

IN SIGHT BUT OUT OF MIND:
THE CONSTRUCTION OF MEMORY AT THREE ONCE STIGMATIZED SITES
IN BERLIN AND POZNAŃ

By

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ABSTRACT

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This study explores cultural identity reflected in the urban landscape at three structures formerly identified with National Socialism: Berlin's *Olympiastadion* (Olympic Stadium) and *Siegessäule* (Victory Column), and Poznań's *Zamek cesarski* (formerly *Kaiserschloss* – or Imperial Castle). My analysis is based on local and state archival work, as well as the examination of literary, visual and media sources in both Germany and Poland. I conclude that after the structures were first used to project meaning from Cold War tropes, both tourism and the enhancement of local identity in the face of European and global influences eventually contributed to the shift in meaning at these spaces in both cities.

Poznań's *Zamek cesarski*, a palace first commissioned by German Kaiser Wilhelm II, became, with its dedication in 1910, a monument to Prussian-German imperialism in this multi-ethnic Polish-German-Jewish city. Rededicated by the new Polish republic after World War I, the structure was later remodeled by the Nazis for Hitler's use. One of their most prominent additions is still visible today: the *Führerbalkon*, a balcony extending off the front of the building for Hitler to watch military parades. After 1945, the partially damaged neo-Romanesque building was repaired and maintained by the Polish postwar administration, and today serves citizens as the multifaceted *Centrum Kultury "Zamek"* (Center of Culture "Zamek"). The physical space surrounding the building has been drastically changed, as a number of Polish monuments and memorials have been erected around the palace's perimeter. Similarly,

Olympiastadion and the *Siegessäule*, despite their design and function as sites of German history and national memory, are increasingly associated today with the city of Berlin. Both have hosted a number of cultural events: the stadium has maintained its function to this day, while the monument was first neglected and decades later became associated with a number of popular events in the reunified capital.

After first demonstrating Hitler's personal interest in the design and the Nazis' use of each structure, I center my work on each site in its post-1945 landscape. I analyze the debates on whether or not to purge the structures from the urban landscape and examine questions of appearance, utilization and repurposing during the decades of the Cold War. Finally, I describe the emphasis on historical and new events, the erection of monuments and the structures' depiction in cultural texts that have also had an impact on the public perception of the three spaces in today's Berlin and Poznań.

Examining sites with a similar past in both cities also allows a comparative look at memory trends in Germany and Poland – two nations where decisions regarding memorialization and urban development have been carefully scrutinized in the public sphere. In addition to contributing to the growing field of work on the use of public space to establish cultural memory, this project demonstrates processes by which even the most meaningful cultural associations can be rewritten.

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To my loving parents

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NOTE TO THE READER

Because this dissertation, at least in its initial version, has been written for the field of German Studies, all German-language sources have been cited in the original. Polish-language sources have been translated into English and the original has been provided in a footnote.

In an effort to avoid over-translation, I refer to place names in their original language, particularly for the many buildings, streets, landmarks and urban sites that are an important part of this study. For place names in Polish and other languages other than German, I have provided an English translation in parentheses immediately following the first instance. I made a few exceptions in the interest of readability, referring occasionally to a longer name or institution directly in English. In regard to the three structures on which the dissertation is based, I generally use their current names: Zamek cesarski, Olympiastadion and the Siegessäule. When discussing specific historical periods when structures or cities had names other than their current ones, I use the form used by the prevailing political authorities of that respective era.

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KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

ARCHIVES

APP	Archiwum Państwowe w Poznaniu
BArch-B	Bundesarchiv, Berlin
BArch-K	Bundesarchiv, Koblenz
BArch-FA	Bundesarchiv, Filmabteilung, Berlin
BR	Biblioteka Raczyńskich, Poznań
BU	Biblioteka Uniwersytecka w Poznaniu, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań
GSA	Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin-Dahlem
IZ	Instytut Zachodni, Poznań
LAB	Landesarchiv Berlin
MKZ	Miejski Konserwator Zabytków, Poznań
MNP	Muzeum Narodowe w Poznaniu
Stabi	Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin Preußischer Kulturbesitz
ZBS	Zentrum für Berlin-Studien, Haus Berliner Stadtbibliothek

NEWSPAPERS AND PERIODICALS

Ab	<i>Der Abend</i> (American newspaper in Berlin, 1946-1981)
BM	<i>Berliner Morgenpost</i>
BZ	<i>Berliner Zeitung</i>
DU	<i>Dziennik Urząd Rzeczpospolita Polska</i>
FAZ	<i>Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung</i>

Foc	<i>Focus Online</i>
GWlkp	<i>Głos Wielkopolski</i>
GWyb	<i>Gazeta Wyborcza</i>
HB	<i>Handelsblatt</i>
Ku	<i>Der Kurier</i> (French newspaper in Berlin, 1945-1966)
ND	<i>Neues Deutschland</i>
NZ	<i>Die neue Zeitung</i> (American newspaper in Germany, 1945-1955)
PDW	<i>Poznański Dziennik Wojewódzki</i>
Rz	<i>Rzeczpospolita</i>
Sim	<i>Simplicissimus</i>
Sp	<i>Der Spiegel</i>
SpO	<i>Spiegel Online</i>
SpO-Intl	<i>Spiegel Online International</i> (English language edition)
Taz	<i>Die Tageszeitung</i>
Te	<i>Der Telegraph</i> (British newspaper in Germany)
Ti	<i>The Times</i>
Tsp	<i>Der Tagesspiegel</i>
ZfB	<i>Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung</i>
Zt	<i>Die Zeit</i>

CHAPTER 1

Forgetting the Past: The Rewriting of Collective Memory

*Das Vergangene ist nicht tot; es ist nicht einmal vergangen.
Wir trennen es von uns ab und stellen uns fremd.
- Christa Wolf, Kindheitsmuster (11)*

I.

Introductory Scenes

Poznań, August 20, 2010

It was a warm August evening, and a crowd waited with anticipation for the band to take the stage. The sun had dipped below the horizon, and the pale sandstone façade now appeared brighter than the sky above. Several hundred had crowded inside the castle grounds, where the concert would be held in the beautiful Rose Courtyard. Outside the courtyard gates many others still hoped for one of the valuable tickets “za sto groszy” – for a mere hundred *groszy*, about 35 cents. Headlining was the Spanish flamenco band, *elbicho*, invited to Poznań for the special anniversary celebration. On this day Poznań’s Zamek cesarski – the Imperial Palace, originally Königliches Residenzschloss or Kaiserschloss – turned 100 years old, and Polish cultural leaders had organized this concert to commemorate the 1910 visit of the German Kaiser, Wilhelm II, for the dedication of this palace, the cornerstone of a brand new district designed to elevate the “superior” German culture in the public eye of the multicultural city.¹ Beginning in 1939, the castle was redesigned to serve as headquarters for the Nazis’ so-called “*Reichsgau Wartheland*” – beginning a reign of terror that lasted six years in the region and will never be forgotten.

¹ Historians use the term *Hebungspolitik* to refer to this aspect of Wilhelm II’s political goals in the East, whereby he aimed to present what he felt was a German cultural superiority through architecture and urban planning.



Figure 1.1. A 2011 postcard depicts Zamek cesarski. Produced by DDK Edition, Poznań; photograph by Dariusz Krakowiak. Used by permission. For interpretation of the references to color in this and all other figures, the reader is referred to the electronic version of this dissertation.

After an energetic concert and a few words by Mayor Ryszard Grobelny and Centrum Kultury “Zamek” (Center of Culture “Zamek”) director, Marek Raczak, fireworks lit up the now dark sky. Music accompanied the pyrotechnic display – beginning with Carl Orff’s powerful “O Fortuna” from the cantata *Carmina Burana*. One might be tempted to ponder Fortuna’s role in the past hundred years at this space, if standing there, listening to the fireworks pop and bang, looking up at the violent flashes of color streak across the sky over the shadowy gray façade of the fortress that changed hands four times since Wilhelm was presented with its key.

Commemoration is certainly an important part of the Polish way of life, but what could cause Poles to commemorate the symbol of Germanization in today’s largely monoethnic Poznań? Grobelny’s message, urging Poles to accept the castle as their own, was unmistakably positive: “Today, more and more often, this is truly a Polish Zamek, this is our Zamek, this is our

Centrum Kultury ‘Zamek.’ This is an element of Poznań of which we are genuinely very proud.”² Has the building truly been reconciled with the contemporary Polish city? Does his statement come across as argumentative, or do Poznanians share their mayor’s point of view, embracing the Zamek as their own?

Berlin, May 20, 2011

On a sunny day in May, members of the Berlin press gathered around the base of the Siegessäule (Victory Column) in the capital’s leafy Tiergarten. On this day, after a year and a half of hiding behind scaffolding, the well-known *Goldelse* – Berliners’ cynical yet endearing term for the golden Viktoria statue atop the column – was once again presented to her city. She was dressed for the occasion in a brand new coat of Schwabacher gold leaf – over one kilogram. The monument stands nearly 70 meters high and the 285 steps up the column reward tourists with a memorable view of the German capital. The journalists snacked on local Berlin hors d’oeuvres while bartenders poured them complimentary glasses of Berliner Pilsner and champagne from Lutter und Wegner. A four-person accordion ensemble dressed in modest *fin de siècle* garb played buoyant period tunes from a century ago. Before he and Mayor Klaus Wowereit spoke, Carsten Spallek, an economic councilman for Berlin-Mitte, first took questions from a small enclave of journalists representing the wide spectrum of the capital’s newspapers and media sources. Asked about the complicated past of the monument, Spallek answered:

[I]ch glaube der Charakter hat sich geändert....[Einst] militärisch geprägt...ich glaube, dass die Siegessäule eine ganz andere Bedeutung hat. Auch durch die positive Wirkung der Veranstaltungen die wieder drum hier passieren und die

² Original: “Dzisiaj, coraz częściej, tak naprawdę to jest polski Zamek, to jest nasz Zamek, to jest nasze Centrum Kultury ‘Zamek.’ To jest element Poznania, z którego my tak naprawdę jesteśmy dumni.” The speech was given in the Rose Courtyard behind the Zamek following the concert, on August 20, 2010.

immer wieder im Bilde sind. Zähl es, es ist die Love Parade, die Fanmeilen, Berliner Marathon und CSD³ ...von einem Kriegerdenkmal zu einem Symbol einer offenen, toleranten und reisenswerten Stadt....Das ist eine Sache was auch heute gefeiert werden sollte.⁴

Is this plausible? €4.3 million were invested in a painstaking renovation that included cleansing of the *Germania* mosaic and a new layer of 24-karat gold leaf for Viktoria, the goddess of victory. The monument has been restored to and preserved in its authentic form. Yet the form is not that of 1873 when the monument was first unveiled as a tribute to Bismarckian expansion and Prussian-forced German unity, but rather the form it was given under Albert Speer – in 1939. The meaning, as Spallek encourages us, however, can be changed.



Figure 1.2. The Siegessäule shone brightly on May 20, 2011, when it was reintroduced to the press following a 17-month renovation project. The allegory of Viktoria and the cannons received a new layer of 24-karat gold leaf. Photograph by the author.

³ Christopher Street Day Parade.

⁴ Press interview, May 20, 2011.

Berlin, July 9, 2006

69,000 fans cheered while gazing down at the pitch from the old stadium's tribunes. An estimated 715 million watched via television – gathered on the streets of Berlin and throughout Germany, certainly in both France and Italy, as well as all over Europe and throughout the world.⁵ The lasting image of that match for all those who watched – whether Zinedine Zidane's stunning head-butt of Marco Materazzi or the Italian celebration after converting the clinching penalty kick after extra time – has nothing to do with the stadium itself. Not even the British tabloid *The Sun* – often eager to use German football⁶ as an excuse to reference the Nazis – had a word to say about the National Socialist origins of Olympiastadion (Olympic Stadium).⁷ Instead, the attention was on the teams and players, the match and result, as well as an unfortunate exchange between goal-scorers Zidane and Materazzi in the 110th minute.

Perhaps that is where the attention indeed ought to be at such an event as the World Cup final. Within the context of memory culture, however, the question looms: Were the host stadium's Nazi origins largely unknown, ignored or simply forgotten? The fact that the Olympic grounds – stadium included – have been held under *Denkmalschutz* by the German government

⁵ FIFA's official viewership estimate exceeded 715 million, though other estimates are as low as 260 million.
<<http://www.fifa.com/worldcup/archive/germany2006/results/matches/match=97410064/report.html>> (Last viewed 27 September 2011).

⁶ Throughout this work the term *football* is used in reference to European football, or soccer. In contrast, *American football* is used to refer to the popular American game that was developed later in the United States.

⁷ The paper that has made frequent Nazi references in topics related to German football instead ran the article "Now it's Wonderball" leading up to the 2006 French-Italian final at Olympic Stadium. The article discussed Oasis lead singer Noel Gallagher's friendship with Italian striker, Alessandro Del Piero, as well as his plans to attend the match in Berlin in support of the Italian side. <<http://www.thesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/sport/football/55100/Now-its-Wonderball.html>> (Last viewed 27 September 2011).

since 1966 clearly demonstrates a will to protect the memory of the stadium's past (Kluge, *Olympiastadion Berlin* 177). Does that memory resonate with the public, or is it merely a political formality that is out of touch with contemporary society?



Figure 1.3. After completion in 2004 of renovation by Gerkan, Marg and Partner (gmp), which included a trademark new roof, Olympiastadion hosted the 2006 World Cup final. Here the stadium is shown on the eve of the 2011 final of the DFB-Pokal (German Football Association Cup) between F.C. Schalke 04 and MSV Duisburg. Photograph by the author.

II.

Methodological Approach to Defining Three Spaces

This study examines three structures that were intently employed by the National Socialist regime as symbols of power and ideology. An administrative fortress, a grand sporting facility and a pompous monument: these three structures were all designed to further the ideals of German racial and ideological supremacy – in sport, in war and in governing newly acquired territory. The structures intimidated citizens and opponents alike, while furthering the causes of

recruitment and propaganda. Military and party demonstrations were held at each site, and under the Nazis the three sites were used to represent the nation's achievements, power and capability.

Each of the three buildings exists today in the same place and in essentially the same form. More surprisingly, perhaps, the sites are not shunned, but embraced by citizens in Poznań and Berlin, respectively. How did these three structures manage to survive during and after the fall of the Nazi regime? Why do they no longer have the stigma they once had as prominent symbols of National Socialism? What happened to the meaning at these sites, and what does that demonstrate about the meaning of built space in the context of urban culture? Pursuing answers to these questions will lead to a greater appreciation of the transient meanings of urban space, the influences of such changes and their impact on society.

There are hundreds of buildings either built or modified by the Nazi regime that are still in existence – some shunned, some functional and others forgotten.⁸ Fehrbelliner Platz is a massive office complex in Berlin's Wilmersdorf district, built in the mid-1930s in the unmistakable National Socialist style: the uniform, imposing walls of cold, gray limestone. It houses a number of different entities today, including the film division of the Bundesarchiv. Yet though the complex housed government-controlled offices under the Nazis, they were low-profile and the building politically insignificant. Aside from an unflattering aesthetic, the only stigma associated with the building is the date on its cornerstone. In other words, from then until now, there has been little change in function or perception.

The jagged edge of the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche clock tower on Charlottenburg's Breitscheidplatz serves today as a constant reminder of the price paid for

⁸ See, for example, Helmut Weihsmann's comprehensive *Bauen unterm Hakenkreuz. Architektur des Untergangs* (Vienna: Promedia-Verlag, 1998), or one of Matthias Donath's more accessible guides focusing on fewer, more prominent sights in slightly more detail, such as *Architecture in Berlin 1933 - 1945: A Guide Through Nazi Berlin* (Berlin: Lukas-Verlag, 2006).

waging World War II. Although one cannot look at the church without remembering the war, the church never served the Nazi regime as a political symbol, despite Joseph Goebbels' discussion of the church's place in the West Berlin district.⁹ The Detlev-Rohwedder-Haus on Wilhelmstraße – formerly Hermann Göring's Reichsluftfahrtministerium (Imperial Aviation Ministry) – is indeed representative Third Reich architecture that has survived intact. The massive building has not shed its Nazi associations, however, despite several significant functional changes. One explanation may be the fact that the building has been continuously linked to authority and politics.

Unlike the complex at Fehrbelliner Platz and the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche, the three sites in this study were intended as symbols of National Socialism, a meaning that was not merely happenstantial: Hitler himself was actively concerned with the design of all three, making his own specific adjustments and specifications. The Kaiserschloss in Poznań was originally a palace built to display the authority of the Kaiser in the midst of the aggressive Germanization of a city with a Polish population in the clear majority. Under the Nazis it immediately underwent an expensive remodeling and was established as the political seat of Gauleiter Arthur Greiser and the Nazi regional administration. Olympiastadion and its surrounding complex hosted youth and political rallies, promoting the Nazi military through sport, and hosted the 1936 Olympic Games, meant to present German fascism to the world and prove “Aryan” racial superiority through athletics. The Siegessäule was dedicated in 1873 as a memorial honoring military success, expansion and the founding of “the German nation.” It was physically moved and its design altered in 1938-39 under the direction of Albert Speer, intending to portray the Prussian legacy as a precursor to the Nazis' Thousand-Year Reich.

⁹ For commentary on Goebbels' writing about the church and its place in the Charlottenburg district during late Weimar Berlin, see Rudy Koshar, *From Monuments to Traces* 113 ff.

Like the Detlev-Rohwedder-Haus, the three structures chosen for this study also bore a political stigma after World War II, but their connections to politics were deemphasized at some point, which allowed each site to acquire alternate meaning(s). These three once powerful symbols have thus survived, and today are not only fully functional but also embraced as important icons in the contemporary urban landscape. This study focuses on that transfer of meaning.

Sociologist Jennifer Jordan examines sites caught between “mundane” normality (i.e., having no history worth noting at all) and those marked and recognized as memorial sites (15). She points out a clear pattern of characteristics that memorial sites have in common before they become memorialized. Building on James Young, who argues that “no site speaks for itself” (62), and Rudy Koshar, who writes that despite being material constructions, historical sites’ “meanings derive from public action” (*From Monuments to Traces*, 9), among others, Jordan devises a formula in which four conditions are necessary for an authentic space to become memorialized. Looking at several dozen authentic sites in Berlin tied to the National Socialist past – both memorial sites as well as those that have failed to be marked – Jordan has shown that the successfully memorialized site begins as: (1) public-owned space that (2) is not currently in use and that (3) possesses meanings that resonate with a broader public audience (4) from whom a committed advocate or “memorial entrepreneur” is willing to push for memorialization. The absence of any one of the four conditions, on the other hand, typically means the site will “fade into the cityscape unmarked” (14). With one particular characteristic – having an advocate or “memorial entrepreneur” (2) – she demonstrates that memorial spaces “must be produced” (18).

In contrast to the sites Jordan examines – either marked out for remembrance or held in captive obscurity – here I examine three places caught between multiple meanings and

memories: the proud and the tragic; the national and the local; the political and the aesthetic. If Jordan investigated whether or not certain authentic sites are *remembered*, the question I raise is whether or not the authentic past of three particular sites has been *forgotten*. With an eye towards the influences and actors involved, I explore which (whose) memories have prevailed and which (whose) have subsided, as well as those interpretations that might survive into the future. Furthermore, I suggest several reasons for these trends.

In tracing the meanings of these edifices, I will analyze the meaning of each structure in the following three categories: its function; its representation (i.e. its implied meaning); and its personal or social meaning (i.e. its perceived meaning). Today's Olympiastadion functions simultaneously as both stadium and *Denkmal*. It has never lost its original purpose though it has served many other functions along the way. Zamek cesarski has been royal residence, university, (briefly) hospital and administrative center, before now having served nearly 50 years as cultural institution under two political systems. The Siegestsäule has always been a monument, today houses a museum exhibit as well, but has in the past decade become every bit as well known as a backdrop for various events. All three structures have been well-known symbols – first of the German nation, *Volk* or regime, though now they have also become popular symbols of their respective cities. All three are marketed as popular tourist destinations. Each building has appeared in a number of fictional and other cultural texts. Finally, each in its varying functions evokes specific personal memories and impressions to different individuals and groups. I explore these various “readings” of the three structures as cultural texts in the urban landscape – those readings that have emerged, those that have persisted and those that have been lost. I will also demonstrate how both personal and collective interpretations can be influenced or manipulated.

III.

Interpreting Meaning: A Hermeneutic Approach

After the Bundestag decided in 1991 to move the capital of reunified Germany from Bonn to Berlin, the once divided city on the Spree began to change at an extremely rapid pace. The influx of ministries and construction projects brought both inclinations toward and hesitations about reconstruction, repurposing and navigating spaces covered in the city's many layers of history. There followed an intriguing if relentless series of architectural debates and controversies over what to do with various historical spaces – a series of debates that garnered the attention of not a few scholars across many disciplines. It was in the midst of these debates, in 2001, that Germanist Lutz Koepnick identified the “prominent function of architectural forms today to evoke historical legacies and negotiate the challenges of an ever-more global future.” He went on to say that in American German Studies “the remaking of Berlin into a capital city of both collective memory and transnational appeal seems to be on everyone's mind” (345). Koepnick cites Frederic Jameson, however, who identifies space as allegorical – continuously infused with meaning rather than possessing meaning in its form (Jameson 259). Koepnick concludes, “Space per se can never be political,” and that, despite what an architect might wish to imply, “[i]n itself, built space signifies nothing” (346).¹⁰

Fellow Germanist Rolf Goebel, in response to what he called Koepnick's “anti-hermeneutic polemic” (198), disagrees, arguing that there is indeed value in the author's, i.e. architect's, original design and intent. Berlin's urban landscape, he writes, is “saturated with concrete historical references, traces of original intentions, and determinate meanings.” The

¹⁰ Koepnick continues (regarding “space”): “Its historical meanings depend on narratives and discourses negotiating what a certain building is *meant* to mean, on projective activities that are by no means immune to the historical process.”

buildings and streets are “hermeneutic objects” that are “waiting to be ‘read’ – actualized, interpreted, critiqued or simply enjoyed” (198).

In advocating the use of the trained literary eye to examine “texts” beyond the written page, Goebel encourages us not to abandon hermeneutics in our critique of urban space. Pointing to both Franz Hessel’s literary eye as a *flâneur* and Walter Benjamin’s claim in *Passagenwerk* “that one can read the real like a text,”¹¹ he establishes the roots of this approach to the cultural reading of the urban cityscape already in modernism (199).

Goebel disagrees with Koepnick’s suggestion that built space alone is void of meaning: “[A]rchitectural sites, even more literally than texts, can be inhabited or deserted, but they always call for, and indeed merit, interpretations and interrogations that originate from the buildings’ meaning potentials on their own terms, not primarily from the audience’s desires, projections, and expectations” (198). The sites themselves are worthy of our attention. If interpretation is our aim, we need to base this not solely upon other interpretations – that is, the personal – but also consider form and function, production and representation. With the following rhetorical questions, Goebel sums up the validity and importance of what we do as cultural critics of built space:

How can memory, with its reflexive interrogation or preservation of past moments of urban life, legitimately arise in the minds of people visiting or inhabiting architectural forms if built space is said to signify nothing in itself? How can we distinguish between historical simulations and truthful reconstruction, between genuine acts of commemorating the past and the touristic commodification of tradition, between actual events and their digital (re-)presentation, unless we envision a cultural studies methodology that, among its many interdisciplinary approaches, incorporates determinate readings of architectural intentions, historical references, and aesthetic values inscribed in the materiality of streets, museums, monuments, and other sites? (199-200)

¹¹ Benjamin’s original: “daß man das Wirkliche wie einen Text lesen kann” (qtd. in Goebel 199). The translation of Benjamin is my own.

Memory clearly demonstrates the meanings spaces themselves can have, since even a place void of politics and unknown to the media is capable of conjuring powerful memories, meanings and associations. Yet memory can also be manipulated. It can also change over time. What happens when the collective memory is dependent on post-memory rather than personal memory? Goebel urges us to consider all of these things in our assessment – not just the meaning ascribed by a given advocate or “memorial entrepreneur” – to use Jordan’s phrase – or by the media, an author or politician. It is important what the original purpose and aesthetic was, just as it is crucial for us to examine the Nazis’ repurposing and the meanings after the war and reunification. How can we study shifts in meaning if we pay no attention to the point of departure?

