exempt.[31]

Weinberg and Elieli argue that the fact that the US is presented not only as liberator but also as bystander 'constitutes an act of public self-criticism. . . . Only in a democracy like America could a governmental museum include . . . such harsh self-criticism'.[32] Thus even to the extent that the museum can be seen as engaging in a self-critical reflection, this supposed self-criticism becomes an immediate opportunity for self-congratulation and the reaffirmation of liberal democracy. Indeed, the valorisation of 'American values' that the memorial-museum furthers arguably represents a straightforward example of the kind of instrumentalisation of the Holocaust which has troubled those involved in the debate over its representation.

The Holocaust Memorial Museum takes the supposed incomprehensibility of the Holocaust as its starting point and offers visitors special access to the incomprehensible by providing them with a vicarious experience of the trauma suffered by the victims. This approach reflects the shift discussed in chapter 3 toward what Landsberg refers to as 'the experiential as a mode of knowledge'. Landsberg argues that the Holocaust Memorial Museum is one of many mass-cultural forms which succeeds in turning 'history into personal memory' advancing 'the production of "prosthetic memories"'.[33] Against claims that the experiential approach amounts to the Disneyfication of history, she argues that in 'decentering' the cognitive mode of understanding this approach 'reflects a change in what counts as knowledge'. For Landsberg this is not about visitors experiencing the Holocaust as such but instead having 'an experience that positions their bodies to be better able to understand an otherwise unthinkable event'.[34] Like Young and Rogoff, Landsberg places faith in the power of 'memory' to transform individual subjects. Within their shared liberal framework, individuals bear both the capacity and the responsibility to ensure that history is not repeated. We live in a world which is increasingly saturated in 'memory' in its various institutional, memorial and popular cultural forms. And yet, looking around the world today, the idea that this makes us more morally responsible is highly questionable. This is not surprising given the failure to transform the social structures which repeatedly, and quite predictably, produce the persecution of minorities and genocide. If public pedagogy does have a role to play in transforming attitudes, it is difficult to see how this aim is furthered by a national institution which, however well intended, enmeshes the moral imperative to 'remember' with dubious and authoritarian appeals to emotional identification, on the one hand, and the valorisation of national values, on the other.

THE JEWISH MUSEUM BERLIN

When a design competition for an extension to the Berlin Museum, an eighteenth-century baroque building in the city's Kreuzberg district, was launched in 1988, Daniel Libeskind won with a complex and ambitious proposal which went well beyond the original design brief.[35] The son of two Holocaust survivors, Libeskind was born in Poland in 1946 and moved to New York in the late 1950s. Schooled in deconstructionist architecture by John Hejduk and Peter Eisenman, Libeskind had previously devoted himself to the exploration of theoretical problems. This project was his first opportunity to give physical form to his ideas. Reflecting on his design for the building and determination that it be realised, Libeskind tells of how he objected to the idea of a Jewish

department being added to the existing museum: 'I rebelled against this idea with all my mind body and soul. I did not believe that the Jewish dimension should be treated like just any other department of the museum'.[36] Instead, 'I did something I believed in, which was to transform the entire structure into a discourse about Jewish-German history'.[37] The Jewish Museum Berlin would become one of the most iconic buildings of the late twentieth century, which, as well as housing a collection, functions as a distinct Holocaust memorial in its own right.

The Jewish Museum is intended to give architectural form to trauma and historical rupture. The design is complex, overlaid, one might say overburdened, with historical references, musical texts and metaphors.[38] The central metaphor around which the building was conceived is that of the void which functions as an index of the unrepresentable, the negative sublime. Referred to by Libeskind as 'Between the Lines', the museum is designed around 'two broken lines: one straight but fragmented; the other tortuous but continuing into infinity'. These two lines intersect and create voided spaces. The fragmentation of space is a metaphor for history:

> The torn shards inside and out never existed as some prior whole (either in the ideal of Berlin or in the real one) nor can they be reassembled in some hypothetical future. The fragmentation is the spacing, the separation brought about by the history of Berlin, which can only be experienced as the absence of time and as the fulfillment in time of what is no longer there.[39]

The building first opened in 1999 but closed again in 2000 so that the exhibitions could be installed before reopening in 2001.[40] The imposing zinc coated exterior has a kind of zigzag form. Impenetrable from the outside, the museum has no entrance of its own and can only be accessed via the entrance of the old baroque building to which it is attached. Dark, brooding and curious in its form, it seems to repel as much as it invites the interest of passers-by; the thin slanted windows, like cuts, which run along its sides are the only indication of a connection between the building's interior and the world outside. Its somewhat hostile appearance has led one critic to describe it as:

> an untouchable space, an area beyond the reach of criticism, inaccessible to reason, precluding grief and mourning. . . . [It] eludes criticism and commands respect. A hermetic bunker-like perfectly self-satisfied building.[41]

Having entered via the older building, visitors are processed through airport-style security checks before descending a staircase to access the museum. The spaces below ground are fragmented and the walls and floors are slanted at irregular angles to make everything look and feel out of kilter. This ex-

pectation-defying subterranean space is intended to be confusing, disorientating and disarming. The underground level is divided into three intersecting pathways or axes which are lined with darkened glass display cabinets containing objects, photographs and documents which once belonged to the victims. The first leads to the 'Garden of Exile and Emigration'. The garden is square with pillars arranged on a regular grid and set on a twelve-degree gradient designed to cause a sense of disorientation and instability which is exacerbated by the uneven cobbled ground underfoot. The pillars have been planted with Russian willow oak trees which are intended to symbolise hope.[42] The second axis leads to the 'Stair of Continuity', which takes visitors up to the main exhibition spaces of the permanent collection 'Two millennia of German Jewish History'. The exhibition uses historical artefacts, photographs and various forms of multimedia and interactive display to represent the experience and significance of Jewish life in Germany. The third axis leads to 'the Holocaust void', a concrete tower, twenty-seven metres high, cold and dark except for a small slice of day light which shines through a slit cut into the wall high up the tower.

For Libeskind architecture is about communication: full of symbolism, architectural spaces are not simply containers they tell stories and even point 'toward that which language itself cannot fully articulate'.[43] What is it, then, that this building communicates? Although inspired by the Holocaust, which remains its key referent, the building is in fact a broader meditation on, and realisation in material form of, a particular view of history and where we stand in relation to it. Libeskind writes that the Jewish Museum deals with trauma and draws a distinction between viewing trauma from a psychoanalytical perspective and entering 'the space of that trauma, the space of the city'.[44] Trauma is, he maintains, something one can experience materially, phenomenologically, as well as psychologically.

Gross's concept of 'traumatic architecture' is useful in capturing something about the nature of the Jewish Museum and the Holocaust Memorial Museum and other related projects.[45] He argues that we are witnessing the emergence of 'an internationally recognizable memorial architecture . . . one emphasizing gaps, voids, incongruities and the personal relation to what theorists have begun to call 'negative' or 'evil sublime'. These buildings, he continues, '*act out* the trauma of the Holocaust as architecture; walking through them is supposed to be a step towards *working through* that trauma as feeling and experience'.[46] While his characterisation of this dominant international trend is convincing, I want to argue that there is an important difference between the ways in which these two specific buildings conceive of and give form to trauma and the kind of visitor experience they offer. In the Holocaust Memorial Museum, one is supposed to experience trauma vicariously. It sets out

to create experiences which in some sense replicate those of the victims to prompt visitors to identify and empathise with them. The central conceit here is that being made to feel like victims will prompt in us an aversion to the persecution of others. In contrast, in the Jewish Museum trauma is conceived more broadly, not simply as a something one might experience, whether in reality or vicariously but rather as something deeper and more profound. This building is not about the trauma experienced by individuals or groups; rather it is about history itself as trauma and the Holocaust as *the* traumatic event which structures contemporary cultural and intellectual life. The building gives form, then, to what Libeskind refers to as:

> The *absolute* event of history, the Holocaust . . . the incineration of meaningful development for Berlin and for humanity – shatters this place while bestowing a gift of that which cannot be given by architecture: the preservation of the sacrifice and the offering: guardian or night watch over absent and future meaning.[47]

LaCapra's distinction between 'historical trauma' and 'transhistorical or structural trauma' (discussed in chapter 3) provides a useful framework for understanding the different ways in which the notion of trauma is manifest in these buildings.[48] 'Historical trauma' is specific, it refers to the traumatic experiences of groups and individuals. While 'empathetic unsettlement' is an important and appropriate response to the trauma suffered by others, La Capra is clear that 'not everyone is subject to it or entitled to the subject-position associated' with traumatic experience.[49] In contrast, 'structural trauma' 'is related to (even correlated with) transhistorical absence (absence of/at the origin) and appears in different ways in all societies and all lives'.[50] Although the first can be overcome through processes of mourning and reconciliation, the second cannot. With events like the Holocaust there is, LaCapra argues, a danger when the two forms are collapsed into one and the event is accorded sublime qualities.[51] When this happens historical trauma is transformed into 'founding trauma', becoming the basis for collective and personal identities. Reading the Holocaust Memorial Museum and the Jewish Museum through LaCapra's framework we can see that the former deals with 'historical trauma'. I would argue that it aims to go beyond 'empathetic unsettlement' to produce 'vicarious trauma' and that this is inappropriate. In contrast, the Jewish Museum – which gives form to the Holocaust as the '*absolute* event of history' – enacts a reading of this historical event as a 'founding trauma', Lyotard's 'crime opening postmodernity'.[52]

Fragmented and intended to destabilise and disorientate, the Jewish Museum is designed to interpellate the postmodern subject – perplexed by history and by the ungraspability of the totality. Here the 'postmodern condition' finds

architectural form. This condition is to be experienced physically and aesthetically as well as intellectually. As Arnold-de Simine writes, approvingly,

> The feeling of disorientation and irritation which the architecture wants to invoke in the visitor . . . is not in imitation of the situation of the persecuted Jews, but first and foremost an attempt to undermine the interpretational security of the museum visitor.[53]

As Arnold-de Simine makes clear, the trauma experience here is not a simulation of that of the victim but an articulation of that which we are all encouraged to recognise as our own. The building enacts in architectural form the elevation of trauma from a concept which deals with real suffering and damage to a metaphor for life early in the twenty-first century which, as we saw in chapter 3, pervades much contemporary critical and cultural theory.

If Libeskind's building seeks to give material form to trauma through the metaphor of the void and the use of fragmentation and disorientation, the permanent exhibition it was designed to house does quite the opposite. It provides a narrative experience which leads visitors through two thousand years of German-Jewish history. The layout is awkward at times, punctuated by dead spaces and windows into the 'voids' that run through the building, so that there are occasional moments when one finds oneself in a dead-end corner. These feel more like purposefully odd affectations, however, than challenging museological interventions. The exhibition itself is not fragmented nor, once one has become accustomed to the odd shape of the building, is it particularly disorientating. The exhibition is a fairly straightforward linear path through history, structured around different themes which overlap temporally, such as 'German and Jewish at the Same Time 1800–1914' and 'Berlin, Berlin 1890–1933'. Visitors' walk through the narrative is not so heavily controlled as it is in the Holocaust Memorial Museum. There are arrows on the floor pointing visitors in the right direction, it is possible to go the wrong way or double back on yourself but there is no real danger that people will get lost. The Nazi period and the Holocaust, while they are addressed, do not dominate the overall exhibition. There are no piles of shoes or train carts and very few pictures of emaciated people and corpses. The exhibition ends with a modest display of pictures which document Jewish life in Germany after the war.

The Holocaust Memorial Museum uses an Americanised narrative to draw out the supposedly universal lessons of the Holocaust and appeal to an American audience. In contrast, the Jewish Museum's permanent exhibition focuses on the central role Jewish people have played in German social, cultural and

political life. The processes of identification, in so far as they are of significance here, are aimed not at establishing a relationship between the visitor and the victims whose presence is fairly minimal but rather with famous, influential and assimilated German-Jews. Aimed primarily at a German constituency, this somewhat homogenising approach emphasises continuity and the connections between German and Jewish life. So while the building is intended to give form to historical rupture – the Holocaust as the '*absolute* event of history' – the exhibition suggests continuity and conciliation.[54] Content thus appears to contradict form. In fact, I want to argue that the emphasis on continuity in contrast to the building's dramatisation of rupture sets the stage for a reading of the Holocaust as a catastrophic aberration beyond comprehension – as sublime.

Young reads the building as a counter-monument which poses questions rather than answers. The voids are, he argues, disorientating rather than didactic: 'Their aim is not to reassure or console but to haunt visitors with the unpleasant – uncanny – sensation of calling into consciousness that which has been previously – even happily repressed'.[55] In contrast, I would argue that while the counter-monuments seek to engage visitors in a dialogical encounter with the past, the Jewish Museum employs a range of heavy-handed architectural means to subject visitors to its will. Fragmented, destabilising and domineering, the building induces feelings of disorientation, confusion and even anxiety. It interpellates a postmodern subject: at once flattered into believing that their individual responses are both unique and significant and, at the same time, infantilised. Invited to view history as mysterious, incomprehensible, sublime, this perplexed spectator of history is bereft of historical agency. The building is awe inspiring and authoritative rather than critical and dialogical.

Young has also praised the building for being 'aggressively anti-redemptory' but *the museum* – formed of both the building and its contents – is more complex than this, and so too is its place in contemporary Germany.[56] Libeskind's own reflections on the museum and its meaning and significance are illuminating in this regard. While giving architectural form to something like the postmodern sublime and to the idea of history as trauma, Libeskind does not go all the way. Contradicting Young and transgressing the prohibition on redemption, he infuses the project with hope: 'By its presence, it contributes to the awareness of evils both past and present and has become a beacon of hope in the new German capital'.[57] Libeskind retains (or at least professes) a belief that liberal institutions have the power to transform not just individuals but also the city itself and perhaps even German-Jewish relations as a whole.

Finally, it is worth considering the timing, location and symbolic significance of the building. The design competition was launched in 1988, shortly

before the 'fall' of the Berlin Wall, but realised during a momentous period of transformation for the city and the now reunified nation. The building is located in Kreuzberg, on the edge of the former East/West divide. Before the Wall was removed, and because of its proximity to it, this was a marginalised and socially deprived, although culturally dynamic, area with a large Turkish community and a strong tradition of countercultural experimentation. With reunification the now central location of the area, as well as its rich cultural heritage, made it ripe for regeneration and gentrification. It is now a popular tourist destination, with rocketing rent increases driving established communities out of the area. Here, as in much of the post-Cold War redevelopment in Berlin, the emphasis on certain aspects of the city's history is foregrounded, whereas others are ignored or even erased.[58] As mentioned in the previous chapter and explored in further detail in the next, the past and its marking in the present have been and remain central to the city's transformation since reunification.

Central to the reinvigoration of Berlin's tourist economy, the Holocaust has been put at the centre of an attempt to form a post-reunification national identity internally, as well as to project a particular image of the nation on the international stage. This process has seen the dialogical approach superseded by more monumental memorial art which seeks to have the final word and draw a line under the past. The Jewish Museum marks a step in that direction. An iconic symbol of the nation's attempt to 'come to terms with the past', the building performs this process as spectacle and, as a popular tourist destination, invites visitors to engage with history and its overcoming by walking through this meditation on historical rupture as a physical, phenomenological experience. Articulated through the metaphor of the void, history is rendered sublime and the Holocaust is represented as the founding trauma of postmodernity and for a city and a nation reborn.

CONCLUSION

The counter-monuments' engagement with the Nazi past and its legacies formed part of a larger process of coming to terms with the past but did so in a way that was dialogical and subtly provocative. Site-specific interventions in the urban fabric of the cities in which they reside, they were free of some of the symbolic weight and public scrutiny to which national memorials are subject. In contrast, the Holocaust Memorial Museum and the Jewish Museum use trauma as a trope through which to present the Holocaust as sublime while at the same time recuperating it to serve the construction of what are, in the end, affirmative national narratives. The Holocaust Memorial Museum

serves to valorise 'American values' and patriotic sentiment, whereas the Jewish Museum gives form to the idea of the Holocaust as a radical rupture and serves a symbol of the nation's attempt to overcome it.

Although the American context is clearly quite distinct from the German, there are important similarities between these buildings. Although differently conceived in each, the concept of trauma is central to both and, as I have sought to demonstrate, both buildings are monumental and authoritarian in nature, using various architectural, curatorial and other means to affect and ultimately dominate the visitor. Domineering in its external form, the internal spaces of the Jewish Museum are intended to subject visitors to a destabilising and confusing experience. The idea here, just as in the Holocaust Memorial Museum, is that because the Holocaust cannot be understood, it must be 'experienced'. In the case of the Holocaust Memorial Museum the intended visitor experience provides visitors with 'access' to the Holocaust through the simulation of a vicarious experience of the historical trauma experienced by the victims. The Jewish Museum is also centred around the concept of trauma but here we are not dealing with the historical trauma of the victims, but rather with the Holocaust as a founding trauma, a metonym for a crisis of civilisation and of reason and understanding as such.

Affectively powerful in their own ways, the two museums draw their authority from slightly different places. Although the Holocaust Memorial Museum's emotional punch comes from the ways in which it seeks to mimic the trauma of the victims, the Jewish Museum's authority is premised on the articulation of the Holocaust as a rupture, a crisis of which we are all 'victims by proxy'. Both use the concept of trauma to evoke the Holocaust sublime. In so doing, I contend, they represent a return to monumentalism. This is not a return to classical or neoclassical monumentalism, of course, but rather a reformulation of the monumental through the postmodern trope of the dark or negative sublime. The very notion of the Holocaust sublime – the idea that the Holocaust cannot be understood – is essentially monumental in its form. In presenting the Holocaust as sublime, and even while rejecting *traditional* monumental forms, trauma architecture – which is premised on the very notion that the Holocaust cannot be understood but must be *felt* – gives form to this monumental claim. Like the sublime, the monumental serves to make us feel small, insignificant and in awe. At the same time, monuments serve to elevate certain individuals, values or groups. As in Kant's analytic of the sublime, they are productive of a sense of superiority. While in the case of the Holocaust this may appear perverse, the uses to which it is put in these and other national memorials is productive of a sense of superiority over the past which is central to their ideological purpose: that of reaffirming the

contemporary status quo. I pursue this line of argument in the next chapter specifically in relation to the Memorial to Murdered Jew of Europe.

NOTES

1. See, for example, Linenthal, 'The Boundaries of Memory'; and Weinberg and Elieli, *The Holocaust Museum in Washington*.
2. Gross, 'Holocaust Tourism'.
3. Wiesel, 'President's Commission on the Holocaust Report'.
4. Lennon and Foley, 'Interpretation of the Unimaginable', 47.
5. Weinberg and Elieli, *Holocaust Museum*, 18–19.
6. Ibid., 49.
7. Ibid., 49.
8. Quoted in Lennon and Foley, 'Interpretation of the Unimaginable', 49.
9. Biographical information from Dunlap, 'James Ingo Freed, 75, Dies'; and 'James Ingo Freed (1930–2005)', United State Holocaust Memorial Museum website.
10. Freed, 'The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum', 61.
11. Ibid., 65.
12. Ibid., 64.
13. Ibid., 63.
14. Details of the four works can be found in Weinberg and Elieli, *Holocaust Museum*, 29–31.
15. Freed, 'Holocaust Memorial Museum', 62.
16. Ibid., 64.
17. Ibid., 64.
18. Ibid., 64.
19. Weinberg and Elieli, *Holocaust Museum*, 26.
20. Ibid., 25.
21. Freed, 'Holocaust Memorial Museum', 65.
22. Ibid., 73.
23. My emphasis; quoted in Linenthal, 'Boundaries of Memory', 410.
24. Original emphasis; Gross, 'Holocaust Tourism', 81.
25. Video dialogue quoted in Linenthal, 'Boundaries of Memory', 407.
26. Gourevitch, 'Behold Now Behemoth'.
27. 'Tower of Faces', United States National Holocaust Memorial Museum website.
28. Poole, 'Misremembering the Holocaust', 43.
29. Rothberg, *Traumatic Realism*, 181.
30. Novick, *The Holocaust and Collective Memory*.
31. Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others*, 78–79.
32. Weinberg and Elieli, *Holocaust Museum*, 18.
33. Landsberg, *Prosthetic Memory*, 130.
34. Ibid., 131.

35. On the history of the museum, see Young, 'Daniel Libeskind's Jewish Museum in Berlin: The Uncanny Arts of Memorial Architecture', in *Visual Culture and the Holocaust*, ed. Zelizer, 179–97.
36. Libeskind, 'Counterpoint: Daniel Libeskind in Conversation with Paul Goldberger', in Goldberger, *Counterpoint*, 8–22, 13.
37. Libeskind quoted in Ibid., 22.
38. See Libeskind, 'Trauma', in *Image and Remembrance*, eds. Hornstien and Jacobowitz, 43–58.
39. Libeskind, 'Between the Lines: Extension to the Berlin Museum, with the Jewish Museum', 49.
40. Mathes, 'Teutonic Shifts, Jewish Voids', 174.
41. Ibid., 175.
42. For information on the gradient and trees species, see 'The Libeskind Building', from Jewish Museum Berlin website.
43. Libeskind, 'Counterpoint', 14.
44. Libeskind, 'Trauma', 45.
45. Gross, 'Holocaust Tourism'.
46. Ibid., 76.
47. Emphasis in original. Libeskind, 'Between the Lines', 49.
48. LaCapra, 'Trauma Absence and Loss', 721–22.
49. Ibid., 722.
50. Ibid., 722.
51. Ibid., 724.
52. Lyotard, 'Letter to Samuel Cassin', in Lyotard, *The Postmodern Explained to Children*, 30–31.
53. Arnold-de Simine, 'Memory Museum and Museum Text', 24.
54. Emphasis in original. Libeskind, 'Between the Lines', 49.
55. Young, 'Libeskind's Jewish Museum', in *Visual Culture and the Holocaust*, 194.
56. Ibid., 193.
57. Libeskind, 'Counterpoint', 13.
58. Akcan, 'Apology and Triumph', 173.

Chapter Six

The Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, the 'End of History' and the Holocaust Sublime

Building on the analysis developed so far, this chapter offers a critical reading of the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe in Berlin. The product of years of impassioned debate and controversy the vast memorial finally opened in 2005 and stands at the centre of the city's busiest tourist route between the Brandenburg Gate and Potsdamer Platz on the former no-man's land known as the *Todesstreifen* ('death strip') which once divided the city. Commemorating the darkest chapter in the nation's history, the memorial ostensibly disavows the traditional role of the national monument: that of glorifying the nation, its values and its achievement, as well as, giving form to and seeking to promulgate a shared sense of national identity. Reflecting recent trends in memorial architecture, this apparently ambiguous and non-didactic memorial to the nation's victims is certainly far from heroic and may indeed appear to renounce this tradition. And yet, standing at the heart of the city, the memorial is an icon of post-reunification Berlin transformation and a major tourist attraction. There is, then, an apparent paradox here: How does a monument to the nation's greatest shame, intended to express sorrow for the victims, end up being one of the capital's most popular tourist attractions? What does this tell us about the place of the Holocaust and the role of memorialisation in Germany today? And what does it suggest about the role of memorialisation in the current conjuncture?

THE MEMORIAL TO THE MURDERED JEWS OF EUROPE

The public campaign for the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe began in 1989 when journalist and national TV celebrity Lea Rosh proposed the construction of a 'highly visible symbol' of remembrance at a public forum

on the future of a site known as the Gestapo Terrain.[1] The site's history as the headquarters of the SS and the Gestapo emerged during a restoration project on the adjacent Martin Gropius Bau in the late 1970s.[2] Viewed as a metaphor for post-war silence, wilful forgetfulness and erasure, the site became the focus of a grassroots campaign to persuade reluctant local officials to allow it to be transformed into educational institution.[3] Joining the debate over the future of the site, Rosh proposed the establishment of a traditional *Mahnmal* (memorial of admonishment) to mourn and remember the Nazis' Jewish victims. In the end, however, Active Museum succeeded in securing the plot as a 'site of perpetrators', a museum intended to confront and engage visitors, challenging them to develop a critical understanding of the past and its consequences for the present.[4]

Although the campaign for the memorial failed to secure the Gestapo Terrain, the fall of the Berlin Wall and reunification opened up new possibilities and opportunities. In 1990 Rosh suggested a new location in the heart of the traditional government quarter 'on the ruins of the centre of Nazi power'.[5] The site had been home to the administrative headquarters of the Nazi regime. The Ministry of Nutrition and Agriculture, the Foreign Office, the Reich Chancellery, the Ministry for Propaganda and the bunkers of Goebbels and Hitler were all located either on or in close proximity to the site.[6] Aerial bombing and post-war demolition had erased much of this history and from 1961, with the construction of the Berlin Wall, the site had been part of the central section of the Todesstreifen, the mined and heavily guarded no-man's land designed to ensure strict control over movement to and from the East. The site is adjacent to the Brandenburg Gate, from where in 1989 East and West Berliners breached the foreboding structure signalling the end of the Cold War and the beginning of a new chapter in German history.