It is, furthermore, not the aim of this study to suggest where the National Socialist past is still visible or whether that past ought to be remembered or displayed. On the other hand, neither can that past be simply ignored as irrelevant or outdated, particularly if the goal is – as it is here – a complete and effective interpretation of a given space. The Third Reich has left such an indelible mark on all aspects of German culture that it is neither fully possible nor certainly welcomed in German Studies to leave that period out of any discussion of twentieth-century German culture. Similarly, no discussion of Poland in the twentieth century can overlook the Third Reich and its effects either. Together with Germany’s resulting political division and eventual reunification, the rise and fall of the Third Reich is at the root of nearly every cultural debate, particularly in urban architecture and collective memory.

IV.

Temporal and Global Effects on Collective Memory

Maurice Halbwachs' work of linking memory to space has impacted scholarship in a broad range of fields. In addition to defining the sociological theory of collective memory, he identifies the tendency of social groups to connect their values to physical space: "[M]ost groups...engrave their form in some way upon the soil and retrieve their collective remembrances within the special framework thus defined" (156). Various groups – whether linked by age, class, occupation, nationality, ethnicity, gender or shared experience – remember a given space in particular ways often varying from those of other groups. "In other words," continues Halbwachs, "there are as many ways of representing space as there are groups....[E]ach group cuts up space in order to compose, either definitively or in accordance with a set method, a fixed framework within which to enclose and retrieve its remembrances" (156-57). Such spaces are what historian Pierre Nora defines as *lieux de mémoire* (sites of memory) – places "where memory crystallizes and secretes itself" ("Between Memory and History" 7).

Conversely, however, the inability to associate personal memory with "place" defines the borders for memory itself. "When we reach that period when we are unable to represent places to ourselves, even in a confused manner, we have arrived at the regions of our past inaccessible to memory," writes Halbwachs (157). Applying this notion to an entire group or generation, there are past events no longer accessible to memory. If there are, then, particular events and histories associated with a particular space, they exist as memory per se only as long as the group or generation. But if memory is tied to space, what happens to the space after that memory is no longer accessible?

Afterwards those associations are once and for all trapped outside what Halbwachs terms *social memory*, and become accessible only through history, or – as Halbwachs terms it – *historical memory*. Some seven decades after World War II, only a small portion of the population can call on personal memory based on their own experience of this era. Even those memories are predominantly those of children, themselves subject to many influences then, not excluding contemporary ones. The vast majority of us, in the absence of any personal recollections of our own, rely on textual and medial representations as well as historical accounts.

Halbwachs draws this important distinction between *social memory* – which is experienced – and a *historical memory* reliant on historical representations in the form of text, media and memorialization. Sociologists Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider, referring to Halbwachs in *The Holocaust and Memory in the Global Age*, make precisely this point: “The Nazi era is not part of most people’s lived experience, and memories...are based exclusively on representations.” These representations, they point out, are “central to the de-territorialization of memory” (30). For Levy and Sznaider, memory eventually loses its dependency on a particular space. The result is a collective memory that is less authentic, much more fluid, and reliant on the representations of others and on current and ever-changing interpretations of those representations.

The Holocaust, Levy’s and Sznaider’s subject, is everywhere today: from college courses to pop culture; from fiction to memoir; from oral history archives¹² to Art Spiegelman’s graphic novels; from crime novels to the literary canon; from Claude Lanzmann’s eight-hour

¹² The University of Southern California Shoah Foundation Institute and the Freie Universität Berlin have been working since 1994 to assemble the Visual History Archive, which is made up of over 50,000 interviews with Holocaust witnesses.

documentary film to Quentin Tarantino. One question we as scholars ask ourselves is: Who or what is molding our perception of the Holocaust? My project applies the same question to three architectural forms layered with memory that goes back to the Nazis (or further). What do these spaces mean today, and who is informing our generation's perceptions of these structures?

Of the sudden influx of questions on all things "memory" in Germany after the fall of the Wall and reunification, historian Rudy Koshar writes: "[M]any journalists and scholars assumed that a typically German silence about the past had now given way to a preoccupation with history" (*From Monuments to Traces* 4). That reunification brought with it a renewed focus on the past makes perfect sense, since questions about the past and about memory are so strongly linked to identity – something Germans were forced to think more about after reunification.

Hence, if simply on account of age and the passing of time, today's *social memory* that ties a particular space to its National Socialist past is evaporating. That memory is giving way to personal recollections of events more recent than those from the 1940s. Associations with contemporary functions and representations of that space are shared by larger portions of the population. If the *social memory* that links these sites first and foremost with the Nazis is on the wane, and in addition to that, the globally-influenced *historical memory* ceases to associate these three sites with their National Socialist past, then the collective memory is undergoing rapid change precisely during this generation. Personal associations with the Nazi past based on lived experience are fading. The attempts by those still possessing personal memory, as well as by certain scholars and – on occasion – the media, to resist this globally-driven and locally-influenced trend are becoming either less frequent or finding less resonance with the current generation. Associations with, references to and stories about the Nazi past are by no means subsiding: the narrative is still there, perhaps more than ever. But the reality is this: perceptions

of this historical period are – as with every other historical period before it – becoming overwhelmingly based upon *historical memory*, that is, that which is portrayed to us through historical and cultural texts.

Halbwachs concludes his discourse on memory and space by stating that the latter “is stable enough to endure without growing old or losing any of its parts.” It is this spatial image that, because of its stability and its tendency to endure, gives us “the illusion of not having changed through time” (157). With the exception of a few minor modifications that I address in chapter 3, the Siegessäule, Olympiastadion and Zamek cesarski all appear essentially as they did in 1945. In their form the structures have not changed through time. Yet that may be simply an illusion, since form is only one aspect of reading a cultural text.

V.

Musealization and the Promotion of the Local

Andreas Huyssen observes a noteworthy trend in our global society: an obsession to store and preserve history and memory. Because of the increased speed, boundlessness and temporality of both information and media in the digital age, we are inclined to give in to the “seduction of the archive” (*Present Pasts*, 5). German philosopher Hermann Lübbe wrote already in the 1980s of “musealization” – a term Huyssen also uses – which essentially signifies the extension of museum-making into our everyday lives as a method of coping with change (Lübbe 18).¹³ As a result, writes Huyssen, “memory and musealization together are called upon to provide a bulwark against obsolescence and disappearance, to counter our deep anxiety about the speed of change and the ever-shrinking horizons of time and space” (23).

¹³ Huyssen quotes Lübbe on p. 22 ff.

This has led to a dramatic increase first of all in the quantity of “musealized” information available, which in turn means increased competition for attention and perceived relevance of that information. One major effect has been that even the local or provincial, if able to render itself worthwhile in a convincing fashion, has the potential to reach a global audience. Fervidly promoting our local histories as universally significant, we lobby first for the world’s time and attention, then immediately for remembrance, often accompanied by national and international funding. Memorializing and musealizing, we knight ourselves protectors against the dangers of forgetting, or worse – obscurity. The result can be an information overload: seemingly everything is marked in museums and archives of which too few are aware, and fewer actually visit; cities adorned with plaques and monuments camouflaged to passers-by with modern buildings and commercialism, or with the simple over-abundance of memorials. As Huyssen warns, “Musealization itself is sucked into the vortex of an ever-accelerating circulation of images, spectacles, events, and is thus always in danger of losing its ability to guarantee cultural stability over time” (24).

Alongside the struggle for relevance, local identity has emerged to challenge national identity. I argue that local identity has played an important role in the redefining of each of the three sites discussed here as well. The local identities in Berlin and Poznań are juxtaposed with national German and Polish identities, respectively. Neither the local nor the national has completely eliminated the other – they exist alongside one another as well as the major global influence of cosmopolitanism, which, as sociologist Ulrich Beck writes, “does not exist without local particularities” (98-99). The three structures in this study, located in high-profile cities subject to global and cosmopolitan influences, are now endorsed and projected much more as symbols of their cities than symbols of their nations.

VI.

Two Paths Diverged: Memorialization and Forgetting

The memory of people is of utmost importance for us as humans. Once someone dies, that person is no longer physically present. A place, on the other hand, differs significantly in that it is always still physically present. Even if a building or monument is torn down or modified, the physical space still remains. If an event took place, be it historically or personally significant, one can still go to that specific space where it happened. Even if absolutely nothing remains there from the event itself, people still seek meaning being there – standing on that ground, breathing that air, observing the surroundings and feeling the climate. The place still *lives* in a certain sense. It still carries particular meaning.

We often go to places to remember people. That is, essentially, what a cemetery is: a place to remember and show respect to those no longer with us. Memorials function like gravestones for a city or “nation” or event. In that sense gravestones have much less to do with death than they do with remembering. Monuments are the same: they have more to do with remembering an event than with the event itself.

The landscape of the National Socialist past, and particularly in the former capital, is sprinkled with sites with the potential to remind us of the regime that murdered six million people in the Holocaust as well as other victims at home and abroad through street violence and invasion, racist policy and forced migration, not to mention the war waged on Europe. Historian Brian Ladd wrote a book about Berlin’s “ghosts” and geographer Karen Till refers to certain spaces as “haunted” – both terms fittingly describe the Nazi-era meaning we ascribe to sites all over Berlin as one of several layers of the past. “[W]e make places to house these ghosts,” writes Till, “to try to understand our inheritance of cultural loss and trauma. We return to these places

to feel haunted. We make places of memory to get near those gaps and in this way become closer to those who went before us and to those who may come in the future” (225).

Jennifer Jordan’s work has shown precisely how the places to “house these ghosts” are made: barring any logistical obstacles (property ownership or use), they are produced. In my investigation of three places with this common memorial-worthy past that have been repurposed and redefined in completely different ways, I ask: Have the ghosts been driven out of these sites, confined to victim memorials and designated Holocaust memory sites?

In her monograph *The New Berlin: Memory, Politics, Place*, Till presents a thought-provoking critique of the myriad questions that have risen out of the gulf between fast-paced urban development and the memorial-minded moral conscience of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* in the post-reunification capital. While she centers her work around four sites with links to the Nazi past – The Topography of Terror, the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, the Jewish Museum and the Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp Memorial and Museum – Till covers many of Berlin’s other “haunted” sites as well. For example, the vast office spaces offered by the Detlev-Rohwedder-Haus, originally built as Göring’s Reichsluftfahrtministerium, were utilized after the Wall fell – first as the headquarters for the Treuhand firm responsible for East German privatization, and eventually as the Bundesministerium der Finanzen (Federal Ministry of Finance). Till explains the repurposing of this building, “tainted” as one of the branches of the Nazi war machine, as follows:

This building was ‘reused,’ like some of the other older buildings in the city, because of the enormous unanticipated expenses of reunification, moving the capital to Berlin, and the economic recession in general. Otherwise, the politicians in Bonn wanted to build all new buildings, perhaps in an attempt to ignore the historical presence of Berlin. (225)

The third chapter of this study presents similar circumstances that led to the preservation and repurposing of the three structures. I demonstrate how policy-makers in Berlin and Poznań were also faced with severe shortages of built space as an economic reality in the immediate years after World War II. This was not the only factor in their decisions, however. The perceived need for political leverage and self-legitimization prompted new leaders to apply the structures to their own purposes.

VII.

Comparative Contexts: German and Polish Memory Tropes

There have been times when leaders urged the public to forget history. One such time was after the Second World War. Walter Ulbricht, the first party secretary of the German Democratic Republic (GDR), sought to “erase fascist structures from [citizens’] memory,” as various buildings in Berlin and Potsdam, such as each city’s Stadtschloss (Royal Palace) – though certainly monarchic rather than fascist – were hastily pulled down by the newly-established authority.¹⁴ In communist postwar Poland and in the GDR, as well as in the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), authorities could more easily implement ideological changes in the urban landscape under the guise of “forgetting” a past regime few at that time wished to remember.

The 1993 opening of Szobor Park (Statue Park) in Budapest may have marked an interesting trend shift in how we remember. Instead of the immediate destruction of the monuments and symbols that represented the yoke of Soviet-communist oppression, as was the case in many other nations, post-communist Hungarian leaders gathered the monuments and set them up miles outside the city. Today they remind those who visit of the political and aesthetic

¹⁴ Qtd. in Michael Meng.

values of the previous political regime, functioning not unlike a museum. When they were put there, however, it was done as if to avoid making a decision in favor of “forced forgetting” – resisting the emotional urge that so often accompanies the spirit of revolution and regime change.

Other examples of National Socialist memory from World War II, after not being preserved for years or decades after 1945, now follow this trend of renewed preservation following a period of forgetting and neglect. Two examples are sites of Hitler’s former wartime residences: the Obersalzberg in Berchtesgaden and the Wolfsschanze (known today as “Wilczy Szaniec” or “Wolf’s Lair”) near Kętrzyn, Poland. Both were partially destroyed and/or neglected after the war, though both have in recent years gained status as authentic historical sites. While many historically engaged tourists come to visit and even stay at the sites (each complex features a hotel and restaurant), both have also been criticized for commodifying the Nazi past. Whether the result of commodifying a historical space or the impulse to musealize – or perhaps both – such places have been brought back from the realm of the forgotten.

This study examines three symbolic sites of National Socialist memory that have been preserved, yet have *never* functioned principally as memory sites since the end of the war. I show how each of them survived physically during an era in which “forgetting” was a common political objective carried out in urban planning. I also recount what else has happened at each site since the collapse of the Third Reich, and explain why they are no longer associated with National Socialism. After two decades of a post-communist era now obsessed with remembering, how have the “forgotten” pasts of these structures been confronted?

One important factor to keep in mind is that none of the three sites is in this study is a “victim site.” They are not concentration camps, torture cellars or cemeteries – places associated

with the victims of the Nazi regime. Such places resonate with a global audience as places that need to be preserved out of respect for the memory of those who died and for admonishment that such tragedies might not be repeated. Perpetrator sites, on the other hand, are more easily (though not always) freed from the global moral conscience. Economics become a more significant factor in preserving functional buildings. If these were victim sites, that factor alone might be sufficient to trump economics on the basis of global influence.

Examining two sites from Berlin and one from Poznań will demonstrate that the same phenomenon has happened in both Germany and Poland – that is, in the post-World War II context: in a perpetrator nation and a victim nation. World War II has had a more profound lasting effect on the national identity of each of these nations arguably than any other event in their rich histories. Yet the two nations (collectively speaking) are situated on perfectly opposite sides of the memory spectrum in relation to World War II – one as perpetrator, the other as victim. Both nations are compelled to remember – one motivated by guilt, the other by loss. The national memory culture of both nations has developed around the tragic events of that war and the Holocaust. The two events form a focal point, like a star around which the other events of national history and memory revolve.

Despite the fact that both nations are juxtaposed to World War II and the Holocaust on opposite sides, both have sites that were symbolically used by the National Socialist regime that have now completely lost this meaning. This study shows how these sites have, in fact, lost that meaning within two vastly different contexts of these neighboring countries.

The politics of memory in the post-Cold War era in Central Europe have had a surprisingly common influence on the sites in both Germany and Poland. The two decades since the fall of communism have been marked by widespread reconstruction and urban change in both

Poznań and in reunified Berlin. Millions of marks, euros and złoty have been poured into building projects, urban revitalization, and the preservation of historical sites. In both cities these funds have come from municipal and local governments, from the federal government, and (since 2004 in Poland) from the European Union.

Local identity in both Poznań and Berlin has played a major role. The commodification of this built space has been another factor, as each site has been marketed by its respective city to attract both tourists and local visitors. In Poznań, a frame of monuments encircling the Zamek was erected over several decades. This constitutes a desire to put a Polish stamp on a space that was built during the *Kaiserzeit* as part of a Germanization effort and subsequently toggled back and forth between Polish and German interpretations, each trying to erase the previous monuments and marks. Once a “disposable past,” the Nazi link to the castle in some situations serves as a “usable past” in the Polish present – a reinforcement of the nation’s “victim status” narrative of history during Second World War.¹⁵ In Berlin the two sites’ Nazi ties prove usable and disposable at different times.

Levy and Sznajder show the profound effect globalization has on the way we develop and foster memory. The Holocaust was an event so tragic, so widespread and so well-documented that in the decades since it has affected memory in nations all over the globe, certainly as much as anywhere in both Germany – as the perpetrator nation – and Poland – as the stage on which most of the tragedy played out. As societies become more global, cosmopolitan values influence memory culture in individual nations and cities. Following the pattern of the Holocaust memory narrative, global influence has begun to affect the way nations think, write, build, commemorate

¹⁵ The terms “usable past” and “disposable past” are taken from Huyssen, “Present Pasts,” p. 38.

and remember. In short, global influence, according to Levy and Sznajder, has an effect on the way nations develop their national narratives and the way they form their collective memories.

There may not be a clearer example than that of Germany, the nation with a national guilt weighed down by the enormous burden of World War II and the Holocaust. Of the dueling urban landscapes of East and West Berlin, reconstructing themselves within the dark, unavoidable shadow cast by the Third Reich, Till writes: “The tension between the simultaneous renewal and rejection of the past, and the difficulties of remembering the future after National Socialism, continues to be central to the processes of place making and social memory in Berlin today” (43). The blame-reflection politics of the divided Berlin have, in the narrative of the contemporary memorial landscape, become forever linked to the National Socialist period itself. Have the Siegessäule and Olympiastadion been overlooked or neglected? If so, how, if there is no overlooking this historical period in Berlin, the city Hitler picked to build into the fearsome *Reichshauptstadt Germania*? Ladd asks the very important question of whether neglect is the same as denial in regard to the National Socialist past.¹⁶

Poles, however, have not enjoyed the time that some of their fellow Europeans have had to form their own collective memory and tell their national story on a global level. For this reason, along with a general skepticism toward government and outside influence that seems almost like a Polish tradition, they may be more resistant to global influences on their memory and their narrative. Still relatively new to post-war democratic Europe and the European Union, Poles are first trying to help their neighbors understand *their* story. This also provides a potential source of conflict between national and local memory narratives.

¹⁶ Ladd discusses the debates about neglect and denial in memory of the National Socialist past in his essay “Epilogue: The View from Berlin” that concludes Gavriel Rosenfeld’s and Paul Jaskot’s edited volume *Beyond Berlin: Twelve German Cities Confront the Nazi Past* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2008).

In the following four chapters I seek to answer the following four questions: The second chapter documents how each structure was imbued with Nazi meaning in design, representation and function. The third considers how and why each survived not only the war, but also the regime-change and post-war politics in both postwar Poland and Berlin under four-power control, in the British section and in the Federal Republic. The fourth chapter discusses various sources of alternate meaning at each structure, and considers why certain meanings were successful in remaining linked to each structure. The final chapter assesses the state of each site today, considering whether each space is still “tainted” with memory of the Nazi past, whether it is cleansed of this past and whether memory is contested. The answers to these questions provide a greater understanding of meaning at these three intriguing urban spaces. They also provide us with a pattern to observe this phenomenon in other places and contexts throughout the world.

CHAPTER 2

“The Word in Stone”:¹⁷ Three Structures as Billboards of National-Socialist Triumph

*“Im Grunde, so glaube ich, waren aber sein politisches Sendungsbewußtsein
und seine Architektenleidenschaft immer untrennbar.”
- Albert Speer on Hitler, Erinnerungen (94)*

I.

Introductory Scenes

Poznań, October 25, 1943

It had been four years since the Nazis marched into Poznań and Reichsführer SS Heinrich Himmler was in town from Berlin to observe the anniversary. There was a military parade in front of the castle, now renamed “Deutsches Schloss,” which housed Gauleiter Arthur Greiser’s administration and held offices for Hitler. Nazi news documentaries show Himmler saluting while walking by a regiment of soldiers standing in formation and offering the “Hitler-Gruß,” as Greiser walks directly behind his guest (BArch-FA, DW 47/688/1943; EW 37/ Nov 1943). Despite earlier visits from such Nazi dignitaries as Joseph Goebbels, Robert Ley and Baldur von Schirach (Schwendemann, *Hitlers Schloß* 112), historian Catherine Epstein writes that October 1943 “marked the zenith of Greiser’s power and prestige” in Poznań as governor of the so-called “Reichsgau Wartheland” (287).

During another visit to Greiser’s capital earlier that month, Himmler gave the most widely-known speech of his career, known as the “Posen speech,” which was recorded and has been preserved. Speaking first to leaders of the SS and two days later to an assembly of Reichs-

¹⁷ This phrase is taken from the title of Robert R. Taylor’s book: *The Word in Stone: The Role of Architecture in the National Socialist Ideology*. Berkeley, CA: The University of California Press, 1974.

and Gauleiter, Himmler addressed the ongoing genocide and made concrete reference to the murder of the Jews with his now well-documented words: “Most of you know what it means to see a hundred corpses lying together, five hundred, or a thousand.”¹⁸ Because renovations at the castle would not be finalized until December 1943 (Schwendemann 133), the speeches were held in the Golden Hall of Poznań’s sixteenth-century Ratusz (Rathaus or Old Town Hall).¹⁹ As depicted in the documentary footage, however, Wilhelm II’s German Schlossplatz was chosen for such rallies – and not the older, Polish Stary Rynek (Altmarkt or Old Town Square) with its Ratusz. In fact, the castle’s renovation scaffolding was completely removed for the occasion (133). Franz Böhmer’s nearly-finished castle was *the* symbol of Nazi power in Greiser’s “Reichsgau Wartheland.”



Figure 2.1. The National Socialists stripped Wilhelm’s ornate chapel in the clock tower and built an office to accommodate Hitler. The “Führerbalkon” provided an observation point for

¹⁸ Qtd. in Epstein 288

¹⁹ Historian Jan Maria Piskorski disagrees, claiming that Himmler’s second of two October speeches was “most likely” given in the Zamek (Bojarski, “Żydów” 8). Other historians maintain that Hotel Rzymski (Hotel de Rome) on Plac Wolności (Freedom Square) may have been the location for this meeting. Hotel Rzymski, like Zamek cesarski, was remodeled during the 1940s by Franz Böhmer. Both the building’s façade and interior bear typical National Socialist architectural characteristics.

presiding over military parades on St.-Martin-Str. (today ulica Święty Marcin). Photograph by the author.

In the documentary footage of Himmler's visit, several officials can be seen in the background on the balcony protruding out of the tower from the first-floor apartments prepared especially for Hitler. This ceremony offered citizens of Poznań a taste of precisely the type of rallies over which Hitler wished to preside from his residence in the capital of a "racially purified" German East.

Berlin, May 15, 1939

Nearly three years after the Olympic Games, and just a few short months before the Nazis would march into Poland, Berlin's Olympiastadion – since 1934 called "Reichssportfeld" as well as "Olympia-Stadion" – was the site of an exhibition football match between the German National Team and the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. After the Munich Agreement in October 1938, where France and Great Britain signed the Sudetenland over to the Nazis, Hitler subsequently seized the remaining Czech lands in March 1939, calling the territory the "Protektorat Böhmen und Mähren." With the May football match in Berlin the Nazis "welcomed" citizens of the new "protectorate" to their empire – the first of many nations subjected to the Hitler regime.

The reportage for *Tobis Wochenschau* begins with trumpets, followed by a panorama of the stadium with a large crowd. The narrator excitedly explains the two teams' performance of "ein technisch ausgezeichnetes Spiel" (BArch-FA, *Der Ball ist rund*, track 5). "Nach ritterlichem Kampf," he continues, "endete das Spiel unentschieden, drei zu drei." The documentary makes the event's use for propaganda very clear, as the highlights fail to include most of the goals scored, instead displaying short bursts of individual effort and one-on-one engagements – at

times even violent. These clips of physicality and “Kampf” are interspersed with short reactions from an emotional and aggressive Olympiastadion crowd.

One sequence shows a German forward block a Bohemian player’s kick by raising both arms to knock the ball down in front of him, whereupon he quickly blasts a shot on goal. While the Protectorate’s keeper is able to make the save, the injustice would certainly not have been lost on any Czechs. The referee’s failure to blow the whistle on the Germans’ use of their hands echoes Neville Chamberlain’s and Édouard Daladier’s failure to halt Hitler and the Nazis, who with the Czech lands had only just begun to grab for large sections of Europe.



Figure 2.2. The new Olympic Stadium awaits the 1936 Games. The Podbielski Eiche, a German allusion to the ancient Greek olive tree at the temple of Zeus, can be seen just beyond the gate to the right. Photograph courtesy of the Landesarchiv Berlin (F Rep 290). Used by permission.

Berlin, April 20, 1939

The Nazis used the occasion of Hitler's 50th birthday to organize a public parade in Berlin. The parade culminated at the Victory Column, which was adorned in red banners bearing the swastika. Goebbels set up ten cameramen at different strategic points, thereby capturing the event to be played across the "Reich" as a documentary production from Universum Film AG (UFA). Historian Fritz Terveen calls the film "ein Glanzstück Goebbels'scher Propagandatechnik" that was "so typisch für die 'staatspolitisch und künstlerisch wertvollen' Selbstbespiegelungen und Propagandastücke des Dritten Reiches" (84). The Victory Column was at the center of this military display, a political pep rally for the war Hitler would begin just months later with his invasion of Poland. Only a week later Hitler would mock Roosevelt's call for peace, and the very next such "Paradeaufnahme" (parade recording) would present Germans with footage of their dictator marching through a conquered Warsaw (83). The film, writes Terveen, serves by documenting this event as "ein wichtiger Schlüssel zum Verständnis nationalsozialistischer Macht- und Glanzentfaltung und Massenlenkung" (84). The Nazis capitalized, therefore, on the Victory Column, taking advantage of its strategic location on the Ost-West-Achse, the ample open space around it, its imagery of victory and its very name. All of this was part of their use of the monument itself as a rally for victory. As the German people looked on at that parade – whether from the foot of the column in Berlin or sitting in any of hundreds of the theaters across the empire from Freiburg to Königsberg – they would note that a fourth segment of the column held up the original three segments from the respective victories under Bismarck, pushing the golden Viktoria even higher into the sky as the Nazis instilled a desire for that victory they soon would pursue.



Figure 2.3. The Siegessäule was used by the National Socialists to promote their version of völkisch nationalism. Here, in 1937, it is adorned with National Socialist banners. In 1938 Hitler and Speer moved it from this location to the Großer Stern, raised the column 6.5m and rotated the angel to face France in the West. Photograph courtesy of the Landesarchiv Berlin (F Rep 290). Used by permission.

II.

Three Sites Appealing to National Socialists

All three of these historical sites were established during the *Kaiserzeit* and were part of an architectural program of German nationalism. The Siegessäule (1873) and the Zamek (1910) were built during the *Kaiserzeit* and the stadium during the Weimar Republic, on the site of the original Deutsches Stadion built for the planned 1916 Summer Olympics that never took place. Hence each site had first been conceptualized before the National Socialist regime, which simply adapted the existing space and/or structure to suit its needs.

When the Nazis came to power, Hitler himself kept a close eye on building and renovation at these particular sites, paying special attention to the structures' design – even in Poznań after 1939, when he was already occupied with the war. The would-be artist and architect even submitted his own sketches demanding revisions to early drafts of blueprints and building plans. Albert Speer and Arthur Greiser, meanwhile, exploited Jewish and Polish forced laborers for their projects.²⁰ This connected the National Socialists' building endeavors directly to their racist agenda of genocide and Eastern colonization – the essential arm of the Empire that combined slavery with murder. The building endeavors of Hitler and Speer relied on resources primarily from the East – both raw materials and forced labor.

Before the Nazis' rise to power in 1933, the three sites already had plenty of detractors who saw the structures as part of a vein of chauvinist, militaristic hubris. That did not change under the Nazis. As we shall see, even after completion of the Nazis' building and renovation projects, the structures drew critique from non-sympathists and loyal National Socialists alike. By 1945, each structure had become a visible and recognizable symbol of Nazi power in its city.

²⁰ See Jaskot 11-46.

III.

“Des Deutschtums Zitadelle”:²¹ The Schloss as Symbol of German Nationalism in the East

Wilhelm II saw himself as the extension of the German line of Holy Roman emperors from the Middle Ages, a list that included Charlemagne and Frederick Barbarossa. His obsession with Romanesque architecture was an extension of that historicizing sense of self. Historian Matthew Jefferies indicates that Wilhelm’s Romanesque enthusiasm “had been fuelled by a series of research trips in the winter and spring of 1890, when he had collected a large number of drawings and photographs of historic buildings” (99).

Two of the best examples of Wilhelmine neo-Romanesque architecture were designed by Franz Schwechten: Berlin’s Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche and Poznań’s Kaiserschloss. Writes Jefferies: “Both buildings self-consciously sought to make the now familiar connection between the Hohenstaufen and Hohenzollern emperors” (99). Wilhelm also sponsored extensive renovations of the Teutonic knights’ castle at Marienburg (Malbork), which has remained the world’s largest castle complex to the present day. The German emperor visited the castle over 30 times between 1891 and his abdication in 1918. Referencing the title page of a 1912 issue of the monthly magazine *Ostmark*, Schwendemann shows the importance of the Marienburg and Poznań’s Kaiserschloss to the Germanization movement. The cover depicts a portrait of Bismarck as the sun rising in the East, while the Prussian eagle spreads its wings over the land and the two castles, which represent the link between past and present (24).

Wilhelm looked at Poznań or Posen, as it was called, in the same way he saw Straßburg (Strasbourg) in Alsace on the western frontier. Schwendemann points out the similarity between the two cities in the so-called “Westmark” and “Ostmark,” respectively, and draws a direct

²¹ This phrase was used by Emanuel Ginschel in the poem “Grüß Gott!”, which adorned the front page of a special edition of the *Posener Tageblatt*, vol. 49, No. 389 (21 August 1910).

comparison between the Kaiserschloss in Poznań and the Alsatian Hohkönigsburg, a former stronghold of the Hohenstaufen dynasty that Wilhelm began rebuilding in 1899. The castle was a way for Wilhelm to link himself to the emperors of the past (38-39). This link also explains the Kaiser's commissioning of the new Schloss in the neo-Romanesque style, which he saw as the Germanic style (41).

Wilhelm made three visits to Posen, the royal residence city and center of Germanization efforts in the East. On a larger scale, they were part of concerted efforts of the Kaiserreich's *Ostmarkpolitik*, which, as Schwendemann accurately documents, laid the roots for Hitler's *Volkstumspolitik*, "die in Polen ab 1939 mit einer Radikalität und Brutalität sondergleichen durchgeführt wurde" (23). The Schloss in Posen was the central place – both practically and symbolically – for both regimes in the entire region.

When the castle was dedicated as "Königliches Residenzschloss" on August 21, 1910, both Kaiser Wilhelm II and Kaiserin Auguste Viktoria made the trip from Berlin to be in attendance for the important event. Historian Christian Myschor documents the three visits of the so-called "Reisekaiser" to Posen – in 1903, 1910 and 1913 – and the significant political and economic impact this had on Germans and Poles alike (27-58, 156ff.). The palace was designed to solidify the German Empire's hold on its territories in Poland and in the East. Moreover, Wilhelm wished the palace to show that this was, in fact, a German city; that German culture was a blessing for Poles living in Posen; and that Germany was strong and would protect the city. The space being dedicated at the western rim of the old city center was being used to mold the current thoughts of its citizens – both Polish and German – and create for them a memory of the city as German. This imagined past was to ensure a future its German rulers wanted.

According to art historian Zenon Pałat, four sections of the forum surrounding the Kaiserschloss are to be interpreted as representative of four distinct purposes, each promoting the German *Hebungspolitik* meant to elevate German culture as superior: the Schloss to legitimize the Kaiser's power; the Ansiedlungskommission to glorify German colonization; the Königliche Akademie to create and nurture a national identity through German art and science; and the Neues Stadttheater to "[persuade] German settlers of their historical mission in the cultural development of East German territories" (71).²²

A special edition of the nationalistic *Posener Tageblatt* was printed for the occasion. Its pages are rife with *völkisch*-nationalist thinking. The following poem by the newspaper's editor, Emanuel Ginschel, adorned the front page:

Heil Kaiser Dir und Deinem Haus!
Heil unsrem Burggebieter!
In Friedenszeit, im Kampfgebraus
Sind wir des Schlosses Hüter.

Stolz grüßt dies Zeichen deutscher Macht
Weithin am Warthelande,
Der Kaiserherrschaft Glanz und Pracht
Zeigt es dem Posner Lande.

Stets wird es künden Deine Gunst
Für unsrer Ostmark Ringen,
Dies würd'ge Denkmal deutscher Kunst
Wird Dank und Ruhm Dir bringen.

Die Siedler, Tausende an Zahl,
Die Du hierher gerufen,
Sie fühlen näher allzumal
Sich nun des Thrones Stufen.

²² For more on *Hebungspolitik*, see Christoph Schutte, *Die Königliche Akademie in Posen (1903-1919) und andere kulturelle Einrichtungen im Rahmen der Politik zur "Hebung des Deutschtums"* (Marburg: Verlag Herder-Institut, 2008), and Zenon Pałat, *Architektura a polityka: Gloryfikacja Prus i niemieckiej misji cywilizacyjnej w Poznaniu na początku XX wieku* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskiego Towarzystwa Przyjaciół Nauk, 2011).

Getreulich hielten stets die Wacht
Wir an bedrohter Stelle,
Nun hat sie stärker uns gemacht,
Des Deutschtums Zitadelle.

Sie künde kühn auf immerdar,
Daß deutsch ist diese Erde,
Und daß der Hohenzollern-Aar
Sie treu beschützen werde.

Und jedes künftige Geschlecht
Erinnere sie aufs neue:
Wie Zollern hier schuf Wohlstand, Recht,
Wie dankbar deutsche Treue.

Gott schütze, die gehn ein und aus
Im Schloß am Warthestrande,
Gott segne unser Kaiserhaus
Und alle deutschen Lande!

Ginschel made sure no one misunderstood the regime's goals with the building of this castle, as the text is full of nationalistic antagonism. The first-person pronoun *unser* appears twice, while the adjective *deutsch* is used five different times. The palace is even called a monument in the third stanza: "Dies würd'ge Denkmal deutscher Kunst." The palace, as a beacon of *Deutschtum*, was intended especially for the "Siedler, Tausende an Zahl," who were summoned to Posen by the Kaiser. These "loyal patriots" relocating to Poznań were now being rewarded for their hard work and sacrifice: they would live in an imperial residence city, and be protected by the house of Hohenzollern.

As for the Polish citizens, who made up nearly 65% of Posen province in 1910 (Hagen 324), the palace was meant to demonstrate the strength and superiority of their German Kaiser and his state. Of course there was much opposition among Poznań's Poles to the German authority in general, and to the Kaiserschloss and Kaiserforum in particular, as it was representative of the oppressive, often hostile, Prussian-German regime that had been

suppressing their language and culture in Greater Poland for well over a century. Those in Poznań aspired with others in Warsaw, Vilnius and the East (subjects of the Russian Empire) and those in Krakow, Lviv and Galicia (controlled by the Austro-Hungarian Empire) to rise up and restore the Polish state. Decades of strategic commemorations as well as work through education, the Catholic Church, literature, language and the arts had been building the national movement.²³ In 1918, that dream of many would come to fruition with the founding of the Second Polish Republic, spurred on in large part by the Greater Poland Uprising in Posen province – remembered by many as the only successful uprising in Polish history.

Ginschel refers to memory in stanza seven of his poem, claiming that every future generation will remember the House of Hohenzollern for bringing prosperity and rights to the – in his view – previously uncivilized city. Indeed, the Imperial Palace was also a play on public memory. This “monumental” structure marked the area as German, thereby claiming the past as well as the future.

There is no mistaking the political purpose of this space. While the city and territory had already in 1795 been claimed politically as Prussian (and hence, German), with the Kaiserschloss and Schlossviertel the Germans were claiming the city as *culturally* German. The castle’s origins under Wilhelm II were hardly more appealing to Polish residents at the time than the building was during the Nazi occupation. Whereas Greiser was only able to occupy the finished castle for a mere 14 months before the city fell to the Red Army in February 1945, Wilhelm’s castle anchored a district that changed the shape of the city and also adorned every image of an aggressive campaign of Germanization in Poznań.

²³ For an excellent account of this “national” struggle in the decades leading up to the First World War, see Patrice Dabrowski’s monograph *Commemorations and the Making of Modern Poland*.

IV.

Architecture under National Socialism

For Adolf Hitler, architecture served as a concrete expression of his beliefs. Political historian Robert Taylor points to its roots in right-wing nationalist thought, which was “permeated with *völkisch* ideas” (*The Word in Stone* 1). When the Nazis seized power in 1933, they imposed an ideology based on ideas that had been developing for decades. The ideology incorporated the *völkisch* ideal that hoped to both define and glorify typically “German” culture, art and architecture in lieu of anything inversely deemed “non-German.”

Hitler developed a fascination for the architectural ruins of once mighty empires such as Egypt, Babylon, Greece and Rome, believing that their greatness has been preserved in their enduring architecture (Fest, *Hitler* 782ff.). He spoke of this architecture as “the word in stone” – a suitable title Taylor chose for his book. “When we build, let us think that we build forever,” ordered Hitler (Holtorf). This phrase is no subtle reminder of the power he saw in architecture. What, then, was the history or message he expected people to “read” on the walls of his buildings?

One of the aspects was that of a legacy through architecture, as Taylor demonstrates. Albert Speer, “court” architect for the Third Reich, developed the theory of *Ruinenwert* or “ruin-value” to satisfy his leader’s wishes and advance party ideology. In a word, Speer wanted to build structures “die im Verfallszustand, nach Hunderten oder (so rechneten wir) Tausenden von Jahren etwa den römischen Vorbildern gleichen würden” (Speer 69). The material used for the face of Olympiastadion was *Muschelkalk* – a shellbearing limestone meant to give the appearance of antiquity. Werner March’s layout of the Olympia complex included a number of elements with direct correlation to ancient Greek architecture:

Neben der Kampfbahn, dem stadion, lagert sich das Maifeld als forum mit der Langemarckhalle als templon, die Freilichtbühne als theatron, die Reichsakademie als gymnasion, das Haus des deutschen Sports als prytaneion und das öffentliche Erholungsgelände als palästra. Und selbst der heilige Ölbaum am Eingang zum Tempel des olympischen Zeus, von dessen Zweigen ein Knabe mit goldenem Messer die Siegeskränze abschnitt, hat seine Wiederkehr gefunden in der deutschen Eiche, die heute am olympischen Tor die Eintretenden grüßt.
(Rittich 67-68)²⁴

The inclusion of all these places and their connection to ancient Greece is unmistakable. Even the German *Eichbaum* at the stadium's East entrance mirrors the Greeks' olive tree at the entrance to Zeus' temple. All of these elements remain on the Olympic grounds today.

The *Ruinenwert* theory raises an interesting question for the postwar decisions regarding preservation: did preserving Poznań's renamed "Deutsches Schloss" deny Hitler his intended legacy? According to Speer's theory, leaving Nazi structures in disrepair would fulfill Hitler's wishes. The architectural critic Julian Rose argues, therefore, that by continuing to use Olympiastadion, for example, Berlin is denying Hitler his desired legacy of the ruin (89).

While the *Ruinenwert* theory applied to the future, in the present Hitler and Speer designed state architecture to have an imposing impression on citizens of the Third Reich. Their intent was to intimidate opponents – both domestic and foreign – as well. Speer himself admitted, after having served his 20-year sentence: "My architecture represented an intimidating display of power" (Krier 213).²⁵ Speer's Neue Reichskanzlei, for example, accomplished the desired effect with guests of state. According to Markus Braun, "The excessively long approach, which diplomats and guests of state had to make to the reception hall, did not fail in its effect." Czechoslovakian president Emil Hacha, he writes, was one of the first to feel this intimidation when he signed over control of his country to Hitler in 1939 (141).

²⁴ Qtd. in Petsch, p. 133.

²⁵ Qtd. in Scobie, p. 40.

The effects of National Socialist architecture were not limited to those of an ideological or psychological nature on citizens and opponents. The building program relied on the efforts of millions of forced laborers. Hitler's architectural aspirations to rebuild Berlin into "Welthauptstadt Germania" necessitated increasing amounts of labor which was satisfied by the SS system of concentration camps. Art historian Paul Jaskot has pointed out that "it was precisely the passion of building that was structurally related to the criminal capacity of the SS to carry out state policy in the forced-labor concentration camps under its control" (10).

Jaskot has shown the significant impact Nazi architecture and urban planning also had on political policy and strategy in the East. Several camps were strategically placed near stone quarries and brick work factories – sites that would capitalize on the labor to drive production of Speer's projects in places like Berlin. To this end, and given Speer's appointment as armaments minister during the war, the SS had to consult him regarding expansion and geographical location of the camps (Schwendemann 125). Fighting labor shortages in the face of his grand building plans for Hitler in Berlin, Speer acquired approval from Hitler himself to mobilize Czech workers and Soviet prisoners-of-war for his building projects and personally acquired an additional 15,000 Czech workers from Reinhard Heydrich after a 1941 visit to Prague (99). Of 600,000 total inmates in the Nazi concentration camp system by the end of 1944, Schwendemann, in a 2005 feature article in *Die Zeit*, attributes 480,000 of them – a staggering 80% – to various building and armament units under Speer's direct control ("Späte Enttarnung"). It was National Socialist building aspirations that drove an expanding forced labor system, which in turn quickly developed into the system of work and death camps at the disposal of Nazi leaders who laid out plans for the Final Solution at the Wannsee Conference in 1942.

The National Socialists also made a clear ideological connection between *Sport* and *Krieg*. Both required a physical *Kampfgeist*, both were fought on behalf of the *Vaterland*, and both were meant to prove the mythical doctrine of Arian physical, genetic and racial superiority. The Langemarckhalle with its 77-meter-high Glockenturm accounted for this connection at Hitler's Reichssportfeld. Located across the Maifeld from the stadium, the hall and tower were visible to stadium crowds through the opening in the Marathontor at the stadium's western end. The hall was built to honor the fallen in World War I, but functioned as a type of death cult particularly to make an impression on the youth who visited. Naming the hall for a group of students who died at Langemarck in World War I, the Nazis glorified the act of giving one's life for the Reich. Children watched and took part in large athletic and martial exhibitions on the Maifeld outside. Art historian Matthias Donath comments: "An keinem anderen Ort ist der Mißbrauch des Sports für eine menschenverachtende Ideologie so deutlich abzulesen" (63). Hitler and the Nazis manipulated the enjoyment of sport and the virtue of competition both to recruit and to train Germany's youth to give their lives for that cause.

The vertical image of the Glockenturm filled the single gap in the stadium and formed the geographical culmination of the Ost-West-Achse on Berlin's far western edge. Consistent with the Nazis' link between *Sport* and *Krieg*, the Ost-West-Achse was itself conceptualized for more than just athletes. Anthony Read and David Fisher define the avenue as "a great Via Triumphialis not just for sporting heroes but also for German armies returning victorious from war" (210).

Speer's grand boulevard proceeded through western Berlin into the Tiergarten, through its enlarged centerpiece at the Großer Stern, where war was immortalized in the martial column of victory. When the column was moved there in 1938 and 1939, it was also raised and the traffic

circle widened, accounting for increased visibility and a presence that persists to this day. The axis continued along the Siegesallee, lined with statues of military heroes, through the Brandenburger Tor and into the historical center. It was in front of the Brandenburger Tor that the axis was to intersect with the Nord-Süd-Achse, along which many of the new buildings to be designed for Hitler's Reichshauptstadt Germania were to be located. Speer would never finish the Nord-Süd-Achse, though the Ost-West-Achse remains an accurate visual testimony to Hitler's urban plans for his vision of a future Nazi world capital.

V.

Hitler's Blueprints

The nationalist past stemming from the Kaiserreich at each of these three sites allowed Hitler to utilize all three to promote the Nazis' own version of German nationalism for the German people. Yet in all three cases the existing form was not enough to satisfy his architectural desires. In each case Hitler rejected the design of the original structure in favor of his own vision. His architects Albert Speer and Franz Böhmer along with the brothers Werner and Walter March were forced to adjust their designs to satisfy the desires of their "Führer," and eventually accommodated his demands into each structure's layout and façade. Their work became Hitler's "Word in Stone" – each edifice serving the National Socialist ideology in both form and function.

Albert Speer spends a long chapter of his autobiography describing in detail the vast urban construction plans he and Hitler had for the design of central Berlin. With their completion in 1950, Hitler wished to rename the city "Reichshauptstadt Germania," as mentioned above – a metropolis he envisioned for 10 million people. New structures were to include the Volkshalle, a

massive, neoclassical domed structure over 200 meters in height, that was meant to hold more than 150,000 people for political speeches and that would have dwarfed the adjacent Brandenburger Tor and Reichstag; a triumphal arch over twice as tall and nearly four times as wide as Paris' famous Arc de Triomphe; and extensive railway stations at the north and south ends of the Nord-Süd-Achse.

Because of this the Siegessäule was moved to its current location at the Großer Stern and was expanded "als neuer Mittelpunkt des Ehrenplatzes des Zweiten Reiches" (Stephan 245). As was also the case with Olympiastadion and the Zamek in Poznań, Hitler's direct hand was involved in the remodeling of the Wilhelmine monument. Speer describes the dictator's role:

Selbst der Funkturm blieb... erhalten und die Siegessäule, die unseren Neubauplänen im Weg stand, nicht beseitigt; Hitler sah darin ein Monument deutscher Geschichte, das er, der stärkeren Wirkung wegen, bei dieser Gelegenheit sogar um eine Säulentrommel erhöhen ließ; er zeichnete dazu eine noch erhaltene Skizze.... (154)

Hitler's purposes were far different from those found in the architecture of Prussian militarism and German superiority we see in the Zamek and the Siegessäule – an architecture already offensive to neighbors in places like Poland and France. He downplayed elements representative of the church or the monarchy, converting the Zamek's beautiful mosaic chapel into his own office, and re-erecting next to the Siegessäule the monuments to the politician Bismarck and the military generals Roon and Moltke, but erecting no monument to Wilhelm I or any other Kaiser. Speer recalls Hitler mocking the Prussian architecture for being, of all things, too modest: "[Er] mokierte sich über die Sparsamkeit selbst des triumphierenden preußischen Staates, der sogar an der Höhe seiner Siegessäule geknausert hatte" (154).

Hitler fundamentally changed the look of not only the monument itself, but the Großer Stern and the boulevard as well. Their visual appearance and urban layout today is purely the

result of Speer's and Hitler's vision for the Nazi capital. The Siegessäule was raised 6.5m to a height of nearly 68m by adding a fourth segment to the column. Just as the column's original three segments – adorned with corresponding cannons taken as war booty from each opponent and now preserved in gold leaf – commemorated the victories against Denmark, Austria and France, respectively, the fourth segment was to bear a symbolic meaning as well: victory in the war Hitler was preparing to wage with the rest of Europe. Speer thereby formed a monumental paradox – commemorating an achievement not yet attained.

In addition, when reassembling the monument at the Großer Stern, Hitler had the column rotated clockwise ninety degrees, fixing the “angel of victory” into a permanent westward stare – directly toward the conquered enemy in France. National Socialist architectural annals define the new positioning as such:

Das Gesicht der Siegesgöttin ist nach Westen gewendet, dorthin, wo die entscheidenden Siege des Zweiten Reiches erfochten wurden. Sie streckt den Siegeskranz in die Richtung, aus der viermal die siegreichen Truppen durch das Brandenburger Tor feierlich einmarschiert sind. Sie blickt zugleich den Gästen des deutschen Volkes entgegen, welche auf der neuen Feststraße von Westen her ihren Einzug in die Reichshauptstadt halten. (Stephan 245)

More specifically, Viktoria's gaze was directed to the capital of the historical rival in Paris, and to Versailles – the place where the last German Empire had been founded in 1871 and subsequently dissolved in humiliating fashion in 1918.

The Großer Stern was widened by nearly two thirds to 200 meters, making an imposing impression and setting it as the centerpiece of the Ost-West-Achse in the midst of the Tiergarten. The sides of the granite pedestal were extended outward on each side to create a broader base, and the column was flanked by four new neo-classical guard houses outside the traffic circle, which provide access to the middle of the circle via underground tunnels. The four houses are among Speer's only surviving works in Berlin. After tearing down several houses, the avenue

was widened to 50m and ten lanes leading to Brandenburger Tor. The widening of this avenue was among Hitler's very first projects – completed already in April 1933. It was dedicated with a military parade on April 19 – the eve of Hitler's birthday (Petsch 104).



Figure 2.4. Three women pose for a picture ca. 1920 at Königsplatz, the Siegessäule's original location in front of the Reichstag before it was moved beginning in 1938. Photograph courtesy of the Landesarchiv Berlin (F Rep 290). Used by permission.

* * *

As with the prominent war monument from the Bismarck era, Hitler had a direct hand in the design of Olympiastadion as well. He was not at all pleased with Otto March's original model, "einen Betonbau mit verglasten Zwischenwänden, ähnlich dem Wiener Stadion" (Speer 94).