With the removal of the Wall the proposed site was part of a huge barren space at the centre of Berlin. Daniel Libeskind suggested that the land should remain untouched, a wilderness at heart of the city and reminder of its trouble past.[7] Concern for the economic future of the city was, however, paramount. The idea of dedicating part of the site to a purpose-built memorial was, however, deemed appropriate and in 1992 the German federal government provisionally agreed to make the land available. In dedicating this economically valuable and symbolically significant site to this purpose, the government signalled the reunified nation's commitment to fulfilling its duty to remember past crimes and the central place of the Holocaust not only in the nation's history but also to its present and its future.

The proposed memorial became a focal point for the continuing public debate over history and the legacy of the Third Reich, the question of national identity and the politics and aesthetics of commemoration. Although some

argued for the necessity of the memorial, critics insisted that a memorial which expressed sorrow for the victims without addressing the question of responsibility fitted all too well with Helmut Kohl's 'normalisation' agenda; an attempt to close down debate and draw a line under the past.[8] The naming and dedication of the memorial were also significant matters of contention.[9] The central dilemma is succinctly observed by Peter Carrier:

> Critics feared that a single monument would blur historical distinctions between motives for persecutions, but also that separate monuments would foster the symbolic segregation of the memory of victim groups to a hierarchy established within the system of perpetration itself.[10]

In the context of these debates and as a result of pressure from Sinti and Roma and Gay Rights activists, commitments were made to build two further memorials, to which I shall return in the final section.

An open international competition for a memorial design was launched in 1994. The City of Berlin guidelines stated that 'today's Germany is assuming its obligation:

- not to avoid the truth, or to give in to forgetfulness
- to honour the murdered Jews of Europe
- to remember them in sorrow and shame
- to accept the burden of German history
- to give the signal for a new chapter of human cohabitation in which injustice to minorities will no longer be possible'.[11]

From the guidelines and the debates around the need for, and significance of, the memorial it is possible to discern three distinct but interrelated central roles the memorial was to perform. The first is *commemorative*: to 'honour' and 'remember' the victims through the construction of a highly visible symbol that would speak to present and future generations. The second we might describe as *formative*: As discussed in chapter 4, in the context of reunification and anxious debates over its desirability and implications, the question of national identity – what form it might take, how it might be forged and its relation to the past – was central. Finally, the memorial performs what we might refer to as a *normalising* function. In the wake of Bitburg and in the context of international concerns over reunification, the memorial was intended to perform the nation to an international audience. It would act as a symbol of unity and international respectability, signalling to the rest of the world that Germany had learnt from its past and that there was nothing to fear from the reunified state. At the heart of the revisioning of Berlin after the Cold War, it was also, of course, intended to act as a tourist attraction.

Writing in favour of the proposed memorial in 1999, Jürgen Habermas saw it as an important step in the formation of the political self-understanding of German citizens and what he refers to as 'a fractured national identity':

> With this memorial the present generation of descendants of the perpetrators profess a political self-understanding into which is branded the deed – the crime against humanity committed and tolerated under the National Socialist regime – and *therewith* the anguish over the unspeakable crimes inflicted upon its victims, as a permanent source of disquiet and admonition.[12]

However, he insists that its purpose 'cannot be to elevate the Holocaust to the "founding myth of the Federal Republic"'.[13] And yet, the memorial's role as a national symbol of the reunified nation's attempt to confront its past and reaffirm the principles of democracy may suggest otherwise. Indeed, I will argue that as part of a broader politics of remembrance and erasure, the memorial plays just this kind of role: placing the Holocaust and its legacy at the heart of post-reunification national identity formation. Another issue with Habermas's conception of the memorial is that, like some of the projects discussed in chapter 4, it conceives of the addressees of the memorial as the decedents of the perpetrators and suggests an ethnic conception of intergenerational responsibility which excludes the decedents of the victims as well as those from immigrant backgrounds.

The memorial design competition attracted 528 proposals, registering a variety of responses to the challenge posed. As discussed in chapter 4, a number of counter-monumental proposal were entered but rejected. A proposal by Christine Jackob-Marks won the competition. The design consisted of three-hundred-foot-square tilted slab of concrete, on which the names of those known to have been murdered would be engraved, with eighteen boulders scattered on the surface, referencing the Jewish tradition of leaving small stones on gravesites.[14] However, described by James Young as 'too big, too heavy-handed, too divisive', the proposal was unpopular and Kohl vetoed the proceedings by withdrawing government support.[15] This threw the campaign into disarray and prompted further debates regarding both the possibility and the desirability of the project.[16] In response the organisers arranged a series of public meetings, held in January, March and April 1997. While international experts had a prominent role – and despite the fact that the proposed memorial was intended to speak for the whole nation – few from the former East participated and the memorial debate remained something of a West German affair.[17]

With the public consultation complete, a commission of experts was appointed to oversee a second, closed design competition. Twenty-five artists and architects were invited to submit proposals, of the nineteen submitted

four designs were short-listed for public consultation.[18] Richard Serra and Peter Eisenman's Waving Field of Pillars – a proposal to fill the site with four thousand grey concrete pillars, of varying heights and at various angles resting on an undulating surface – was the most popular among both the public and experts and won overall approval as a design concept. There followed a period of negotiation and adaptation during which Serra – famously uncompromising when it comes to the autonomy of his work – withdrew from the project.[19] Eisenman worked with the local authorities and government officials to address their concerns, reducing the size of the memorial to make it less threatening, safer and more user-friendly.[20] The project came under threat once again with a change of government in 1998, when Kohl's CDU government lost power to an Social Democratic Party (SPD)-Green coalition. The SPD Culture Minister, Michael Naumann, had been openly hostile to Eisenman's proposal prior to the election – calling instead for a 'House of Remembrance' which would include a library, a museum and a genocide research institute.[21] A compromise was eventually reached, however, and the proposal voted through Parliament on 25 June 1999 with the significant proviso that an Information Centre would be incorporated into the memorial site.[22]

Tasked with deciding how to integrate the Centre, Eisenman recommended that it be placed underground on the south-eastern side of the site. It was thus decided that the memorial – an aesthetic response to the Holocaust – would be given primacy over the accompanying Information Centre's pedagogic role. Although not in favour of the idea when it was proposed, during his speech on the opening of the memorial Eisenman praised the Centre as an important contribution and counterweight to the memorial;

> I think the Ort and the field together are very important . . . there are two ideas of memory. One is the unforgettable, which is the silence of the field; the other is the memorable, which is recorded in the archives, in the Ort. Together they are what make this memorial possible.[23]

THE MEMORIAL AND INFORMATION CENTRE

The memorial is made up of around twenty-seven hundred concrete blocks or pillars, each measuring 0.95 m deep and 2.38 m wide and varying in height from 0.2 m to 4.7 m. The pillars are arranged in a grid formation but tilted at slightly different angles and standing on an uneven ground surface covering an area of nineteen thousand square metres (figure 6.1).[24] A total of forty-one trees have been planted to the west side of the memorial where it meets the city-centre park, the Tiergarten. The pillars contain no inscription and their number is arbitrary bearing no relation to the number of people killed.

Figure 6.1. Peter Eisenman, Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, Berlin.
Photograph by the author, July 2011.

Although Serra withdrew from the project, his imprint on it, if somewhat tempered, remains apparent. Most famous for his large-scale works in steel, Serra became the youngest and most daring member of the minimalist grouping of artists when he moved to New York in 1966.[25] Rejecting illusionism, minimalism is concerned with objects in space, the body, perception and phenomenological experience. It seeks to overcome the 'metaphysical dualisms of subject and object' and holds that the meaning of a work resides not in the object but within the subject.[26] Serra's works often plays with perceptions of time and space and have been criticised for being overbearing in their monumentality.[27] He rejects this criticism but speaks of an interest in disorientating and provoking strong psychological responses in those who visit/participate in his works.[28]

Serra is not the first to have engaged with the Holocaust through a minimalist approach; nor is the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe his first response to the subject. His earlier works on the subject include: The Drowned and The Saved, created in 1992 as a site specific work for the Synagoge in Stommeln, Germany, but later moved to Köln; Gravity, created in 1993 for the Hall of Witnesses in the National Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington; and a work situated in Berlin.[29] The latter is titled Berlin Junction and it was purchased by city authorities in 1988 to serve as a memorial to the victims of the Nazis T4 euthanasia programme named after 4

Tiergarten Strasse, the address where the programme was devised and where the memorial is now located.[30] The building long erased, this mute but dramatic sculpture-cum-memorial now sits close to the Berlin Philharmonic Hall on the edge of the bus terminal which services the Cultural Forum. A short distance from the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe it is, nevertheless, isolated from the main tourist attractions of the reunified city, visited by few and regularly subjected to vandalism (figure 6.2).

Eisenman made a name for himself in the late 1960s as one of the 'New York Five'. Rejecting both humanist and technological approaches, the group was also united in its admiration for the seminal modernist works of the interwar period and the primacy they gave to formal issues. Eisenman took inspiration from the work of Giuseppe Terragni, a pioneer of Italian modernism under Benito Mussolini.[31] Despite his association with fascism, Eisenman argues that Terragni's architecture is 'critical' because it is concerned with

Figure 6.2. Richard Serra, Berlin Junction.
Photograph by the author, July 2011.

fragmentation, disjunction and contingency, rather than hierarchy, unity and continuity, and because it is open to complex textual readings.[32] Eisenman's work is also informed by Jacques Derrida's critical method of deconstruction and its implications for notions such as truth, certainty and meaning.[33]

Eisenman aims to break the 'strong bond between form and function', which he views as a hangover from a humanist era in which moral imperatives were used to justify architectural design. He uses the diagram as a 'template for invention', a means of pushing architecture beyond the bounds of modernism.[34] His technique involves generating geometric and grid systems, usually based on selected topographical features of the site, which are overlaid in complex computer-generated diagrams and manipulated to help to determine architectural form. Eisenman used this technique to determine the manner in which the ground plane of the memorial would undulate and the positioning and tilt of the pillars.[35] He began with two basic grids: the first determines the positioning of the pillars in a standard grid. The second is generated by the topography of the city. The difference between the ground and the top plane of the memorial, and the way in which the pillars tilt, is determined by the intersection of the two grids.[36]

The memorial is intended to subvert assumptions about the inherent rationality of the grid and therein the very notion of a stable, rational and predictable system.[37] The 'perceptual and conceptual divergence' between the top and ground planes is intended to evoke this sense of instability. It also denotes 'a difference in time between . . . chronological, narrative time and time as duration. The monument's registration of this difference makes for a place of loss and contemplation, elements of memory'.[38] For Eisenman the voids or 'indeterminate spaces' created by the forms are essential in creating the physical and temporal experiences visitors undergo as they pass through the memorial.[39] In keeping with a minimalist conception of art as non-referential and non-expressive, the meaning does not inhere in the memorial – which is not (according to Eisenman) intended to promulgate a predetermined message – but rather in the experience of the visitor.[40]

This minimalist/deconstructionist approach is quite distinct from the more open and interactive stance of the counter-monuments discussed in chapter 4. They have a participatory logic which seeks to engage the viewer in 'memory work'; this might be through engaging directly with the memorial, as in the inscription of messages on the Gerzs' Hamburg memorial, or by engaging the public in researching the biographies of the victims, as in the Stolpersteine project. In contrast, minimalist-inspired treatments of the Holocaust emphasise somatic experience and silent reflection rather than cognitive and communicative forms of engagement.

This somatic-reflective emphasis is already prefigured by the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. In Berlin, as in Washington, much of the power of the memorial comes from the fact that to engage with it the visitor must walk through and become immersed in it. Here the memorial precedent set by Lin is extrapolated, its potential effects more fully realised. Designed to evoke feelings of isolation, disorientation and unease, the memorial uses various strategies in pursuit of this end. There is a marked difference between the top and ground planes, indiscernible when it is viewed from the edge. As they walk into the memorial, visitors become aware of this discrepancy as the undulating ground drops and they descend below street level and find themselves quickly, and somewhat unexpectedly, surrounded by the pillars towering over them. As in the Garden of Exile at the Jewish Museum Berlin, the destabilising effect is amplified by the uneven ground surface. At the same time, as with the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, as visitors descend the noise of the surrounding streets is dampened. In Berlin the effect is much more dramatic, however, because of the size of the memorial and the level of physical immersion it requires. The city, although it remains visible through the gaps between the pillars, is put at a distance, estranged. In the Vietnam Veterans Memorial there is a clear path along which visitors travel with a descent into darkness followed by an ascent into light with the implied symbolism of redemption. In contrast, the path through the Berlin memorial is not predetermined and the question of redemption is both more complex and more indirect. At the same time, however, the narrow gaps between the pillars mean that it is necessary to walk through in single file. It also makes passing others difficult, so that the path visitors take is, at least in part, determined by the need to avoid uncomfortable physical and social interactions. Each visitor is an atomised wanderer silently trying to find a path through this strange and at times even threatening field of concrete forms.

Blank, mute, austere and at times domineering, this vast memorial is also remarkably photogenic; and, particularly when the light plays off its surfaces, even beautiful. Yet, in the absence of a dedication plaque or direct invocation of the Holocaust, one could be forgiven for mistaking the memorial for a giant abstract artwork. It has been both praised and criticised for its 'associative openness'. For German architectural critic Heinrich Wefing, 'one of its merits is that it does not dictate what its observer should think or experience'.[41] Another commentator, Julius Schoeps, then head of the Moses Mendelssohn Center for European Jewish Studies at the University of Potsdam, said:

> the site didn't particularly move me. The arbitrariness of the messages especially troubled me. Whom does one commemorate at this place? The Jews? Or

> perhaps the fallen Wehrmacht soldiers? The whole thing is not so entirely clear. . . . I find it regrettable that they decide on a design that can stand for everything and for nothing.[42]

This apparent 'openness' is reflected in the ways in which people engage with the memorial. While most visitors move through the memorial quietly, one also hears the screams and laughter of younger visitors running through and playing hide and seek. Visitors of all ages commonly sit on the pillars to eat their lunch, chat or use their phones and stand on them to get a better view or camera shot (figure 6.3). Others jump from pillar to pillar with a disconcerting air of glee and excitement.[43] When it first opened such behaviour was condemned as inappropriate and disrespectful, however, jumping across the memorial has now become a common practice. In my experience of visiting the memorial on numerous occasions since 2005, it is now unusual *not* to see someone jumping across the pillars. There is a code of conduct for visitors displayed on small plaques discretely set into the floor around the edge of the memorial which requests that people refrain from smoking, climbing and jumping on the memorial, lighting barbeques and sunbathing. There is, however, nothing about the memorial itself that precludes these kinds of behaviour.

In 2017 writer, artist and activist Shahak Shapira launched a project to name and shame people who had posted pictures of themselves posing at

Figure 6.3. Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe.
Photograph by the author, July 2011.

the memorial on social media sites. Shapira was born in Israel in 1988 but moved to a small East German town as a child and has written of being surrounded by Nazis and Nazi sympathisers and of his experience of anti-Semitic abuse and violence.[44] He selected twelve images of people at the memorial behaving in ways he deemed inappropriate and superimposed them on photographs of the camps, some of which included emancipated victims and corpses. These images were then displayed on a website alongside the originals. The project was named Yolocaust (combining the acronym for 'you only live once' with Holocaust).

Yolocaust sought to name and shame the individuals in question and spark a larger debate about contemporary commemorative culture. The project succeeded in catching the attention of the international media and the website was visited by more than 2.5 million people.[45] Within a week all of those featured on the site contacted Shapira to express their regret and ask for the images to be taken down, they also each removed the images in question from their social media profiles. In this sense, Yolocaust was incredibly successful. And yet, in taking aim at individual visitors, it fails to engage critically with the memorial itself and to question its role in the touristic and symbolic economy of the city. This is, after all, a major tourist attraction and the kind of 'dark tourism' it seeks to encourage raises all kinds of moral and political questions about the ways in which the memorialisation of atrocities, not only here but around the world, has become an economically significant part of the tourist industry.[46]

Eisenman's position on the memorial's meaning and the ways in which people interact with it is somewhat ambivalent. Referencing Hannah Arendt's notion of the banality of evil, Eisenman claims that 'The enormity of the banal is the context of our monument'.[47] Placing his own work within a broader lineage of critique explored in chapter 3, like Lyotard, Eisenman posits a direct link between modernity and the Holocaust. At the same time, he is careful to insist that the memorial has no fixed meaning and that there is no right or wrong way to interpret or engage with it. And yet, Eisenman had always hoped to prompt powerful emotional responses and was impressed by the psychological impact of the memorial: 'I've heard people say they were in awe and felt a sense of speechlessness, their hands got moist, and I'm pleased with these kinds of reactions'.[48] On this basis, he described the memorial as offering 'an analogous experience in the present' to that experienced by people 'who got off the trains at Auschwitz'.[49] Wefing has, rightly, described the architect's suggestion that his work would act as 'a Holocaust simulator' as 'obscene'.[50] For the purposes of our analysis, it is important to note here that, while rejecting the notion of inherent *meaning*, Eisenman nonetheless embraces the idea of evoking strong *emotional responses* and even a vicarious experience of the trauma suffered

by the victims. Even more significant, in light of our previous discussion of the Holocaust sublime, like Freed, Eisenman explicitly links his work to the supposed incomprehensibility of the Holocaust: 'In this monument', he writes, 'there is no goal, no end, no working one's way in or out. The duration of an individual's experience of it grants no further understanding, since *understanding is impossible*'.[51]

As my analysis of 'trauma architecture' in the previous chapter suggests, Eisenman is far from alone in attempting to use architecture to evoke the 'Holocaust sublime'. As Gross argues, what trauma theory and the idea of the Holocaust as the negative sublime in the works of theorists like Lyotard, have in common

> is the notion that the past exceeds our capability to represent it, and that this excess manifests itself through formal distortions and negative gaps. Irregular form, in other words, is the index of unknowable content.[52]

'[D]isplacing history into the spatial and experiential registers of architecture and memory' trauma architecture does more than simply reflect these theories – it renders them concrete.[53] The memorial stands as a symptom of the unknowable – the traumatic core which supposedly lies at the heart of historical experience. Emphasising experience over historical understanding, it invites physical and psychical immersion and emotional response. The scale of the memorial, its defiance of expectations, the fact that one cannot take it all in from any one vantage point and the manner in which it sets out to disorientate and destabilise, all point to the memorial's rendering of the Holocaust as sublime. The implications of evoking the Holocaust sublime here requires further attention, not least in relation to the memorial's historical and urban contexts. Before returning to this, however, we must analyse the accompanying Information Centre and the distinct ways in which it represents the Holocaust and engages the visitor-subject.

If the memorial evokes the scale and incomprehensibility of the Holocaust, the Information Centre is intended to provide a counterweight to the abstract artistic statement above. Its primary aim is to 'personalize and individualize the horrors of the Holocaust' and, secondary to this, to inform visitors about other memorials and historical sites in Germany and across Europe.[54] In response to heated debates over the role of the memorial, the scope of the Information Centre was carefully and narrowly defined to ensure that it would avoid supplanting or undermining the work of other historical and commemorative sites and institutions.[55] The Centre would not, it was agreed, include any original artefacts, nor any complex treatment of relevant histori-

cal issues such as the rise of Nazism, the history of Jewish life in Europe or the evolution and implementation of the 'Final Solution'.

The exhibition opens with a display of six large photographic portraits: arresting, haunting, they give a face to the victims with whom visitors are asked to identify. Alongside these images, a timeline on the wall begins with the Nazis' rise to power in 1933 and ends with the fall of the regime and the end of the war in 1945, clearly delimiting the Centre's focus. The task of 'personalizing and individualizing' is taken up in room one, where quotations from personal letters and diaries are displayed at ground level in illuminated glass plates. The low lighting and the fact that visitors are forced to look down help to induce a sober and contemplative atmosphere. These plates, like the other design elements in the Information Centre, are the same size and shape as the memorial pillars and constitute the key motif used by the designer Dagmar von Wilcken to link the Centre and the memorial above.[56] The pillar motif is also reflected in the ceiling and display cases. While they echo the memorial above, the pillar-shaped and coloured display cases are made of thin sheets of some kind of wood or MDF and give the Centre a temporary feel and finish in contrast to the weighty permanence of the concrete memorial above.

In 'The Room of Families', the biographies of individual families from across Europe are shown along with reproduced photographs and documents. Next is 'The Room of Names', a dark space with benches, where a disembodied voice reads out the names and brief biographies of individual victims in German and English, while their names are projected on the walls. 'The Room of Sites' is perhaps the most informative of the four main exhibition spaces. Here short films, images and texts provide information on the death camps and the scale of destruction, while the testimony of survivors is relayed through telephone-style audio installations. On leaving this room, visitors return to the bright daylight of the foyer area where they are invited to access archive material including survivor testimony and information on other sites of remembrance including memorials and museums in Germany and across Europe.[57]

Reflecting the terms of, and participating in, the ongoing debate regarding the representation of the Holocaust, the Memorial and Information Centre might be seen to strike a balance between Adorno's call for an indirect or negative form of representation – the memorial's invocation of the sublime – and concerns voiced by Lanzmann and Lang as to the need to remain true to the facticity of the events, not least in the face of those who deny what happened. In refusing to 'represent' the Holocaust in any straightforward sense, while at the same time seeking to destabilise and prompt a shift in perceptions at the level of the individual subject, it could be argued that Eisenman's evocation of the sublime reflects the position outlined by Adorno. And yet,

I contend that the forms of engagement and kinds of response it elicits constitute an aestheticisation of the victims' suffering as something which visitors are invited to access at the level of perception and emotional response. At the same time, a national memorial is never simply a work of art and cannot be read or judged merely in these terms. As I have argued, national memorials, however aesthetically radical and avowedly non-didactic and non-nationalistic they may be, remain pedagogical devices and ideological signifiers. Intended to convey the significance of particular events to present and future generations, national memorials – even when they emerge from a context of contestation – convey and reaffirm what is, at the time of their construction, the hegemonic interpretation of those events and their significance. If, as some have suggested, memorials had ceased to function in these ways there would be little sense in building them. Constructed in the context of reunification (and again against Adorno) the memorial may also stand accused of instrumentalising the Holocaust in the interests of a process of reforming the identity of the nation and the city. I will return to this point toward the end of the chapter.

Placing the emphasis on identification, the fairly modest Information Centre contains only a rather limited amount of historical information, while the memorial above bears no inscription and betrays no explicit didactic intent. Indeed, reflecting the call made by Rogoff, discussed in chapter 4, this national memorial ostensibly eschews the task of providing a definitive account of the events it commemorates and how they ought to be 'remembered'. Instead it invites visitors to develop their own understanding by piecing together their own journey around the various sites to which it points. This non-totalising approach – which reflects and responds to concerns over the relationship between this and other historical and memorial sites – suggests a response to the complexities of the events and the debates they have inspired. At the same time, however, there is a postmodern-consumerist logic at play here which invites everyone to 'experience' their own Holocaust as they engage in a touristic journey from one site to the next. As a site dedicated to the victims which tells us nothing of the perpetrators, this national memorial, which is also a major tourist attraction, arguably disavows responsibility for dealing with the complexities of the history it seeks to commemorate.