Writes Speer:

Von der Besichtigung kam Hitler zornig und erregt in seine Wohnung, wohin er mich mit Plänen bestellt hatte. Kurzerhand ließ er dem Staatssekretär mitteilen, daß die Olympischen Spiele abzusagen seien. Ohne seine Anwesenheit könnten sie nicht stattfinden, da das Staatsoberhaupt sie eröffnen müsse. Einen solchen modernen Glaskasten würde er jedoch nie betreten. (94)

Speer then rectified the situation by drawing a sketch that night, which both Hitler and, later, the March brothers approved. The design covered up the steel framework with "Naturstein" and omitted the glass partitions altogether (94).

Werner March describes the meeting he and his brother Walter had with Hitler on October 5, 1933. Hitler listened for two hours to the brothers' detailed presentation of their plans for the Olympic grounds, the result of many months of work, only at the end to himself sketch a few bold lines onto the design, rendering their plans obsolete and outlining his own demands for the project (Teut 201). Among the most important of Hitler's demands was the inclusion of a marching ground next to the stadium – something for which he saw no adequate place in Berlin's center. March continues: "Er stellte die Forderung, das Athletik-Stadion und dieses Aufmarschgelände zu einem einheitlichen Ganzen so zu verbinden, daß beide Anlagen in eine innige harmonische Beziehung zueinander treten" (201). The brothers March eventually designed the enormous Maifeld, a space larger than eleven full football fields, and placed it not only in line with the stadium on the Ost-West-Achse, but also viewable from within the stadium. Not unlike the recent trend with American baseball stadiums built since 1990, where a gap is

placed in the outfield to present spectators with a view of the city's skyline, Hitler's stadium also had a gap in the seating. His spectators' attention, however, would be directed rather to the Maifeld and the World War I "heroes" immortalized in the Langemarckhalle.

* * *

Hitler likewise took an interest and involvement in the design of his Deutsches Schloss in Poznań. He personally approved certain plans, such as the Führerbalkon added to the clock tower (Bojarski, "Przekorny stulatek").²⁶ In fact, proposed changes to the façade, such as the balcony addition, were first done in plaster on the building itself, photographed and sent to Hitler for approval. The renovations entailed changes to the façade and extensive alterations to the interior. In particular, Wilhelm's romantic, ornate décor, such as that of the Großer Saal, was stripped in favor of the cold, sober Nazi interior design with its straight edges and symmetry. Fascist art was added as well, including a frieze depicting allegories of war and peace situated above the main entrance's spiral staircase.

One of the most noticeable changes – inside and out – was the conversion of Wilhelm's two-story chapel in the clock tower into "das Arbeitszimmer des Führers" on the first floor and "der Sitzungssaal des Gauleiters" on the second. Greiser's apartments and offices were located on the second floor and Hitler's on the first, including the Führerbalkon extending out of his study in the clock tower precisely where the apse of the chapel had been. In addition, accommodations were included on the ground level for four SS-Leiter and a unit of 50 men to accompany Hitler on his visits (Böhmer, MKZ, 1201/2/60).

²⁶ Pazder states in the *Gazeta Wyborcza* interview with Bojarski: "Hitler, podobnie jak cesarz, bardzo interesował się pracami w Zamku i - choć najprawdopodobniej nigdy tu nie był - osobiście akceptował poszczególne rozwiązania, na przykład budowę balkonu na wieży zamkowej."

The dictator's architectural aspirations often showed no regard for utility or historical preservation, unless they served his ideological interests. He arbitrarily razed functional buildings for being in the wrong style or simply for standing in the wrong place. Urban planning scholar Gabriela Klause points out that not even Kaiser Wilhelm's architecture of Germanization was immune to the destructive whims of National Socialism: "Even Wilhelm II's Kaiserschloss fell victim to Hitler's building program, where interiors were destroyed and in 1940 rebuilt in the style of the Third Reich as a residence for Hitler" (282).²⁷

* * *

Germanist Andrew Webber comments on the effects of Hitler's and Speer's aspirations in Berlin, reminding us that completion was indeed the exception rather than the rule:

Those parts of the scheme that were realized, such as the Olympic avenue, certainly carry the imprint of such a totalisation, but there too the city is a site of paradox. While National Socialism did much to destroy the city's counter-spaces, it neither achieved a total clearance nor came to construct in full the capital of capitals. (22-23)

To be sure, it was only the very beginnings of Speer's design for central Berlin that ever came to fruition. The bulk of construction was to be completed after the war's end. Images of the intimidating white model that Hitler spent hours so intently studying seem quite foreign to those familiar with the modern German capital. According to the architect, Hitler would often repeat: "Mein einziger Wunsch, Speer, ist, diese Bauten noch zu erleben. 1950 werden wir eine Weltausstellung veranstalten.... Wir werden die ganze Welt einladen!" (156).

As a result of plans that were only partially carried out, Berlin has been left with a number of challenging spaces evoking this dark period of German history. Even though only the

²⁷ Translation is that of the author. Orig.: "Ofiarą hitlerowskiej aktywności budowlanej padł sam Zamek Cesarski Wilhelma II, w którym zniszczono wnętrza, przebudowując je w 1940 roku w stylu Trzeciej Rzeszy na rezydencję Hitlera."

beginnings of Hitler's Germania were built, the urban layout has had a profound impact on today's city. The Siegessäule and Olympiastadion provide two prime examples. Both are aligned along the East-West Axis, the former as its centerpiece and the latter its very origin with the Glockenturm, Langemarckhalle and Marathontor. The Siegessäule and Olympiastadion are no longer perceived in that context as they once were (or as once intended), but both stand precisely where they did under the Nazi administration, their connecting "axis" still the main east-west artery through the modern-day metropole. It is important not to overlook these two focal points of the Nazis' urban legacy, all the more when considering the lack of attention the two may receive in terms of this past. What has happened with these two sites since 1945 demonstrates the "erasability" of even those spaces most laden with meaning.

Meanwhile, Poznan's former Kaiserschloss was a powerful and important symbol of Nazi political ideology because it was built to be Hitler's "Residenz im Osten" (Schwendemann, *Hitlers Schloß* 119). A Nazi documentary film from 1942, entitled *Posen – Stadt im Aufbau*, clearly instructs viewers as to the significance of both castle and city for the "Reich." After denouncing bourgeois Polish apartments on the "Altmarkt" and the plain Polish houses in the countryside, the narrator praises "German" architecture, closing with footage of the Schloss and throne room. Mirroring the workers' reconstruction of the façade and interior, the narrator reconstructs the building's meaning, ending the film with these words: "Der Schlossbau Wilhelms des Zweiten: von Grund auf im Innern erneut, wird er zum Sinnbild und Ausdruck dessen was heute Posen und darüber hinaus den ganzen Warthegau mit jungem Leben erfüllen: Gauhauptstadt Posen, Herzkern des neuen Deutschen Ostens" (BArch-FA, K 25240).

In reality, the castle was the seat of the murderous Nazi administration under Gauleiter Greiser. Hitler went further than Kaiser Wilhelm II had: not only was this palace to symbolize

the strength and authority of the German empire. It was also to represent German racial supremacy, which the Nazis used to justify the horrifying crimes committed against Jews, Poles, Russians, Sinti and Roma, and all other racial, political and social opponents.

VI.

Public Sentiment before and during the Third Reich

There was a fair measure of negative sentiment among the public reception of the three structures – both before the Nazis came to power as well as afterwards. Locals in Poznań still tell a popular anecdote about the castle during its construction under Wilhelm II. The anecdote satirizes the enthusiastically nationalist German mayor, Dr. Ernst Wilms, vis-à-vis Polish citizens in Posen. Wilms, while monitoring progress on the building of the Kaiserschloss, was impressed, even baffled, by the zeal of one particular Polish worker, and asked him why he was so enthusiastic about completing this residence for the German Kaiser. The worker's famous reply: "They say that when the Kaiserschloss stands in Poznań, then Poland will rise from the dead" (Kwaśniewski 283).²⁸

A cartoon from a 1910 issue of the satirical newspaper *Simplicissimus* depicts the brand new castle as a "gift" from the germanizing regime to Polish citizens in an ill-advised effort to endear the latter to the German language and culture (Sim, 15/23 [5 Aug. 1910], 388). Drawn by Thomas Theodor Heine, the caricature shows a man offering a model of the Kaiserschloss to a boy standing in a stubborn, disinterested pose. The man represents the German administration in Poznań, the boy the Polish citizens, who accounted for nearly two thirds of the province's population (Hagen 324). The man says in the caption: "Hier ist ein neues Spielzeug für dich. Nun

²⁸ Translation is that of the author. Orig.: "Zaś ale przepowiednia mówi, że gdy zamk cysorski w Poznaniu stanie, to Polska z martwych powstanie."

mußt du mir aber versprechen, fleißig Deutsch zu lernen.” To this the boy replies: “Nein, Herr Michel, aber wenn Sie mir versprechen, fleißig Polnisch zu lernen, will ich Ihnen versprechen, das Ding nicht kaputt zu machen” (Sim, 15/23 [5 Aug. 1910], 388).

In its first decades during the *Gründerzeit* the Victory Column was known as the focal point of the nationalist *Sedantag* military parades that celebrated German expansion and unification at the expense of the French. The Kaiser’s abdication and Germany’s defeat in a long and bloody World War I cast a negative light on the military monument. In 1921 there was an unsuccessful attempt by a small group of radicals to blow up the monument.

Walter Benjamin treats the monument specifically on a few pages of his 1932 memoir *Berliner Kindheit um Neunzehnhundert*. He subtly though clearly expresses his displeasure with the ritualistic *Sedantag* holiday and its military parades. He laments the French defeat, with which “schien die Weltgeschichte in ihr glorreiches Grab gesunken, über dem diese Säule die Stele war” (19). The artwork in the portico reminds him of images of eternal suffering from Dante’s *Inferno* (20). Benjamin opens his vignette comparing the Siegessäule to “das rote Datum auf dem Abreißkalender,” both of which stand on a wide open space (18). With an ambiguous reference to the aforementioned calendar page, he playfully also calls for the column’s removal, or, at the very least, subtly expresses his displeasure with the monument: “Mit dem letzten Sedantag hätte man sie abreißen sollen” (18). In the months after the end of the Second World War, the monument still stood tall if somewhat out of place in a city that was a sea of rubble. It became a popular backdrop for “victorious” Soviet and Allied soldiers posing for photographs – some perhaps in an attempt at irony (see Figure 3.7).

The original Deutsches Stadion was built for the 1916 Olympic Games, which were canceled on account of the First World War. After the 1936 Games were then awarded to Berlin

shortly before the Nazis came to power, Hitler utilized the decision as an opportunity for greater international recognition and respect. Many were critical of a Berlin Olympics in the months and weeks prior to the Games in August. The United States, after contemplating boycott as a protest to Nazi racist practices, finally decided to compete just weeks before the event. Though the Nazis went to great lengths to present themselves favorably to their international guests – removing “Aryan only” signs and discreetly discontinuing large-scale Jewish persecution for the first half of August 1936 – German citizens were surely not fooled. German-Jewish journalist and scholar Victor Klemperer wrote about the regime’s hypocrisy in his *Tagebücher*, describing the 1936 Olympics in a tone of disgust:

Die Olympiade, die nun zu Ende geht, ist mir doppelt zuwider. 1. als irrsinnige Überschätzung des Sports; die Ehre eines Volkes hängt davon ab, ob ein Volksgenosse zehn Zentimeter höher springt als alle andern. Übrigens ist ein Neger aus USA am allerhöchsten gesprungen, und die silberne Fechtmedaille für Deutschland hat die Jüdin Helene Meyer gewonnen (ich weiß nicht, wo die größere Schamlosigkeit liegt, in ihrem Auftreten als Deutsche des Dritten Reiches oder darin, daß ihre Leistung für das Dritte Reich in Anspruch genommen wird)....Und 2. ist mir die Olympiade so verhaßt, weil sie nicht eine Sache des Sports ist – bei uns meine ich –, sondern ganz und gar ein politisches Unternehmen. (122-23)

Klemperer criticizes German leaders’ hypocrisy in presenting Germany as “an open book” to other nations and promoting themselves as a peaceful nation, despite the fact that in two weeks the Jewish persecution would begin anew, with greater strength (123-24). He quotes a friend of his denouncing the bombast of the Olympic buildings in the midst of food shortages: “[U]nd diese ungeheure Prunk in Berlin bei den Olympiabauten, als ob wir im Golde schwimmen – und der Mangel an Fleisch...” (127-28).

After the war had begun and the Zamek was undergoing its renovations as Deutsches Schloss and the seat of Nazi authority in the so-called “Reichsgau Wartheland,” the building became unpopular with many Germans as well as Poles. In fact, it drew the ire of even some of

those loyal to Greiser and the regime. Schwendemann cites “ein[en] alte[n] Kämpfer sowie eine große Anzahl deutscher Volksgenossen und Mitglieder des NSDAP” who sent an angry memorandum in January 1943 demanding work on the castle be stopped in favor of building apartments, so frustrated were they by the sparse housing situation in Posen (128).²⁹ The anonymous writers directed their critique at Greiser and the “Taten aus dem ‘Irrenhaus.’” Pointing out that Hitler was not once mentioned in the letter, Schwendemann argues that the letter-writers knew very well he was ultimately responsible for the Schloss renovations, but shied away from open critique of the dictator (128).

The Zamek thus came to symbolize a waste of material and money, especially late in 1943 when it still was not finished and the war had begun to turn in favor of the Allies. The “Führer” who had with such interest followed the designs and renovations had not yet made an appearance at his Posen residence. Speer eventually revoked “the castle’s status as a ‘war important building project,’” as Epstein writes. She and Schwendemann both suggest that Hitler, who nonetheless kept the project going, may have entertained thoughts of the Schloss as a temporary Reich Chancellery (243; 138). Schwendemann points out that even with Speer’s own revocation of the building’s status as *kriegswichtig*, the project continued to be funded after the war’s turning point at Stalingrad (134). In the end, Hitler never saw the castle in person.

Both scholars agree that what the Zamek demonstrates from this era are the unchecked extravagance and arrogance of the regime. According to Schwendemann, “Was das Posener Schloß bis heute dokumentiert, ist nicht der spartanisch lebende Feldherr Hitler in seinen militärischen Hauptquartieren...sondern vielmehr der Diktator, der hemmungslos Geld und Ressourcen einsetzte, um seine megalomanen Phantasien umzusetzen” (153). Greiser’s

²⁹ The original letter, entitled “Empörung in Posen,” is available at the Bundesarchiv Berlin, R 43II / 1022, 49.

biographer offers a similar assessment of the building: “The renovation of the Posen Castle exposed Nazi hubris and its illusions in the East. Although meant to be an imposing symbol of Germanism, it came to represent the unnecessary squandering of scarce wartime resources” (243).

Furthermore, all three structures were not only (re)built and introduced by the National Socialists – each had explicit instructions from Hitler as to exactly how they were supposed to look. Plans for modifications of the Deutsches Stadion from 1913 were thrown out because Hitler wanted a brand new stadium that adhered to his stylistic requirements based on the ancient Greek model and that included a large adjacent field for marching and demonstrations. Speer himself cites Hitler’s own personal drawings for the remodeled Victory Column with the additional fourth segment to the pedestal, mocking the Prussians for being thrifty instead of making it higher. Hitler rejected the first round of Böhmer’s proposed remodeling to the Zamek, sending the architect sketches with his own demands of how the interior and exterior should look.

Despite Hitler’s personal role in each structure’s design, each of them stands today with these modifications preserved. It is worth noting that post-1945 renovation efforts have aimed primarily to preserve the buildings as they looked *after* Nazi-era modifications – and often even to clean and restore them to this prior form. This detail is certainly worth our attention, and will be addressed in the fourth and fifth chapters. First we will see how these sites survived the end of the war and the years afterwards.

CHAPTER 3

Survival of the Unfit: Bureaucracy and Logistics Trump Postwar Emotion

“Art history cannot be in the business of forgetting this past by separating cultural products from the implementation of state and Party policy.”
- Paul Jaskot (9)

I.

Introductory Scenes

Poznań, July 1946

Professor Szczesny Dettloff, a Catholic priest whom art historian Janusz Pazder recognizes as “a renowned art historian and medievalist,”³⁰ was also a leading voice on architectural matters in postwar Poznań. On the topic of what to do with the Zamek after the war, he criticized most participants in the discussion for speaking purely from emotional sentiment when calling for the destruction of the German palace. Though even Dettloff saw the Zamek as a “Wilhelmine werewolf,”³¹ looming in the Polish cityscape, he was not in favor of tearing down the palace altogether, but wanted rather to remodel it and use it for the postwar city, namely by providing a home for the Polish university that had been housed there until 1939. The scholar explained this inclination as his “second, utilitarian soul of the practically-reasoning Poznanian,”³² (in keeping with the stereotypical characteristic of his city) winning out over his natural and emotional soul

³⁰ Translation by the author. Orig.: “znakomitego historyka sztuki, znawcy średniowiecza księdza,” Pazder, “Zamek jako ‘Nowy Ratusz’ i ośrodek kultury” 215.

³¹ Translation by the author. Orig.: “...choć dziś podporządkowują się ogromnej masie wilhelmowskiego ‘wilkołaka’” Dettloff 682.

³² Translation by the author. Orig.: “Lecz niestety kołacze w mej piersi według słynnego wzoru druga, uutilitarystyczna realnie myślącego poznaniaka a przy tym członka wyższej uczelni, której przyznany został do użytku Zamek. A ta dusza żąda zachowania gmachu na cele naszego uniwersytetu.”

as an art historian (681). By lobbying to keep the palace itself, his voice was clearly set against popular opinion, as citizens responded overwhelmingly to an article on the topic with appeals to the new authorities to tear down the palace (681).

One architectural change Dettloff did call for, however, was the lowering of the 74-meter clock tower, which he calls a “threatening fist of German pride” (681).³³ Its tower dominated Poznań’s skyline, hanging over the city like the “visible and eternal symbol of Germanness” that Wilhelm II desired when he commissioned the palace (682).³⁴ Even this advocate of keeping the palace – a rare voice in Poznań at the time – demanded the tower be lowered so that he could win support for the building itself to be preserved and utilized (see Figure 3.1).

Dettloff admitted the urge to cry out, “*Caeterum censeo, palatium esse delendum!*” (“And furthermore I think: the Palatinate must be destroyed!”), calling for the destruction of the German “Palatinate” just as Cato the Elder had called for the destruction of his hated Carthage, ending each speech with the now famous words (681). The Romans eventually did take revenge on Carthage, leveling the city and famously spreading salt on the ground to prevent anyone or anything from dwelling there ever again. Many Poles in postwar Poznań felt the same way towards German authorities and toward the sandstone castle seen as a German entity – built not in Berlin, Bayern or Thüringen, but in their own city (Dettloff 681; GWlkp [1945], 11, 12, 13).

Unlike the city of Carthage, the palace in Poznań would survive, though not unscathed. Its proud, pointed clock tower was reduced to two-thirds of its original height and a simple, flat roof introduced just above the four-sided clock. A few smaller turrets were shortened as well. Though there had been some war damage to the top of the tower, Pazder reaffirms that the tower

³³ Translation by the author. Orig.: “pięść grożącą buty niemieckiej.”

³⁴ Translation by the author. Orig.: “‘widomym i wiecznym symbolem niemieckości’ naszego grodu.”

was lowered “not due to its technical condition, but the ideological grounds” (*Zamek cesarski* 150). Soon after “revenge” had been carried out on the tower, city authorities eagerly moved their offices into the building, and a new home for party headquarters was quickly erected next door. The mayor calculatedly chose the office formerly designed for Hitler as his own (Pazder, “Zamek jako...” 216).



Figure 3.1. The Zamek's main clock tower was damaged during the liberation of Poznań in February 1945. Here a Soviet tank is visible on the street. While the Zamek eventually was spared, the clock tower – perceived by Poles as a symbol of German domination – was lowered by nearly one third its height. Photograph by Z. Zielonacki, courtesy of Miejski Konserwator Zabytków (MKZ), Poznań. Used by permission.

Berlin, Summer 1945

As World War II finally drew to a close in Europe in the spring, and the victorious powers drew up the map of Berlin into four respective sections, the grounds with both the Siegessäule and Olympiastadion fell to the British administration. French officials petitioned to have the former blown up, but their repeated arguments at the conference tables of numerous Allied administrative committees would fall on deaf ears. As a consolation to the French, however, British authorities allowed them to fly their flag atop the Victory Column until 1949. Still not wholly satisfied, however, the French took matters into their own hands.

Four two-meter by twelve-meter bronze reliefs on the sides of the base of the column depict the victorious Prussian-German troops in each of the three Wars of Unification from 1864 to 1871, as well as the return of the victorious troops to Berlin (see Figure 3.2). One of the reliefs immortalizes their march through Paris' Arc de Triomphe, when the Prussians used France's victory arch to proclaim their own triumph. The Siegessäule with its art – and this frieze in particular – pointedly connected Paris' arch to Berlin's column. In so doing, the Germans were proclaiming which nation had ultimately prevailed in a long, dueling history between the two rivaling neighbors. Earlier Napoleon had taken the *Quadriga* back to Paris with him from atop the Brandenburger Tor. Then, before commissioning the Siegessäule following the Franco-Prussian War, Wilhelm I was crowned German Emperor in Versailles' Hall of Mirrors, a location chosen to humble the French in return. Later, after World War I, Versailles was again chosen as the place where the treaty was signed that humiliated the Germans.

Shortly after World War II ended, and before the Allied Control Council met to discuss the monument's fate, it was presumably French occupation authorities who lifted the friezes

from their places on the base of the Siegessäule and took three of them back to Paris (Alings, *Vom Geschichtsbild* 111; Matthias Braun 67). Only the frieze displaying the Prussian-led German victory over the Austro-Hungarians at Königgratz – a pan-German matter of no political concern to the French – remained in storage in Berlin’s Spandauer Zitadelle. No one in Germany knew of the friezes’ whereabouts for decades thereafter. Both Reinhard Alings and Matthias Braun describe how French authorities took them “als Beutestücke” before motioning to have the monument destroyed (111; 67). Regardless of the decisions that were to come on the fate of the entire monument, the French acted on their own accord to remove at least the most explicit element of Prussian and Nazi hubris from what they felt was one of Germany’s most offensive monuments.



Figure 3.2. Berlin Mayor Klaus Wowereit (third from l.) and economic councilman Carsten Spallek (second from l.) presented a symbolic golden key for the Siegessäule to leaseholder Monument Tales Verwaltung GmbH after the completion of renovation in May 2011. They stand in front of the frieze depicting the Prussian victory over Austria-Hungary in 1866. This was the only frieze not taken by the French after World War II. Photograph by the author.



Figure 3.3. The original 1936 Olympic bell was buried after the war near where it fell when the Glockenturm was collapsed by the British in 1947. The bell was located and excavated in 1956. It is currently on display on the south side of the stadium. A replica hangs in the reconstructed Glockenturm. Photograph courtesy of Landesarchiv Berlin. Used by permission.

Berlin, February 15, 1947

The stadium, still standing, was almost immediately used for further sporting events, but one element on the Olympic grounds was too “weighty” to stay in its current position: the twelve-ton Olympic bell hanging from the 76-meter-high Glockenturm, positioned directly across the vast Maifeld from the stadium’s west entrance, the Marathontor. Upon felling the tower in 1947, British authorities found the bell had a huge hole blown through it with anti-aircraft ammunition, believed to be either a misguided shot at an aircraft or an act of vengeance on the bell itself carried out at the end of the war (Kluge, *Steine beginnen zu reden* 84). The face of the bell has two emblems: one side shows the Brandenburger Tor and the other the National Socialist

“Reichsadler” clutching the Olympic rings. The inscriptions “11. Olympische Spiele Berlin” and “Ich rufe die Jugend der Welt” encircle the rim in old German script. Two swastikas are imbedded into the latter slogan, which the Nazis used to urge Hitler Youth stationed at the stadium to fight to their death in the last days of the war. The large hole is directly under the year 1936.

After the tower was demolished in February, in May 1947 the bell was lowered into a pit to the west of the stadium across the Maifeld (see Figure 3.3). By burying it, the British sought to protect it from precisely that fate which befell the Siegessäule friezes. The Nazi bell was kept out of sight for visitors to the stadium as well as for members of the British military based at the Olympic complex.

II.