Rather than confronting visitors with this history, Bettina Mathes argues that the memorial invites visitors to adopt 'a victimised position. . . . Instead of feeling *for* the murdered Jews, the memorial invites me to feel as [a] Jewish victim'.[58] As I have argued, this call to identify oneself with a victimised position is deeply problematic, not least given the memorial's location in the capital city of the 'land of the perpetrators'. At the same time, however, I want to suggest that the memorial also – and especially when viewed from

the edge – invites another kind of viewing position; that of neither victim nor agent, but rather spectator. This vast memorial, which sets out to perplex, disorientate and destabilise, confronts this spectator-subject with the enormity and supposed incomprehensibility of history. Although the memorial is often read in isolation, the visitor-spectator does not – in fact cannot – view the memorial apart from its urban context. The memorial is situated in the heart of the city and deeply embedded in the urban fabric and symbolic and tourist economies of Berlin. It is to a reading of the memorial's relationship with its immediate urban setting that I now turn to explore, among other things, the implications of rendering the Holocaust as sublime in this particular national and local context.

URBAN CONTEXT

When I first visited the memorial in 2005 and 2006 it still had the appearance of something like a void at the heart of the city. Today it is far more comfortably embedded in its surroundings. The saplings planted to soften the grey concrete aesthetic have grown into established young trees which succeed in softening the contrast between the memorial and the Tiergarten across the road. The construction sites which once surrounded the memorial are now occupied by neighbouring buildings including shops, apartments and offices. On its north edge the memorial tapers to ground level, where it meets the new US Embassy (figure 6.4). The US first purchased the site, then home to Blücher Palace, in 1932. Destroyed by a fire shortly afterwards, the embassy only finally opened in 1939 and then had to be vacated just two years later when the US entered the Second World War.[59] After reunification, the US consolidated the existing embassies in Bonn and East Berlin and in 1992, at around the same time that decisions were being made about the location of the memorial, it was decided that a new embassy would be constructed on this historic site. The symbolic significance of the location was emphasised by US Ambassador Dan Coats during the groundbreaking ceremony in 2004:

> During . . . the Cold War, the Brandenburg Gate was a symbol of division. Today the Brandenburg Gate is a symbol of unity and strength for Germany, Europe and the world. The decision of the United States to return to this historic site symbolizes America's support for a unified Germany.[60]

Opened on 4 July 2008, the embassy was intended to symbolise the US's place at the heart of the reunified city and to celebrate its relationship with the new German state. At the same time, described by one critic as a 'lonely fortress', the heavily securitised building appears almost menacing in its

Figure 6.4. Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe with the US Embassy and the Reichstag.
Photograph by the author, July 2011.

defensiveness, a warning perhaps rather than a celebration.[61] It is as if the embassy had been positioned on the old death strip to guard over an historical victory, marking the triumph of the West at what was perhaps the most symbolically significant locus of the Cold War.

To the north-west side of the memorial stands the Reichstag building, home to the national parliament (the Bundestag). Famously 'wrapped' and then unwrapped in an artistic stunt by Christo and Jeanne-Claude, the Reichstag became the scene of a popular celebration of German democracy and an international spectacle in 1995.[62] The extensively renovated building is now topped by a glimmering glass cupola which is open to the public as a tourist attraction, offering views over the city and down to the parliament below. It is, not entirely subtly, intended to symbolise and celebrate the transparency of democracy.[63]

Opposite the memorial on its west side, over the road on the edge of the Tiergarten, stands the Memorial to the Homosexuals Persecuted under the National Socialist Regime (figure 6.5). Designed by Michael Elmgreen and Ingar Dragset, it is formed of a single grey concrete block, twelve feet tall by six feet wide. Through a window on one side visitors see a film of two people of the same sex kissing.[64] The memorial opened in 2008 and is intended not only to mark the crimes of the past but also – in a country where aspects of the

Figure 6.5. Michael Elmgreen and Ingar Dragset, Memorial to the Homosexuals Persecuted under the National Social Regime, Berlin.
Photograph by the author, July 2011.

1871 law criminalising male homosexuality remained on the statute book until 1994 – as a symbol of tolerance and inclusion and against the persistence of homophobia.[65] Tilted towards the memorial over the road, its positioning and size in relation to it, and the fact that it appropriates its formal language, reflects a desire for inclusion which also makes it look like a slightly odd offshoot of the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, like something of an afterthought, which indeed it was.

Nearby, sheltered amongst the trees, stands the Memorial to the Sinti and Roma of Europe Murdered under the National Socialist Regime. It opened on 24 October 2012, after years of debate over the name and the inscription and a series of disputes between the artist and the Berlin authorities (figure 6.6).[66] Designed by Israeli sculptor Dani Karavan the memorial is formed of a pool of water twelve metres in diameter with a triangular stone column at the centre which references the badges prisoners were forced to wear in the camps. The stone is retractable and a fresh flower is placed on it each day.

Figure 6.6. Dani Karavan, Memorial to the Sinti and Roma Murdered under the National Socialist Regime, Berlin.
Photograph by the author, July 2013.

Around the pool carefully placed stones, some bearing the names of the death camps, fan out to evoke the central motif of the flower. Information about the genocide, or *Porajmos*, is displayed on glass panels around the edge of the memorial site. Surrounded by trees, the memorial is self-enclosed and, unlike the homosexual victims' memorial, makes no obvious visual reference to, nor attempt to connect itself with the larger memorial across the road. In place of an inscription, Roma poet Santino Spinelli's 'Auschwitz' circles the pool of water.[67]

It took the (West) German authorities until 1982 to formally recognise the genocide of the Sinti and Roma. The existence and central location of this memorial may, therefore, be seen as an important symbolic gesture, not only recognising the suffering of the victims but also acknowledging the continual marginalisation and persecution of Sinti and Roma throughout Europe today. As important as this message is, however, the question of the hierarchy of victimhood remains unresolved.

When a national memorial to the Nazis' Jewish victims was first proposed, Romani Rose, chair of the Central Council of German Sinti and Roma, published a petition demanding the inclusion of the Sinti and Roma victims.[68] The President of the Central Council of the Jews in Germany, Paul Spiegel, was likewise concerned by what he saw as the memorial's 'incomplete mes-

sage' and 'the danger of creating a hierarchy of the victims and of pain suffered'.[69] The two smaller memorials' close proximity to their larger neighbour places them at the heart of Berlin's memorial landscape. Their relative size and positioning do, however unintentionally, suggest a hierarchy. The three memorials also divide the victims according to the criteria of persecution and exclude other victims – including people with disabilities, political prisoners and other ethnic and religious minorities – whose suffering has not been the subject of successful public campaigns for central national memorials.

Returning to the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, to the south side the gleaming towers of the new incarnation of Potsdamer Platz dominate the skyline (see figure 6.1). An icon of modernity in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, after the Second World War Potsdamer Platz was left in ruins. Marking the border between the Soviet and British quarters, it was the scene of tense confrontation and became part of the death-strip when the Wall was erected.[70] After the fall of the GDR decisions about the future of the centre of Berlin were quickly made and – in an effort to attract large-scale corporate investment and to create a new commercial hub for the city (and amid some controversy) – large plots of land around Potsdamer Platz were sold off for redevelopment.[71] Although decisions over the future of Potsdamer Platz were made behind closed doors, citizens and tourists were invited to experience the redevelopment as spectacle. In 1995 a temporary structure called the Info-Box was erected and visitors were invited to enjoy panoramic views of the largest building site in Europe and witness 'the city of the future' being constructed.[72] Potsdamer Platz is now a tourist magnet in its own right. It is dominated by three showpiece towers. In the centre stands the Kolloff Tower, the redbrick facade of which brings the visual language of New York to Berlin. On the left, is Renzo Piano's yellow terracotta, glass and steel Debis Tower (part of a complex of four buildings). On the right stands the Bahntower (home to the headquarters of Deutsch Bahn) which is part of Helmut Jahn's vast Sony complex: a sparkling millennial vision in glass and steel.[73] Described by one critic as 'an emotional vacuum', Potsdamer Platz stands as a cold, sterile instantiation of the ubiquity of corporate architecture; a vast privately owned complex of corporate headquarters, shopping malls, food outlets and high-end apartments.[74]

The mélange of postmodern and neo-modernist architecture which dominates Potsdamer Platz is accompanied by a scattering of traces and relics of the past, historical knickknacks selected to provide interest for tourists. The remains of the Esplanade Hotel, have been literally packaged, encased in glass, within the Sony Centre. Other historical relics include sections of the Berlin Wall, complete with faux-Cold War guards and a rather dreary-looking

Figure 6.7. Karl Liebknecht Plinth, Berlin.
Photograph by the author, July 2011

pedestal for a statue never made, dedicated to Karl Liebknecht (see figure 6.7). First unveiled by the Mayor of East Berlin in 1951, it remained unfinished and then, with the construction of the Wall, was left standing in the border strip between the two states. Held in storage from 1995, it was returned to its original but utterly transformed location in 2002. Liebknecht, a leading figure in the November Revolution of 1918 and co-founder of the Spartacus League (which later became the German Communist Party), is appropriated as a 'democratic member of Parliament' who was 'murdered by *Freikorps*'.[75] The rather more complex and messy history of the November Revolution and the foundation of the Weimar Republic is left untold.[76] A short distance away, a preserved section of the Wall has been transformed into a kind of memorial to fellow communist leader Rosa Luxemburg. Her image and the words '*Ich bin eine terroristin*' ('I am a terrorist') were stencilled onto the wall by artist Stefan Micheel in 2004. Asserting her significance alongside that of Liebknecht, in the context of the War on Terror the work was also intended to raise questions about the nature of historical memory in Germany and the language used to refer to those deemed 'enemies of the state'.[77] These two communist icons, stand within, but in contrast to, the present incarnation of Potsdamer Platz. References to an earlier age of competing ideologies, these memorials may also be seen as trophies to capitalism's confident victory over its histori-

cal foe. Indeed, when viewed from the dark and sombre memorial, the towers of Potsdamer Platz themselves appear like a triumphant flag planted at the heart of this once divided city to symbolise this victory.

The all-pervasive nature of this triumph has in recent years become more overtly manifest at the memorial. When it first opened, the idea that the site would become home to commercial food outlets and souvenir shops was deemed inappropriate and unacceptable. However, after complaints about the lack of toilet facilities and refreshments for visitors, in 2006 a structure containing numerous retail units was constructed and now runs the full width of the memorial along Cora-Berliner Strasse (figure 6.3). Today, as you stroll through the memorial from the west side to the east, the spaces between the pillars are filled with shop signs and advertisements beckoning you out of the solitude and darkness of the memorial which peters out just a few steps from 'Dunkin Donuts' and the other culinary delights on offer. If the memorial may once have provided visitors with a space for reflection, this space has now been somewhat unceremoniously filled. The call to 'remember', however problematic it may be, is now overshadowed by the rather more profane injunction to consume. If when it first opened the memorial seemed to mark a void, today it appears more like a slightly curious backdrop to normal social and commercial life in a key tourist destination. Visitors can jump off the coach and within a few minutes carry out their ethical duty to remember, grab a burger and then enjoy a beverage and take in the views from the roof terrace cocktail bar which now overlooks the memorial.

While the memorial places the 'memory' of the Third Reich and its victims at the heart of the city, in the surrounding area many of the structures and traces of the decades of separation have been removed or buried in the process of reconstruction. Where they are preserved, such as on Potsdamer Platz and around the nearby Checkpoint Charlie (an old crossing point between the East and the West), remnants of the years of division are overtly commodified and even mocked, with actors dressed as border guards providing amusing 'photo opportunities' for tourists (figure 6.8)

Although in no way exhaustive, my analysis of this urban context suggests a reading of this as a deeply ideological landscape. Eric Hobsbawm, who had lived in Weimar Berlin in his youth, describes the new Berlin as 'a subsidized showcase for the values of wealth and freedom', much as West Berlin had been during the Cold War.[78] The symbolic locus of a battle for the future, today 'the end of history' is writ large in the city's urban landscape. The battle has been decisively won and here the nation represents itself as a bastion of liberal democracy as well as the natural home of consumer capitalism.

Figure 6.8. 'Checkpoint Charlie', Berlin.
Photograph by the author, July 2011.

If, as the architect suggests, the memorial is intended to deconstruct the instrumental rationality associated with modernity, its critique is narrowly delimited. Holding modernity responsible for the Holocaust it fails to consider its relationship to the prime engine of modernity: capitalism. The evolution of the memorial, from a site of commemoration to one of consumption – flanked by fast food outlets and souvenir shops and overlooked by a swanky terrace bar – is a mark of the extent of this disassociation. Another can be found in controversy which erupted in 2003 when it emerged that the German firm Degussa which was contracted to cover the memorial pillars in anti-graffiti paint once (through a subsidiary named Degesch) supplied Zyklon B to the Nazi's gas chambers. While construction was briefly halted, with concerns over the costs and completion dates at the fore, and to the dismay of Rosh and others, the matter was quickly resolved and the contract continued. President of the German Parliament and Chair of the memorial foundation Wolfgang Thierse defended the decision, arguing that this is 'a monument that the whole of German society is building' and that, in this spirit, no part of society should be excluded 'even if their predecessors were connected to the Nazi regime's crimes'.[79] The implication is clear; whatever may have happened in the past Germany stands together as one nation. But this nation remains divided and not simply along East/West lines. The rise of the far-right in Germany in the last decade or so speaks of a nation that is far from having 'come to terms'

with its past or with the structural causes of fascism which remain in play today.[80] Indeed, the rise of the far-right since reunification, points both to the necessity and the limitation of memorialisation in Germany today.

A counter-monumental project by the Centre for Political Beauty mobilises the iconic power of the Berlin memorial as a weapon in the fight against the rise of the far-right. At a political rally in Dresden in January 2017 Björn Höcke, a member of parliament for the far-right political party Alternative für Deutschland (AFD), said of the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe: 'we Germans are the only people in the world who have planted a memorial of shame in the heart of their capital' and called for the nation to adopt a positive attitude towards its past.[81] In response to Höcke's speech, the Centre for Political Beauty bought the house next door to his home in Bornhagen and constructed a scale replica of the memorial in the garden. They describe the work as a 'monument against the creeping normalisation of fascism in Germany'.[82] The work succeeded in spoiling Höcke's view, while also drawing attention to the parallels between the contemporary far-right and the Third Reich.[83] The group have fought and won several court battles against demands for damages to Höcke personal rights, attempts to have the work removed and to have them evicted from the property. This work then, uses the well-known memorial in Berlin as a reference point, turning Höcke's speech regarding the memorial against him. It also highlights the continuities between the Nazis' politics and Höcke's own and thus calls for the need for political action to defeat the forces of fascism in Germany today.

The Holocaust Memorial in Bornhagen is an audacious artistic and political stunt. And yet, while highly effective in capturing public attention, it doesn't engage critically with the memorial itself nor the limitations of German memorial culture more generally. Flagging the crimes of a long dead regime, the memorial renders history both spectacular and sublime. Evoking awe and incomprehension, it allows the contemporary subject to consume it without having to confront the connections and continuities between this past and our present. Encouraged to adopt both a victimised position and that of a spectator, visitors are never prompted to view themselves as historical agents. As Peter Marcuse warned before it opened, the memorial might 'pay tribute to the victims . . . but will say nothing of causes or perpetrators: so victims without villains, a natural catastrophe, not the doing of humans, an event, not an action'.[84]

Before concluding this chapter, it is important that we return to the question of the sublime in light of this analysis of the relationship between the memorial and its urban and national contexts. I want to suggest that the invocation of the sublime here is complex and needs to be read on more than one level. The memorial ostensibly evokes the postmodern conception of the

sublime championed by Lyotard, which accepts the limits of human reason and opens up an ethical space wherein history can be contemplated but never grasped as a totality. As a national memorial at the heart of the capital, this may appear, then, as a symbol of the German nation's humility, a far cry from the Kantian notion of the sublime as a reaffirmation of the superiority of human reason. While this reading is appealing in its simplicity, there is more going on here. In holding the sublime as an ethical space, postmodern thought, in refusing to grapple with the totality, actually leaves the way open for it to be recuperated for the purposes of reaffirmation. Removing the sting from history and enabling it to be consumed as another highlight on a whistle-stop tour of the city, the memorial's rendering of the Holocaust as sublime does more than simply mystify history then. Inviting us to confront the past and steady ourselves, unsettled perhaps but ultimately secure, it opens the way for that history to be recuperated as a means of reaffirming the status quo. Read in relation to its wider urban and historical contexts, the memorial participates not only in the construction of the Holocaust as a singular and incomprehensible event that we cannot and indeed *should not* seek to understand, but one over which, with the 'end of history' and the victory of liberal democracy and capitalism, the German nation has triumphed. What is reaffirmed here is the actually existing totality that is contemporary global capitalism and, alongside this of course, the German nation-state in its current neoliberal form.

CONCLUSION

Occasioned by reunification and situated at 'the end of history' the memorial generates meanings in complex ways. While clearly intended to commemorate the victims and to signal a responsible relation to the past in the present, it does much more than this. Located just metres from the Brandenburg Gate on the old death strip at the heart of this once divided city and burying the material traces of the years of division, the memorial straddles and unifies the two halves of the city. It fills the void left in the wake of the removal of the wall with a powerful symbolic statement regarding the nation's past, present and future. Reflecting and reaffirming the central place of the Holocaust in the nation's self-understanding, at the same time, this enormous and extraordinary memorial renders history as both incomprehensible and yet somehow *experienceable.* On the one hand, as they immerse themselves in the memorial and walk through the underground Information Centre, visitors are invited to identify with the victims at an emotional and affective level. On the other hand, it invites them to view history through the eyes of a perplexed spectator, as mysterious, incomprehensible, even sublime. Sublime, that is, not only in the sense of being an assault on the powers of our understanding

and imagination but also as providing an opportunity to reassure ourselves of our own superiority, in this case, over the past. The Holocaust sublime invites us to face history from a position of distance and superiority, to view it as something that happened then which bears little or no relation to the subject who encounters it now.

At the same time the memorial functions as a popular tourist attraction where people come to 'experience' history and grab a hotdog before the coach moves on to the next stop on the tour of the highlights of the city. The memorial's location and its status as a major tourist attraction raise important questions as to the place of the Holocaust in contemporary Germany. As Donna Stonecipher notes, this 'memorial to the country's greatest shame' is not hidden but 'given pride of place, it is made a star attraction, it is even glamorous. It is a memorial the city flaunts, wants people to visit'.[85] Its success as a tourist attraction may well lie precisely in the way in which it asks us to identify with the victims, to view the past as inexplicable and the present as inexorable. Mystifying the past and obfuscating its relation to the present, the memorial and Information Centre interpellate a bewildered spectator-subject. At the same time, and somewhat paradoxically, the visitor/spectator/consumer is positioned to identify with, and even admire, a nation that has faced up to and 'come to terms' with its history. Surrounded by the gleaming symbols of democracy and consumerism, the memorial places the darkest chapter in the nation's history at the centre of its capital. The dark and foreboding other of contemporary Germany, it not only condemns that past but enjoins us to identify with the present system as the least worst possible and, indeed, the only possible state of affairs. This may then, after all, be a rather traditional national monument which, among other things, acts to legitimate the nation and reaffirm the neoliberal status quo.

NOTES

1. Schlusche, 'A Memorial is Built: History, Planning and Architectural Context', in 'Foundation for the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe', *Materials on the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe*, 14.
2. Till, *New Berlin*.
3. Ibid., 63–82.
4. On the debate between the two groups, see Ibid., 121–52. On the history of the Topography of Terror which now occupies the site, see Rürup, ed., *Topography of Terror*, 222–23.
5. Rosh, quoted in Schlusche, 'A Memorial is Built', 15.
6. On the history of the site, see Ibid., 15–19; and Ladd, *Ghosts of Berlin*, 130.
7. Huyssen, 'Voids of Berlin', 73.
8. Till, *New Berlin*, 121–52.

9. For an overview of the debate, see Benz, 'A Memorial for Whom? The Debate about the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, about Victims of Persecution and about Memorial Sites', in Foundation for the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, *Materials*, 30–39. For a more critical in-depth analysis, see Carrier, *Holocaust Monuments*. For an insider perspective from a critic turned competition judge, see Young, 'Germany's Holocaust Memorial', in Young, *Memory's Edge*, 184–223.

10. Carrier, *Holocaust Monuments*, 138–39.

11. Quoted in Till, *New Berlin*, 161.

12. Habermas, 'The Finger of Blame: The Germans and Their Memorial', in Habermas, *Time of Transitions*, 41.

13. Ibid., 43.

14. Proposal discussed in Young, 'Germany's Holocaust Memorial', in Young, *Memory's Edge*, 189–91.

15. Ibid., 190. Also see Schlusche, 'A Memorial is Built', in Foundation for the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, *Materials*, 20.

16. For an overview of the debate, see Benz, 'A Memorial for Whom?' in Foundation for the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, *Materials*, 30–39; Carrier, *Holocaust Monuments*; and Young, 'Germany's Holocaust Memorial', in Young, *Memory's Edge*, 184–223.

17. Notable exceptions were Bruno Flier and Wolfgang Thierse. Till, *New Berlin*, 21.

18. See Schlusche, 'A Memorial is Built', in Foundation for the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, *Materials*, 22; and Young, 'Germany's Holocaust Memorial', in Young, *Memory's Edge*, 200–210.

19. On Serra's insistence on artistic autonomy, see Serra, *Writings Interviews*, 143.

20. On the adaptions to the design, see Young, 'Germany's Holocaust Memorial' in Young, *Memory's Edge*; Carrier, *Holocaust Monuments*; and Schlusche, 'A Memorial is Built', in Foundation for the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, *Materials*.

21. Naumann 'Remembrance and Political Reality'.

22. On parliamentary debates, see Young, 'Germany's Holocaust Memorial', in Young, *Memory's Edge*, 219–23; and Schlusche, 'A Memorial is Built', in Foundation for the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, *Materials*, 24–25.

23. Eisenman, 'Inauguration Speech', in Foundation for the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, *Opening Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe 10 May 2005 Speeches and Pictures*.

24. Measurements from the memorial website, http://www.stiftung-denkmal.de/en/memorials/the-memorial-to-the-murdered-jews-of-europe/field-of-stelae.html, accessed 2 October 2012.

25. Foster, 'The Crux of Minimalism', in Foster, *The Return of the Real*, 127–70.

26. Ibid., 40.

27. For a feminist critique of his work, see Chave, 'Minimalism and the Rhetoric of Power', 59.

28. Foster, *The Art-Architecture Complex*, 236–39.

29. On *The Drowned and the Saved* and *Gravity*, see Foster, 'The Un/making of Sculpture', 189–92.

30. Ladd, *Ghosts of Berlin*, 153.

31. Eisenman, *Giuseppe Terragni*.

32. Eisenman, 'A Critical Analysis: Giuseppe Terragni', in *Peter Eisenman: Feints*, ed. Cassará, 75.

33. While the two men worked in dialogue, Eisenman rejects use of the term 'deconstructionist' to describe his work. See Derrida, 'A Letter to Peter Eisenman'; and Eisenman, 'Post/El Cards: A Reply to Jacques Derrida'.

34. Quotes from Eisenman 'Post/El Cards', 16. Also see Eisenman, 'Feints: The Diagram', in *Feints*, ed. Cassará, 204–5.

35. The diagrams for this project are reproduced in Eisenman Architects, *Holocaust Memorial Berlin*.

36. Ibid., 152.

37. Eisenman 'Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe' in *Feints*, ed. Cassará, 152.

38. Ibid., 152.

39. Eisenman discusses his interest in voids and absences in Eisenman, 'Reply to Jacques Derrida'.

40. I draw here on Eisenman's writings on the memorial: Eisenman, 'Inauguration Speech', 30–31; Eisenman, 'Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe', 152–63; and Eisenman, 'The Silence of Excess', in Eisenman Architects, *Holocaust Memorial Berlin*.

41. Wefing, 'The Holocaust Memorial'.

42. Schoeps, quoted in Wulf, 'Remembrance is the Cause of a Few Activists'.

43. See Deutsche Welle, 'Play Time at the Holocaust Memorial'.

44. Ziv, 'The Story of Yolocaust'.

45. Figure from Shapira's website, https://yolocaust.de, accessed 26 January 2020.

46. On 'dark tourism', see Lennon and Foley *Dark Tourism*; Sharpley and Stone, *The Darker Side of Tourism*; and Williams, *Memorial Museums*.

47. Eisenman, 'Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe', 152.

48. Eisenman quoted in Wise, 'Concrete Memory'.

49. Ibid.

50. Wefing, 'The Holocaust Memorial'.

51. My emphasis. Eisenman, 'Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe', 154.

52. Gross, 'Holocaust Tourism', 76.

53. Ibid., 76.

54. Minutes of the third meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Foundation for the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, 24 February 2000, quoted in Quack and von Wilcken, 'Creating an Exhibition about the Murder of European Jewry: Conflicts of Subject, Concept and Design in the "Information Centre"', in Foundation for the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, *Materials*, 40.

55. Ibid.

56. Ibid.

57. Further details on the exhibits can be found on the Memorial Foundation's website, http://www.stiftung-denkmal.de/en/memorials/the-memorial-to-the-murdered-jews-of-europe/information-centre.html#c1670, accessed 19 October 2012.

58. Mathes, 'Teutonic Shifts', 167.

59. On the history of the site, see Lyndon, 'The New U.S. Embassy in Berlin'; and Minosh, 'Sovereignty, Security, and the Architecture of American Governance', in *The Politics of Space and Place*, eds. Certomà, Clewer, and Elsey, 124.

60. Coats, 'Remarks by Ambassador Coats at the Groundbreaking ceremony for the New American Embassy in Berlin'.

61. Campbell, 'Sending the Wrong Message', 6. On the securitization of the building and its significance, see Minosh, 'Sovereignty, Security', in *The Politics of Space and Place*, eds. Certomà, Clewer, and Elsey.

62. Huyssen, 'Monumental Seduction: Christo in Berlin', in Huyssen, *Present Pasts*, 30–48; and Leslie, 'Wrapping the Reichstag: Re-visioning German History'.

63. Foster and Partners, 'Reichstag, New German Parliament; Berlin, Germany, 1992–1999'.

64. On the history and significance of the memorial, see Haakenson, '(In)Visible Trauma: Michael Elmgreen and Ingar Dragset's Memorial to the Homosexuals Persecuted under the National Socialist Regime', in *Memorialization in Germany*, Niven and Paver, eds., 146–56.

65. Moeller, 'Private Acts, Public Anxieties, and the Fight to Decriminalize Male Homosexuality in West Germany'.

66. Zimmerman, 'The Berlin Memorial for the Murdered Sinti and Roma'.

67. Dokumentation und Kulturzentrum, Deutscher Sinti und Roma, 'Cultural Events for the Inauguration of the Holocaust Memorial in Berlin'.

68. Rose, 'Zentrale Gedenkstätte' in Berlin Ein Mahnmal für alle Opfer.

69. Foundation for the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe. 'Spiegel's speech at the official opening ceremony on 10 May 2005'.

70. Ladd, *Ghosts of Berlin*, 119.

71. Rogier, 'Growing Pains'; and Roost, 'Recreating the City as Entertainment Centre', 9.

72. Guy, 'Shadow Architectures: War, Memories and Berlin's Futures', in *Cities, War and Terrorism: Towards an Urban Geopolitics*, ed. Graham, 81; Huyssen, 'Voids of Berlin', 69–72; and Rossi, 'Times Square and Potsdamer Platz', 43–48.

73. Guy, 'Shadow Architectures'.

74. Watson, 'Berlin's Empty Heart', 101.

75. Information and quotes from accompanying plaque, July 2012.

76. Gay, *Weimar Culture*, 147–51; and Carsten, *War Against War*, 208–32.

77. See the artist's website, http://www.stefanmicheel.de/rosa3.html, accessed 12 July 2020.

78. Hobsbawm quoted in Guy, 'Shadow Architectures', 78.

79. Deutsche Welle, 'Degussa to Continue Work on Holocaust Memorial'.

80. See Adorno, 'The Meaning of Working Through the Past' (1959), in Adorno, *Critical Models*, 89–104; and Clewer, 'Sublime Authority of Ignorance'.

81. Oltermann, 'AfD Politician Says Germany Should Stop Atoning for Nazi Crimes'.

82. The Centre for Political Beauty website, https://politicalbeauty.com/page23.html, accessed 12 July 2020.

83. Oltermann, 'Holocaust Memorial Replica Stunt Shines Light on Rightwing Radicalism in Germany'.

84. Marcuse, 'Reflections on Berlin', 335.

85. Stonecipher, 'The Moment's Monument', 14.

Chapter Seven

The National September 11 Memorial & Museum

Trauma, Commerce and Patriotism at the New World Trade Center

In December 2001, in his final speech as Mayor of New York City, Rudolph Giuliani said of the World Trade Center site:

> I really believe that we shouldn't think about the site out there . . . as a site for economic development. You've got to think about it from the point of view of a soaring, beautiful memorial. If we do that part right, then economic development will just happen. Millions of people will come here, and you'll have all the economic development you want.[1]

Reading Giuliani's speech as 'questioning the wisdom of commercially developing one of the country's most expensive pieces of real estate', Elizabeth Greenspan has described this as a 'radical' statement that only he 'could have gotten away with'.[2] Architecture critic Michael Kimmelman similarly misread Giuliani: 'Art before business: an amazing thought'.[3] Giuliani was not, of course, rejecting the idea of commercial development at all but, instead, rather astutely, making the case for an emphasis on memorialisation as the very means through which economic regeneration was to be secured. This chapter explores the ways in which the interplay between economic 'realism', nationalism and sentimentality have shaped the National September 11 Memorial & Museum and the redevelopment of the World Trade Center site within which they are situated.

THE WORLD TRADE CENTER SITE

In the days following the World Trade Center attacks, New York became littered with thousands of missing posters and spontaneous memorials. Reflecting well-established commemorative practices, the outpouring of emotion

and opinion on the streets and in the parks of New York in the immediate aftermath of the attacks represented a range of responses and positions which, I shall go on to argue, are excluded from the official National September 11 Memorial & Museum. Expressions of anger and hatred and calls for revenge competed with appeals for peace; the slogan 'our grief is not a cry for war' was answered with 'Fuck you, you left-wing coward piece of shit' and hand-written notices demanding that the US 'Bomb Afghanistan'.[4] Union Park Square became a particular focal point for both mourning and debate where, for a short time, 'political discussion and kitsch materiality' were allowed to coexist.[5] An equestrian statue of George Washington was transformed into an anti-war monument – a pre-emptive protest against George W. Bush administration's predictable response to the attacks. On 20 September 2001, the City Parks Department ordered that the banners, poems, candles, missing posters and other items that had amassed be cleared.[6] 'While public mourning was officially sanctioned in New York', McKim argues, 'the mixture of grief and political discussion that emerged in Union Square in the days following the attacks seemingly was not'.[7]

In the weeks that followed the attacks, thousands of people flocked to the World Trade Center site. Long after Union Park Square was cleared, the streets around the site were filled with teddy bears, flowers, banners and notices. While commentators waxed lyrical about the 'unspeakable' nature of the events, entrepreneurs wasted no time in commodifying the attacks which were at the same time being exploited by the Bush administration in the interests of pursuing its long-term political aims. Within days, street vendors were plying a trade in an array of 9/11 themed memorabilia ranging from T-shirts and snow globes through to Osama bin Laden toilet paper and walking tours around the site.[8] The number of visitors became a nuisance for the rescue, recovery and clearance operations. Rather than simply banning access to the area, however, the authorities not only sanctioned but also positively encouraged the publics' fascination by constructing a viewing platform. Opened in late December 2001, the platform had a timed ticketing system designed to manage the flow of visitors. Issuing four thousand tickets a day, it immediately became Lower Manhattan's most popular tourist attraction.[9] The viewing platform in New York provided visitors with access to what Miles Orvell has termed 'the destructive sublime', the so-called 'Ground Zero' of the wreckage, but also the processes of recovery and reconstruction which followed in its wake.[10] Giuliani explained the decision to create the platform:

> People from all over the world want to come here, for I think the most appropriate of reasons. . . . Because they realize that something very horrendous and very magnificent happened here. It's going to be part of our history forever.[11]

Referring to the event as both horrendous *and* magnificent, here Giuliani invokes the language of the sublime, endorsing visitors' fascination with the site as well as evoking the historical significance of the event. Attracting millions of visitors, the platform also made an asset out of a catastrophe. Survivors and relatives of the victims complained that the site was being turned into a ghoulish 'freak show' and a 'money-maker', but despite a campaign for its removal, the platform remained in place until late summer 2002 when it was removed so that reconstruction could proceed.[12] By then visitor numbers had dwindled and plans to build three further platforms were shelved.[13]

The public debate over the memorialisation of the events began within days of the attacks – amid all the shock and chaos of their immediate aftermath and before anyone knew how many people had been killed. As Sturken has argued, the speed with which thoughts turned to the subject is indicative of a broader preoccupation, even obsession, with memorialisation in the US.[14] Some suggested that the site be transformed into a public park, whereas others called for the dramatic ruins of the World Trade Center to be preserved as a memorial.[15] Philippe de Montebello, then director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, urged the city to commit 'to preserving the searing fragments of ruin . . . [as] a fitting, realistic and moving monument'.[16] Evoking the sublime power of the wreckage, he argued that this 'relic of destruction . . . could become a testament to renewal' and a 'symbol of survival'.[17] The economic and symbolic imperatives to rebuild, and rebuild quickly, and to do so in a triumphant manner, rendered this approach untenable. The idea of a permanent memorial at the site, however, was never seriously in question. At the same time, given the scale and intensity of the destruction this was not simply a question of designing an appropriate memorial. First decisions had to be made as to the future of the site. This would quickly become a divisive and passionately contested matter of national as well as local import because different groups, powerful individuals and organisations vied for control of the site and its future.[18]

The ground on which the towers had once stood was quickly declared 'sacred'. Although perhaps understandable – not least given that for many of the victims no physical remains could be uncovered and returned to the families for cremation or burial – this designation was nonetheless highly contested, not least because it came into conflict with the interests of both the owners of the site and local residents.[19] For local residents – many of whom had been forced to vacate their homes and some of whom had also lost loved ones in the attacks – the prime concern was with getting reconstruction underway so that they might get back to some sense of normality. The owners of the site, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (the organisation responsible for

building, operating and maintaining transportation and trade assets throughout New York and New Jersey), were concerned primarily with getting the damaged subway and train systems up and running again and with the site's swift and economically viable redevelopment. This aim was, however, complicated by the fact that there was a competing claim to ownership of the Twin Towers. In July 2001, shortly before the 9/11 attacks, the Port Authority had sold the lease on the World Trade Center to property developer Larry Silverstein. Primarily concerned with ensuring that the site's redevelopment would secure him the same square footage of rentable office space he had lost (10 million square feet), Silverstein immediately instructed his architect, David Childs, to begin working on designs for a new set of building.[20]

For many this rush to rebuild, and indeed for some the idea of rebuilding at all, was deeply offensive. And yet, although the victims' families were able to claim and mobilise a form of moral authority in disputes over certain aspects of the redevelopment, their ability to determine its future was in fact heavily circumscribed and its reconstruction as a commercial space was never in question.[21] Nevertheless, the idea of the site – and in particular the footprints of the Twin Towers – as sacred has remained central, not least in terms of the form of the memorial itself, which is constructed around (a particular interpretation of) New York City Governor George Pataki's promise to the families in July 2002 that the footprints of the towers would not be built on.[22]

As well as complicating the process of redevelopment, the designation of the site as 'sacred' or 'holy' ground – along with the numerous readings of the Gettysburg Address at anniversary ceremonies – conferred a specifically nationalist meaning on the site.[23] Situating the victims within a longer history of sacrifice in the name in the nation, it also tied the site and its future to a resurgent nationalism and bellicose rhetoric of revenge and retribution; the designation of holy ground as a justification of 'holy war'.[24] What Neil Smith has referred to as the 'anxious nationalization' of the attacks belies the fact that people from 92 different countries died at the World Trade Center.[25] '[C]haracterized as a "national trauma"' – rather than a local or international event – '9/11 was perceived as an assault on American innocence – a devastating blow that simultaneously mandated their shared therapeutic recourse in the war on terror'.[26] In 2007 the memorial foundation announced a change of name which would ensure that the events would be memorialised as a *national* tragedy: the World Trade Center Memorial was renamed the National September 11 Memorial & Museum at the World Trade Center: 'a national symbol that, like the Statue of Liberty, tells us something about who we are as Americans'.[27]

Bitterly contested at the local level, the future of the site was thus also invested with a symbolic significance for the nation as a whole. This, not

least, given the iconic status of the Twin Towers, the spectacular nature of their destruction and the damage inflicted not only at the material level of death and destruction but also at the level of signs.[28] If 9/11 had put the power and global dominance of the US into question, in the years that followed, the Bush administration was determined to reassert it. This was most dramatically and disastrously enacted through the War on Terror, where 9/11 provided legitimation for the pursuit of a set of foreign policy goals which long predated the attacks.[29] The rebuilding of the World Trade Center is also part of *this* story, part of an attempt to reassert US strength and power at the level of signs, just as it was attempting to do at the geopolitical level. The memorial and museum, and indeed the entire site, need, therefore, to be read not only in relation to the events they *explicitly* memorialise but also the wars these events were used to justify.

In August 2002 the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation (LMDC) – the body founded to plan and manage the process of reconstruction – launched an architectural competition for a new master plan for the site.[30] In February 2003, just weeks before the US invaded Iraq, Daniel Libeskind's proposal, Memory Foundations, was announced as the winner. Overlaid with references to mourning, heroism and renewal, Libeskind's proposal was both populist and sentimental. Constructed around a central memorial space – 'Memory's Eternal Foundation' – it would also include areas named the 'Park of Heroes', the 'Wedge of Light' and the 'Garden of the World'.[31] The crowning glory of Libeskind's plan was a tower that would stand at 49 feet higher than the old World Trade Center at the symbolic height of 1,776 feet – a reference to the nation's victory in the War of Independence in 1776. The tower's form, with its swooping spire, was intended to pay homage to the nearby Statue of Liberty. Pataki loved the idea and quickly renamed the building:

> You had the Empire State building, you had the Twin Towers. . . . It shouldn't just be, you know, One WTC. It should have a name. And symbolizing 1776 *and* showing the world that we weren't going to be frightened in the face of these attacks . . . the perfect name for this is the Freedom Tower.[32]

Designed to be the tallest building in the world, it would also be an unambiguously triumphant response to the symbolic damage inflicted on the nation and a forceful reassertion of the mythology of 'freedom' as the primary American value which, along with 'democracy', would be used to justify the War on Terror. This sentimental and patriotic proposal would drape the entire site in a metaphorical US flag. A theme park of trauma and heroism, the proposal chimed perfectly with the dominant, if deeply contested, narrative of these events in the US. It also fulfilled Giuliani's wish to see the site

transformed into a 'soaring memorial', not because it rejected the economic imperative but, rather, because it sought to imbued every inch of the site with a symbolic significance which would render shopping and going to work, as well as visiting the memorial at its heart, into a patriotic reaffirmation of 'American values'. Projecting a coercive consensus of meaning, crucially, it also provided the perfect cover for the maintenance of the site's commercial character, ensuring what Michael Sorkin has referred to as the 'holy of holies' – Silverstein's 10 million square feet of office space.[33]

Although the site conforms to the basic structure of Libeskind's original plan, in the end the more bombastically patriotic and sentimental elements of the masterplan were dropped. Much to Libeskind's dismay, the Freedom Tower, was redesigned by Silverstein's architect who eliminated the visual reference to the Statue of Liberty while retaining its symbolic height.[34] In 2006 and to get the development of the site moving again after years of disputes and legal battles, a deal was cut to shift the ownership of the Freedom Tower – feared to be 'an unleasable white elephant' – from Silverstein to the Port Authority.[35] The owners subsequently changed the name to One World Trade Center: an act of economic realism prompted by the realisation that potential corporate tenants were resistant to residing in such an emotively named symbolic target for feared future attacks.[36] Opened in November 2014, it is still popularly referred to as the Freedom Tower and will no doubt continue to be for years to come (figure 7.1).

The design competition for the memorial was launched in April 2003, just weeks after the US invaded Iraq. The competition guidelines stipulated that, among other things, the memorial must make the footprints of the original World Trade Center Towers visible and that it must recognise each of the victims.[37] Thousands of memorial designs from all over the world were submitted and considered by a jury formed mainly of professionals, including Holocaust memorial expert James Young and the designer of the nation's favourite memorial, Maya Lin. Alongside them sat a number of art experts, business people, philanthropists, political figures and just one family member, Paula Grant-Berry. Israeli American architect, Michael Arad, won the competition with Reflecting Absence.[38] The design preserved the footprints of the old towers which would form two recessed pools into which water would continually fall surrounded by a large plaza with a display of the victims and names and spaces for contemplation housed below ground level. Young explains that the jury were looking for a design 'that would not overwhelm or dominate visitors with inhuman scale or spectacle . . . that would allow for human reflection and inner contemplation'.[39]

Figure 7.1. One World Trade Center (the 'Freedom Tower'), New York, US.
Photograph by the author, September 2014.

The winning design underwent a series of changes before the memorial's final form emerged. Arad was instructed to work with landscape architect Peter Walker to soften the plaza area – which was seen to be rather bleak – by introducing trees, grassed areas and seating. Due to budget limitations and concerns over security and the symbolism of the underground elements, the display of the names was moved up to the plaza level.[40] An underground element would however be retained in the form of an accompanying museum. The decision to place a museum beneath the memorial echoes the relationship between the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe and its accompanying Information Centre. Rather than playing second fiddle to the memorial as in Berlin, however, here, as I will go on to argue, the museum is absolutely central in constructing a definitive narrative of the 9/11 attacks and the site and its meaning.

The period between the selection of the design and the opening of the memorial was characterised by continual struggles over the site's future shape and meaning.[41] In what remains of this chapter, however, I focus on the memorial and museum as they now exist and their relationship to the wider World Trade Center development.

THE MEMORIAL

The memorial opened in September 2011, on the tenth anniversary of the 9/11 attacks. It is formed of two pools, each measuring an acre in size, with water cascading thirty feet down and then disappearing into dark sunken voids (figure 7.2). Around the edge of the memorial the names of those killed are arranged on brass panels according to 'meaningful adjacencies': with groups of colleagues, relatives or friends clustered together in ways that would be meaningful to their loved ones. The names of service personnel are displayed separately with their division of the police or fire service clearly designated.[42] The memorial pools are situated within a generous plaza with seating areas and more than four hundred oak trees (figure 7.3). At the centre stands 'The Survivor Tree': a Callery pear tree which survived the attack and was restored to good health: 'a living reminder of resilience, survival and rebirth' – themes which, as we will see, frame the entire redevelopment.[43]

Figure 7.2. Michael Arad, National September 11 Memorial, New York.
Photograph by the author, September 2014.

Figure 7.3. National September 11 Memorial.
Photograph by the author, September 2014.

The memorial itself is fairly bland, a predicable cobbling together of the key elements of contemporary memorial architecture: the listing of the names; an aesthetic of absence (including subterranean elements) made palatable by symbols of hope and renewal (trees and water); and its use of the horizontal (rather than the vertical) plane to create space for visitors to sit or mill about. As Doss argues, the memorial's 'primary appeal lies in its giganticism. Visitors frequently describe it as 'awesome' and 'overwhelming', responding less to what might be symbolized than the scale of its enormous sunken fountains'.[44] The size of the memorial is, however, far from incidental. Somewhat predetermined by the commitment to make the footprint of the Twin Towers visible, the form of the fountains marks the 'death' of the towers as much as it commemorates the human victims of the attacks. At the same time, the size of the memorial has the effect of conferring a sense of profound significance on the events being commemorated, giving symbolic form to the ways in which the events themselves were mediated as an awesome spectacle, even a sublime event. Karen Wilson Baptist has written of the affective power of the water and the 'sense of transcendence' she felt in response to the memorial. Drawing on Landsberg, and describing herself as having generated 'prosthetic memories' of the attacks as she watched them on TV, she writes that at the memorial 'the draw of the darkness was all encompassing – stillness, peace, salvation; the water invited deliverance'.[45] One is prompted to ask: deliverance to whom and from what?

Accessible from various points, this vast memorial is designed to cater for a constant flow of tourists as well as acting as a ceremonial space where families and dignitaries come together on each anniversary. While Young insists that the aim was to create a hospitable and contemplative space, the size and location of the memorial, its overblown aesthetics of absence, the sheer number of visitors and resulting hubbub around the site create an environment far more attuned to spectacle than contemplation.

The memorial is very photogenic, and indeed, the predominant mode of visitor interaction here happens through the camera. People can be seen wandering around the memorial taking pictures, posing for 'selfies' and even queuing up to get the perfect shot. This is then, not merely a place where people come to pay their respects, but a popular tourist attraction. As in Berlin, here visitors are invited to experience history as spectacle. The memorial invites awe and wonder, its vast scale an index of the sublimity of the event it commemorates.

This bright, light, packed memorial plaza makes no explicitly obvious demands in terms of visitor etiquette. Although some become emotionally engaged – depositing personalised tributes, stroking or taking rubbings of the names – others treat the memorial much like any other tourist destination. Like the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, the memorial itself contains no inscription nor any national or religious symbols. R. R. Reno reads this lack of symbolism as nihilistic, arguing that the memorial focuses on 'the death of individuals' rather than 'our life as a nation':

> The overall effect is to downplay our citizenship and accentuate our shared, naked humanity. Surrounded by a faceless international style of architecture and stripped of national symbolism, the 9/11 Memorial offers no public meaning. There is nothing to dissent from – and nothing to consent to.[46]

Although Reno is correct to say that the memorial is in itself free of national symbolism, if we look at the ways in which visitors interact with it and what they bring to it, a different picture emerges. The memorial plaza is animated by an ever-changing plethora of national, patriotic symbols which visitors bring with them to the site (figure 7.4). Echoing practices developed at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, this memorial – with its ample, gently slanted, just above waist height surfaces – is designed to cater for and invites visitors' to leave personal tributes at the site. As in Washington, the small plastic American flag is a common and popular offering, second only to flowers, while others leave teddy bears, handwritten notes and photographs.[47] Most of these items are in some way decorated with red, white and blue, if not with the full stars and stripes, representing not only a tribute to the individual but also to the nation. Often seen sporting stars and stripes T-shirts and carrying

Figure 7.4. National September 11 Memorial.
Photograph by the author, September 2014.

flags, visitors and the tributes they leave behind thus bring colour as well as patriotic sentiment to this otherwise rather monotone memorial space. While Reno bemoans the memorial's lack of patriotic symbolism, in fact, the site is teeming with an ever-changing array of patriotic gestures. As befits a self-aware memorial attuned to contemporary commemorative practices and the desire of visitors to such sites to feel that they are able to 'express themselves', this deceptively simple memorial forgoes the temptation to impose a specific national narrative or a particular vision of patriotism. At the same time, however, these individual expressions draw on a limited repertoire of what are deemed to be appropriate gestures of mourning and remembrance. The resulting glut of roses, teddy bears and flags serves as a clear indicator, I would suggest, of the way in which the memorial coalesces patriotic sentiment and generates conformity without having to impose it. The contrast with the temporary memorials which sprung up in the immediate wake of the attacks – which contained diverse, contrasting and often conflicting responses, both personal and political – is striking.

If the memorial is rather banal, lacking the emotional intensity of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the unsettling aesthetic impact of the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, the museum below is so obvious and so ardent in its attempt to elicit emotional responses that it is almost a caricature

of the trauma architecture trend discussed in previous chapters. While much (although by no means all) of the overblown sentimentality of Libeskind's master plan was banished from the redevelopment at ground level, it finds refuge – one might even say its vocation – in the museum below.