The Value of Built Space in Post-war Urban Planning

After the traumatizing air raids and brutal street combat in 1945, many buildings in central Berlin and Poznań had been reduced to a devastated state: a jagged half-frame of the original structure, open and charred, standing, perhaps even sagging or leaning against its neighboring edifice. Others were a mass of bricks and dust, piled in front as well as sprayed across the street into debris of neighboring buildings that had met the same fate. Some 55% of Poznań’s residential buildings were uninhabitable; in the Old Town estimates of destruction reach 75% to 80% (Kubiak and Olszewski 10; Górczyńska-Przybyłowicz 172-173; Schwendemann 167-168). In Berlin, between one-third and one-half of the entire city, and up to two-thirds of the city center had been destroyed (Ladd, “Double Restoration” 118; Markus Braun 162).

When the three structures in this study, however, survived the war, they represented an urban status quo that not all were willing to accept. Brian Ladd asks whether “the style and date of construction taint these buildings as ‘Nazi,’” admitting plainly: “In some eyes, yes.” “A more practical question,” Ladd continues, “is: Are these buildings disqualified for normal use? Or can they somehow be denazified?” (*Ghosts* 141). More generally, can any building simply shed its negative meaning in favor of reappropriation? The physical presence of the three structures in this study was apparently so oppressive, in fact, that the need was felt to remove an ideologically tainted, visible element from the face of each of them. In each case it was deemed necessary that some measure of retribution be carried out on the outward appearance of these symbols themselves to legitimize maintaining them as part of the urban cityscape.

In the case of the Zamek, its dominating clock tower was decapitated, a recompense for Poles against the symbol of Prussian-German oppression in Poznań for over 150 years. The French stripped the Siegessäule of its humiliating friezes depicting the triumph of their German rival, meanwhile flying their own flag atop the “victory” tower. Olympiastadion’s bell that proudly declared the start of the so-called “Nazi Olympics,” was hidden from view beneath several feet of Berlin’s sandy earth. Perhaps stripping one key element from each imposing structure levied a certain retaliation against that for which the buildings themselves had stood.

Curiously, in two of the above cases the element removed was connected not to the Nazi regime, but to the German Kaiserreich. The Siegessäule’s friezes were unveiled in 1873 and commemorated victories in the Prussian-led Wars of Unification. The Zamek’s pointed clock tower was built by Franz Schwechten for Wilhelm II in 1910. The Nazis only changed the tower’s lower portion, in fact, converting the chapel into two offices and stripping the apse in favor of Hitler’s balcony. For many Poles, the 74-meter clock tower was not so much a symbol

of Nazi fascism as of the German presence in Poznań under the Hohenzollerns. Nonetheless, abrupt regime change, the gradual process of restoring order and a decidedly anti-German sentiment in 1945 were all factors that led to the removal of unwanted visible elements at these sites.

Once the three elements were removed, life went on and the structures became the backdrop for new historical events – some such events specifically staged, others happening at those sites by chance. Coupled with time and a social atmosphere of looking forward past the trauma of the recent war, the structures silently faded into the background – or at least out of the political spotlight. These edifices slowly lost the stigma they had in 1945, when the war was still fresh in the minds of the public as well as new political leaders.

Chapter 4 will focus on the new events that took place at each space. This chapter first demonstrates how in each case – with the exception and at the expense of one key physical element – each structure survived not only the war itself, but – and perhaps more surprisingly – the immediate postwar years under respective new administrations. The dire need for functioning buildings after the war's destruction made it easier to ignore an existing stigma in a building people identified with the Nazi regime. In answer to his own question, cited above, Ladd writes: "[A]n intact building was too precious to be the subject of moral scruples" (141). This would play a key role in the preservation of both the palace and the stadium. Both the British occupying forces in Berlin and Poznań's communist authorities were eager to make use of their respective inherited examples of modified German imperialist and National Socialist architecture. Even the Siegessäule, as we shall see, had a certain value for some of Berlin's postwar leaders – Germans and Allies alike – as a rare historical heirloom in the smoldering city center.

III.

Saved by the Guillotine: A Castle without its Cap

After the war ended in Poznań, it was the Zamek's place in the skyline that turned many in the city against the building. Few Poles were satisfied with the prospect of the 74-meter "German" clock tower dominating the skyline of a city that was in ruins after a brutal German occupation, and had lost the towers from two of its oldest and most important landmarks – the sixteenth-century Ratusz (Old Town Hall) and the Katedra (Cathedral) that dates back to the beginnings of both the city and the Polish state in the tenth century (Pazder 215-16). Hence, its own dominant physical presence immediately threatened the Zamek's future. Ironically, however, it was precisely this dominant presence – along with the stately building's practical and economic worth – that saved the Zamek, preserving its future in Poznań.

On February 1, 1945, the Red Army battled the Nazis for several hours at the Zamek before taking complete control of the castle on February 2 (Schwendemann 158). The battle for Poznań continued for three weeks, culminating in the Nazis' surrender at the nineteenth-century Prussian military Fort Winiary or Zitadelle (Cytadela) on February 23 (Kubiak and Olszewski 22 ff.). As demonstrated in the previous chapter, the castle represented the persistence of the Nazi leadership's decadence up to the very end of the war (see 53-55). One German soldier's testimony from the Nazis' final weeks in Poznań echoes this sentiment. For several weeks the Zamek was used as a military hospital and held German prisoners of war. One such prisoner, who had snuck into the Zamek to mix in with the "Schloßbewohner" and look for food, found a menu from New Year's Day, 1945, including "Erdbeeren mit Sahne." In his autobiography he comments: "Greiser verstand es offensichtlich auch während des totalen Krieges, feudal zu leben" (Wanner 23).

When, on February 8, the Polish engineer Feliks Maciejewski was named mayor of the city by Soviet leaders, the Zamek's fate had already been decided. Deemed by this first ring of authorities as a reminder of Prussian-German dominance and Nazi brutality, the 35-year-old sandstone castle was to be expunged from Poznań's post-occupation cityscape. Just two weeks after being appointed, Maciejewski not only promised to tear down the Zamek, but to accomplish as much "with the hands of the German prisoners," and the city council unanimously agreed (Podbierowa 44, Pazder 215). The Poznań daily *Głos Wielkopolski* reported the mayor's intentions with a news brief on March 2, following it up the next day with a front page editorial entitled "Zburzyć Zamek – symbol krzyżackiej buty" ("Destroy Zamek – Symbol of Teutonic Hubris"). The editorial announced the city's decision and lobbied for support of the building's destruction, criticizing the palace as a product of Prussian militaristic hegemony built with French war reparations from 1870-71 (GWkp [1945], 12, 13). The city's postwar building department, in an August 1945 report urging the city council to limit destruction during reconstruction work, nevertheless encouraged the destruction of several "German towers" – first among them the Zamek's – that give the city a "falsely injected German verticalism" that is "so foreign to the Polish soul" (APP, 1226/85, 4).³⁵ They recommend that "one of the first patriotic, urbanistic and aesthetic requirements should be the deconstruction of unsightly and invidious German towers" (4).³⁶

³⁵ Translation by the author. Orig.: "Miasto dziś może wyrzucić na przybyszu nienającym go poprzednie, fałszywe wrażenie, bo wieże niemieckie, ten sztucznie zaszczerpiiony wertykalizm niemiecki, tak obcy duchowi polskiemu, egzystuje jeszcze, a nie ma przeciwwagi w budowlach i wieżach polskich, które uległy zniszczeniu."

³⁶ Translation by the author. Orig.: "Dlatego też jednym z pierwszych postulatów patriotycznych, urbanistycznych i estetycznych powinna być rozbiórka szpetnych i rażących wież niemieckich, b. zamku cesarskiego, Dyrekcji Poczty, Ziemstwa Kredytowego, Ubezpieczalni

Another *Głos Wielkopolski* article in March, under the title “Z ruin powstanie nowy Poznań” (“A New Poznań Will Rise from the Ruins”), denounced the “German lies” about the city’s heritage and assigned the blame for its destruction to Hitler and the Germans, thereby vindicating the Red Army. The author appeals to citizens: “Let’s build Poznań again – but our way, a beautiful city, a Polish city” (GWkp [1945], 22). The Soviet-influenced political stance is transparent in both the mayor’s decision and the local press, which was trying to steer anyone among the general public not already in favor of the building’s removal. In fact, postwar administrative leaders in Poznań and Greater Poland took it upon themselves to discredit all Germanic history in the region – not just National Socialists, but Prussians, Austrians, Teutonic Knights and the Holy Roman Empire as well (APP, 471/1025, 60).

Polish head of state Bolesław Bierut visited Poznań on March 8, observed a parade on Plac Stalina (Stalin Square, the future Plac Mickiewicza) and spoke to a crowd in front of the Zamek. Bierut already had his intentions for rebuilding the city. Comparing it to the resilient capital of Warsaw, he lauded Poznań for its heroism and loyalty and vowed to restore it to its former beauty (Świtała 97). Though Bierut did not mention the sandstone backdrop for his speech specifically, he spoke both of German crimes and of rebuilding Poznań in the same context. His listeners might easily have envisioned a new building there, especially given the recent language in the press.

The only thing standing between the Zamek and Maciejewski’s wrecking ball was the approval of the regional council of the voivodeship (*województwo*) or province, which essentially was an extension of the government in Warsaw. The mayor submitted a motion to destroy the Zamek, inquiring as to the jurisdiction and ownership of the building. On June 12,

przy ul. Mickiewicza, szkoły przy ul. Słowackiego, wieży górnosłaskiej i wielu kościołów niemieckich.”

1945, Maciejewski and the city council received the voivodeship's response: the Zamek belonged to the national treasury and the city had no authority to tear it down (GWIkp [1945], 104). Citing several legal statutes from the *Dziennik Urzęd* going back to 1928, Edward Osóbka-Morawski, chairman of the Council of Ministers, rejected Maciejewski's motion and recommended the Zamek be given to the university in Poznań (PDW, 6/46, 165). A memorandum from the presidium of the State National Council (Prezydium Krajowej Rady Narodowej) – of whom Bierut was chair and Osóbka-Morawski vice-chair – not only prevented the City Council from tearing down the building, but even decreed that its current style be preserved (APP, 1160/78, 25). Issues of local memory, therefore, were trumped by national politics – driven in this case by Soviet influence rather than by Polish nationalism.

Art historian Janusz Pazder also credits Osóbka-Morawski with halting plans to tear down the Zamek. “Edward Osóbka-Morawski opposed the destruction of the Zamek, because Zamek was the property of the state,” says Pazder in an interview with Piotr Bojarski. “Osóbka-Morawski ordered the Zamek be handed over once again to Poznań University, which desperately needed space” (Bojarski, “Przekorny stulatek”).³⁷ The irony of the fact that the economically savvy decision to utilize the castle's space came from Warsaw – and not Poznań, as regional stereotype would suggest – was not lost on Pazder. He alludes to the Varsovians' uncharacteristic pragmatism, which is normally associated with the Polish image of Poznanians – those Poles who lived for 150 years under the Prussian sphere of influence: “One could say that,

³⁷ Orig.: “Zniszczeniu zamku sprzeciwił się premier Edwarda [sic] Osóbka-Morawski, bo Zamek był własnością państwa. Osóbka-Morawski nakazał przekazać Zamek ponownie Uniwersytetowi Poznańskiemu, który pilnie potrzebował pomieszczeń.”

as an exception, Poznanians in this case were steered by emotion, whereas the premier in Warsaw acted – in the typical Poznanian fashion – pragmatically” (“Przekorny stulatek”).³⁸

In the end, therefore, while the tower was reduced in size per the building committee’s recommendation (APP, 1226/85, 4), the palace survived. Maciejewski’s stint as Poznań’s mayor was short-lived, lasting merely a few months. His replacement, 36-year-old Stanisław Sroka, was elected by a vote of 40-13 on July 16,³⁹ and within two days he was sworn into office (Świtała 238).⁴⁰ Sroka is still remembered for his contributions to the rebuilding of Poznań and, in particular, of the Ratusz (Old Town Hall).

A portrait by Jerzy Watracz of the former president hangs today in the Ratusz, which houses the Museum of the History of the City of Poznań (Muzeum Historii Miasta Poznania). In the picture Sroka is seated in a relaxed pose, hands at his side, but with a stern, determined look on his face. In the background is the renaissance Ratusz itself – arguably Poznań’s most important architectural work since 1555 – its tower and façade reconstructed after the damage it sustained during the war. Next to that portrait is another of two toddlers playfully laying bricks, imitating the proud, resilient workers in the background who are rebuilding the Ratusz. As citizens were reminded in Bierut’s speech, the postwar theme in communist Poznań was the same as in Warsaw, Stalingrad, Dresden and other cities in the Soviet sphere of influence that were left smoldering after a brutal, yet ultimately successful, war: work and reconstruction.

³⁸ Orig.: “Można więc powiedzieć, że poznaniacy wyjątkowo kierowali się w tym przypadku emocjami, a po poznańsku, pragmatycznie zachował się premier w Warszawie.”

³⁹ Seven of the 60 council members abstained.

⁴⁰ See also the section for June 29 on p. 221, in which Osóbka-Morawski introduces the new government with Gomułka.



Figure 3.4. Stanisław Sroka served as president of Poznań from 1945 to 1948. He met twice with head of state Bolesław Bierut to gain permission to use the Zamek as city hall. Sroka is also credited with beginning the rebuilding of the 1555 Ratusz (Old Town Hall) on Stary Rynek (Old Town Square) after its tower was destroyed in World War II. This 1947 portrait by Jerzy Watracz, entitled “Portret prezydenta m. Poznania Stanisława Sroki” (“Portrait of the President of the City of Poznań, Stanisław Sroka”), currently hangs in the Ratusz as part of a museum dedicated to the city’s history. The Ratusz can be seen in the background. Photograph by the author. Used by permission of Museum Narodowe w Poznaniu (MNP, Mp1463).

Sroka’s three-year city presidency may be associated with the Ratusz, but he could be equally remembered as the president who preserved the Zamek. It was this building that – despite its German origins and Nazi associations – appealed to the mayor as the seat of his city council. Just like Wilhelm II, Hitler and Greiser, Sroka too found the castle’s long hallways and spacious offices “suitable for the dignity” of the city council (APP, 1160/18, 10). In November 1947, he reported to the National City Council on two meetings that past February in Warsaw with Bierut. Addressing the council members, Sroka referred to the results of these meetings as “our success” (“sukces nasz”) when breaking the news that Bierut had not only agreed to let

them keep the Zamek, but to move city administration there, using it as the “Nowy Ratusz” (New Town Hall) while the original Ratusz on Stary Rynek was being rebuilt (294).

By this time in late 1947, two years had passed since the Zamek had been spared from destruction. Sroka’s and the council’s “success” was indeed the use of the impressive building for spacious offices. Instead of being used by the university, as Osóbka-Morawski originally had decreed, Sroka acquired the building for the primary purpose of housing the city’s authority. Having acquired Bierut’s personal stamp of approval, he was able to proceed with budgetary plans and renovations. The city administration’s move to the Zamek was almost wholesale. Sroka listed 16 departments of the administration that were to be located in the Zamek immediately, as well as four additional departments that would join them after renovations. This left only four departments that would be housed in other locations.

At the end of his address to the council, Sroka listed the amount it would cost the budget for the Zamek renovations: 45 million złoty in 1947 and another 108 million in 1948. This is nearly three times more than the 23.8 million and 34.5 million złoty from the same budget designated to repairing the beloved Ratusz on the city’s main square during the same two years (10).⁴¹ The city’s renaissance town hall, like the Katedra (Cathedral), has long been one of the key symbols of “Polishness” in the city, always emphasized during the nationalist struggles. That a Polish administration should put renovation of the German Zamek on the same level of priority with the Ratusz is in itself astounding – not to mention the fact that this was just two years after the end of the Nazi occupation.

⁴¹ The specific figures are listed as follows: 15 million złoty from the ordinary budget and 30 million złoty from the extraordinary budget for the Zamek in 1947; 8 million złoty from the ordinary budget and 100 million złoty from the extraordinary budget for the Zamek in 1948; 8.9 million złoty already used and another 15 million złoty anticipated for the Ratusz in 1947; and 6 million złoty from the ordinary budget and 28.5 million złoty from the extraordinary budget for the Ratusz in 1948.

In a meeting on November 22, 1947, that set the city's budget for the upcoming year, an additional half a million zloty were designated for upkeep of the castle. One council member reasoned that despite high costs in the first year, they would be able to cut costs in future years (1160/32, 102). The motion to approve the budget was unanimously approved, and city authorities moved into the stately neo-Romanesque structure, where they would stay for 15 years (103). Most of the funds were used to convert the wings to offices for the use of the city council (1160/18, 10).

Schwendemann argues that communist authorities ultimately saved the palace in large part because the National Socialist architecture fit so well to the Stalinist ideal. While the building's origins were imperial, and the exterior style was – but for a few changes – preserved, the interior renovations under the Nazis were so complete that few elements of Wilhelm's interior are still recognizable. Nearly all the original décor was replaced with the fascist interiors similar to those used at Hitler's Reichskanzlei. Writes Schwendemann: "Ein Grund war sicherlich, daß die stalinistische Architektur der NS-Architektur in vielem ähnelte. Nicht von ungefähr hatte sich Stalin im Herbst 1939 an den Bauten Speers interessiert gezeigt" (170-71). Schwendemann also references a comment Speer made in his memoirs, published in 1969, in which the prominent Nazi architect was invited to Moscow to meet with Stalin. Here is Speer's full citation:

Etwa Anfang Oktober [1939] ließ der deutsche Botschafter in Moskau, Graf von der Schulenburg, Hitler mitteilen, daß sich Stalin persönlich für unsere Baupläne interessiere. Eine Serie von Fotografien unserer Modelle wurde im Kreml ausgestellt, unsere größten Bauten allerdings auf Weisung Hitlers geheimgehalten, um, wie er meinte, "Stalin nicht auf den Geschmack zu bringen." Schulenburg hatte vorgeschlagen, ich solle zur Erklärung der Pläne nach Moskau fliegen. "Er könnte Sie dabehalten," äußerte Hitler halb im Scherz und untersagte die Reise. Wenig später teilte mir der deutsche Gesandte Schnurre mit, daß meine Entwürfe Stalin gefallen hätten. (*Erinnerungen* 183)

There was talk of converting the style of the Romanesque façade, which was seen as a Germanic style, and even of changing the tower to one like Warsaw's infamous Pałac Kultury (Schwendemann 170). In the end, however, the formidable sandstone walls as well as the specifically Nazi interior proved appealing enough, as only modest changes were made inside. Postwar Polish authorities took down the tower, but kept the vast majority of friezes, sculptures, motifs and interior décor that the Nazis added under Böhmer. "[D]er arische Übermensch" would pass as "der proletarische neue Mensch," at least in stone, and motifs such as hammer, sickle and sheaves of grain were befitting of both ideologies, Schwendemann points out (171). Friezes of the allegories "Krieg und Frieden" still adorn the top of the spiral staircase leading to the second floor above the Great Hall. Near columns set aback from the staircase is the large oak leaf emblem used by the Wehrmacht as a symbol of *Deutschtum*.⁴² When asked about some such curious symbolic elements that can be found today throughout the castle, Zbigniew Antczak, an architect who has worked on various renovation and restoration projects in the building during the past decade, commented: "The Poles did not remove everything that the fascists put in. It was simply arbitrary" (Personal interview).⁴³

In addition to its form, the Zamek's wartime function was preserved as well. The Nazi regime had been replaced with an oppressive Stalinist regime, and the university had been forced to look elsewhere for much-needed classroom and office space. Those who spoke out in the press

⁴² One might also recall the emblematic *Podbielski Eiche* planted on the grounds of the old Deutsches Stadion during the last years of the *Kaiserzeit*. The 200-year old oak was later incorporated into the Olympiastadion construction during the 1930s.

⁴³ Orig.: "Nie wszystko Polacy zlikwidowali z faszystów. To był po prostu przypadek."

were soon hushed.⁴⁴ As the next chapter will show in the discussion of the June demonstrations of 1956, the public's disapproval of the regime's appropriation of the building for its own use had not subsided for an entire decade after the end of the war. For the time being at least, the castle with its humbled tower retained its purpose and association as a representative place of authority.

IV.

Berlin's Two Unsuspecting Nazi Structures?

Given the fact that the regime had its capital in Berlin for twelve years, remnants of National Socialist architecture are surprisingly few, despite enormous sums of state money dedicated to massive building projects by Hitler and Speer. Many of Hitler's building plans were interrupted quite early on by his own war of aggression, and much that was built was destroyed –either during the war or after. Nevertheless more does remain than many realize. Despite the war, the average annual building activity under Hitler was equal to the sum of all building from both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries put together before he came to power (Koshar, *Germany's Transient Pasts* 206). Only several of the structures that survived the war, however, have been controversial.

⁴⁴ Zofia Karczewska-Markiewicz, who wrote theater reviews, cultural reports and editorials for the daily *Rzeczpospolita*, wrote three articles in the fall of 1947 criticizing the government for neglecting cultural organizations in postwar decision-making and depleting the budget for culture and art. One decision she criticized was the city council's repossession of the Zamek from the university. Her articles were brought up in a December 29, 1947, meeting of the city council, resolving in the decision to address the problem (APP, 1160/18, 318). Sroka himself then responded to Karczewska-Markiewicz with a series of three articles defending the city's decision and the stressing the importance of cultural organizations. Karczewska-Markiewicz, in the months after Sroka's responses, never addressed the topic again in the press. Only her theater reviews were published.

Two buildings often referenced are Göring's former Reichsluftfahrtministerium and the former Reichsbank. Architectural critic Michael Wise calls these "prime examples of the Third Reich's efforts to deploy monumental architecture as a propaganda tool." Bonn planned to destroy the structures and replace them with "up-to-date ministry buildings" (Wise 89). Dieter Hoffmann-Axthelm, a Berlin urban planner, warned in 1991 against "heedlessly" reoccupying the Nazi structures.⁴⁵ By 1992, plans had been made to demolish the two buildings.

But – as is seemingly inevitable in Berlin – a counter-argument arose. Some in the city government, as well as lobbyists and the public opposed this destruction as something of which their city had experienced quite enough in the past five decades. Besides that, building new structures would prove much more expensive than remodeling, and would take much longer to complete (90). Mentioning several similar buildings in Berlin, Munich and Nuremberg, Wise recounts that "pragmatism eventually prevailed" in the cases of the Reichsluftfahrtministerium and Reichsbank, where reunified Germany's Finance Ministry and Labor Ministry would take up residence (91-107). In fact, as we have just seen in Poznań as well, the economic factor often ends up carrying the day. As was the case with the controversial Zamek, there was an even greater emphasis on budget considerations in 1945.

Let us now shift our attention to the two Nazi structures in Berlin that are part of this study, Olympiastadion and the Siegessäule. Wise neglects to mention either in his thought-provoking chapter on National Socialist architecture – perhaps offering further evidence of each structure's change in meaning. Yet that does not mean that the two structures, both having survived the war completely intact, were void of meaning in 1945. As in Poznań, the abundance of destruction and lack of built space played a part at the two sites in Berlin. Here, as we have

⁴⁵ Qtd. in Wise, 89.

also seen in Poznań, the new authority used the sites for the purpose of achieving self-legitimization in the wake of World War II, a period when one world conflict had just ended and another was just beginning.

V.

The British Military Administration Moves into the Olympic Complex

Bombs rained down from the sky on Berlin in what must have seemed like a constant stream for several years during World War II. It may seem strange that Olympiastadion was not targeted. There is no doubt that it would have helped disrupt the Nazi war effort. The Nazis had been using the space to produce and store armaments since the start of the war. The company Blaupunkt manufactured primers for anti-aircraft machines there. Near the war's end, the stadium's bunkers accommodated the studios of the National Socialist radio network, *Großdeutscher Rundfunk* (<www.olympiastadion-berlin.de>). Strategically, the stadium complex was an easily justifiable target. It is also likely that the stadium built to host Hitler's infamous "Nazi Games" might have been the first major potential target many Allied flight crews saw during their approach on Berlin.

Given the stadium's position on the capital's far western edge, it may also have been valuable as a landmark in the days before radar for the countless American and British planes and bombers deployed on a constant string of missions to Berlin. The oval structure may have functioned as a strategic marker – after all, it was the Western source of the Ost-West-Achse – for the many planes flying missions to the capital, directing them on their way to targets nearer the city's center, especially during cloudy weather with limited visibility.

After the war it was the British, under whose supervision the Olympic grounds fell, who were largely responsible for the preservation of the stadium and the entire Olympic complex. Journalist Volker Kluge claims that the stadium may still exist only because it fell under British occupation: “Wahrscheinlich existiert es heute überhaupt nur noch deshalb, weil es von den Briten 1945 besetzt wurde” (*Steine beginnen zu reden* 167). Otherwise it might have been either torn down or, more likely, simply neglected to become overgrown and forgotten. But despite the tainted christening as focal point of the 1936 Nazi Olympics, in 1945 both the functional stadium and Olympic complex were valuable assets.