THE MUSEUM

Located between the two memorial pools, the memorial-museum opened in May 2014. In his opening speech President Barack Obama referred to the museum as 'a sacred place of healing and hope'.[48] Despite these conciliatory words, many of the victims' families were deeply troubled by the museum. Among other things, they objected to the admission fee, the presence of a gift shop – offering a whole range of souvenirs from cuddly toys and T-shirts to designer jewellery – and the fact that the unidentified remains of the dead were to be stored in what they saw as a money-making venture. 'They're down there selling bracelets; they're making money off my dead son' complained the father of a firefighter who died.[49]

While the presence of the gift shop and a café can hardly come as a surprise (even the Auschwitz visitor centre has a café and a bookshop), the introduction of an admission charge has been particularly controversial – not least given that the museum is supposed to be dedicated to remembering what has been constructed as a national tragedy. The $26 fee (increased from $24 since it opened) makes this one of the most expensive museums in New York. Joe Daniels, the President of the Board, defended the charge, arguing that in the absence of government funding for the running costs – an estimated $63 million a year including $10 million in security costs – it was necessary to secure the future of the museum and ensure free access to the memorial.[50] As such, the museum, located at the heart of what is intended to be a shopping destination as well as a commercial hub, faces considerable pressure to ensure that it satisfy not only corporate sponsors – including American Express, the Walt Disney Company Foundation and J. P. Morgan Chase – but also the fee-paying, souvenir-buying public. At the same time, the memorial-museum is intended both to commemorate the victims and educate visitors and, as a national site of symbolic and ideological significance, provide a definitive account of the events and their significance. Here I explore the some of the ways in which the tensions raised by these competing demands are resolved – however tendentiously – through the language of national trauma, heroism and renewal.

The cavernous museum is located below ground and occupies 110,000 square feet.[51] Entered at ground level through a large glass and steel pavilion, it is

constructed around the commitment to retain the footprints of the old buildings. The museum director, Alice Greenwald, explains the significance of the site's archaeology, which helps to dramatise 'the story' while also offering visitors an 'authentic' experience:

> Not simply located at the site of the attacks, the Museum . . . has been built in a contemporary archaeological site whose authenticity of place has been fully integrated with the narrative that unfolds within it. Where most museums are buildings that house artifacts, this Museum has been built within an artifact.[52]

One critic has described it 'an artificial ruin, a curated aftermath'.[53] Greenwald insists, however, that the museum offers 'an emotionally safe encounter with a difficult history'.[54]

Greenwald worked at the National Holocaust Memorial Museum for nineteen years prior taking on the Directorship of the 9/11 Memorial Museum in 2006. She worked with creative director Michael Shulan to develop the museum's shape and rationale.[55] Neither an historian nor a museum curator, Shulan made a splash in New York as part of the team behind the first post-9/11 photography exhibition: *Here is New York: A Democracy of Photographs*, which invited amateurs and professionals alike to submit photographs which were in some way related to the day.[56] The exhibition was praised for both its democratic approach and its immersive qualities: 'the display transports you, surrounds you, nearly chokes you as you move through what people saw and felt . . . the photographs are filled with raw, unmediated emotion'.[57] This approach informed Shulan's vision of the museum which he insisted should be 'open' and non-didactic; visitors, he said, 'really need to feel that this is their story'.[58] His aim, writes Greenspan, was

> to replicate the mood of the day, particularly the experience of witnessing the attacks . . . the confusion the shifting accounts of what was transpiring, the multiple ways in which people made sense of what was happening: instead of taming this uncertainty Shulan hoped to build it into the story.[59]

As with the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the claim to multiplicity here actually functions to delimit a narrow range of acceptable responses; as such – and despite the rhetoric – it functions as part of a broader hegemonic process through which dominant interpretations are normalised and universalised as the only possible kinds of response. Reflecting the dominant trends in memorial architecture discussed previously, this is a *memorial-museum* constructed around a specific narrative, where the events addressed are both dramatised and commemorated. Here, however, as we shall see, the sense of drama far exceeds that of the instances of trauma architecture encountered so far.

Having undergone airport-style security checks, visitors enter the museum via a bright glass atrium. Two preserved metal columns from one of the destroyed towers dramatise the stairway. Alongside an image of the Twin Towers, these remnants are juxtaposed with a direct view of the imposing and unequivocally triumphant Freedom Tower. As they descend below ground level visitors are plunged into near darkness, with the only bright source of light emitting from the controversial gift shop. This dramatic descent into the museum, from the light into the dark, carries religious overtones which echo the designation of this as a sacred site.

Visitors then pass through a multimedia display: a cacophony of noise and images which seeks to evoke the horror and confusion of the day. Next, they find themselves in a lighter, brighter walkway overlooking Foundation Hall, a vast space dominated by and paying homage to the 'slurry wall'; the retaining wall that was built to prevent the Hudson River from flooding the site when it was excavated in the mid-1960s in preparation for the construction of the World Trade Center. The preservation of the slurry wall was central to Libeskind's plan for the site. It and the remains of the box columns that once anchored the old towers are invested with the metaphorical significance as 'foundations for the future, reminders of the hope for renewal'.[60]

The journey down to Foundation Hall takes visitors seventy feet below ground level along a series of strikingly large and virtually empty walkways. Employing a familiar contemporary trauma aesthetic, the sharp angles and voided spaces amplify the sense of drama the museum is designed to evoke. These walkways wind around the forms of the giant pools suspended from above. The preserved remains of the 'Survivors Staircase' – which once connected 5 World Trade Center to Vasey Street and provided an escape route for hundreds of evacuees – run alongside the steps down to the lower level of the Museum.[61] At the bottom of these steps is an artwork formed of 2,983 squares (one for each victim), each painted a different shade of blue, it is intended to commemorate the dead and as a meditation on the nature of memory: 'What one person perceives as blue might not be the same as what another person sees. Yet, our memories, just like our perception of color, share a common reference'. Located behind this wall – hidden from view and accessible only to family members and staff – is the repository of the unidentified human remains recovered from the site. While Greenwald has offered reassurances that the remains will be treated with care and sensitivity, the presence of what one might describe as a crypt or mausoleum within a commercial tourist attraction remains controversial.[62]

Turning left into the capacious and cathedral-like Foundation Hall, visitors pass a damaged fire engine, the preserved remains of one of the antennae from the old towers and a recovered lift mechanism (figure 7.5). At the centre of the

Figure 7.5. Foundation Hall, National September 11 Museum.
Photograph by the author, September 2014.

hall stands the 'Last Column' – the last of the World Trade Center columns to be removed from the site. Covered in tributes and acting as a kind of shrine, it remained in place until 30 May 2002 when it became the focal point of a funeral-like ceremony marking the official end of the recovery and clean-up operation.[63] These objects evoke a sense of the sheer materiality of the destruction. More than that, though, as Hal Foster has suggested, treated less as artifacts than as sacred relics, these remnants, help to confer a significance on these events which is theological rather than merely historical.[64] Indeed, they might be seen as the material counterpart to the language of unspeakability and the sublime, so quickly and easily mobilised in the weeks following the attacks and which have helped to define how they have come to be understood.[65]

Bush drew on this common trope: 'The murder of innocents cannot be explained, only endured', instantly converting it into a justification for revenge: 'And though they died in tragedy, they did not die in vain. Their loss has moved a nation to action, in a cause to defend other innocent lives across the world'.[66] As David Holloway argues, the idea that 9/11 changed everything 'became the ideological lynchpin of the "war on terror"'.[67] The notion that these events were exceptional and inexplicable was not merely the preserve of the war-mongering right, however, but became a common trope in political and academic discourse including among some on the left. Derrida, for example, said in response to the attacks that:

> 'Something' took place, we have a feeling of not having seen it coming, and certain consequences undeniably follow upon the 'thing'. But this very thing, the place and meaning of this 'event', remains ineffable, like an intuition without a concept.[68]

Gene Ray has similarly described the attacks in the language of trauma and the sublime, as something that 'marks the limit of conventionalized assimilable experience'.[69] As discussed in chapter 3, there is a distinct danger here that historical specificity is elided and history itself is rendered sublime. Ray performs precisely this kind of move when he argues that we are all 'victims by proxy' of the qualitative break constituted by the trauma of Auschwitz and Hiroshima which has destroyed the legitimacy of the capitalist world order and the myths of the Enlightenment.[70] For Ray 9/11 and the War on Terror are symptoms of our inability to mourn this loss and move beyond the 'looping and acting out of our trauma' through war.[71] Conceived of as victims not agents, contemporary subjects are enjoined to mourn rather than repeat trauma through vengeful acts of war. Ray strongly opposed the War on Terror. Nevertheless, this understanding of history *as* trauma – and therefore inaccessible, incommunicable and incomprehensible – can and has been used to serve quite different purposes. Indeed, as we will see with this museum, it is perfectly amenable to nationalist and right-wing agendas.

As visitors move from Foundation Hall into the historical exhibition – underneath the north pool – there is a sudden and dramatic shift. Foundation Hall is spacious, quiet and contemplative; in contrast, the historical exhibition is packed full of visitors working their way through narrow maze-like spaces, overloaded with written information, artefacts, photographs, videos and loud audio. The opening exhibit is structured around a timeline which offers a detailed minute-by-minute reconstruction of the main events of the day. Reflecting the nature of the events themselves, there are several overlapping timelines which shift from one place to another in a manner intended not to clarify what happened but to evoke confusion and – crucially – a sense that visitors are reliving the experience of those who witnessed the events, either in person or on television. News footage from the day plays on a loop, so too do recordings of those who would soon die saying their last words to their loved ones. The whole thing is, as intended, quite overwhelming.

The fact that these spaces are overcrowded with people and audiovisual, uncomfortable and anxiety-inducing is of course not a failure of design but its very purpose. The museum takes the previously discussed principles and strategies of trauma architecture to the next level. As I have argued, drawing on Gross, the core principle of trauma architecture is not that we might come to *understand* an historical event – for this is presumed to be

impossible – but that we need to be made *feel* it.[72] Here, as in the Holocaust Memorial Museum, the immersive experience is intended to generate something like the forms of prosthetic memory and vicarious trauma discussed in chapter 3. Visitors are invited to participate in the trauma of these events and, crucially, make it their own. In the Holocaust Memorial Museum such strategies have been justified in terms of the need to touch visitors at an emotional level so that they might empathise with the victims and thereby undergo a transformative process which will help them to guard against the persecution of religious and ethnic minorities in the future. Here the same strategies are employed to instill a sense of shared victimhood; evoking American innocence and inviting visitors to feel like they know what it was like to be there. This self-indulgent fantasy of vicarious trauma is the means through which visitors are encouraged to identify themselves not only with the victims but also with the nation.

Having 'experienced' the events of the day, visitors then move through two further historical exhibits. The first provides some historical context, with displays on 'New York before 9/11', information on the hijacking of the planes and a controversial film on the origins of al-Qaeda. In the context of growing Islamophobia in the US, concerns were raised about the way in which Islam is represented in the museum which stood accused of conflating the religion with terrorism and contributing to misunderstanding and antagonism. These concerns were dismissed by the museum.[73]

The final set of exhibits focus on the aftermath of the attacks: Here images and artefacts are used to recreate the temporary memorials and shrines which sprang up in the days after the attacks. The rescue and recovery missions, as well as the rebuilding of the World Trade Center site, are treated in great detail. In contrast, the broader context of the attacks, the question of US foreign policy prior to 9/11 and the aftermath of the attacks, including the War on Terror, are treated in only the most cursory fashion. A text panels close to the end of the historical exhibition reads:

> To prevent future attacks, the U.S. government initiated a Global War on Terror. . . . One of the many objectives was to undermine terrorism by enabling open, democratic elections in countries governed by repressive regimes. Many joined the military to defeat supporters of terrorism.[74]

Portraying the US as acting in self-defence while benignly exporting democracy, the panel goes on to say that: 'Debates about national security, civil liberties, and military action continue'. It ends with a quotation from Bush's 20 September speech: 'Our War on Terror begins with Al-Qaeda, but it does not end there. It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped, defeated'.[75] Two small flyers for anti-war protests are

displayed nearby, but there is no attempt to contextualise them nor any mention of the sizable anti-war movement in the US or the scale of opposition to the war around the world.

In Foundation Hall the material relics of retribution form a display on the killing of Osama bin Laden which includes the shirt worn by the Navy SEAL who shot him and a brick from his compound in Pakistan.[76] Daniels described the shirt as 'a tangible reminder to all those who visit the Museum of the undaunted courage and steely resolve of the American men and women, who risk their lives – to keep our country safe from harm'.[77] While this 'victory' – the extrajudicial killing of Bin Laden – is deemed to be 'part of the story' the museum makes no mention of the hundreds of thousands of Afghans, Iraqis and others killed, maimed, traumatised and displaced in the name of the War on Terror nor its devastating and ongoing consequences in the region.

Beneath the south pool 'In Memoriam' displays the images of the victims of the 2001 attacks and the 1993 World Trade Center bombings – each the same size, arranged in a regular grid and covering four walls. Reminiscent of the Room of Names at the Berlin memorial, there is a smaller dark room within In Memoriam in which the names and brief biographies of the dead are read out and projected onto the wall along with their photographs and, in some cases, accompanied by audio recordings of friends and family recalling the life and character of the deceased. The portrayal of the victims is modelled on the *New York Times'* award-winning *Portraits of Grief* series which ran in the weeks and months after the attacks. These short anecdotal biographies and images presented a sanitised and standardised all-American brand of wholesomeness stripped of anything that might be deemed contentious.[78] Loving parents, dedicated employees, generous and respected members of their communities, the victims are represented as idealised exemplars of the American dream. As Doss argues

> from the moment of their murders, their deaths were manipulated to sustain politicized assumptions of American national innocence and to legitimate national security narratives of revenge and retribution – from the hastily conceived USA Patriot Act to the prolonged war on terror.[79]

Focusing on the heroism and innocence of those who died in the attacks and the way in which the US responded, the museum is, as Greenwald writes:

> As much about '9/12' as it is about 9/11 . . . a case study in how ordinary people acted in extraordinary circumstances, their acts of kindness, compassion and generosity of spirit demonstrating the profoundly constructive effect we can have on each other's lives by the choices we make, even in the face of unspeakable destruction.[80]

The museum reflects the insistence of campaign groups like Take Back the Memorial that this should be a space free from politics, dedicated to the commemoration of the dead and the events of that day alone. The museum presents the latter in laborious detail and fetishes the material remains while offering visitors little sense of the context in which these events occurred or the continuing, devastating aftermath of the War on Terror.[81] The events are isolated from history as though they were indeed inexplicable. If, as James Tracy suggests, a 'new politics of bearing witness to 9/11 . . . was the central element in the resurgent US nationalism that reverberated across the country', the museum's emphasis on bearing witness to, even vicariously experiencing (rather than developing a rounded understanding of), these events must be understood as an attempt to legitimise what has been done in the name of justice and revenge.[82] More than this, evoking the sublime nature of the event, the museum gives form to an understanding of 9/11 as a 'founding trauma' for a nation wounded but reborn. That is, in LaCapra's terms, a historical trauma which is imbued with a sacral and sublime quality such that it is transformed into the basis of identity formation.

This understanding of 9/11 as a founding trauma pervades every element of the museum and is given a filmic rendering in the small cinema located next to In Memoriam. *Rebirth at Ground Zero* plays on three of the four walls providing visitors with an immersive experience of the World Trade Center site's redevelopment. Beginning with the sounds of destruction and dream-like images of floating ash, the central theme of the film's opening scenes is that of pain and sorrow combined with hope and determination. The bulk of the film consists in a speeded up montage of the process of reconstruction with voice-overs relaying personal reflections on the process of healing and its relation to the rebuilding of the site. This foreshortened representation of the process of coming to terms with the real trauma suffered by many, ends on an upbeat note, with images of the completed memorial and affirmative accounts of how the pain of loss has lessened over the years. Ending on a view of the new World Trade Center with triumphant music to boot, the 'lesson' here couldn't be clearer: the World Trade Center and the nation are reborn and triumphant.

THE NEW WORLD TRADE CENTER

As they emerge from the museum visitors find themselves amid this triumphant rebirth from the ashes of Ground Zero. The memorial and museum form the centrepiece of the new World Trade Center complex which includes six new skyscrapers (containing 10 million square feet of offices and 550,000

square feet of retail space), a dramatic new transportation hub designed by Santiago Calatrava and a performing arts centre.[83]

If, as I have argued, the urban contexts in which they are situated are essential to understanding the ways in which memorials generate meanings and the kinds of ideological work they perform, this is no more so than in the case of the September 11 Memorial & Museum. While the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe sits at the heart of the central tourist loop of Berlin, its relation to the buildings around it is somewhat contingent. In contrast, here the memorial is not only an integral part of the wider development but lies at its very heart, spatially but also symbolically and economically. If the iconoclastic felling of the Twin Towers and the death and destruction wrought by the 9/11 attacks marked a crisis in American hegemony, this development – every inch of it, from the depths of the museum to the antennae of the Freedom Tower – stands as a retort to this attack and the material as well as symbolic and economic damage it inflicted on the city and the nation.

The Freedom Tower looms over the whole site and dominates the Manhattan skyline (see figure 7.1). Signalling the city's and the nation's renewal, it provides the triumphant counterpart to the memorial's equally overblown aesthetics of absence. In fact, although it appears to be all glass and steel the building is mounted on a concealed concrete and steel bunker which is two hundred feet high and actually speaks of the fearful, highly securitised and paranoid approach to urban design which became the norm in the US after 9/11.[84] Intended to secure the tower against the threat of car and truck bombs, the bunker was added to the design at the last minute at the insistence of the New York police.[85] Indeed, the whole World Trade Center site is heavily securitised, with police and security patrolling the memorial at all times, hundreds of CCTV cameras tracing visitors' every move and concrete bollards surrounding the site (figure 7.6). As Sorkin argues, the redevelopment of Ground Zero is the 'sublime embodiment' of a post-9/11 security agenda.[86] Securitisation is a key feature of the neoliberal city, wherein increasing inequality and insecurity in terms of jobs and welfare have been met with 'the rejuvenation of the state's image as the keeper of law and order'.[87] Here this general trend is both exacerbated and aestheticised as part of the overall 'visitor experience' and the site's ideological message. The security checkpoints, fortifications and surveillance both recall the events that inspired them and, at the same time, serve 'to enlist us in the far larger system of unfreedoms . . that depends on the constant relegitimation of fear'.[88]

The Freedom Tower and the memorial and museum are part of what Young cheerfully describes as 'a larger matrix of memory and commerce, life and loss'.[89] Heavily securitised and sanitised, while the public are invited to bring the space to life, this is not really a public space at all. Here as elsewhere

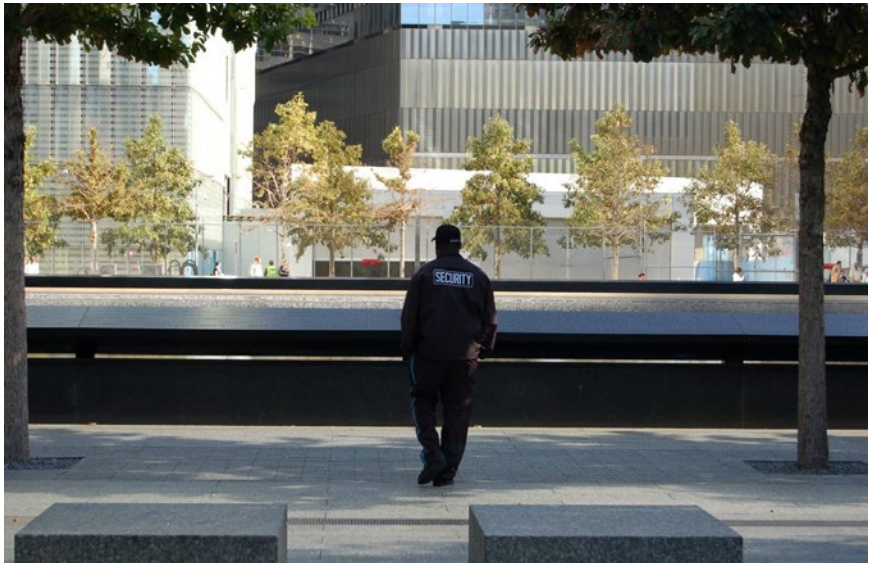

Figure 7.6. National September 11 Memorial.
Photograph by the author, September 2014.

in the US, public space, in so far as it can be said to be public at all, is now conceived of in terms 'of so-called "public-private partnerships" and . . . the idea that public space must pay for itself directly'.[90] Like the apparently public but actually privately owned spaces of Postdamer Platz, this memorial plaza provides a stage set wherein reminders of a troubled past are selectively 'preserved' or purposely constructed, boosting the symbolic capital of an otherwise rather mundane development of corporate headquarters and shopping malls. Here the public are not only under constant surveillance but also explicitly forbidden from engaging in acts and forms of behaviour which are perfectly legal and legitimate, including 'loitering', handing out leaflets, holding demonstrations or indeed any 'expressive activity that has the effect, intent or propensity to draw a crowd of on-lookers'.[91]

One of the most striking features of this development is a small bronze equestrian statue. America's Response Monument: *De Oppresso Liber*, is named after the motto of the US Army Special Forces ('liberate the oppressed') and commemorates the contribution to 'Operation Infinite Justice' – later renamed 'Operation Enduring Freedom' – of those who served in the early days of the US's invasion of Afghanistan.[92] Referencing the 'horse soldiers' who travelled across Afghanistan on horseback accompanied by Northern Alliance militants, the statue is an all-American vision of heroic masculinity. Although some US soldiers did move around Afghanistan on horseback in the early days

of the campaign, this can hardly be said to be typical or representative of the nature of the conflict. In the summer of 2021 this disastrous conflict finally came to an end when the US withdrew from Afghanistan and the Taliban – the very people it was claimed that Afghans were being 'liberated' from – resumed power. Designed by Douwe Blumberg, the statue began life as an eighteen-inch-high limited edition tabletop bronze of a Green Beret on horseback (an expensive bit of War on Terror memorabilia). It was only later transformed into a larger than life monument at the behest of, and with funding from, a number of wealthy individuals and corporations operating in Lower Manhattan.[93] First unveiled at the World Financial Center (adjacent to the World Trade Center) in 2011, in 2012 it was moved to the foot of the Freedom Tower before being relocated in Liberty Park – an elevated public park which overlooks the memorial – in 2016. Like the three soldiers at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, this statue has been executed in meticulous detail, its 'realism' conferring an air of authenticity which is amplified by the incorporation of a chunk of steel from the wreckage of the old World Trade Center. Emotionally charged markers of 'authenticity', pieces of steel recovered from the wreckage have been transported to memorials across the nation and around the world.[94]

As Doss argues, the statue clearly defines 9/11 and the US's response 'in terms of rage, revenge, and retribution'.[95] Part of a broader resurgence of 'John Wayne masculinity' after 9/11, the statue mobilises this romantic fantasy of the American cowboy as hero, venturing out into the unknown to exact 'justice' for the dead and those who remain at home.[96] The statue is macho and paternalistic as well as sentimental, and while its realist aesthetic looks out place in contemporary Manhattan, its aggressive sentimentality fits perfectly at the World Trade Center site.

CONCLUSION

Wilson Baptist celebrates the National September 11 Memorial & Museum as a heterotopic space in the midst of an identity crisis 'capable of harboring shifting identities', where

> unidentified remains come to rest, where those without a body to mourn can trace a material presence for their loved ones, where a tree that survived in the midst of so much destruction and death can blossom, reminding visitors of the resilience of human nature, and yes where a tourist can snap a 'selfie'.[97]

Young has similarly discussed the memorial in the language of 'multiplicity' and open-endedness:

> For just as memory is a negotiation between past and present, it is also an ongoing negotiation among all the groups of people whose lives were affected by this event and those whose lives will be shaped by what is built here.[98]

Conceived of as a national memorial, the 'lives' to which Young refers here are without doubt the lives of the American victims and their families. As in the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, there is no sense that non-American lives (except those non-American victims reclaimed as citizens by proxy in the rendering of 9/11 as a national tragedy) figure here at all. The lives of the hundreds of thousands killed, mutilated, traumatised and displaced by the War on Terror and its continuing ramifications around the world are simply ignored.

Formed of an unholy alliance between trauma, nationalism and the market, the New World Trade Center development blends together a number of what should be incongruent elements. The bland neo-modernism of the highly reflective towers is infused with a sentimental nationalist triumphalism which the official relinquishing of the name of the Freedom Tower does little to curtail. That many of the more bombastic elements of Libeskind's site plan have not been realised is a measure of the extent to which the site must function not only as a tourist attraction but also as a major commercial hub. And yet the narrative of trauma and triumph, loss and rebirth, is nevertheless writ large in this urban environment – which is a long way from the site of multiplicity and 'shifting identities' Wilson Baptist imagines it to be.