The British had had an eye on Berlin’s Olympic complex from the very start. As soon as Berlin’s four zones were marked off, military leaders chose the new complex as their headquarters, commencing with clean-up on July 1, 1945, with the help of German prisoners of war, as Kluge recounts (*Olympiastadion Berlin* 121). The British military would remain until 1994 (179). As early as September 23, 1945, they hosted an international Olympics for the Allied nations in Berlin. All attended but the Soviets, who pulled out at the last minute.

The British did nothing to slow down the rebuilding of German sports after the war; in fact they promoted it (Fischer and Lindner 254). With the ceremonial first kick of a 1949 regional league match, British Major General Geoffrey Bourne, Commandant of the British Sector of Berlin, returned the Olympic Stadium to German hands (261).⁴⁶ There were many subsequent matches and other events hosted by the West Germans as well as by the British – or by both, such as the friendly match between English and West German youth sides in 1967 (see Figure 3.5). The stadium has even been host to fictional events: in his well-documented historical

⁴⁶ The picture’s caption in Fischer’s and Lindner’s volume identifies “der britische General Byrnes” as the one taking the ceremonial kick. The authors may have confused General Bourne with former U.S. Secretary of State, James Byrnes.

crime novel, *The Good German* (2001), Joseph Kanon stages a scene of friendly American football among the Allies at Olympic Stadium in the summer of 1945 (110-16).

In summary, the Olympic complex had a distinct functionality for the Allies after the war as military headquarters. In spite of their National Socialist origins and use for armaments production, neither the complex nor stadium was targeted during Allied bombing and survived the war fully intact. It is not clear whether or not this functionality or the possible value as an air landmark factored into the Allies' decision not to target the complex. In any case, after the war the stadium provided a venue for a multitude of recreational and sporting events for those stationed in and living in Berlin under British administration.



Figure 3.5. The British returned Olympiastadion to West Germany in 1949 and it was used as the city's main sports venue. Here the West German youth team (r.) meets England in a football match in April 1967 – one year after the two countries met in the World Cup final in London's Wembley Stadium. Courtesy of Landesarchiv Berlin. Used by permission.

VI.

The Angel of Victory Survives French Lobbying and the Allied Control Council

The Siegessäule's fate was decided in a long and drawn-out process that was, at least in some respect, unique to the four-power occupational system in Germany after World War II. France, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and the United States represented four powers whose roles in the war, political interests and relationships to the conquered Germany were vastly different from one another. This became evident in the long discussion concerning the status of the Siegessäule in the urban landscape. The matter took more than two years to be settled – which, according to arguments made by two of the last committees to discuss the monument's fate, played some role in its preservation: by 1947 it had become so long since the debate began that any drastic action would risk being seen as revanchist. Ultimately, while Allied representatives did recognize what the French correctly pointed out – the monument's altered form and symbolic function under National Socialism – in the end they considered the structure's origins in the 1870s the most substantial argument in protecting it from the fateful Directive No. 30. The fact that the discussion persisted into 1947 and the anticipation of a negative public reaction also played a role in the decision to keep the monument.

During the two-year decision process, the monument also fulfilled a function in the meantime, not at all unlike its original purpose: as a monument to victory adorned with the flags of the victorious powers. In addition to appeasing the French, who fought most ardently for its removal, for the time being it provided a constant and satisfactory political symbol for the occupational authorities.

Beyond serving the Allies as a 67-meter flag pole, the Siegessäule also provided the backdrop for post-war celebration by the victors. Soviet soldiers celebrated at the site and many had their picture taken in front of the monument (see Figure 3.7).⁴⁷ Even the state chose it as an appropriate stage for celebration, holding an Allied military parade there to commemorate the German surrender and display their authority to the public. The French newsreel documentary film, “Parade der vier Siegermächte auf der Siegessäule,” produced for the German population, shows the Allies’ use of the victory monument in the same way the Nazis used it after it was re-erected. The film also provides a clear summary of the French attitude of the time that would characterize the bureaucratic battle they so ardently waged over two years to erase the Siegessäule from existence. A stream of soldiers, jeeps and tanks parade down the former Charlottenburger Chaussee, which is adorned with flags and bunting and lined with onlookers, some of whom are standing in the shade provided by some of the very few trees still standing in Tiergarten in the summer of 1945 (see Figure 3.6). The narrator clearly describes both the scene and the French historical sentiment toward the German capital:

Eine große Parade der alliierten Besatzungstruppen feiert in Berlin den entgültigen Sieg der vereinten Nationen über die Mächte des Faschismus. Die Truppen der vier Siegermächte marschieren durch die Strassen der Stadt, von der aus der Zweite Weltkrieg über alle Kontinente getragen wurde....Berlin, das seit Napoleons Zeiten keine Besetzung von keiner fremden Macht gekannt und das erst in diesem Krieg fühlbar die Schrecken der Zerstörung kennengelernt hat. Berlin, von wo aus Preußen-Deutschland drei mal in den letzten 75 Jahren den Krieg in wahnwitzigem Hochmut entfesselt hat. Berlin, die Ruine Berlins, klingen wieder vom Schall der alliierten Fanfaren. (BArch-FA, MAG 2986)

⁴⁷ One documentary film shows Soviet soldiers dancing and playing the accordion on May 2, 1945, after receiving official greetings from Stalin the day before (BArch-FA, BSP 1798). The monument was well-known as a symbol of the German Sedantag celebrations in the Kaiserreich, but World War II was not the first time foreign soldiers celebrated here. A silent documentary film from 1919 also shows American soldiers gathering at the Siegessäule in its original place after the conclusion of World War I (BArch-FA, BSP 06637).

On May 19, 1945, the Soviets appointed the Magistrat der Stadt Berlin, an “antifascist” German governing unit answering to Moscow that was headed by the future GDR head of state, Walter Ulbricht. Architect Hans Scharoun, who would later build the Philharmonie and Staatsbibliothek in West Berlin, was the chair of the Magistratsabteilung für Bau- und Wohnungswesen. Scharoun’s department prepared, in April 1946, a comprehensive assessment of the city’s remaining monuments, placing the structures on three lists: those which would remain in their current places; those to be kept, but only on the condition of relocation to museums; and those which were to be purged from the urban and cultural landscape. In all 43 monuments were to be destroyed, while eleven were to be transferred to museums and ten would remain where they were. Near the top of the list of those slated for destruction was the Siegessäule.⁴⁸ The committee reasoned: “Die Siegessäule ist zwar ein Wahrzeichen von Berlin, aber künstlerisch nicht bedeutend genug, um ein Stehenbleiben an so auffälliger Stelle zu rechtfertigen” (LAB[STA], 100/773, 26-31).⁴⁹

The Siegessäule was no accidental target: towering above the hollow shell of what had used to be the German capital, the monument’s central location and imposing size helped make it the most visible landmark in a city without a skyline. Besides that, it was well-known from 60 years as the centerpiece of Sedantag parades even before the Nazis relocated and subjected it to

⁴⁸ Reihnhold Begas’ formidable monument of Bismarck, surprisingly, was designated to stay in its current place at the Großer Stern. The committee decided: “Trotz seiner pathetischen Ausdruckssprache ist es doch als Hauptwerk der Berliner Bildhauerkunst des 19. Jahrhunderts anzusprechen. Zwischen den Bäumen des Tiergartens steht es nicht allzu auffällig” (LAB[STA], 100/773, 26-31). On the final list, Bismarck had been designated to be moved to a museum. To this day his statue has remained alongside Moltke and Roon as part of the Siegessäule ensemble at the Großer Stern. (773, 2a-2f).

⁴⁹ For a detailed account of the Magistrat’s discussion during several meetings between March and May of 1946, see Dieter Hanauske, *Die Sitzungsprotokolle des Magistrats der Stadt Berlin 1945/46: Teil II: 1946* (Berlin: Berlin Verlag, 1999), 254-257, 386-399, 464-483 and 499-500.

their own explicitly public political celebrations. The committee cited its size and stature as contributing to the decision, and reasoned that the popular monument was not artistically meaningful enough to prevent its removal.

The Magistrat sought to act quickly. Originally the destruction of the monuments was to be carried out by July 26, 1946. After a few changes made during the Magistrat's subsequent meeting on May 18, the list was approved and the fast-approaching completion date was moved back three weeks. Pending only the approval of the Allied Kommandatura in Berlin (AK), the Allied authority in the former German capital,⁵⁰ the Siegessäule was to be removed "so schnell wie möglich, spätestens bis zum 15. August, 1946" (LAB[STA], 100/773, 2a-2f).



Figure 3.6. This Allied military parade in the summer of 1945 traveled the same route the Nazis used for their parades. The Siegessäule can be seen in the background. Courtesy of Landesarchiv Berlin. Used by permission.

⁵⁰ The AK was the local authority that answered to the Allied Control Council, the four-power government responsible for all of Germany.

The list was, nonetheless, much too arbitrary for the AK, who discussed it but eventually passed it on to the Allied Control Council (ACC),⁵¹ that, already on May 13, 1946, had initiated a mandate known as Directive No. 30, concerning the “Liquidation of German Military and Nazi Memorials and Museums” (LAB, Zs 1288/7, 154-155). The directive overruled the decision of the Soviet-appointed Magistrat and left the matter to be decided by the ACC’s special committees. The directive declared specifically those monuments illegal “which [tend] to preserve and keep alive German military tradition, to revive militarism or to commemorate the Nazi Party, or which is of such a nature as to glorify incidents of war” (154). The ACC intently defined in the directive the application of the terms “military tradition,” “militarism” or “incidents of war” as referring only to “warlike activities subsequent to 1 August 1914” (155). Because of the Siegessäule’s 1873 origin and subsequent redesign and move in 1938-39, this became a crucial point of debate when discussed by various committees.

Such decisions, in most cases, fell not to architects, urban scholars and cultural critics, but rather to military administrators. The members of the ACC committees were given the enormous job of restoring Germany to a level of self-sustainability after twelve years of Nazi rule had permeated every facet of society and government. What is more, they were to operate on four-member committees made up of colleagues from each of their fellow occupation powers. Cold War political agendas were becoming clear, and diplomacy played a significant role. With a stack of decisions to be made at each meeting, committee members were accustomed to making swift decisions. When something, as in the case of the Siegessäule, needed more time, they listened to arguments and in the case of stalemate assigned it to another committee for further research and advice. Had this case clearly fallen under Directive No. 30, it would have been an

⁵¹ The ACC is synonymous with the Allied Control Authority (ACA), which is seen in the abbreviations of archival signatures, and “Allierter Kontrollrat.”

open and closed decision with no room for debate. Instead, the various committees continued to deem the question of the Siegessäule as wanting of “special consideration” and it was therefore passed between committees specializing in education, fine arts, internal affairs and legal interpretation.



Figure 3.7. After the war, the Siegessäule became a popular backdrop for “victorious” Soviet and Allied soldiers posing for pictures. This Red Army soldier’s picture was taken in 1946. Courtesy of Landesarchiv Berlin. Used by permission.

The AK in Berlin did not appeal to the ACC because they had more power or because their approval was necessary, but because of the particularity of this case, a special situation that fell between the language of the directive because of the Siegessäule's repurposing by the Nazis. Obviously already in 1946, the monument was a complex public space laden with multiple layers of Germany's complicated past. The press had obtained the story and drawn attention to the situation, evidenced by articles such as "Siegessäule soll verschwinden" (Tsp, 22 May 1946, 4) and "Wilde Einfälle" (Ku, 3 June 1946, 3). The public awaited the result.

Without exception, on each committee it was the French representative trying to convince his three colleagues of the monument's National Socialist nature. There were different French representatives, and though their argument was always essentially the same, it took on various versions and was supported by different lines of reasoning. One of the most detailed was a five-pronged argument of the Legal Directorate in which the French delegate first admitted that, if interpreting the 1914 date cited in the directive "stricto sensu," the column could not be subject to removal. Nevertheless, "on account of the transfer and alteration of this monument during the Nazi regime, it could be considered as a new monument." He attacked the 1914 date as "purely arbitrary" and moved for it to be deleted, maintaining that "the continued existence of the Siegessaule [sic] in the heart of Berlin, capital⁵² of the former Prussia, the cradle of German militarism, is exactly opposed to one of the main aims fixed by the Allies." Finally, in a play to quantify national victimhood, the delegate requested permission to remove the monument's "objectionable" features, i.e. its reliefs and mosaics which were quite humiliating to France, an

⁵² There is a blank space where this word is presumed to have been on the copy of this protocol. It is not clear whether the word, presumed to be "capital," was removed or omitted, or simply did not show up on the archives' copy.

occupation power which had been more than any other country, a victim of German militarism” (BArch-K, DLEG/M[47]23, 9-12).

The French representative on the Education Committee agreed with his fellow Allied representatives that the Siegessäule should indeed not be torn down for political reasons. In other words, French resentment of a German monument celebrating victory in 1870 does not justify removal of the monument. The argument should rest on the fact that after its move and alteration in 1938-39, it was no longer the Siegessäule of the Bismarck era; rather, “it had become a monument to Nazism (DIAC/AEC/M[47]3, 2-3).” The argument of the Internal Affairs Committee’s French representative was even broader in his criticism. He argued that the monument is “an important symbol of the survival of the Germans during the Nazi regime and of the German arrogance” (DIAC/MEMO[47]21).

Another French advisor cited the “destruction of the Tannenburg [sic] Memorial by the victorious Soviet armies,” which took place before Directive No. 30 was drafted, adding that this was “a worthy action, implementing Control Council Directive No. 30 before it was written” (DIAC/M(47)2, 14). Tannenberg was one of two localized but highly nationalistic celebrations after the turn of the twentieth century that highlight the respective German and Polish views of history and of the present. Both were identifiable with growing nationalistic trends. Historian Keely Stauter-Halsted describes the first of the two dueling celebrations: a small Polish town’s “massive popular celebration marking...the fifth centennial in 1910 of the Polish victory over the Teutonic Knights at the Battle of Grünwald” (154). Local nationalist leaders adapted the celebrations “to fit their own contemporary political purposes” (172). As fellow historians Maria Bucur and Nancy Wingfield write in the volume’s introduction, the essay demonstrates that “shifting fortunes of commemorations reveal both the diverse ways political groups reframe

national questions for ideological ends and the rich ambiguities in the cultural representation of such issues” (5). While the French argument that the post-1939 version of the Siegessäule is a different monument contains both truth and relevance, the argument itself provides evidence of yet another “diverse way” in which a political group can “reframe national questions for ideological ends,” to cite Bucur and Wingfield.

In contrast to the Polish commemoration Stauter-Halsted mentions, historian Robert Taylor documents the 1914 German monument in East Prussia: the Tannenberg Memorial referenced by the French official. Erected to commemorate the 1914 German victory over Poles near the storied fifteenth-century Grunwald site, the memorial was considered by *völkisch* writers to mark an act of revenge (Taylor 188). One might pose the question: revenge for what – the 1410 military defeat or the increasing celebrations like the one in 1910 mentioned above?⁵³

The French committee member referenced Tannenberg to argue that the Soviets’ destruction of the Tannenberg memorial in their sweep across Poland would have been justifiable even outside of the Allied Directive No. 30. Though that particular action had not been preapproved by an international tribunal, the Soviets had acted in the spirit of the directive. Likewise, he reasons, “the Victory Column should also be destroyed under the provision of Control Council Directive No. 30” (BArch-K, DIAC/M[47]2, 14).

In the matter of the postwar German monument landscape, the single most important goal of the French was the destruction of the Siegessäule. Whether in light of Allied Directive No. 30 or in spite of it, for them the action was obviously justifiable. The directive was merely bureaucratic red tape, providing the opportunity for an obstacle to the ultimate goal of

⁵³ The Grunwald anniversary continues to be a major attraction in Poland each July, including large-scale reenactments on the original site. The 2010 event attracted an estimated 200,000 visitors for the 600th anniversary of the original battle (Fowler).

destruction of the monument. While the Tannenberg memorial's removal – given its location in postwar Poland – was likely imminent, in pointing to a spontaneous action by the westward-surfing Red Army the French were not exactly citing the world's model of discretion in 1945. It is certainly possible that this mention of the Red Army's destruction of the Tannenberg memorial was simply politicking for the Soviet vote on the matter of the Siegessäule.

Hence, in the end, the highest post-war authority, haven taken on the specific assignment of removing Nazi ideology from the urban landscape of post-Hitler Germany, decided by a three-to-one count that the Siegessäule was not objectionable enough to merit its removal. The difference of opinion in the discussion was not even drawn along the Cold War lines that were beginning to dictate the dialogue of so many topics – particularly in Berlin and its four sectors.

In the end, while the French pointed to the Nazis' remodeling, reintroduction and indoctrination of the monument, this was perhaps merely an argument of convenience. It was rather on account of their national perspective vis-à-vis the Germans dating back to the nineteenth century that the French wished to see the monument purged from postwar Berlin. When it became clear that their international colleagues could not be convinced of the same, the French stripped the friezes and carried them off to Paris, just as Napoleon had done with the Brandenburger Tor's symbolic *Quadriga* nearly 140 years prior. The three Siegessäule friezes remained in France until the mid-1980s. Their symbolic return to Berlin in two installments was characterized as a political gesture, as the next chapter will address.

* * *

In his 2001 novel *Rot*, Uwe Timm marvels at the fact that the Siegessäule survived 1945, a year synonymous with the end for so many structures of importance in Berlin.

Es kommt einem Wunder nahe, daß gerade dieser Klops stehengeblieben ist, im Krieg nicht von Bomben, nicht von der Stalinorgel getroffen und später nicht von

den Rotarmisten gesprengt wurde. Nach der Kapitulation haben die Russen dem Engel eine rote Fahne in die Hand gesteckt, das war alles. (93)

It was not simply the Soviets who “stuck a red flag into the angel’s hand.” The Siegessäule was also used to hoist the French *Tricolore* and the British Union Jack as well as both the American and Polish flags at various points, demonstrating a clear justification of the monument in form and message. After the arrival of the Allies and the division of Berlin into four zones, it was with British permission that the French and Americans were allowed to fly their flags on the monument, which was in the British-controlled Tiergarten (LAB, B Rep./037/216, BKC/M[46]32). One British delegate assured his French colleague that employing the Siegessäule as a pedestal for the *Tricolore* was “not a concession, but a right won by the French armies” (BArch-K, DIAC/P[47]13).

The victors utilized Johann Heinrich Strack’s and Albert Speer’s column as well as Johann Friedrich Drake’s sculpture of the golden Viktoria to proclaim their own victory. The display was not simply temporary; the French were permitted to keep their flag there until 1949 – four years after the war ended. In fact, according to Alings, they replaced the flag 22 times in those four years after it had apparently become tattered (112). The French thereby employed the services of the same aggressive Viktoria which the Frenchman Victor Tissot called “a type of angel of extermination” and a “work of art” that actually succeeded in “making the capital city uglier” (285).⁵⁴ Hanging another victorious flag on the column simply either gives credibility to the monument as an admirable, effective symbol of victory, or, from the German perspective, establishes the Viktoria as an ironic bearer of the message of defeat. More than that, the Allies – in particular the French – thereby rendered moot and hypocritical all relevant arguments made

⁵⁴ Original: “eine Art Würgeengel...daß diese ‚Kunstwerk‘ so recht dazu beiträgt, die Hauptstadt häßlicher zu machen” (qtd. in Matthias Braun, 10).

against preserving the column, based on its past association with fascism and danger as a militaristic symbol.

In the introduction we considered the pressing need for functional buildings in 1945 in both cities. In the cases of the Zamek and Olympiastadion, this was the most important factor in their survival. In the Siegessäule's case, the Allied jury was hung. The lone argumentation for its removal, though both legitimate and valid, may have been the mere façade for a revanchist national(ist) vendetta. One of the deciding factors was a point brought up by several committees asked to review the Siegessäule case: timing. As late as 1947, occupation authorities did not wish to tear down a "gray area" monument and risk upsetting the devastated local Berlin population. The Allied Education Committee maintained, in February 1947, that "it would be a mistake to destroy it at such a late date" (BArch-K, DIAC/P[47]93). The American representative argued that "the Column should not be destroyed under such controversial circumstances, so long after the end of the recent war," fearing that "its destruction might have world-wide repercussions, as its significance was becoming more a question of politics than of education or fine arts." His Soviet colleague agreed that "its destruction would certainly...create a bad impression" (DIAC/AEC/M[47]3, 2-3). The British member of the Directorate of Internal Affairs and Communications urged his colleagues to "take into account that the column is now standing among the ruins of Berlin and that the two should remain as a lasting memorial for the German people" (DIAC/M[47]29, 5). This reading of the Victory Column in a context of destruction and ruin could indeed make the case for an effective monument of irony: the structure's victorious name and image stand in contrast with its surroundings and the sober reality the war and its aftermath had for Germany.

In a certain sense, the pragmatism that played a role in the preservation of the Zamek and Olympiastadion also applies here. The Siegessäule was not a structure that would be utilized on a regular basis on the inside, but Allied committee members here make a convincing argument that its outer surface served a practical purpose. The monument's function as a marker of German history and its place in a devastated urban landscape were valuable to the ruling authorities concerned with their primary formal objectives, namely the denazification and reorganization of the defeated Germany. This was a high-profile decision that had indeed dragged on long enough to generate both anticipation and controversy in the politically-charged four-zone former capital. By deciding to keep the monument, the four powers felt they would gain a measure of legitimacy in the eyes of Germans. The visual monument, still intact, had the potential to offer Berliners some sense of history that did not directly relate to the Nazi era (although the Nazis had gone to great lengths to connect this history to their vision). Whether or not Berliners saw the monument in this way can certainly be left to debate: the monument quite likely invoked pride for some and shame for others. The committees of the Allied Control Authority, nonetheless, used precisely this argument in their final decision to spare the monument.

Ironically, it may have indeed been Germans who had the last say on keeping the monument, after all. In the 1971 Sunday edition *Tagesspiegel* column "Die Welt von Einst," recapping headlines from 25 years prior, there was a short mention – all of eight lines – of the Berliner Magistrat's and Allied plans for the Siegessäule's removal in 1946 (Tsp, 7809/23 May 1971, 39). This prompted one reader, the German antifascist and Holocaust survivor Dr. Heinrich Grüber, to write in to "Demokratisches Forum" two weeks later, clarifying that the monument is indeed still standing, lest the previous column be misunderstood, and criticizing

Germans for their lack of appreciation for history (Tsp, 7820/6 June 1971, 25).⁵⁵ The following week, Professor Ferdinand Friedensburg wrote in to the same forum to set the record straight. He had been a member of the democratically-elected Berliner Magistrat in 1946 and served as Berlin's interim mayor for several months in 1947 while Louise Schroeder was ill. Friedensburg claims that on the Berliner AK, the Soviet and British delegates had sided with the French, but the American delegate wished to hear the opinion of the Germans represented by the newly elected Magistrat. Having been asked for the Magistrat's opinion, Schroeder found "die große Mehrheit des Magistrats auf der Seite der französischen Forderung." Even Ernst Reuter, writes Friedensburg, "meinte, es sei nicht schade um die Siegessäule; sie sei wirklich nicht schön" (Tsp, 13 June 1971, 25). Friedensburg, however, disagreed with both method and motive:

Ich widersprach mit Heftigkeit; so häßlich sei das Denkmal nun auch wieder nicht, und Berlin sei arm genug an Erinnerungen, die die Stadt mit ihrer stolzen Vergangenheit verbanden. Vor allem hielt ich es für unmoralisch, von uns eine ausdrückliche Zustimmung zu einem Revancheakt der Siegermächte zu verlangen. Ob wir die Siegessäule im neuen Berlin beibehalten wollten, solle später einmal von einer wirklich freien Stadtverwaltung entschieden werden. (25)

The former mayor was in the minority, though not alone in his opinion to keep the monument. However, "die kluge Louise Schroeder, die sichtlich beeindruckt von unseren Argumenten war," refused to take a protocol of the meeting, and instead of putting the matter to a vote, simply informed the Kommandatura that they were unable to reach an agreement (25).

Friedensburg, who died the following spring, in 1972, concluded his letter: "Dabei blieb es, und an der Siegessäule freuen sich noch heute die Berliner und zahllose auswärtige Besucher" (25). However close the committee might have been to removing the monument, both

⁵⁵ Grüber compares the Germans and Russians in his closing critique of the German attitude: "Auch die Russen sind stolz auf ihre Geschichte, und sie hüten die Zeugen der Vergangenheit von Leningrad bis Moskau, Kiew und Odessa. Wir Deutschen haben nun einmal wenig Verständnis für Geschichte und für die Großen der Vergangenheit, und wir haben keine Achtung vor dem historisch Gewordenen."