Formed around the commitment to 'preserve' the footprints of the old Twin Towers, this vast memorial is as much to these icons of global capitalism as it is to the nearly three thousand people killed in the attacks. Indeed the whole site has been organised around a desire to preserve not the ruins or all of the archaeology of the site, but the ongoing presence and foundations of just two of the buildings destroyed that day. Their archaeological remains have helped to structure the shape of the redevelopment and, more significantly, confer a sense of authenticity and, therefore, legitimacy on the ways in which the site constructs the events and their meaning.

At the same time, sacred ground or not, the site is required to attract large numbers of tourists, shoppers to fill its capacious malls and high-yielding corporate tenants to fill the 10 million square feet of office space. It can hardly come as a surprise, then, that the memorial is surrounded by skyscrapers and sat on top of a fee-paying museum which is designed to offer not a historical account of the events and their significance but a particular kind of visitor experience which takes trauma architecture to the next level, combining its key strategies with all the self-indulgent emotionalism of a Hollywood blockbuster. Were there any doubts that the museum makes a theme park out of an historical event, in March 2015 the September 11 Memorial and Museum was awarded the Themed Entertainment Association's

award for 'Extraordinary Cultural Achievement' at a black-tie ceremony hosted at the Disneyland Hotel.[99]

The '9/11 experience' offered here combines the previously discussed approaches to giving architectural and museological form to trauma. While, like the Holocaust Memorial Museum, it sets out to evoke 'vicarious trauma', it also, like the Jewish Museum Berlin, lays claim to the events it commemorates as a 'founding trauma' and therein the basis for identity formation. Skirting over the historical details and complexities, the museum denies visitors access to the means thorough which they might develop their own understanding. Instead, the 'safe encounter' with death and destruction the museum provides invites visitors to confront the horror of the event. At the same time, in the tradition of the sublime, it offers them reassurance that the threat has been overcome, mastered – this not least in the context of a highly securitised urban environment which stands as an emblem of national security in a post-9/11 age. The events thus become available for aesthetic contemplation, a form of sublime delight which not only reaffirms 'our' superiority but the need to remain 'vigilant'; that is a justification for both repression at home and war abroad.

Giuliani's call for a 'soaring memorial' at the site – not instead of but as a means to achieve its economic recovery – has indeed been realised. The whole site is a memorial, not least to capitalism and the iconic symbols of global trade that once stood here. The Twin Towers are not simply remembered, but replaced with fresh new towers of glass and steel. Befitting these neoliberal times, this is a memorial with sufficient economic savvy to know that it needs to be about much more than 'memory'. It needs to attract tourists – lots of them – as well as shoppers, corporate tenants and capital investment.

NOTES

1. Rudolph Giuliani quoted in Greenspan, *Battle for Ground Zero*, 42.
2. Ibid., 42.
3. Kimmelman, 'Art/Architecture'.
4. Greenspan, *Ground Zero*, 12.
5. McKim, 'New York's Spontaneous 9/11 Memorials and the Politics of Ambivalence', 3.
6. Ibid., 8–9.
7. Ibid., 9.
8. On the commodification of the site, see Sturken, *Tourists of History*, 213–15; and Lisle, 'Gazing at Ground Zero', 10.
9. Greenspan, *Ground Zero*, 54.

10. Orvell, 'After 9/11', 246.
11. Rudolph Giuliani quoted in Lisle, 'Gazing at Ground Zero', 3.
12. Murphy, 'As Public Yearns to See Ground Zero, Survivors Call Viewing Stand Ghoulish'.
13. Greenspan, *Ground Zero*, 53–54.
14. Sturken, 'The Aesthetics of Absence', 321.
15. On the campaign run by Save the Facades, see van Tor and Ronnes, 'Reflecting Absence', 93; and the campaign website, http://www.savethefacades.com, accessed 14 March 2015.
16. De Montebello, 'The Iconic Power of an Artifact'.
17. Ibid.
18. On the battles over the future of the site, see Greenspan, *Ground Zero*; Tor and Ronnes, 'Ground Zero'; and Sturken, 'Aesthetics of Absence'.
19. On the significance of this designation, see Sturken, *Tourists of History*, 199–205.
20. Greenspan, *Ground Zero*, 20 and 29.
21. On the families' campaign groups, see Donofrio, 'Ground Zero and Place-Making Authority'; and Stow, 'From Upper Canal to Lower Manhattan'. On the commercial nature of the development, see Sorkin, 'Back to Zero: Mourning in America', in *Indefensible Space*, ed. Sorkin, 213–32, 214.
22. See Greenspan, *Ground Zero*, 120; and Sturken, *Tourists of History*, 201.
23. Sturken, *Tourists of History*, 200.
24. Grant, 'Ground Zero as Holy Ground and Prelude to Holy War'; and Tracy, 'Bearing Witness to the Unspeakable'.
25. Smith, 'Scales of Terror: The Manufacturing of Nationalism and the War for U.S. Globalism', in *After the World Trade Center*, eds. Sorkin and Zukin, 103.
26. Doss, *Memorial Mania*, 120.
27. Joe Daniels quoted in Chan, 'A New, Longer Name for the 9/11 Memorial'.
28. Retort (Boal, Clark, Matthews, and Watts), *Afflicted Powers*.
29. As seen in, for example, Cheney, 'Defense Strategy for the 1990s'; and The Project for the New American Century, 'Rebuilding America's Defenses'. Also see Dunmire, '9/11 Changed Everything'.
30. For more on the various proposals, see Kogod and Osman, 'Girding the Grid', 108–21; and Stephens, Luna and Broadhurst, *Imagining Ground Zero*.
31. For Libeskind's rationale for the design, see his website, http://daniel-libeskind.com/projects/ground-zero-master-plan, accessed 30 September 2014.
32. Emphasis in original. Pataki quoted in Greenspan, *Ground Zero*, 94.
33. Sorkin, 'Back to Zero', in *Indefensible Space*, 227.
34. Greenspan, *Ground Zero*, 91–104.
35. Sorkin, 'Back to Zero', in *Indefensible Space*, 224.
36. Greenspan, *Ground Zero*, 165–67.
37. Lower Manhattan Development Corporation, 'World Trade Center Site Memorial Competition Guidelines'.
38. See the National September 11 Memorial website, http://www.911memorial.org/design-competition, accessed 30 September 2014.

39. Young, 'The Stages of Memory at Ground Zero', in *Religion, Violence, Memory, and Place*, eds. Baruch Stier and Landres, 214–34, 226.

40. See Sorkin, 'Back to Zero', in *Indefensible Space*, 219–20; and Greenspan, *Ground Zero*, 188–91.

41. See, for example, Greenspan, *Ground Zero*; Donofrio, 'Place-Making Authority'; Sweeney and Opotow, 'Why There?'; and Bowe, 'The Heartbreak of the Place'.

42. On the battles over the display of the names, see Greenspan, *Ground Zero*, 124–25.

43. See the National September 11 Memorial and Museum website, http://www.911memorial.org/survivor-tree, accessed 23 February 2015.

44. Doss, '*De Oppresson Liber* and *Reflecting Absence*', 212.

45. Wilson Baptist, 'Incompatible Identities', 5.

46. Reno, 'The Failed 9/11 Memorial', 4.

47. National September 11 Memorial and Museum website, http://www.911memorial.org/blog/memorial-remembers-victims'-birthdays, accessed 11 March 2016.

48. Obama, 'Remarks by the President at 9/11 Museum Dedication'.

49. Jim Riches quoted in Phillip, 'Families Infuriated by "Crass Commercialism" of 9/11 Museum Gift Shop'.

50. Karni, 'Mandatory $24 Admission Fee Set for 9/11 Museum due to Lack of Government Funds'.

51. Pearson, '9/11 Memorial Reveals the Bedrock of Tragedy', 30.

52. Greenwald, 'Message from the Museum Director'.

53. Bevan, 'Memories in Ruins'. On the archaeology of the site, see Tor and Ronnes, 'Ground Zero'.

54. Greenwald, 'Message'.

55. Greenspan, *Ground Zero*, 207.

56. For more on this project, see Orvell, 'After 9/11'; and Ochs, 'Here is New York', 122. A selection of the images has been published in George, et al., eds., *Here is New York*.

57. Ochs, 'Here is New York', 122.

58. Greenspan, *Ground Zero*, 208.

59. Ibid., 209.

60. Chanin and Greenwald, eds., *The Stories They Tell*, 27.

61. Ibid., 36; and Tor and Ronnes, 'Ground Zero', 97–99.

62. Wilson Baptist, 'Incompatible Identities', 6.

63. Tor and Ronnes, 'Ground Zero', 89.

64. Foster, 'The Last Column'.

65. Mitchell, *Cloning Terror*, 55–68.

66. G. W. Bush, 'Remarks at the Pentagon, 11 September 2002', quoted in Doss, *Memorial Mania*, 122.

67. Holloway, *9/11 and the War on Terror*, 4.

68. Derrida, 'Autoimmunity: Real and Symbolic Suicides', in Borradori, *Philosophy in a Time of Terror*, 86.

69. Ray, *Terror and the Sublime*, 1.

70. Ibid., 2.

71. Ibid., 4.
72. Gross, 'Holocaust Tourism'.
73. Otterman, 'Film at 9/11 Museum Sets off Clash Over Reference to Islam'.
74. Museum text, September 2014.
75. Museum text, quote from Bush, 'Address to a Joint Session of Congress and the American People'.
76. Hagen and Golding, 'Shirt of SEAL who Killed Bin Laden on Display at the 9/11 Museum'.
77. Daniels quoted in 9/11 Memorial Foundation, '9/11 Memorial Museum Unveils New Exhibition on the Victorious End in the Hunt for Osama Bin Laden'.
78. Miller, 'Portraits of Greif', 122. Also, see Simpson, *Culture of Commemoration*, 21–54.
79. Doss, *Memorial Mania*, 153.
80. Greenwald, 'Message'.
81. A powerful voice in debates over the future of the World Trade Center site, the group was formed after Debra Burlingame published 'The Great Ground Zero Heist'. On the group's influence, see Donofrio, 'Place-Making Authority' and Greenspan, *Ground Zero*, 135–41.
82. Tracy, 'Bearing Witness', 87.
83. World Trade Center website, https://www.wtc.com, accessed 3 April 2020.
84. See, for example, Benton-Short, 'Bollards, Bunkers, and Barriers'; Marcuse, 'The "War on Terror" and Life in Cities after September 11, 2001', in *Cities, War, and Terrorism*, ed. Graham: 263–75; and Minosh, 'Sovereignty, Security', in *The Politics of Space and Place*, eds. Certomà, Clewer, and Elsey.
85. Greenspan, *Ground Zero*, 101–3.
86. Sorkin, 'Back to Zero', in *Indefensible Space*, 215.
87. Myers, 'After the Welfare State', quote from 186.
88. Sorkin, 'Back to Zero', in *Indefensible Space*, 216.
89. Young, 'Memory and the Monument after 9/11', in *The Future of Memory*, eds. Crownshaw, Kilby and Rowland, 92.
90. Sorkin, 'Smoke and Mirrors', 80.
91. 'Visitor Rules and Regulations', National September 11 Memorial website, http://www.911memorial.org/visitor-rules-and-regulations, accessed 11 March 2016,.
92. Doss, '*De Oppresson Liber*', 203.
93. Ibid., 207.
94. Gessner, 'The Aesthetics of Remembering 9/11'. Also see Doss, *Memorial Mania*, 159–61.
95. Doss, '*De Oppresson Liber*', 209.
96. Faludi, *The Terror Dream*, 4. On the gendering of the War on Terror, also see Shepherd, 'Veiled References'. On the resonance and significance of the figure of the cowboy, see Malphurs, 'The Media's Frontier Construction of President George W. Bush'.
97. Wilson Baptist, 'Incompatible Identities', 6–7.
98. Young, 'Stages of Memory', in *Religion, Violence, Memory, and Place*, 216.
99. Edelman, '9/11 Museum's Entertainment Award Angers some Victims' Families'.

Final Reflections

Situating the memorial-building boom within the postmodern-neoliberal conjuncture, this book has explored some of the ways in which the relationship among postmodernism, neoliberalism and the requirements of the neoliberal state, have shaped contemporary memorial forms and discourses. Locating the origins of the renaissance in memorial-building in the early 1980s, the book has traced a shift from the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the counter-monuments' arguably more open approach to what I have characterised as the increasingly authoritative stance of the more recent case studies. Rather than reading this shift as a mere question of 'style', I have sought to unpick some of the complex ways in which it reflects both a formal process of development – as these national, but also internationally informed, projects draw on and learn from one another – and the specific demands of the contexts within which these structures operate. I have also argued that the emergence of an international style of trauma architecture and the rise of increasingly authoritative architectural, aesthetic and museological strategies point to a broader social, political and cultural context and to bigger questions than merely the fate of contemporary memorial architecture. Chief among these is the question of how we understand our relation to the past, our present and the future, a question to which I will return shortly.

The argument developed here is founded on a variously situated but sustained critique of the rationales underpinning contemporary memorial forms and practices as well as the assumptions and theoretical frameworks that guide the ways in which they are interpreted in much of the dominant literature. These readings emphasise their supposedly pluralistic and ambiguous aesthetics and modes of address and claim that they are non-didactic and non-nationalistic. Situating my central case studies in their specific national and urban contexts, I have sought to elaborate a more complex and critical

analysis. In so doing, I have shifted the focus, analysing not only the distinctive nature of these memorials but also the ways in which they employ postmodern aesthetics to rearticulate and reaffirm nationalism.

Viewing the rise of affective, therapeutic and pluralistic memorials as essentially progressive, left-liberal critics all too often overlook, or indeed deny, the nationalistic purposes the national memorials analysed here, and others like them, serve. In the US, diversity and ambiguity are no barrier to patriotism and militarism, as the history of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial demonstrates. Even as the form of the American memorials discussed here may have prompted controversy, their purpose as national memorials remains that of interpellating national subjects. More than that, in the cases of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the September 11 Memorial & Museum, these national subjects are situated to identify with the ways in which the nation has overcome profound crises only to emerge stronger, more united and more righteous for them.

In Germany, the question of nationalism is a little more complex but no less central. Born in the context of reunification and the crises of nation and national identity formation it precipitated, the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe was also heavily informed by ongoing debates in West Germany over how the Nazi past ought to be 'remembered'. Both the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe and the Jewish Museum Berlin place the Holocaust at the centre of contemporary German public life. In this national context, paradoxically perhaps, the darkest chapter in the nation's history is rendered not only as a lesson for its present and future but as a reaffirmation of its current social and political form. Reaffirming the status quo, these unsettling memorials interpellate a visitor-spectator who is in awe of history and enjoined to feel – and to consume – rather than to think or to act.

In both the US and Germany, far from undermining the traditional nationalistic role of national memorials, postmodern aesthetics are here understood to rearticulate nationalism and national identity in light of the requirements of the current conjuncture. The symbolic and aesthetic language of contemporary memorialisation differs significantly from traditional memorial forms. It does so, I have argued, because to appeal to subjects formed, in part at least, by the postmodern-neoliberal conjuncture, contemporary memorials and memorial-museums need to appeal to those subjects' cultural sensibilities, forms of self-understanding and historical and political awareness. Interpellation is a dynamic two-way process, and while these memorials certainly seek to interpellate certain kinds of subjects, the subjects they go to work on must already in some sense exist, otherwise they would simply fail. Projecting a relativist and 'open' conception of history, the postmodern tropes of ambiguity and diversity are nevertheless perfectly

amenable to nationalist and even right-wing agendas. As we saw in chapter 2, according to postmodern critics, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial invites a multiplicity of responses, which are all equally valid. What matters is what we *feel*, our 'experience', our 'truth', not what happened. What these critics fail to recognise is not only that not all responses are equal but also that some declarations of truth – namely those which chime with the hegemonic consensus – get listened to while other do not. As I have argued, the 'multiplicity' of responses this and other contemporary memorials are said to elicit are in fact very narrowly circumscribed. This is perhaps most explicitly the case in the September 11 Memorial & Museum. It is also, however, evident in the Jewish Museum Berlin and the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe where, instead of inviting critical engagement with the past and its relation to the present, heavy-handed architectural and aesthetic devises are used to evoke a narrow range of emotional and affective responses. Intended to move visitors and challenge their sense of certainty, they fail to question the social structures which underpin war, genocide and political violence. In this sense, their emphasis on emotional identification and affective response, which is commonly read as 'radical', is in fact very conservative.

As well as exploring the continuing relevance of the nation and nationalism, I have also drawn attention to the economic logics which now play an increasing role in dictating the form and content of memorials and memorial-museums. This trend is clearly manifest in Berlin where the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe is an icon for the city and a magnet for tourists, so popular, indeed, that soon after it opened the memorial was, not uncontroversially, supplemented by a strip of food and souvenir shops with a cocktail bar to boot. This trend takes on an even more extreme form in New York. Here the National September 11 Memorial & Museum merge the logics of trauma architecture's theatrics of affect with an unapologetic desire to rebuild and rebuild big, to bring in the corporate tenants as well as the shoppers and tourists. Distinguishing itself from other corporate plazas in New York, the World Trade Center site maximises its 'unique selling point' – its historical and symbolic significance – by employing an overblown aesthetics of absence and triumph. Making a sublime spectacle out of history, the site is also replete with the apparatus and aesthetics of securitization. An index of the national atmosphere of fear and paranoia, as well as a booming security industry in the US, the hyped-up security is part of the visitor experience adding to the somewhat theme park-like qualities of the site.

If the National September 11 Memorial & Museum draws on the trends and tropes of memorial architecture which this book has traced back to the 1980s, it also points to the future of large-scale national memorials. It is unlikely that many other memorial projects will match it in scale. Nevertheless, the cultural

and economic demands of the current conjuncture suggest that the trends discussed will continue to inform contemporary memorial architecture – not least, in this regard, the central role memorials now have in boosting the symbolic capital of the cities in which they reside. Alongside this, the aesthetics of the sublime, the rendering of history *as* trauma – unknowable but experienceable and ripe for touristic consumption as well as emotional manipulation – will continue to characterise memorial architecture and the discourses which justify their role in rearticulating national identity and 'belonging' in a supposedly post-ideological world.

Here we see the melding of the economic and ideological roles of contemporary memorials which, as well as playing an important role in the symbolic and touristic economies of their respective cities, frame the past in its relation to the present and interpellate particular kinds of subjects. As we saw in Berlin, where a non-fee-paying memorial and information centre attract millions of visitors a year, when read in relation to its immediate urban context, the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe reaffirms the German nation-state in its current form and the neoliberal status quo. Read as an integral part of the World Trade Center, the National September 11 Memorial goes further than this, offering a triumphant celebration of the resilience of the nation and of global capitalism in the wake of the destruction of what were perhaps its greatest icons.

Beyond their reaffirmation of the neoliberal status quo and of the nation, I have explored the ideological work performed by contemporary memorials in relation to the question of the sublime. What I have described as the rendering of history as sublime in postmodern theory and trauma studies is central to my analysis. It should also be central to any attempt to understand the political and philosophical implications of the ways in which the case studies explored here represent history and our relation to it. The subject of sublime experience, who stands in awe – in this case of the incomprehensible and unrepresentable nature of history – is overwhelmed. This subject is invited to experience their own limitations, to accept that they cannot grasp the totality, let alone seek to transform it. At the same time however, the subject of sublime spectacle may find not only comfort but also a sense of superiority in knowing or feeling themselves to be above and beyond that which confounds their imagination. The question of the multifarious, complex and often deeply ideological ways in which this form of aesthetic experience plays out in different social and political contexts and cultural practices is vital. This, not least, because it is intimately linked to the question of what we can know and represent and therefore what we can do. For while it may have the power to unsettle us, to provoke and to challenge our dearly held assumption, the sublime is also in danger of rendering us powerless, on the one hand, and

complacent or even self-congratulatory, on the other. I do not claim to have found *the* answer to the question of the place and significance of the sublime in the contemporary conjuncture. In foregrounding its central place in postmodern and neoliberal thought I have, however, begun to explore some of the political and philosophical implications of the sublime's recurring presence in contemporary memorial forms and practices. In so doing, I hope to have pointed to possible new avenues for research in this area.

My analysis points to a relationship between the idea that history is unrepresentable and unknowable and what Jameson refers to as the 'postmodern sublime': our awareness of the complex and ungraspable nature of global capitalism. The rendering of both history (how we got where we are) and the social totality of the present (global capitalism) as sublime raises important questions regarding historical agency and political subjectivity. The postmodern-neoliberal conjuncture projects the endless present of a social world rendered ahistorical by the market. In this context, the always ideological concept of the sublime mystifies both the past and the present thereby rendering the future beyond our control.

Within the context of an uncertain present and a perceived loss of the future, contemporary memory culture may ostensibly appear to signify a retreat into the past. It is my contention, however, that what we are witnessing is less a retreat into the past than the plumbing of its depths to extract resources for the present, both economic – the past sells – and, crucially, ideological. Claimed to 'honour' the dead and remember the past, memorials are actually concerned chiefly with staking a claim on certain aspects of the past in the interests of the present and with an eye to constructing a particular kind of future. Interpellating postmodern-neoliberal subjects – individualised, perplexed and depoliticised – the memorials and memorial-museums discussed here enjoin visitors to develop emotional and affective responses without providing them the means and opportunity to develop sophisticated and politically informed forms of historical understanding. Those who stand in awe of history are in no place to understand the past or to transform the present in the name of a different kind of future. Contemporary national memorials thus reflect one of the most significant convergences between postmodern thought and neoliberal ideology; both project a permanent present, urging us to recreate ourselves in the light of existing conditions; for 'there is no alternative'.

While I have focused on memorials and memorial-museums in the US and Germany, the trends discussed here are international. Further research in this area might point to similar projects which, to varying degrees, combine the mainstays of trauma architecture, the desire to generate tourist footfall and processes of national identity formation or reformation. These might include

Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, Israel; the Monument to the Victims of State Terrorism and Memorial Park in Buenos Aries, Argentina; the National Holocaust Memorial in Ottawa, Canada; the planned UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre in London and the planned Sleuk Rith Institute (a memorial-museum dedicated to the Cambodian genocide) in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. These recent and yet to be realised projects open up a whole range of questions about how some of the trends and logics of contemporary memorial architecture discussed here manifest in other distinct national contexts. The approach developed here will, I hope, suggest a starting point for an analysis of these and similar projects and the complex ways in which they operate within the contemporary conjuncture.

Bibliography

Abramson, D. 'Maya Lin and the 1960s: Monuments, Time Lines, and Minimalism'. *Critical Inquiry* 22, no. 4 (Summer 1996): 679–709.

Adorno, T. *Critical Models: Interventions and Catchwords*, trans. H. W. Pickford. New York, Columbia University Press, 2005.

———. *Prisms*, trans. S. Weber and S. Weber. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1983.

Adorno, T., W. Benjamin, E. Bloch, and G. Lukács. *Aesthetics and Politics*. R. Taylor ed. and trans. London: Verso, 1980.

Åhr, J. 'Memory and Mourning in Berlin: On Peter Eisenman's Holocaust-Mahnmal'. *Modern Judaism* 28, no. 3 (2008): 283–305.

Akcan, E. 'Apology and Triumph: Memory Transference, Erasure, and a Rereading of the Berlin Jewish Museum'. *New German Critique* 110 (Summer 2010): 153–79.

Allon, F. 'Ghosts of the Open City'. *Space and Culture* 16, no. 3 (August 2013): 288–305.

Althusser, L., *Essays on Ideology*. London: Verso, 1971.

American Battle Monuments Commission, Memo, 18/12/1989, R. Stilwell to Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board. U.S. National Archives, College Park, MD.

Anderson, B. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 1983.

Apel, L. 'Stumbling blocks in Germany'. *Rethinking History: The Journal of Theory and Practice* 18, no. 2 (2014): 181–94.

Apperly, E. '"Stumbling Stones": A Different Vision of Holocaust Remembrance'. *The Guardian*, 18 February 2019. https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2019/feb/18/stumbling-stones-a-different-vision-of-holocaust-remembrance. accessed 23 August 2020.