Grüber's and Friedensburg's letters provide clear evidence of an attitude of pride in German history that did still exist among some of the city's leaders of the postwar generation. There were those grateful to see the Siegessäule stand tall in the midst of the ruined urban landscape of central Berlin.

VII.

Conclusion: Function before Form

Michael Wise and Rudy Koshar both argue that functional buildings should not be prevented from serving a practical purpose simply on account of past association with a discredited regime. Wise claims, "The stones themselves are not guilty" (107). Koshar points out that through "restoration or the rebuilding of surroundings" societies can "cut all meaningful connections to the past" (206). In Poznań, the palace which had housed parts of the Polish university and the mayor's office under Polish control during the interwar period first became the seat of a new oppressive authority. In Berlin, both structures were utilized by Allied authorities establishing their rule over a defeated Nazi Germany. The Olympic complex became the center for the British military occupation authority. The Victory Column, meanwhile, testified to the defeated Germans the "victorious" flags of all four Allied powers as well as of neighboring Poland, while the monument itself was at the same time spared by authorities that wished not to offend citizens of a postwar German nation (BArch-K, 2/124-1/12, DIAC/AEC/M[47]3).

These same "innocent" stones, therefore, continued to be used to political ends, albeit by new authorities with completely different ideologies. These new authorities in both Poznań and Berlin carried the flag of restoration and rebuilding, fully intending to "cut all meaningful connections to the past," exactly as Koshar suggests. Yet, ironically, here they utilized for their

own purposes three of the same prominent structures that Hitler designed to proclaim the superiority of National Socialism – precisely that past which the new authorities sought to leave behind.

Each structure continued to stand through the Cold War era, ultimately devoid of Nazi meaning. Over time they became insignificant, un-conflicted and functional rather than symbolic. This allowed for their eventual destigmatization. In these cases, society had time to first “forget” one past and was later able to “remember” another. Can the contemporary term *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* be used to describe the removal of a meaningful piece of each structure? Had the unwanted past at each site been perceived as having been “dealt with” in a certain sense, or did each object’s removal simply constitute a convenient way of ignoring the difficult past? These symbolic changes – the removal of the tower, the Olympic bell and the three friezes – were certainly satisfactory enough that there were no major conflicts regarding these sites in the decade to come.

Had any of the structures been torn down after the war, there would have been much more potential for conflict, even in the future. The Berliner Stadtschloss – which Scharoun, ironically, lobbied unsuccessfully to preserve in postwar East Berlin – provides an excellent example of this scenario. The site of the former Hohenzollern palace has divided Berliners in debate ever since it was torn down in 1950 and replaced by the Palast der Republik two decades later. The conflict particularly erupted after the city’s reunification. By contrast, our three sites were quiet after the fall of communism in Poland and East Germany and German reunification; subsequent renovations were implemented without a significant voice of opposition. Had something more dramatic been done after the war, a natural resistance to such an action might easily have grown into a reluctance to forget.

Many years, even decades after the end of the war, people would begin to ask questions about these structures' past and function during the Nazi era. Yet by then those memories had long been buried. They lay beneath the dirt with the heavy Olympic bell. They were hidden with the missing friezes in France. They had vanished along with the highest twenty-plus meters of the pointed palace tower, no longer dominating the Poznań's skyline as a reminder of German oppression. The association of these three structures with Nazi ideology disappeared along with these signature elements.

The generation that had experienced the horrors of the Second World War was more than content to ignore any reminders of it, even in the urban landscape. Few were seeking visible reminders at this time, as that generation may have been content to let any architectural reminders in its respective city fade into the background.

In both postwar states borne out of the *Land der Täter*, a generation full of collaborators, Nazi sympathizers, and those who "looked the other way" was obviously eager to forget. This "forgetting" was even encouraged by political leaders, who deflected blame across the fabricated border onto the new ideological Cold War rival.

Polish historian Andrzej Paczkowski has shown that in postwar Poland as well, memory of the war was at times suppressed, becoming a "forbidden memory" to the new regime. "Katyń," for example, was eliminated from people's vocabulary, becoming a lost memory, which "served Polish Communism well" (252). When communist leaders decided to utilize the Zamek as an attractive seat of their own municipal administration, it was no longer useful to associate the building with the National Socialist occupants, who, despite large-scale modifications to both the façade and interior that remain to this day, controlled Poznań and the

Zamek for a mere five and a half years. The building, like the city, became re-conquered territory after the war.

In the late 1960s and 1970s, by the time anyone from the postwar generation would begin to ask questions about the Nazi past, each structure had already become the backdrop, symbol or stage for numerous other political, historical and cultural events. Not only were these events extremely meaningful in their own right – they were also much fresher in citizens’ minds than the images and memories from before 1945, a period many were trying to forget. While these “new” post-1945 events could not always be planned or foreseen, they certainly were enthusiastically embraced as imparting meaning on their respective structures. Therefore, one might even say the meaning of these three urban spaces would, in fact, change by design.

In 1956, the Olympic bell was dug up in front of Olympic Stadium – where it is on display today – and in 1987, the last of the missing friezes was returned by the French to Berlin authorities in a show of friendship to honor the city’s 750th anniversary celebration. In Poznań, during two decades since the fall of communism, there has even been discussion of replacing the Zamek’s clock tower.⁵⁶ The temporary attempts at “erasing” history and “forced forgetting” that we saw at the beginning of this chapter ultimately proved futile, although they did succeed in one thing. By diverting the public’s attention away from the “stained” ideological meaning each structure bore under the Nazis, the spaces could be more easily associated with future events.

⁵⁶ Whereas there have been multiple suggestions and conceptual designs throughout the past several decades projecting a new tower, none of the plans has been approved. The tower has remained unchanged since it was lowered at the end of the war. Even when 49 million złoty (around \$16 million) in local and European Union funds were secured in 2009 by Center of Culture “Zamek,” the project called for a remodeling of the Great Hall (Sala Wielka) and other portions of the interior of the castle’s eastern wing. The clock tower is no part of this project, and another project in the foreseeable future currently seems unlikely. Director Raczak was quoted in a 2009 interview as saying that although he would like to rebuild the tower, it would depend on funding that is currently unavailable (Podolska).

Each space would eventually lose its post-war stigma and take on other meanings, as we will see in chapter 4. This “forgetting,” however, would happen unintentionally – the result of both time and circumstance.



Figure 3.8. This photograph of the Olympic complex was taken in 1947. In front of the stadium is the expansive Maifeld where the Nazis once held rallies and youth demonstrations. The Langemarckhalle is across the Maifeld from the stadium, though its damaged Glockenturm had already been torn down. To the left of the stadium in the corner of the complex is the German sports complex that was used by the British as the headquarters of their occupation's administration until 1994. Courtesy of Landesarchiv Berlin. Used by permission.

CHAPTER 4

Time Heals all Wounds? The Acquisition of Alternate Meaning

“So ist es mit Denkmälern. Einige werden zu früh errichtet und dann, sobald die Periode speziellen Heldentums vorbei ist, abgeräumt. Andere...stehen noch immer.”
- Günter Grass, *Im Krebsgang* (165)

I.

Introductory Scenes

Poznań, June 28, 1956

The new regime's decision to convert the Zamek into its own municipal administration center at the expense of the university, which we observed in the previous chapter, struck a nerve with local citizens that did not disappear in the 1950s. In fact, years after the building had been preserved amid threats of destruction, its function was a point of contention voiced by the Cegielski factory workers⁵⁷ and citizens who demonstrated on Poznań's historical day of June 28, 1956.

Ten years after the war ended, apartments as well as food were still scarce in Poznań, capital of a region that rarely in its history lacked such things. The reality of the bleak everyday economic circumstances facing workers and their families in Poznań was a stark contrast to the rosy picture painted by communist propaganda. When faced with increasing food prices and a raise in taxes despite stagnant wages, workers from the large Cegielski metal works factory sent a delegation to Warsaw to voice their concerns. When they returned only to find promised concessions were being denied them, factory workers from the plant in the southern district of

⁵⁷ The large metal works corporation was officially named “Zakłady Metalowe im. Józefa Stalina” from 1949 until several months after the 1956 demonstrations, when the company was once again named after its nineteenth-century founder, Hipolit Cegielski: “H. Cegielski Spółka Akcyjna” (Naumann 119).

Wilda began a march north to the city administration on the fateful morning of June 28. They carried a sign that read simply “Żądamy chleba” (“We demand bread”), though, as historian Andrzej Paczkowski points out, “slogans rapidly changed from economic to political” (*The Spring Will Be Ours* 273).

The workers reached the Zamek, or “Nowy Ratusz” (New Town Hall), where the demonstration eventually grew to over 100,000 citizens. Both the Zamek and the adjacent party headquarters were stormed by the crowd of demonstrators. On the outer wall of the central party headquarters, one man painted the sarcastic words “Mieszkania do wynajęcia” (“Apartments for rent”). Similar shouts addressing the same problem rang out from the crowd: “Zniszczyć ten dom – zrobimy z niego mieszkania!” (“Destroy this house – we will use it for apartments!”).⁵⁸ Municipal authorities had moved into the Zamek as well after the war, spending over 150 million złoty on modifications to accommodate their offices (APP, 1160/18, 10). The citizens’ ire was directed toward authorities representing a government that itself had voiced similar resentment of the Zamek in 1945 before adapting it to their own purposes.

As events escalated, the government deployed tanks and militia to forcefully suppress the revolt. By the end of the day some 70 citizens had been killed, several hundred more injured and about 250 arrested and detained for weeks (Paczkowski 273). As for the Zamek and its district, both would thereafter remain associated with the violence and political implications of the “Poznański Czerwiec” (“Poznań June”). The event has had an enormous bearing on the local psyche in Poznań and became, in fact, an event around which Poles from all over the country rallied in their long but ultimately successful struggle to overthrow the communist regime. In Poznań the event was embraced and its memory quite literally etched in stone, imparting at the

⁵⁸ Both quotations and the second translation are taken from the Museum Powstania Poznańskiego Czerwca 1956. The first translation is my own. Museum visit 12 May 2011.

Castle District an unmistakable meaning that has prevailed to the present day – a meaning that, for postwar generations, was more recent and has arguably become more relevant than the years when Greiser sat in command of his crumbling fascist administration in the so-called “Reichsgau Wartheland.”

Berlin, August 22, 1951

On a warm afternoon in late summer an enormous crowd had gathered at Olympiastadion for a special event organized by the Allied authorities. Such large-scale recreational events were few and far between in Berlin, and today some 60,000 people⁵⁹ filled the seats to take their minds off the difficulties of the post-war economy, the new political conflict and the literal division of a city trying to get back on its feet. Today the Harlem Globetrotters were treating the crowd to an entertaining display of basketball, a sport unfamiliar to many in the crowd of excited onlookers.⁶⁰

During halftime the loudspeaker called for the crowd’s attention, informing them that the world’s greatest runner had returned to Berlin. Jesse Owens, who had shocked the world and frustrated the “Führer” with four gold medals at the 1936 Olympic Games, had returned for a symbolic victory lap around the stadium’s red track. The crowd, many of them standing, cheered with enormous enthusiasm as the American sprinter rounded the stadium, looking ahead of

⁵⁹ The figure of 60,000 is taken from Volker Kluge, *Olympiastadion Berlin = Berlin’s Olympic Stadium* (175). Bud Greenspan, in his 1964 documentary *Jesse Owens Returns to Berlin*, cites 80,000 in attendance.

⁶⁰ Basketball had been played as an Olympic event in Berlin in 1936. The United States defeated Canada for the gold medal by a score of 19-8. The sport had been introduced in Germany before the war and both clubs and leagues existed, but still on a small scale compared to soccer, handball and other team sports. Even in the United States after the war, the National Basketball Association was only in its very first years of existence.

himself with a determined step and grateful eyes. He was dressed in a white track uniform with a diagonal stripe running down across the chest, matching the pattern of the U.S. Olympic Team uniform he donned 15 years earlier. When he concluded the lap, Owens ran over to midfield where West Berlin's mayor, Ernst Reuter, was waiting for him. By this time the entire crowd was on its feet. Reuter, in a gesture meant to make up for Hitler's refusal to shake Owens' hand after his Olympic victories, received the champion warmly with both hands. Leaning over out of his seat in the first row, Reuter shared a few seconds with Owens, as Berliners roared their approval.⁶¹

Berlin, May 1949 / October 1983

When, after nearly a year, the Soviets lifted their blockade of West Berlin on May 12, 1949, the French ultimately pulled down their flag from the Siegessäule, in symbolic silence. It was clear that they were now allied with the West Germans against the Soviets, a political stance that was no longer well served in humiliating Berliners through the display of the victorious French flag. Writes Alings: "Aus den drei westlichen Besatzungsmächten waren zwischenzeitlich Schutzmächte geworden" (*Vom Geschichtsbild* 111-112).

French leaders were, however, not as prepared to return the three bronze reliefs that were stripped from the base of the column just after the war. A 1952 request by the Berliner Senat for the friezes to be returned to the monument was rejected by the French, whose administration refused the same request again in 1964 and 1978 (Sp, 4/23 January 1978, 83). In 1964, however, the French finally admitted to having two friezes in their possession. They were being kept in Paris' Municipal Museum and Army Museum, respectively (Alings 115).

⁶¹ This scene was recorded and portrayed in Greenspan's 1964 film.

Finally, in October 1983, Jacques Chirac – at that time the mayor of Paris – announced to West Berlin’s Bürgermeister Richard von Weizsäcker that the French wished to return the relief depicting the controversial Battle of Sedan to Berlin “als Geschenk.” Weizsäcker thanked him for the “große Geste,” which proved, writes *Der Spiegel*, “daß aus deutsch-französischer Rivalität und Feindschaft eine Freundschaft geworden sei, die ‘große Bedeutung für die Zukunft Europas’ habe” (Sp, 48/28 November 1983, 107).

In February 1984, the French returned both that frieze and one other to Berlin, which left only the frieze depicting the 1864 victory over Denmark at large. Despite varying rumors placing it in Copenhagen or considering it melted down by thieves after the war, it was French president François Mitterrand who returned it to the West Germans in 1987 in honor of the city’s 750th anniversary celebration (Alings 115). During his speech Mitterrand contextualized the political gesture with a rhetorical question: “Berlin – soll diese Stadt nicht die Hauptstadt des Dialogs sein?” (Frank: Zt, 6 January 1989). The president of France used the return of the final frieze as a suggestion to initiate dialogue in Berlin, a city where for decades political communication was typified by walls, checkpoints, spies and an arms race. Despite a stubbornness that lasted several decades, therefore, the friezes finally reappeared and were returned on two occasions to Berlin, thereby redefining the Siegessäule as a symbol of French-(West) German political solidarity during the Cold War.

II.

The Construction of Memory on the *Tabula Rasa*

As chapter 3 has demonstrated, each structure beat the odds to survive both the war and the vocalized motion for removal by new authorities. Each was permitted to remain – at least for the

time being – as a fixture of its city’s urban landscape. What was more, the structures were utilized – two of them immediately – and before long, authorities poured money into preservation and renovation. The two Berlin structures were eventually placed under *Denkmalschutz*, forbidding anyone from removing them or remodeling in a way that might deemphasize their historical design – that is, the design (or redesign) implemented by the National Socialists.

The question to be answered in the current chapter is quite simple: What happened next? The fact that each structure was preserved meant that its history would continue, as new events and interpretations would continue to account for an alternate memory than that associating the spaces with the Nazi past. Until the present day, each edifice has now seen nearly seven decades since the end of the – in relative terms – short-lived reign of National Socialism. Does each attempt to define one of these three public spaces require consideration of the use, meaning and interpretation of its past? This has certainly not always been the case. It was apparent that some events made specific reference to that past, demonstrating a consciousness for what had happened there. Yet other subsequent events seemed staged despite the past, and still other events happened with such spontaneity that the site – historical or not – could in no way have been preconceived. Many of these post-1945 historical events added layers of both history and memory – providing the potential to overshadow any lingering burden from these spaces’ meanings under National Socialism.

This chapter will discuss the function, meaning and interpretation of these spaces in the decades after World War II. The chapter will pursue answers to the following questions for each of the three spaces: What else occurred here historically, and how else have these spaces been used? What are some examples of how these sites have been represented in literature, film, art,

photography, theater, the media and other public venues, and how have they been presented and interpreted there? How did this change, if at all, after the fall of communism in 1989, which saw both German reunification and Poland's long struggle for democracy finally come to fruition? After this chapter presents the historical and cultural events – i.e. the continued “story” of each structure and space, so to speak – the fifth and final chapter will then, taking all of this into consideration, assess how the meaning of each structure has changed and the potential each space still has.

III.

Zamek Cesarski

When, after World War II, it became apparent that the German castle that few in Poznań wanted was there to stay, something noteworthy happened with the surrounding space. In the subsequent decades a ring of monuments gradually formed around the castle's perimeter with a unanimous focus on Polish national memory. This began with the demonstrations of the 1956 “Poznań June” – which included storming the Zamek as the seat of city authorities – and the regime's violent suppression of the demonstrations, described in this chapter's introductory segment. Historian Piotr Grzelczak writes of Plac Adama Mickiewicza (Adam Mickiewicz Square), the open square adjacent to the Zamek: “This place became the arena where the most important events in the city's post-war history were played out” (95).⁶² In addition to historical events like Poznań June, the series of monuments around the castle also changed the impression of the building itself, specifically by steering public vision and attention to those particular events and personas formed and spelled out in gilded permanence.

⁶² Translation by the author. Orig.: “Miejsce to stało się areną, na której rozgrywały się najważniejsze wydarzenia w powojennej historii miasta.”

The Zamek itself housed the university (albeit for a brief time), the city administration and two cultural institutions – all of which continued the uninterrupted utilization of the building as a space with contemporary function. During the first postwar decades, instead of a marker outside the building informing people of when or why it was built or how it was used before 1945, the castle was gradually surrounded by monuments telling exclusively of the Polish past – only two before 1989, followed by a flurry of commemorative markers in the two decades after the fall of communism. The Zamek became a *tabula rasa* of sorts, as the building's past was largely ignored while the space became officially identified only by the current institution(s) located there and the visual cues of Polish national memory around its perimeter.

While the castle's outward form remained unchanged, the first additions to the visual space to give it a more national character happened on the large, adjacent square – originally known in 1903 as Bismarckplatz. In 1955 the Uniwersytet Poznański (Poznań University) was officially renamed “Uniwersytet im. Adama Mickiewicza” (Adam Mickiewicz University), as state officials approved the nineteenth-century national poet as patron. Less than two years later in January 1957 – and just half a year after Poznań June – the prominent square was officially named after Mickiewicz as well, following the suggestion of art history professor Zdzisław Kępiński. Since the war ended there had been no official name, though during those twelve years the square unofficially bore the name of Joseph Stalin – a name most Poznanians were reluctant to keep (Grzelczak 100).⁶³ In May 1960 a four-meter likeness of the famous poet atop a two-meter pedestal was unveiled on the square – a short distance from the place where the Bismarck

⁶³ As mentioned in the chapter's introduction, the metal works corporation in Poznań's Wilda district, whose workers marched to the Zamek on June 28, 1956, was also officially named “Zakłady Metalowe im. Józefa Stalina” from 1949 until several months after the 1956 demonstrations, when the company was once again named after its nineteenth-century founder, Hipolit Cegielski: “H. Cegielski Spółka Akcyjna” (Naumann 119).

monument stood before Poland won its independence in 1918 (Goliński 56).⁶⁴ Though this version, designed by Bazyli Wojtowicz and Czesław Woźniak, won the 1955 competition and was chosen for the square, it is perhaps noteworthy that an earlier proposal in 1948 suggested a colossal Mickiewicz out of the sandstone from the lowered Zamek tower that would stand equally as high as the tower (Grzeszczuk-Brendel, “Plac Adama Mickiewicza” 385).

When, in 1966, Poland celebrated its one-thousand-year anniversary, there were still some in the administration unhappy with the “German” tower dominating the city’s skyline. One such person was municipal architect Tadeusz Gałęcki, who describes his disappointment with his impression that though the city itself is 1000 years old, most of the central architecture bears witness to the 150 years the city spent under Prussian rule while Poland was partitioned (Gałęcki 25). When plans for construction of the commercial center ALFA, a row of five twelve-story towers just down ulica Czerwonej Armii (today’s ul. Święty Marcin)⁶⁵ from the Zamek, were underway, Gałęcki made a bold proposal to the city’s chief architect. Though the towers were planned to be 44 meters tall, Gałęcki wanted to erect a sixth tower twice as high and nearer the Zamek, so as to dwarf the latter and its clock tower, which had already been cut down to two-thirds its original height of 74 meters in 1945 (35). The chief architect’s nervous reaction to the proposal revealed to Gałęcki the irony of the situation. What Gałęcki in his haste had failed to realize is that the tower would also have dominated the adjacent communist party headquarters,

⁶⁴ The monument of Bismarck stood from 1903 to 1919 on what was then known as Bismarckplatz. In 1932 the “Pomnik Najświętszego Serca Jezusowego” (Monument to the Most Holy Heart of Jesus) – also known as the “Pomnik Dziękności” (Monument of Thanksgiving) – was unveiled. This monument featured a 5.3-meter statue of Christ and was intended as a national monument of thanksgiving for independence won by Poland in 1918-19. It was torn down in 1939 at the beginning of the Nazi occupation (Goliński 117-19).

⁶⁵ Formerly “Red Army Street,” the name of the east-west thoroughfare was changed to “St. Martin Street” after the fall of communism. For further details see Grzelczak, p. 98, as well as his footnote 14 on p. 105.

one of two other buildings between the Zamek and the planned ALFA skyscraper. The project, therefore, never came to fruition (26).

In 1962 the city administration moved to the former Jesuit College at Plac Kolegiacki (Collegiate Square), where it remains to this day, and the Zamek became home to the multi-faceted cultural center Pałac Kultury (Pałat and Pazder 28). “Seitdem,” writes Schwendemann, “entwickelte sich das Schloß zum kulturellen Mittelpunkt der Stadt, der es bis heute blieb” (173). Adam Mickiewicz Square, meanwhile, was used as the site of both state-sponsored and spontaneous political gatherings. In 1966 state officials used the space for the official millennium celebration of the Polish nation, while the Catholic church held a simultaneous millennium celebration of Poland’s Christianization, called “Milenium Chrztu Polski” (Millennium of the Baptism of Poland), at the cathedral on the other side of the city (Grzelczak 101). In 1968, writes Grzelczak, students chose the square and monument as a natural place (because of Mickiewicz’s name and likeness) to join fellow students in Warsaw and other cities in protesting the state’s decision to outlaw the showing of Mickiewicz’s drama *Dziady*⁶⁶ at Warsaw’s National Theater (102). Students had also gathered in the same place in 1946 to protest against the regime’s arrest of students in Kraków (Pałat and Pazder 93).

The space around the Zamek is simultaneously *lieu de l’histoire* and *lieu de mémoire*, as it not only was the site of important events such as the Poznań June uprising in 1956 – it also became the site of the monument to the same. Like the historical event, the erection of the monument in 1981 was a significant event in itself, as were subsequent gatherings and demonstrations at the site. History became memory and memory history.

⁶⁶ The Romantic drama *Dziady*, one of Mickiewicz’s most important works, was banned by communist officials in Warsaw in 1968 because of its themes of Polish freedom and strong anti-Russian undertones.

For years before the monument was erected the topic of the Poznań uprising was avoided. Agnieszka Łuczak and Janusz Nowacki, authors of a 2011 exhibition behind the Zamek commemorating 55 years since Poznań June, tell us that “Poznanians were afraid to address it” and communist propaganda referred to it for years as the “Poznań accidents” or the “Poznań events.” Despite its forbidden memory, the space maintained its meaning, which grew in the face of government opposition. The authors explain: “The monument became a place of remembrance and resistance, where Poles would voice their protest through shouting ‘antisocial[ist]’ slogans, singing patriotic songs and laying flowers” (“W obronie pamięci”).