Arnold-de Simine, S. *Mediating Memory in the Museum: Trauma, Empathy, Nostalgia*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.

———. 'Memory Museum and Museum Text: Intermediality in Daniel Libeskind's Jewish Museum and W. G. Sebald's Austerlitz', *Theory Culture Society* 29, no. 1 (January 2012): 24.

———, ed. *Memory Traces: 1989 and the Question of German Cultural Identity*. Bern: Peter Lang, 2005.

Ball, K. 'Introduction: Trauma and Its Institutional Destinies'. *Cultural Critique*, no. 46 (Autumn 2000): 1–44.

Barker, M. *A 'Toxic Genre': The Iraq War Films*. London: Pluto Press, 2011.

Baruch Stier, O., and J. Shawn Landres, eds. *Religion, Violence, Memory, and Place*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006.

Beetham, S. 'From Spray Cans to Minivans: Contesting the Legacy of Confederate Soldier Monuments in the Era of "Black Lives Matter"'. *Public Art Dialogue* 6, no. 1 (January 2016): 9–33.

Benton-Short, L. 'Bollards, Bunkers, and Barriers: Securing the National Mall in Washington, DC'. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 25, no. 3 (June 2007): 424–46.

Bevan, R. 'Memories in Ruins: 9/11 Memorial Museum by Snøhetta and Davis Brody Bond'. *The Architectural Review*, 17 June 2014. http://www.architectural-review.com/buildings/memories-in-ruins-9/11-memorial-museum-by-snhetta-and-davis-brody-bond/8663382.article, accessed 14 August 2015.

Billig, M. *Banal Nationalism*. London: Sage, 1995.

Blair, C., M. Jeppeson, and E. Pucci. 'Public Memorializing in Postmodernity: The Vietnam Veterans Memorial as Prototype'. *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 77, no. 3 (August 1991): 263–88.

Bohm-Duchen, M., ed. *After Auschwitz: Responses to the Holocaust in Contemporary Art*. London: Lund Humphries, 1995.

Borradori, G. *Philosophy in a Time of Terror: Dialogues with Jürgen Habermas and Jacques Derrida*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003.

Bowe, B.J. 'The Heartbreak of the Place: Space, Religion and Politics in Post-9/11 Mosque Controversies'. *The Muslim World* 103, no. 1 (January 2013): 181–94.

Bradford, V. 'Neoliberal Epideictic: Rhetorical Form and Commemorative Politics on September 11, 2002'. *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 92, no. 1 (2006): 1–26.

Brecher, B. 'Understanding the Holocaust: The Uniqueness Debate'. *Radical Philosophy* 96, (July/August 1999): 17–28.

Breckman, W., P. E. Gordon, A. D. Moses, S. Moyn, and E. Neaman, eds. *The Modernist Imagination: Intellectual History and Critical Theory Essays in Honor of Martin Jay.* New York: Berghahn Books, 2009.

Brockman, S. 'Introduction: The Reunification Debate'. *New German Critique* 52 (Winter 1991): 3–30.

Brown, W. 'American Nightmare: Neoliberalism, Neoconservatism, and De-Democratization'. *Political Theory* 34, no. 6 (2006): 690–714.

———. 'Neoliberalism and the End of Liberal Democracy'. In W. Brown, *Edgework: Critical Essays on Knowledge and Politics*. Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005: 37–59.

Bruff, I. 'The Rise of Authoritarian Neoliberalism'. *Rethinking Marxism: A Journal of Economic, Culture & Society* 26, no. 1, (2014): 113–29.

Burak Tansel, C. 'Authoritarian Neoliberalism and Democratic Backsliding in Turkey: Beyond the Narratives of Progress'. *South European Society and Politics* 23, no. 2 (2018): 197–217.

Burke, E. *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origins of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful*, ed. A. Philips. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990.

Burlingame, D. 'The Great Ground Zero Heist'. *Wall Street Journal*, 7 June 2005. http://search.proquest.com/docview/398981656?accountid=9727, accessed 30 March 2015.

Bush, G. W. 'Address to a Joint Session of Congress and the American People'. 20 September 2001, White House. Full transcript published on the *Washington Post* website. http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/nation/specials/attacked/transcripts/bushaddress_092001.html, accessed 17 March 2015.

Campbell, R. 'Sending the Wrong Message'. *Architectural Record* 196, no. 10 (October 2008): 61.

Carrier, P. *Holocaust Monuments and National Memory Cultures in France and Germany since 1989; The Origins and Political Function of the Vél' d'Hiv'in Paris and the Holocaust Monument in Berlin*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2005.

Carsten, F. L. *War Against War: British and German Radical Movements in the First World War*. London: Batsford Academic and Educational Ltd, 1982.

Caruth, C., ed. *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995.

Cassará, S., ed. *Peter Eisenman; Feints*. Milan: Skira, 2006.

Certomà, C., N. Clewer, and D. Elsey, eds. *The Politics of Space and Place*. Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012.

Chan, S. 'A New, Longer Name for the 9/11 Memorial'. *New York Times*, 17 August 2007. http://cityroom.blogs.nytimes.com/2007/08/14/a-new-longer-name-for-the-911-memorial/?_r=0, accessed 9 April 2015.

Chanin C., and A. M. Greenwald, eds. *The Stories They Tell: Artifacts from the National September 11 Memorial Museum*. New York: Skira Rizzoli, 2013.

Cheney, D. 'Defense Strategy for the 1990s: The Regional Defense Strategy', 1993. http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/pdf/naarpr_Defense.pdf, accessed 8 March 2015.

Chave, A. C. 'Minimalism and the Rhetoric of Power'. *Arts Magazine* 64, no. 5 (1990): 44–63.

Choay, F. *The Invention of the Historic Monument*, trans. L. M. O'Connell. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001.

Clewer, N. 'The Sublime Authority of Ignorance, Neoliberal Nationalism and the Rise of the Demagogue'. *Araucaria* 21, no. 42 (2019): 481–503.

Clinton, W. 'Remarks at the Dedication Ceremony for the Korean War Veterans Memorial'. 27 July 1995. https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PPP-1995-book2/html/PPP-1995-book2-doc-pg1160.htm, accessed 7 May 2012.

Coats, D. 'Remarks by Ambassador Coats at the Groundbreaking Ceremony for the New American Embassy in Berlin', 6 October 2004. http://germany.usembassy.gov/germany/speech_10_06_04.html, accessed 12 August 2012.

Cortright, D. *Soldiers in Revolt: GI Resistance During the Vietnam War*. Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2005.

Cozzolini, A. 'Trumpism as Nationalist Neoliberalism. A Critical Enquiry into Donald Trump's Political Economy'. *Interdisciplinary Political Studies* 4, no. 1 (2018): 47–73.

Cronin, A. M., and K. Hetherington eds. *Consuming the Entrepreneurial City; Image, Memory, Spectacle*. London: Routledge, 2008.

Crowther, P., ed. *The Contemporary Sublime: Sensibilities of Transcendence and Shock*. Academy Editions: London, 1995.

Curtis, W. J. R. *Modern Architecture Since 1900*, 3rd ed. London: Phaidon, 1996.

Danziger, S., and R. Haveman. 'The Reagan Budget: A Sharp Break with the Past'. *Challenge* 24, no. 2 (May/June 1981): 5–13.

Davidson, N. 'Nationalism and Neoliberalism'. *Variant* 32 (Summer 2008): 36–38.

Davies, W. *The Limits of Neoliberalism: Authority, Sovereignty and the Logic of Competition*. London: Sage, 2014.

Davies, W., and N. Gane. 'Post-Neoliberalism? An Introduction'. *Theory, Culture & Society* 38, no. 6 (November 2021): 1–26.

De Montebello, P. 'The Iconic Power of an Artifact'. *New York Times*, 25 September 2001. http://www.nytimes.com/2001/09/25/opinion/the-iconic-power-of-an-artifact.html, accessed 9 April 2105.

Dean, J. *Democracy and Other Neoliberal Fantasies: Communicative Capitalism and Left Politics*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009.

Derrida, J. 'A Letter to Peter Eisenman'. *Assemblage* 12 (August 1990): 7–13.

Deutsche Welle. 'Degussa to Continue Work on Holocaust Memorial', 14 November 2003. http://www.dw.com/en/degussa-to-continue-work-on-holocaust-memorial/a-1029053. accessed 6 October 2015.

———. 'Germany: 75,000th "Stolperstein" for Holocaust Victims Laid', 29 December 2019. https://www.dw.com/en/germany-75000th-stolperstein-for-holocaust-victims-laid/a-51827506, accessed 23 September 2020.

———. 'Play Time at the Holocaust Memorial', 13 May 2005. http://www.dw.de/play-time-at-the-holocaust-memorial/a-1582335-1, accessed 25 October 2012.

Dokumentation und Kulturzentrum, Deutscher Sinti und Roma. 'Cultural Events for the Inauguration of the Holocaust Memorial in Berlin, 12–25 October 2012, Roma and Sinti Press Kit'. http://www.sintiundroma.de/fileadmin/dokumente/medien/SuR_Pressemappe_EN2.pdf, accessed 20 January 2015.

Donofrio, T. A. 'Ground Zero and Place-Making Authority: The Conservative Metaphors in 9/11 Families' "Take Back the Memorial" Rhetoric'. *Western Journal of Communication* 74, no. 2 (2010): 150–69.

Doss, E. '*De Oppresson Liber* and *Reflecting Absence*: Ground Zero Memorials and the War on Terror'. *American Quarterly* 65, no. 1 (March 2013): 203–14.

———. *Memorial Mania: Public Feeling in America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010.

Drayton, R. 'Rhodes Must not Fall?: Statues, Postcolonial "Heritage" and Temporality'. *Third Text* 33, no. 4–5 (2019): 651–66.

Dunlap, D. W. 'James Ingo Freed, 75, Dies; Designed Holocaust Museum'. *New York Times*, 17 December 2005. http://www.nytimes.com/2005/12/17/arts/design/17freed.html?pagewanted=2&_r=0&ei=5090&en=5e393a0a11adba55&ex=1292475600, accessed 19 June 2013.

Dunmire, P. L. '"9/11 Changed Everything": an intertextual Analysis of the Bush Doctrine'. *Discourse & Society* 20, no. 2 (March 2009): 195–222.

Edelman, S. '9/11 Museum's Entertainment Award Angers Some Victims' Families'. *New York Post*, 22 March 2015. http://nypost.com/2015/03/22/911-museum-wins-award-for-themed-entertainment/, accessed 10 April 2015.

Eichler, M. 'Citizenship and the Contracting out of Military Work: from National Conscription to Globalized Recruitment'. *Citizenship Studies* 18, no. 6–7 (2014): 600–14.

Eisenman, P. *Giuseppe Terragni: Transformations, Decompositions, Critique*. New York: Monacelli Press, 2003.

———. 'Post/El Cards: A Reply to Jacques Derrida'. *Assemblage* 12 (August 1990): 14–17.

Eisenman Architects. *Holocaust Memorial Berlin*. Baden: Lars Müller Publishers, 2005.

Eley, G. 'Nazism, Politics and the Image of the Past: Thoughts on the West German *Historikerstreit* 1986–1987'. *Past and Present* 121 (November 1988): 171–208.

Faludi, S. *The Terror Dream: What 9/11 Revealed about America*. London: Atlantic Books, 2008.

Farrar, M. E. *Building the Body Politic: Power and Urban Space in Washington, D.C.* Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2008.

Fassin, E. 'The neo-Fascist Moment of Neoliberalism'. *Open Democracy*, 10 August 2018. https://www.opendemocracy.net/can-%20europe-make-it/ric-fassin/neo-fascist-moment-of-neoliberalism, accessed 29 November 2018.

Fisher, M. *Capitalist Realism: Is There No Alternative?* Winchester: Zero Books, 2009.

Fletcher, R. 'History from Below Comes to Germany: The New History Movement in the Federal Republic of Germany'. *Journal of Modern History* 60, no. 3 (September 1988): 557–68.

Foss, S. K. 'Ambiguity as Persuasion: The Vietnam Veterans Memorial'. *Communications Quarterly* 34, no. 3 (1986): 326–40.

Foster, H. *The Art-Architecture Complex*. London: Verso, 2011.

———. 'The Last Column'. *London Review of Books* 33, no. 7, 8 September 2011. http://www.lrb.co.uk/v33/n17/hal-foster/the-last-column, accessed 4 April 2015.

———. *The Return of the Real: The Avant-Garde at the End of the Century*. Cambridge, MA: October Books, 1996.

———. 'The Un/making of Sculpture'. In *October Files; Richard Serra*, eds. H. Foster and G. Hughes, 175–200. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2000.

Foster and Partners. 'Reichstag, New German Parliament; Berlin, Germany, 1992–1999'. http://www.fosterandpartners.com/Projects/0686/Default.aspx, accessed 9 August 2012.

Foster-Hahn, F., ed. *Imagining Modern German Culture 1889–1910*. Washington DC: National Gallery of Art, 1996.

Foucault, M. *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collége de France 1978–1979*, M. Senellart ed. Trans. G. Burchell. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008.

Foundation for the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe. http://www.stiftung-denkmal.de/en/memorials/the-memorial-to-the-murdered-jews-of-europe, accessed 12 September 2014.

———. *Materials on the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe*. Berlin: Nicolaische Verlagsbuchhandlung GmbH, 2005.

———. *Opening Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe 10 May 2005 Speeches and Pictures*. Trans. B. Templer and A. Drösser (booklet purchased in the memorial's information centre).

———. 'Spiegel's Speech at the Official Opening Ceremony on 10 May 2005'. http://www.stiftung-denkmal.de/en/memorials/the-memorial-to-the-murdered-jews-of-europe/speeches-at-the-inauguration-of-the-memorial-to-the-murdered-jews-of-europe.html, accessed 2 February 2012.

Franklin, H. B. *The Vietnam War and Other American Fantasies*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2000.

Fraser, N. *Fortunes of Feminism: From State Managed Capitalism to Neoliberal Crisis*. London: Verso, 2013.

Freed, I. 'The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum'. *Assemblage* 9 (1989): 58–79.

Friedlander, S., ed. *Probing the Limits of Representation: Nazism and the Final Solution*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, London, 1992.

Friedman, M. *Capitalism and Freedom*, 2nd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982.

Friedman, T. L. *The World is Flat: The Globalized World in the Twenty First Century*. London: Allen Lane, 2005.

Fulbrook, M. *German National Identity after the Holocaust*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999.

Gamble, A. *The Spectre at the Feast: Capitalist Crisis and the Politics of Recession*. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave MacMillan, 2009.

Gay, P. *Weimar Culture; The Outsider as Insider* (1968). London: W.W. Norton & Company, 2001.

George, A. R., et al. eds. *Here is New York: A Democracy of Photographs*. New York: Scalo, 2002.

Gerz, J. 'Interview with Simon Baker, Paris, February 2001'. *Oxford Art Journal* 24, no. 2 (2001): 25–40.

Gessner, I. 'The Aesthetics of Remembering 9/11: Towards a Transnational Typology of Memorials'. *Journal of Transnational American Studies* 6, no. 1 (2015): 1–46.

Giroux, H. A. 'Beyond the Biopolitics of Disposability: Rethinking Neoliberalism in the New Gilded Age'. *Social Identities* 14, no. 5 (2008): 587–620.

Godrey, M. *Abstraction and the Holocaust.* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007.

Goldberger, P. *Counterpoint: Daniel Libeskind*. Berlin: Birkhäuser, 2008.
Gourevitch, P. 'Behold Now Behemoth: The Holocaust Memorial Museum: One More American Theme Park'. *Harpers Magazine*, July 1993. http://harpers.org/archive/1993/07/behold-now-behemoth/, accessed 10 January 2012.
Graham, S. ed. *Cities, War and Terrorism: Towards an Urban Geopolitics*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004.
Gramsci, A. *The Antonio Gramsci Reader: Selected Writings*, ed. David Forgacs. London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1999.
Grant, A. J. 'Ground Zero as Holy Ground and Prelude to Holy War'. *The Journal of American Culture* 28, no. 1 (March 2005): 49–60.
Greenspan, E. *Battle for Ground Zero: Inside the Political Struggle to Rebuild Ground* Zero. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.
Greenwald, A. 'Message from the Museum Director'. National September 11 Memorial and Museum website. http://www.911memorial.org/message-museum-director. accessed 3 March 2015.
Griswold, C. L. 'The Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the Washington Mall: Philosophical Thoughts on Political Iconography'. *Critical Inquiry* 12, no. 4 (Summer 1986): 688–719.
Gross, A. S. 'Holocaust Tourism in Berlin: Global Memory Trauma and the "Negative Sublime"'. *Journeys* 7, no. 2 (2006): 73–100.
Habermas, J. 'Concerning the Public Use of History'. *New German Critique* 44 (Summer 1988): 40–50.
———. *Time of Transitions*, ed. and trans. C. Cronin and M. Pensky. Cambridge: Polity, 2006.
Hagen, E., and B. Golding. 'Shirt of SEAL Who Killed Bin Laden On Display at the 9/11 Museum'. *New York Post*, 8 September 2014. http://nypost.com/2014/09/08/911-museum-visitors-marvel-at-shirt-of-seal-who-killed-bin-laden/, accessed 7 August 2015.
Hagopian, P. 'The Korean War Veterans Memorial and Problems of Representation'. *Public Art Dialogue* 2, no. 2 (2012): 215–53.
———. *The Vietnam War in American Memory: Veterans, Memorials and the Politics of Healing*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2009.
Hall, S. 'The Neo-Liberal Revolution'. *Cultural Studies* 25, no. 6 (2011): 705–28.
Hall, S., C. Critcher, T. Jefferson, J. Clarke, and B. Roberts. *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State and Law and Order* (1978), 2nd ed. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.
Harmes, A. 'The Rise of Neoliberal Nationalism'. *Review of International Political Economy* 19, no. 1 (February 2012): 59–86.
Harman, G. H., ed. *Bitburg in Moral and Political Perspective*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986.
Harvey, D. *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
———. 'Flexible Accumulation through Urbanization Reflections on 'Post-Modernism' in the American City'. *Perspecta* 26 (1990): 251–72.
———. *Spaces of Capital; Towards a Critical Geography*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2001.

———. *The Condition of Postmodernity; An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1990.
———. *The New Imperialism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.
Hatherley, O. 'Post-Postmodernism?' *New Left Review* 59 (September-October 2009): 153–60.
Hayek, F. A. *Individualism and Economic Order*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948.
———. *Law, Legislation and Liberty: A New Statement of the Liberal Principles of Justice and Political Economy*. Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 1982
———. *The Constitution of Liberty* (1960). London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1976.
———. *The Road to Serfdom* (1944). London: Routledge, 2001.
Herf, J. *Divided Memory: The Nazi Past in the Two Germanys*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997.
Hobsbawn, E., and T. Ranger. *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.
Hoffmann-Curtis, K. *Judenmord: Art and the Holocaust in Post-war Germany*. Trans. A. Mathews. London: Reaktion, 2018.
Holloway, D. *9/11 and the War on Terror*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008.
Hornstien, S., and F. Jacobowitz eds. *Image and Remembrance: Representation and the Holocaust*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003.
Hunt, A. E. *The Turning: A History of Vietnam Veterans Against the War*. New York: New York University Press, 1999.
Huyssen, A. *Present Pasts; Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory*. California: Stanford University Press, 2003.
———. 'The Voids of Berlin'. *Critical Inquiry* 24, no. 1 (Autumn 1997): 57–81.
Ifill, G. 'Clinton's Economic Plan: The Spending Cuts; A Wide Swath, on Earth an in the Sky'. *New York Times*, 18 February 1993. http://www.nytimes.com/1993/02/18/us/clinton-s-economic-plan-the-spending-cuts-a-wide-swath-on-earth-and-in-the-sky.html, accessed 7 January 2016.
'James Ingo Freed (1930–2005)'. United State Holocaust Memorial Museum website. https://www.ushmm.org/information/press/in-memoriam/james-ingo-freed-1930-2005/, accessed 19 June 2013.
Jameson, F. *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. London: Verso, 1991.
———. *Representing Capital: A Reading of Volume One*. London: Verso, 2011.
———. 'The Aesthetics of Singularity'. *New Left Review* 92 (March/April 2015): 101–32.
———. *Valences of the Dialectic*. London: Verso, 2009.
Jencks, C. *The Language of Post-Modern Architecture*. London: Academy Editions, 1977.
———. *The New Paradigm in Architecture: The Language of Post-Modernism*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002.
———. *What Is Post-Modernism?* 4th ed. London: Academy Editions, 1996.
Jewish Museum Berlin. https://www.jmberlin.de/en, accessed 22 August 2020.

Johnson, J. 'Granite Platoon'. *Landscape Architecture* 80, no. 1 (January 1990): 69–71.
Johnson, N. C. 'Sculpting Heroic Histories: Celebrating the Centenary of the 1798 Rebellion in Ireland'. *Transactions of the Institute of the British Geographers* 19, no. 1 (1994): 78–93.
Kansteiner, W. 'Geneology of a Category Mistake: A Critical Intellectual History of the Cultural Trauma Metaphor'. *Rethinking History: The Journal of Theory and Practice* 8, no. 2 (2004): 193–221.
Kant, I. *The Critique of Judgment* (1790), ed N. Walker. Trans. J. Creed Meredith. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.
Kaplan, E. A. 'Global Trauma and Public Feelings: Viewing Images of Catastrophe'. *Consumption Markets & Culture* 11, no. 1 (2008): 3–24.
———. *Trauma Culture: The Politics of Terror and Loss in Media and Literature.* New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2005.
Karni, A. 'Mandatory $24 Admission Fee Set for 9/11 Museum due to lack of Government Funds'. *New York Daily News*, 24 January 2014. http://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/mandatory-24-admission-fee-set-sept-11-museum-article-1.1589891, accessed 4 August 2015.
Kiely, R. 'From Authoritarian Liberalism to Economic Technocracy: Neoliberalism, Politics and "De-democratisation"'. *Critical Sociology* 43, no. 4–5 (July 2017): 725–45.
Kimmelman, M. 'Art/Architecture; Out of Minimalism, Monuments to Memory'. *New York Times*, 13 January 2002. http://www.nytimes.com/2002/01/13/arts/art-architecture-out-of-minimalism-monuments-to-memory.html?pagewanted=all, accessed 8 April 2015.
Klein, K. L. 'On the Emergence of Memory in Historical Discourse'. *Representations* 69 (Winter 2000): 127–50.
Klein, N. *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism*. London: Penguin Books, 2007.
Klimas, J. 'Veterans Groups Say Military Cuts Should Prompt Obama Budget Veto'. *The Washington Times*, 19 December 2013. http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2013/dec/19/veterans-groups-say-military-cuts-should-prompt-ob/?page=all, accessed 7 January 2016.
Knowlton, J., ed. *Forever in the Shadow of Hitler?: Original Documents of the Historikerstreit, the Controversy Concerning the Singularity of the Holocaust*. Trans. T. Cates. Atlantic Highlands: Humanity Books, 1993.
Kogod, L., and M. Osman. 'Girding the Grid: Abstraction and Figuration at Ground Zero'. *Grey Room*, 13 (Autumn 2003): 108–21.
Koshar, R. *From Monuments to Traces; Artifacts of German Memory; 1870–1990*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000.
Koss, J. 'Coming to terms with the present'. *Grey Room* 16 (Summer 2004): 116–31.
Krell, G., H. Nicklas, and A. Ostermann. 'Immigration, Asylum, and Anti-Foreigner Violence in Germany'. *Journal of Peace Research* 33, no. 2 (May 1996): 153–70.
Kyriakides, Y. '"Art After Auschwitz Is Barbaric": Cultural Ideology of Silence through the Politics of Representation'. *Media, Culture & Society* 27, no. 3 (May 2005): 441–50.

LaCapra, D. 'Trauma Absence and Loss'. *Critical Inquiry* 25, no. 4 (Summer 1999): 696–727.

Ladd, B. *The Ghosts of Berlin*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997.

Lang, B. *Holocaust Representation: Art within the Limits of History and Ethics*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000.

Landsberg, A. *Prosthetic Memory: The Transformation of American Remembrance Culture in the Age of Mass Culture*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2004.

Lazzarato, M. 'Neoliberalism in Action: Inequality, Insecurity and the Reconstitution of the Social'. *Theory, Culture & Society* 26, no. 6 (2009): 109–33.

Lennon, J., and M. Foley, *Dark Tourism*, London, Continuum, 2000.

———. 'Interpretation of the Unimaginable: The U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, D.C., and "Dark Tourism"'. *Journal of Travel Research* 38 (1999): 46–50.

Lentricchia, F., and T. McLaughlin eds. *Critical Terms for Literary Study*, 2nd ed. London: University of Chicago Press, 1995.

Leslie, E. 'Wrapping the Reichstag: Re-visioning German history'. *Radical Philosophy* (May/June 1996): 6–16.

Levi, P. *If This is a Man* and *The Truce* (1958). Trans. S. Woolf. London: Abacus, 1987.

Levy, D., and N. Sznaider. *The Holocaust and Memory in the Global Age*. Trans. A Oksiloff. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2006.

Libeskind, D. 'Between the Lines: Extension to the Berlin Museum, with the Jewish Museum'. *Assemblage* 12 (1990): 18–57.

Liebman, S. ed. *Claude Lanzman's Shoah*: *Key Essays*: Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Lin, M. 'Making the Memorial'. *The New York Review of Books* 47, no. 17, 2 November 2000. http://www.nybooks.com/articles/2000/11/02/making-the-memorial/, accessed 23 October 2012.

Linenthal, E. T. 'The Boundaries of Memory: The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum'. *American Quarterly* 46, no. 3 (September 1994): 406–33.

Lisle, D. 'Gazing at Ground Zero: Tourism, Voyeurism and Spectacle'. *Journal for Cultural Research* 8, no. 1 (2004): 3–21.

Livengood, R. M. 'Pitching Politics for the People: An Analysis of the Metaphoric Speech of H. Ross Perot'. *Western Folklore* 56, no. 3/4 (Autumn 1997): 259–65.

Lloyd, D. 'Colonial Trauma/Postcolonial Recovery?' *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies* 2, no. 2 (2000): 212–28.

Lower Manhattan Development Corporation. 'World Trade Center Site Memorial Competition Guidelines', 2003. https://www.911memorial.org/sites/all/files/LMDC%20Memorial%20Guidelines.pdf, accessed 2 October 2014.

Lupu, N. 'Memory Vanished, Absent and Confined: The Countermemorial Projects in 1980s and 1990s Germany'. *History and Memory* 15, no. 2 (Fall/Winter 2003): 130–64.

Lyndon, D. 'The New U.S. Embassy in Berlin'. *Places* 20, no. 2 (Summer 2008): 74–79.

Lyotard, J. 'Presenting the Unpresentable: The Sublime'. *Artforum* 20, no. 8 (1982): 64–69.
———. 'The Sublime and the Avant-Garde'. *Artforum* 22, no. 8 (1984): 36–43.
———. *The Differend: Phrases in Dispute* (1983). Trans. G. Van Den Abbeele. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988.
———. *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (1979). Trans. G. Bennington and B. Massumi. Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1986.
———. *The Postmodern Explained to Children*: *Correspondence 1982–1985*. Trans. T. M. Pefanis. London: Turnaround Books, 1992.
Malphurs, R. 'The Media's Frontier Construction of President George W. Bush'. *The Journal of American Culture* 31, no. 2 (June 2008): 185–201.
Marcuse, H. 'Holocaust Memorials: The Emergence of a Genre'. *The American Historical Review* 115, no. 1 (February 2010): 53–89.
Marcuse, P. 'Reflections on Berlin: The Meaning of Construction and the Construction of Meaning'. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 22, no. 2 (June 1998): 331–38.
Marling, K. A., and R. Silberman. 'The Statue Near the Wall: The Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the Art of Remembering'. *Smithsonian Studies in American Art* 1, no. 1 (Spring 1987): 4–29.
Martin, E. 'Re-reading Adorno: The "after-Auschwitz Aporia"'. *Forum* 2 (2006). http://www.forumjournal.org/site/issue/02/elaine-martin, accessed 4 February 2015.
Mathes, B. 'Teutonic Shifts, Jewish Voids: Remembering the Holocaust in Post-Wall Germany'. *Third Text* 26, no. 2 (2012): 165–75.
McClancy, K. 'The Rehabilitation of Rambo: Trauma, Victimization, and the Vietnam Veteran'. *The Journal of Popular Culture* 47, no. 3 (June 2014): 503–19.
McKim, J. 'Agamben at Ground Zero: A Memorial without Content'. *Theory, Culture & Society* 25, no. 5 (September 2008): 83–103.
———. 'New York's Spontaneous 9/11 Memorials and the Politics of Ambivalence'. *Borderlands* 9, no. 2 (2010): 1–20.
McManus, M. *The Rise of Post-Modern Conservatism: Neoliberalism, Post-Modern Culture and Reactionary Politics*. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019.
Michalski, S. *Public Monuments: Art in Political Bondage 1870–1997*. London: Reaktion Books, 1998.
Mickenberg, D., C. Granof, and P.Hayes eds. *The Last Expression: Art and Auschwitz*: London: Turnaround, 2003.
Miller, N. K. '"Portraits of Grief": Telling Details and the Testimony of Trauma'. *Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies* 14, no. 4 (2003): 112–35.
Mirowski, P. *Never Let a Serious Crisis Go to Waste: How Neoliberalism Survived the Financial Meltdown*. London: Verso, 2013.
Mitchell, W. J. T. *Cloning Terror: The War of Images, 9/11 to the Present,* Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2011.
———. *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994.
Moeller, R. G. 'Private Acts, Public Anxieties, and the Fight to Decriminalize Male Homosexuality in West Germany'. *Feminist Studies* 36, no. 3 (Fall 2010): 528–52.

———. ‘What Has “Coming to Terms with the Past” Meant in Post-World War II Germany? From History to Memory to the “History of Memory”’. *Central European History* 35, no. 2 (2002): 223–56.

Morley, S. ed. *The Sublime*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2010.

Mowitt, J. ‘Trauma Envy’. *Cultural Critique* 46 (Autumn 2000): 272–97.

Müller, J-W. *Another Country: German Intellectuals, Unification and National Identity*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000.

Murphy, D. E. ‘As Public Yearns to See Ground Zero, Survivors Call Viewing Stand Ghoulish’, 13 January 2002, *New York Times*. http://www.nytimes.com/2002/01/13/nyregion/as-public-yearns-to-see-ground-zero-survivors-call-a-viewing-stand-ghoulish.html, accessed 25 July 2015.

Myers, J. C. ‘Ideology After the Welfare State’. *Historical Materialism* 10, no. 2 (2002): 171–89.

National September 11 Memorial and Museum. http://www.911memorial.org. accessed 20 June 2015.

National World War II Memorial. http://www.wwiimemorial.com/, accessed 12 April 2014.

Naumann, M. ‘Remembrance and Political Reality: Historical Consciousness in Germany after the Genocide’. *New German Critique* 80 (Spring/Summer 2000): 17–28.

Niven, B., and C. Paver eds. *Memorialization in Germany Since 1945*. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000.

Novick, P. *The Holocaust and Collective Memory: The American Experience*. London: Bloomsbury, 2000.

Obama, B. ‘Remarks by the President at 9/11 Museum Dedication’, 15 May 2014, White House Press Office. https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/05/15/remarks-president-911-museum-dedication, accessed 10 April 2015.

Ochs, J. ‘Here is New York: Remembering 9/11’. *The Public Historian* 30, no. 3 (Summer 2008): 121–24.

O’Gorman, N. *The Iconoclastic Imagination: Image Catastrophe, and Economy in America from the Kennedy Assassination to September 11*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016.

Olick, J. K. ‘“Collective Memory”: A Memoir and Prospect’. *Memory Studies* 1, no. 1 (2008): 23–29.

Olick J. K., and J. Robbins. ‘Social Memory Studies: From “Collective Memory” to the Historical Sociology of Mnemonic Practices’. *Annual Review of Sociology* 24 (1998): 105–40.

Oltermann, P. ‘AfD Politician Says Germany Should Stop Atoning for Nazi Crimes’. *The Guardian*, 18 January 2017. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/jan/18/afd-politician-says-germany-should-stop-atoning-for-nazi-crimes, accessed 19 August 2020.

———. ‘Holocaust Memorial Replica Stunt Shines Light on Rightwing Radicalism in Germany’. *The Guardian*, 7 April 2019. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/apr/07/holocaust-memorial-replica-stunt-shines-light-on-rightwing-radicalism-in-germany, accessed 19 August 2020.

Orvell, M. 'After 9/11: Photography, the Destructive Sublime and the Postmodern Archive'. *Michigan Quarterly Review* 45, no. 2 (Spring 2006): 239–56.

Otterman, S. 'Film at 9/11 Museum Sets off Clash Over Reference to Islam', 23 April 2014, *New York Times*. http://www.nytimes.com/2014/04/24/nyregion/interfaith-panel-denounces-a-9-11-museum-exhibits-portrayal-of-islam.html?_r=0, accessed 16 April 2015.

Passerin d'Entrèves, M., and S. Benhabib eds. *Habermas and the Unfinished Project of Modernity: Critical Essays on the Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1997.

Pear, R. 'Budget Proposes Sharp Cuts in Veterans' Health Benefits'. *New York Times*, 19 December 1986. http://www.nytimes.com/1986/12/19/us/budget-proposes-sharp-cuts-in-veterans-health-benefits.html, accessed 2 January 2015.

Pearson, C. A. '9/11 Memorial Reveals the Bedrock of Tragedy'. *Architectural Record* 202, no. 6 (June 2014): 30.

Peltz, J. '9/11 Museum Shows SEAL's Shirt from bin Laden Raid'. *Mail Online*, 7 August 2014. http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/ap/article-2746750/9-11-museum-shows-SEALs-shirt-bin-Laden-raid.html#ixzz3i1qC2Iay, accessed 6 August 2015.

Petrie, J. 'The Secular Word Holocaust: Scholarly Myths, History, and 20th Century Meanings'. *Journal of Genocide Research* 2, no. 1 (2010): 31–63.

Phillip, A. 'Families Infuriated by "Crass Commercialism" of 9/11 Museum Gift Shop'. *Washington Post*, 19 May 2014. http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-nation/wp/2014/05/19/families-infuriated-by-crass-commercialism-of-911-museum-gift-shop/, accessed 10 April 2015.

Pickford, H. W. 'Conflict and Commemoration: Two Berlin Memorials'. *Modernism/Modernity* 12, no. 1 (January 2005): 133–73.

———. 'Dialectical Reflections on Peter Eisenman's Memorial for the Murdered Jews of Europe'. *Architectural Theory Review* 17, no. 2–3 (2012): 419–39.

Poole, R. 'Misremembering the Holocaust: Universal Symbol, Nationalist Icon or Moral Kitsch?' In *Memory and the Future: Transnational Politics, Ethics and Society*, eds. Y. Gutman, A. D. Brown and A. Sodaro, 31–49. Baskingstoke, UK: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010.

Postone, M. 'Anti-Semitism and National Socialism'. In *Germans and Jews Since the Holocaust*, eds. A. Rabinbach and J. Zipes, 302–14. New York: Holmes & Meier, 1986.

'President's Commission on the Holocaust Report', 27 August 1979. http://www.ushmm.org/research/library/faq/languages/en/06/01/commission/, accessed 23 January 2013.

Radstone, S. 'Memory Studies: For and Against'. *Memory Studies* 1, no. 1 (January 2008): 31–39.

Radstone, S., and K. Hodgkin eds. *Memory Cultures: Memory, Subjectivity and Recognition.* London: Transaction Publishers, 2006.

Ray, G. *Terror and the Sublime in Art and Critical Theory: From Auschwitz to Hiroshima to September* 11. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005.

Reagan, R. 'Remarks on Presenting the Presidential Citizens Medal to Raymond Weeks at a Veterans Day Ceremony', 11 November 1982. http://www.reagan.utexas.edu/archives/speeches/1982/111182a.htm, accessed 1 June 2012.

———. 'We Will Be as a City upon a Hill'. Speech given at the Conservative Political Action Conference, 25 January 1974. http://www.conservative.org/pressroom/reagan/reagan1974.asp, accessed 1 June 2013.

Reno, R. R. 'The Failed 9/11 Memorial'. *The Public Square* (December 2011): 3–5.

Retort (I. Boal, T. J. Clark, J. Matthews, and M. Watts). *Afflicted Powers: Capital and Spectacle in a New Age of War*. London: Verso, 2005.

Rogier, F. 'Growing Pains: From the Opening of the Wall to the Wrapping of the Reichstag'. *Assemblage* 29 (April 1996): 40–71.

Rogoff, I. 'The Aesthetics of Post-History: A German Perspective'. In *Vision and Textuality,* eds. S. Melville and B. Readings, 115–40. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 1995.

Roost, F. 'Recreating the City as Entertainment Centre: The Media Industry's Role in Transforming Potsdamer Platz and Times Square'. *Journal of Urban Technology* 5, no. 3 (1998): 1–21.

Rose, G. 'Beginnings of the Day: Fascism and Representation'. In *Modernity, Culture and 'the Jew'*, eds. B. Cheyette and L. Marcus, 242–56. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998.

Rose, M. A. *The Post-Modern and the Post-Industrial: A Critical Analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

Rose, R. 'Zentrale Gedenkstätte in Berlin Ein Mahnmal für alle Opfer: Im NS-Regime gab es keine Verfolgung erster oder zweiter Klasse'. *Die Zeit*, 28 April 1989. http://www.zeit.de/1989/18/ein-mahnmal-fuer-alle-opfer, accessed 1 February 2015.

Rosenberg, E. 'Walking in the City: Memory and Place'. *The Journal of Architecture* 17, no. 1 (2012): 131–49.

Rossi, R. 'Times Square and Potsdamer Platz: Packaging Development as Tourism'. *TDR* 42, no. 1 (Spring 1998): 43–48.

Rothberg, M. *Traumatic Realism; The Demands of Holocaust Representation*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000.

Rürup, R., ed. *Topography of Terror; Gestapo, SS and Reichssicherheitshauptamt on the 'Prinz-Albrecht-Terrain' A Documentation*, 15th ed. Trans. W. T. Angress. Berlin: Verlag Willmuth Arenhövel, 2005.

Sanbonmatsu, J. 'The Holocaust Sublime; Singularity, Representation, and the Violence of Everyday Life'. *American Journal of Economics and Sociology* 68, no. 1 (2009): 101–26.

Sarat, A., and T. R. Kearns, eds. *Cultural Pluralism, Identity Politics, and the Law*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999.

Savage, K. *Monument Wars: Washington D. C., The National Mall, and the Transformation of the Memorial Landscape*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009.

———. 'Trauma, Healing and the Therapeutic Monument'. *Public Art Review* 18, no. 1 (Fall/Winter 2006): 41–45.

Save the Facades website . http://www.savethefacades.com, accessed 14 March 2015.

Schlembach, R., and N. Clewer. 'Forced Empathy: Manipulation, Trauma and Affect in Virtual Reality'. *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 24, no. 5 (September 2021): 827–43.

Schwartz, B., and T. Bayma. 'Commemoration and the Politics of Recognition: The Korean War Veterans Memorial'. *American Behavioral Scientist* 42, no. 6 (March 1999): 946–67.

Serra, R., *Writings Interviews*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996.

Servart Theriault, K. 'Re-membering Vietnam: War, Trauma, and "Scarring Over" After "The Wall"'. *The Journal of American Culture* 26, no. 4 (December 2003): 421–31.

Sharpley, R., P. R. Stone. *The Darker Side of Tourism: the Theory and Practice of Dark Tourism*. Bristol: Channel View Publications 2009.

Shaw, P. *The Sublime*. London: Routledge, 2006.

Shepherd, L. J. 'Veiled References: Constructions of Gender in the Bush Administrations Post-9/11'. *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 8, no. 1 (2006): 19–41.

Simpson, D. *9/11: The Culture of Commemoration.* Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2006.

Sontag, S. *Regarding the Pain of Others*. London: Penguin, 2003.

Sorkin, M. ed. *Indefensible Space: The Architecture of the National Insecurity State*. London: Routledge, 2008.

———. 'Smoke and Mirrors'. *Architectural Record* 199, no. 9 (September 2011): 80.

Sorkin, M., and S. Zukin, eds. *After the World Trade Center*. New York: Routledge, 2002.

Stanger, K. 'Glenna Goodacre Sculpts Vietnam Women's Memorial'. *American Artist* 57, no. 613 (August 1993): 66–67.

Steiner, G. *Language and Silence: Essays 1958–1966*. London: Faber and Faber, 1967.

Stephens, S., I. Luna, and R. Broadhurst. *Imagining Ground Zero: Official and Unofficial Proposals for the World Trade Centre Competition*. London: Thames and Hudson, 2004.

Stonecipher, D. 'The Moment's Monument: Poetry and Berlin Memorials'. *Raritan* 30, no. 3 (Fall 2011): 1–21.

Stow, S. 'From Upper Canal to Lower Manhattan: Memorialization and the Politics of Loss'. *Perspectives on Politics* 10, no. 3 (September 2012): 687–700.

Studio Libeskind website. https://libeskind.com/work/ground-zero-master-plan/, accessed 30 September 2014.

Sturken, M. *Tangled Memories; The Vietnam War, the AIDS Epidemic, and the Politics of Remembrance*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997.

———. 'The Aesthetics of Absence: Rebuilding Ground Zero'. *American Ethnologist* 31, no. 3 (August 2004): 311–325.

———. *Tourists of History: Memory, Kitsch, and Consumerism from Oklahoma City to Ground Zero*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007.

Sweeney, P., and S. Opotow. '"Why There"? Islamaphobia, Environmental Conflict, and Justice at Ground Zero'. *Social Justice Research* 26, no. 4 (December 2013): 492–512.

'The Libeskind Building'. http://www.jmberlin.de/main/EN/04-About-The-Museum/01-Architecture/01-libeskind-Building.php.

The Project for the New American Century. 'Rebuilding America's Defenses: Strategy, Forces and Resources For a New Century', 2000, http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/pdf/RebuildingAmericasDefenses.pdf, accessed 8 March 2015.

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund. https://www.vvmf.org/, accessed 10 August 2020.

Till, K. E. *The New Berlin: Memory, Politics, Place*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005.

Toscano, A., and J. Kinkle. *Cartographies of the Absolute*. Winchester: Zero Books, 2015.

'Tower of Faces'. United States National Holocaust Memorial Museum website. http://www.ushmm.org/information/press/press-kits/united-states-holocaust-memorial-museum-press-kit/tower-of-faces, accessed 25 October 2015.

Tracy, J.F. 'Bearing Witness to the Unspeakable: 9/11 and America's New Global Imperialism'. *The Journal of American Culture* 28, no. 1 (March 2005): 85–98.

Traverso, E. *The New Faces of Fascism: Populism and the Far Right*. Trans. D. Broder. London: Verso, 2019.

Tyler, I. *Revolting Subjects: Social Abjection and Resistance in Neoliberal Britain*. London: Zed Books, 2013.

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum., http://www.ushmm.org/, accessed 20 August 2016.

Van Tor, B., and H. Ronnes. 'Reflecting Absence, or How Ground Zero Was Purged of Its Material History (2001–2010)'. *International Journal of Cultural Property* 22, no. 1 (February 2015): 85–100.

Venturi, R., D. Scott Brown, and S. Izendour. *Learning from Las Vegas*. Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 1977.

Wagner-Pacifici, R., and B. Schwartz. 'The Vietnam Veterans Memorial: Commemorating a Difficult Past'. *American Journal of Sociology* 97, no. 2 (September 1991): 376–420.

Watson, H. 'Berlin's Empty Heart'. *Architectural Design* 76, no. 3 (2006): 100–3.

Wenzel, M. 'The Unrepresentability of the Holocaust'. *Jewish Museum Berlin,* video, 2.26. https://www.jmberlin.de/en/unrepresentability-holocaust, accessed 25 June 2021.

Wefing, H. 'The Holocaust Memorial: Against All Expectations'. *Die Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 4 May 2005. http:/www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/germans/memorial/wefing.html, accessed 4 October 2012.

Weinberg, J., and R. Elieli. *The Holocaust Museum in Washington*. New York: Rizzoli International Publications Limited, 1995.

White, L., and C. Pajaczkowska eds. *The Sublime Now*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009.

Wiesel, E. 'President's Commission on the Holocaust Report', 27 August 1979. http://www.ushmm.org/research/library/faq/languages/en/06/01/commission/, accessed 23 January 2013.

———. 'Trivializing the Holocaust'. *New York Times*, 16 April 1978. https://www.nytimes.com/1978/04/16/archives/tv-view-trivializing-the-holocaust-semifact-and-semifiction-tv-view.html, accessed 12 May 2015.

Williams, P. *Memorial Museums: The Global Rush to Commemorate Atrocities*. Oxford: Burg, 2007.
Williams, R. *Marxism and Literature*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977.
Wilson Baptist, K. 'Incompatible Identities: Memory and Experience at the National September 9/11 Memorial and Museum'. *Emotion, Space and Society* 16 (2015): 3–8.
Wise, M. Z. 'Concrete Memory', March 2005. http://www.travel and leisure.com /articles/concrete-memory, accessed 4 October 2012.
World Trade Center website. http://www.wtc.com, accessed 17 July 2015.
Wulf, J. 'Remembrance is the Cause of a Few Activists'. *Die Tageszeitung*, 6 May 2005. http:/www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/germans/memorial/schoeps .html, accessed 4 October 2012.
Young, J. E. *At Memory's Edge; After Images of the Holocaust in Contemporary Art and Architecture*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000.
———. 'Daniel Libeskind's Jewish Museum in Berlin: The Uncanny Arts of Memorial Architecture', in *Visual Culture and the Holocaust*, ed. Zelizer, 179–97.
———. 'Germany's Holocaust Memorial Problem – and Mine', in Young, *At Memory's Edge*, 184–223.
———. 'Memory and the Monument after 9/11'. In *The Future of Memory*, eds. R. Crownshaw, J. Kilby and A. Rowland, 77–92. Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2010.
———. 'Memory, Countermemory, and the End of the Monument', in Young, *At Memory's Edge*, 90–119.
———. *The Art of Memory; Holocaust Memorials in History*. Ex-Cat., Jewish Museum. New York: Prestel, 1994.
———. 'The Counter-Monument: Memory against itself in Germany Today'. *Critical Inquiry* 18, no. 2 (Winter 1992): 267–96.
——— 'The Stages of Memory at Ground Zero', in *Religion, Violence, Memory, and Place*, eds. Baruch Stier and Landres, 214–34, 226.
Zapatka, C. 'All Quiet on the Western Mall: Recent Memorials in Washington'. *Lotus International* 93 (1997): 64–75.
Zelizer, B., ed. *Visual Culture and the Holocaust.* New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2000.
Zimmerman, M. 'The Berlin Memorial for the murdered Sinti and Roma: Problems and Points for Discussion'. *Romani Studies* 17, no. 1 (June 2007): 1–30.
Ziv, S. 'The Story of Yolocaust, the Holocaust Memorial Selfie Project That Shocked and Vanished'. *Newsweek* 168, no. 7 (2 March 2017). https://search-proquest -com.ezproxy.brighton.ac.uk/docview/1869186221?https://ezproxy.brighton.ac.uk /login?url=accountid=9727&pq-origsite=summon>, accessed 24 January 2019.
Žižek, S., ed. *Mapping Ideology*. London: Verso, 1994.
9/11 Memorial Foundation. '9/11 Memorial Museum Unveils New Exhibition on the Victorious End in the Hunt for Osama bin Laden'. Press release, 7 August 2014. https://www.911memorial.org/sites/all/files/New%20Museum%20Exhibit%20Release.pdf, accessed 7 August 2015.

Index

About the Author

Dr. **Nicola Clewer** is a Senior Lecturer at the University of Brighton where she teaches on the BA Humanities Programme, the MA Cultural History, Memory and Identity and the MA Cultural and Critical Theory. Her research explores the relationship between aesthetics and politics with a particular emphasis on the politics of the sublime. Nicola is a long-standing member of the Centre for Applied Philosophy, Politics and Ethics at the University of Brighton.