Grzelczak explains the significance of the space to Poznanians today because of the 1956 uprising, the memory of its victims and the long struggle for democracy against the communist regime:

The year 1989 ends that history. After Solidarity’s victorious parliamentary elections, which signaled the fall of communism in Poland, the first legal commemoration of the anniversary of the Poznań June 1956 event since 1981 took place on Adam Mickiewicz Square. In winning the election, the democratic opposition also prevailed in its struggle for the memory of that place, for the monument of Poznań June 1956 and finally for the square itself. At the same time the events established a clear break that closed an important period in the postwar history of the square. (105)⁶⁷

On account of the events of June 1956 described by Grzelczak, as well as the importance of the Cold War period and the difficulty of struggle for memory, the space became politically charged for decades after the liberation of the city from the Nazis. Write Łuczak and Nowacki: “The erection of the Poznań June 1956 monument was a part of the public struggle for collective

⁶⁷ Translation by the author. Orig.: “Rok 1989 kończy tę historię. Po zwycięskich dla Solidarności wyborach parlamentarnych, po których upadł w Polsce komunizm, odbyły się na pl. Adama Mickiewicza pierwsze od 1981 r. legalne obchody rocznicy Poznańskiego Czerwca 1956. Wygrywając wybory, demokratyczna opozycja zwyciężyła też w zmaganiach o pamięć tego miejsca, o pomnik Poznańskiego Czerwca 1956, wreszcie o sam plac. Wydarzenia te stanowią zarazem wyraźną cezurę zamykającą ważny okres w jego powojennych dziejach.”

memory, for making it different from what was imposed by the authorities” (“W obronie pamięci”).

That political struggle was of an entirely different nature, however, and had a different opponent than the longtime Prussian or tyrannical Nazi occupiers. The 2009 book *Cities after the Fall of Communism: Reshaping Cultural Landscapes and European Identity*, edited by urban scholars John Czaplicka, Nida Gelazis and Blair Ruble, explores recent trends of architectural self-interpretation in a range of post-communist cities, from Odessa and Sevastopol to Vilnius and Tallinn, as well as changing Polish cities Wrocław, Łódź and Szczecin. These cities have all witnessed clashes between conflicting historical narratives, influenced by national memory tropes, nostalgia, the emergence of capitalist economies, and European and global influence on local and national identities (1-13). Though it is not among the eleven cities examined in the volume, Poznań certainly could have been included, in large part for the complex and dynamic memory history of the Castle District.

Sociologist Krzysztof Podemski argues that the Castle District lost both its original political meaning from the German Kaiserreich as well as its subsequent Cold War political character: “After 1989 the district lost its political character entirely, becoming an important public sphere, a place of symbolic memory of the past, a space of official celebrations and public protests” (118).⁶⁸ To a certain extent, however, the space has still retained its political character. The memory that has been reinforced is now that of the Polish struggle for freedom – from longtime German and Russian occupation (embodied in the Mickiewicz statue) and from Soviet communism (embodied in the Poznań June monument).

⁶⁸ Translation by the author. Orig.: “Po 1989 r. dzielnica utraciła całkowicie charakter polityczny, stając się ważną sferą publiczną, miejscem symbolicznego upamiętniania przeszłości, przestrzenią oficjalnych obchodów i społecznych protestów.”

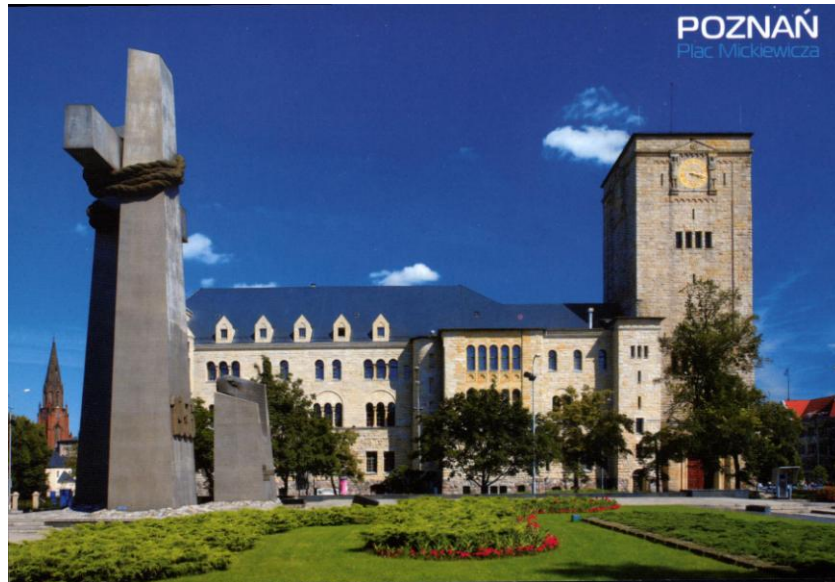


Figure 4.1. Since 1981 the Zamek stands adjacent to the monument to Poznań June 1956 on Mickiewicz Square (Plac Mickiewicza). This postcard by DDK Edition (Poznań) was produced in 2011. Photograph by Dariusz Krakowiak. Used by permission.

According to urban scholar Hanna Grzeszczuk-Brendel, however, the contemporary function of Adam Mickiewicz Square, as the scene of important events in both the public and private spheres, has fulfilled precisely one of the goals that renowned German city planner Josef Stübgen had in mind when he developed the space at the turn of the twentieth century (“Plac Adama Mickiewicza” 388). In addition to creating a multi-purpose cultural center for the city, Stübgen also planned to use the new *Schlossviertel* to display the superiority of German culture as part of Wilhelm II’s *Hebungspolitik*, which is discussed in chapter 2. In the post-communist era the district has continued to attract people for political, public and cultural events, and citizens have spent private time in the square and adjacent courtyards of the Zamek. Grzeszczuk-Brendel further argues in another article that the “university life and cultural events” continue to draw people to that part of the city’s center and provide the Castle District with its “meaning and

significance” (“Historia i przekształcenia” 16).⁶⁹ This is consistent with the key characteristic of the district under the Second Polish Republic during the interwar period, as legal historical scholar Andrzej Gulczyński points out: namely, that despite the Zamek’s continued political and administrative use during that time, the district’s most important role was as university center (73-74). This role as university center was absent, however, during the reigns of both Wilhelm II, who founded a royal academy (not yet a university) exclusively for German citizens, and the Nazi regime, whose “erste wirkliche nationalsozialistische Reichsuniversität” in Posen was severely manipulated politically (Schwendemann 103).⁷⁰ During both German reigns the district functioned first and foremost as administrative center and symbol of authority.

In a flurry of memorializing that began in 1999, several monuments were unveiled that literally encircled the Zamek. Though clearly representative of Polish national memory, I argue that each of the monuments also promotes Poznań’s local memory, at least insofar as it pertains to the national narrative. The 1981 monument to Poznań June provides the clearest example, though others followed. In 1999, on the 80th anniversary of the Greater Poland Uprising,⁷¹ a bronze plaque to Józef Piłsudski was placed on the southern wall of the Zamek’s clock tower, directly beneath the so-called “Führerbalkon” (Wojtkowiak 60). The plaque honored Piłsudski’s

⁶⁹ Translation by the author. Orig.: “Znakomitą oprawą dla ich codziennej aktywności może być również dawna Dzielnica Zamkowa, o której znaczeniu i wadze decyduje teraz życie uniwersyteckie i wydarzenia kulturalne.”

⁷⁰ Schwendemann adds that the Posener Reichsuniversität was one of three “Grenzlanduniversitäten” founded by the Nazis, along with those in Straßburg and Prag.

⁷¹ The uprising against the Germans began several weeks after Kaiser Wilhelm II’s abdication on November 9, 1918, following a speech in Poznań by the composer and patriot Ignacy Paderewski on December 27. The successful uprising assured Poles in the Greater Poland province (*Wielkopolska*, of which Poznań is the largest city and political center) of inclusion in the new Polish state that was established after World War I.

“defense of the Fatherland and Europe”⁷² from communism and is presented on behalf of “Wielkopolskie” or citizens of Greater Poland. Earlier that same year, on September 17, 1999, the Monument to the Victims of Katyń and Siberia (Pomnik Ofiar Katynia i Sybiru) was introduced in the garden behind the Zamek on the 60th anniversary of the Soviet invasion of Poland during World War II (Figura-Czech 232).

The year 2007 saw two new additions in front of the main south façade of the Zamek. In October the Museum of Poznań June 1956 (Muzeum Poznańskiego Czerwcu 1956) was opened inside the Zamek on the basement level with an entrance along the main thoroughfare, ulica Święty Marcin. Large metal numerals, nearly two meters in height and spelling out “1956,” were placed outside the museum’s entrance; the numerals illuminate in red at night. Just a few steps to the east, in front of the steps leading to the building’s main entrance, a monument was erected in November in honor of the three Poznań cryptologists who deciphered the code of the complex German Enigma machine during the 1930s. The students studied mathematics at the time at Poznań University inside the castle, and their work proved invaluable to Polish and Allied efforts during World War II and not least to future Allied cryptologists. The monument is a three-sided bronze obelisk covered in numbers, with the name of one of the three mathematicians – Marian Rejewski, Jerzy Różycki and Henryk Zygalski – on each side (see Figure 4.2). These two monuments stressed important local contributions to national memory, specifically in support of the Polish struggle against Nazism and communism. Even the Katyń memorial – a national memorial with no direct connection to the Castle District, since it commemorates victims of Soviet crimes – was recently incorporated into local identity: in the summer of 2010 a temporary exhibition was set up along the sidewalk encircling the monument. The exhibition consisted of a

⁷² Translation by the author. Orig.: “Obrońcy Ojczyzny i Europy przed nawałą komunistyczną.”

series of posters featuring historical visuals and texts dedicated to the Katyń victims from Greater Poland, thereby repositioning the national tragedy within a local context.

Marek Raczak, who recently retired after serving for 13 years as director of Centrum Kultury “Zamek,” was in large part responsible for changing the image of the Zamek. Shortly after become director in 1998, Raczak commenced with plans to systematically clean the building’s outer sandstone façades. Its black appearance solidified public sentiments of the building as heavy and ugly. Raczak explains in an interview in 2011: “It turns out that people, despite having this building in the center of their city, were not familiar with it. It used to be such a repugnant building, as if too dark, black and repugnant even to enter” (Personal interview).⁷³

Two descriptions of the Zamek in popular Poznań fictional works illustrate the difference in the building’s perception before and after the façades were cleaned. In *Pulpecja*, a novel published in 1993 as part of local author Małgorzata Musierowicz’s beloved series of youth fiction centering on a Poznań family over the span of several decades, teenagers Patrycja and Marcelek meet to go to the cinema located inside the Zamek. Musierowicz describes the building as seen from the bustling avenue in front: “Zamek – also called Pałac Kultury – seems to endure with an independence from [the waves of traffic on the busy street], closed into itself and full of a haughty detachment” (88).⁷⁴ The black façade and imposing architecture reflect the general attitude toward the building in the 1990s.

⁷³ Translation by the author. Original citation from personal interview: “Okazało się, że ludzie mający taki budynek w centrum swojego miasta nie znali go. On był kiedyś takim odpychającym, jakby taki ciemny, czarny, to wręcz jakby odpychający, żeby do niego wchodzić.”

⁷⁴ Translation by the author. Orig.: “Zamek – zwany też Pałacem Kultury – zdaje się trwać niezależnie od tego, zamknięty w sobie i pełen wyniosłego dystansu.”



Figure 4.2. This three-sided monument, unveiled in 2007, honors the three Poznań mathematicians who deciphered the code of the German Enigma machine in the 1930s. They were students at the Poznań University, then housed inside the Zamek. Photograph by the author.

The light gray Silesian sandstone revealed after its cleaning, however, merits a mention as “lively” even on the pages of a noir crime novel. Edward Pasewicz’s 2007 detective story *Śmierć w darkroomie*⁷⁵ demonstrates the stark change in perception of the castle since the cleaning, which – but for the final stages on the western façade – had been completed the year the book was published. The protagonist Zielony, upon returning to his native Poznań to investigate his younger brother’s murder, notices the Zamek in a different light: “When he

⁷⁵ The title translates to “Death in the Darkroom.”

reached the crosswalk, he glanced at the polished Zamek Cesarski. When he was young, it had been a gloomy, dirty building. Now it somehow looked more alive” (25).⁷⁶

The cleaning of the walls has had a major impact on the overall impression as well as the growing interest in the building among today’s Poznanians. In a 2011 book comparing scenes from Poznań’s current urban landscape with the same sites in the past, Krzysztof Smura writes of the Zamek: “It’s good that the façade has been renovated – not so long ago it was all black from soot and dust” (31). Describing a growing interest in the building itself after the façade was cleaned, Raczak explains: “We began offering guided tours of the Zamek on a larger scale. And it turns out that it really caught on. With great enthusiasm Poznanians began coming here for sight-seeing visits” (Personal interview).⁷⁷ In 2010 and 2011, guided tours of the building that were offered once a week in the summer and once a month in the offseason regularly attracted between 100 and 200 visitors per tour.

Podemski documents the significant change in perception of the Zamek and its surrounding district, particularly in the past 20 years. His 2004 study for the city’s development department assessed Poznań’s sites most visited by domestic and international visitors. After Stary Rynek (Old Town Square) the Zamek was the second-most visited place by international visitors, with 36% of them coming to see the Zamek; only 15% of domestic visitors visited the building, however, making it the sixth-most visited site (116).

⁷⁶ Translation by the author. Orig.: “Kiedy dotarł do przejścia dla pieszych, spojrzał na wypucowany Zamek Cesarski. Kiedy był młody, był to ponury, brudny gmach. Teraz wyglądał jakoś żywiej.”

⁷⁷ Translation by the author. Original quotation from personal interview: “Na większą skalę zaczęliśmy robić z przewodnikiem zwiedzanie Zamku. I się okazało, że to bardzo chwyciło. Poznaniacy bardzo chętnie zaczęli tu przychodzić, żeby zwiedzać.”

A recent media event reinforces the building's popularity also among Poles. During 2011, the monthly magazine *National Geographic Traveler* conducted a widely-publicized online survey in Poland in search of the "Seven New Wonders of Poland." Chief editor Martyna Wojciechowska describes the motivation behind the project's concept: "In recent years we have been rediscovering forgotten structures, renovating them and turning them into true touristic pearls" ("Plebiscyt"). Zamek cesarski ranked among the leading sites for several months and eventually finished eleventh out of 35 total sites throughout Poland with 3.10% of all votes. Though narrowly missing a top-seven finish (the seventh-place finisher had 5.43% of all votes), Zamek was far ahead of such sites as the Museum of the Polish Air Force (32nd place, 0.26%) and Chopin Museum (34th place, 0.18%), both of which are much more representative of the national Polish narrative (Wojciechowska). This favorable attitude toward the building is representative of the current generation, for whom the Zamek is the anchor of the university district and a place where people gather for cultural events.

IV.

Olympiastadion

From nearly the very beginning of the postwar "Stunde Null," the stadium was used for sporting events, particularly track and field and football. On September 23, 1945, the British had already used the stadium to host a track and field competition for the Allied Powers, dubbed the "Little Olympics" (Kluge, *Olympiastadion Berlin* 121). According to *Welt in Film*, a regular documentary news program produced by the occupying Americans for a German audience, the first sporting event open to the German public was an exhibition football match in 1946 between the British occupying troops and Sheffield Wednesday, won by the former by a 5:1 count

(BArch-FA, WiF 53/1946). Perhaps most telling about the *Welt in Film* newscast is the contrast between the report of the match and a previous report of the South African president visiting the ruins of Hitler's Reichskanzlei and bunker. For the latter, there was a dark, heavy orchestral score, which, together with the presence of an international leader, cast clear judgment on the Nazi regime and on Hitler in particular. The football match, however, featured an upbeat, cheery musical score with fans – both soldiers and local Berliners – laughing and enjoying the event – regardless of the location. Military leaders were shown in Hitler's private box and announced as the "Ehrengäste" (WiF 53/1946).

A few weeks later there was another track and field event for all occupying powers, including nations such as Denmark and Belgium. An American general opened the games as the *Welt in Film* report announced: "Acht Nationen kämpften um den Sieg. Zum ersten Mal seit 1936 wurde das olympische Feuer wieder entzündet." The crowd was largely German, according to the report: "80.000 Zuschauer, darunter 70.000 Deutsche, sahen, besonders bei den Läufen, spannende Kämpfe" (BArch-FA, WiF 69/1946). *Der Augenzeuge*, a news documentary produced by the Deutsche Film Aktiengesellschaft (DEFA) in the Soviet Zone, reported on the same event, depicting the lighting of the torch and introducing footage of competition with the following words: "Und noch einmal zu Gast bei einem friedlichen Wettkampf. Das Berliner Olympiastadion ist erhalten geblieben und bietet im glanzvollen Rahmen für ein großes sportliches Treffen interallierter Soldaten" (BArch-FA, AZ 20/1946). The former Nazi stadium as historical *topos* has clearly been pardoned here of any lingering association with the fallen regime – and this from both the Western and Eastern postwar perspectives and their competing worldviews.

Another example of the clean slate the stadium was given after the war is illustrated by a 1950 Deutsches Reisebüro commercial promoting the city of Berlin.⁷⁸ The one-minute advertisement, entitled “Berlin ist eine Reise wert,” also shows the importance of the space for local identity in Berlin as opposed to the national German identity, which was at an absolute low in 1950 because of the shame of the war and the fast-emerging political crisis that had divided the country in two. The clip shows West Berlin sites such as Kurfürstendamm, Wannsee and the Berliner Funkturm, while lauding the city’s shopping, “Lebendigkeit” and the many hotels and accommodations that “stehen den Riesenden wieder zu Verfügung.” The adverb “wieder” demonstrates a willingness to return to the city’s pre-destruction days – a touristic foresight that has drawn much criticism in contemporary Germany for ignoring the Nazi past. Near the end the commercial praises Berlin’s green areas and recreational offerings, showing fans at what was presumably a sporting event at Olympiastadion. The stadium’s first shot is shown in sync with the narrator’s words “Weltstadt im Grünen,” which associates the stadium with recreation and not with history (BArch-FA, K 39983).

Volker Kluge writes that the stadium became “[e]in Symbol des Kalten Krieges” after the war (120). Whitewashing the stadium’s recent Nazi political past by connecting the space instead to current Cold War politics was being practiced well before Greenspan’s retelling of Jesse Owens’ Berlin story. There is a clear illustration provided already in a 1946 report from *Der Augenzeuge* (BArch-FA, AZ 27/46). The DEFA news program reported on an American football game in Olympiastadion, colored with the same political jargon that typified the East-West world-view conflict for decades thereafter. The sport is depicted as violent, senseless and foreign to the German public. The narrator uses an ironic tone when introducing the scene: “American

⁷⁸ The advertisement was produced by Kontakt Film GmbH.

football. Zwei Mannschaften aus Amerika im Lande der höchst-entwickelten Zivilisation zeigten dem Berliner Sportpublikum wie bei ihnen zu Hause gespielt wird.” First an equipment manager is shown lining up helmets on the grass in preparation for the violence of the event. In the background fast-paced jazz music played by a marching band sets a chaotic tone for the piece. The first play is not a highlight, but a simple off-tackle dive for a short loss, where the ball-carrier is mauled by several defensive players. The empty stands – except for members of the American military – add to the irony of the newscast, since the “Berliner Sportpublikum” is completely absent. Soldiers, meanwhile, are shown looking on and yelling with aggression. The closing scene presents an injured player being helped off the field by two trainers, followed by a close-up of a concerned woman biting her fingers while looking on in horror. The commentator, his voice marked by a highly sarcastic, admonishing tone, closes his message with the words: “Fürwahr ein friedliches Spiel” (BArch-FA, AZ 27/46).

Several weeks earlier, however, in contrast, *Der Augenzeuge* showed a clip of young Berliners enjoying a summer day by diving at the Olympic Schwimmstadion located in Olympiastadion’s shadow on the north side (BArch-FA, AZ 14/46, 2). After the pool was reopened for Berlin’s visitors in 1950, there were 83,000 swimmers and divers who visited that summer alone (Kluge 125). This particular clip refers to the divers as “Künstler” and shows them with smiles on their faces as they dive into the pool used in 1936 for Olympic competition. The upbeat orchestral music combined with the enjoyment of the participants creates a mood in contrast with the heavy architecture of the Schwimmstadion and the Olympiastadion, the façade of which hovers over the scene in the background. Compared to the football scene, which associates the American military with violence and aggression, this scene depicts peaceful, carefree Germans enjoying a more innocent and artistic sport. Despite the fact that both events

were held at the same former-Nazi site, this did not ensure a consistency in how the events were presented. In fact, the place played no role at all in the presentation of the event; rather the American occupying power and carefree German citizens were shown in contrast to each other based on the quickly developing Cold War politics in the divided former German capital. That same year more obvious measures were made to distance the stadium from its past, when West Berlin's Magistrat changed the building's name from "Reichssportfeld" to "Olympiastadion" (126).

* * *

The chapter's introduction describes Jesse Owens' return to Olympiastadion 15 years after his four-gold-medal performance to run a commemorative victory lap before a huge crowd in the same stadium, culminating in a warm congratulatory embrace by West Berlin's mayor Ernst Reuter. This 1951 scene along with Owens' reflections of his experiences at the 1936 Games was also the subject of Bud Greenspan's 1964 documentary film *Jesse Owens Returns to Berlin*. Both Owens' return in 1951 and Greenspan's film 13 years later effectively depoliticize Berlin's Olympiastadion, repositioning the erstwhile tainted *topos* as one of Owens' sporting triumph rather than one of Hitler's political aspirations.

Greenspan begins by positioning the stadium in the current political landscape of 1964 – a time of extremely high tension during the height of the Cold War, just three years after the Berlin Wall was built and two years after the Cuban Missile Crisis. Greenspan's documentary begins with Owens narrating, apparently from a helicopter "flying over the western zone of the city of Berlin." The very first image is one of the Siegessäule, demonstrating its worth as an important image of the city of Berlin. The camera follows the helicopter's flight from the Tiergarten westward, past Schloss Charlottenburg to Olympiastadion. Owens describes in a

voiceover Berlin's contemporary political situation, where the stadium now "stands in a divided city, in a divided country, in a divided world," and where Berlin is "cut off from the rest of the country by walls, gates, barbed wire and guns" (*Jesse Owens Returns to Berlin*).

Just as the French removed their flag from the Siegessäule in 1949 and returned the friezes in the 1980s as gestures of political solidarity with West Germany, the British flag was officially lowered on June 12, 1949, when British Commandant Geoffrey Bourne presented the stadium to West Berlin's mayor, Ernst Reuter. In the film's introduction, Greenspan and Owens clearly reaffirm West Berlin's position on the side of the Allies and the West, deemphasizing the Nazi past at the Olympic Games by contextualizing Owens' return within the Cold War landscape. Greenspan thereby "moves" the stadium from Nazi Berlin, where it was a tool of the dictatorship, to divided Berlin, where it was void of meaning. This mirrors the common trope on both sides of divided Germany of ignoring the Nazi past in the face of a more imminent political threat.

Leaving the center of the city and current conflict behind, however, Greenspan and Owens arrive at "the magnificent Olympic Stadium," where the latter performed in 1936. Owens' narration clearly contrasts the historical sports venue with contemporary politics: "But here in the stadium all is peaceful" (*Jesse Owens Returns to Berlin*). Owens then recounts his participation in the opening ceremony, the competition, receiving each of his four gold medals and his friendship with German long jumper Luz Long, who offered Owens strategic advice to prevent him from disqualifying. During the closing ceremony, when the evening sun descended directly behind the Olympic flame, Owens recollects:

We wept without shame, for I think all of us felt as brothers. The Olympic flame was dying in front of us. The Olympic flag was slowly being lowered from its heights, and at this moment there were no nationalities, or different colors of skin

or different religious beliefs, but rather a natural aristocracy of man, the qualifications of which are talent and virtue. (*Jesse Owens Returns to Berlin*)

Here, it is the Olympic spirit of sportsmanship and competition thought to transcend politics upon which Greenspan rests his historical views. Owens continues:

And now it was time to go home. We all of us knew that perhaps we were seeing our newfound friends for the last time, for the war was but three years away, and the spirit and comradeship that we loved so much in the Olympic Village would make unnatural enemies of many young people who had laughed, cried and broke bread together. (*Jesse Owens Returns to Berlin*)

Belittling the fact that sports are often themselves used to political ends, Greenspan focuses on the grandeur and camaraderie of Olympic competition in the 1936 Games, while pushing to the margins the Nazis' use of the Games to win the good faith of the international community while distracting them from newly-implemented racist policies. Greenspan's reading is perhaps somewhat predictable, coming from a respected sports journalist and filmmaker who spent his entire career romanticizing memorable Olympic moments on screen. In the process, the stadium as a space is rechristened as the site of Owens' heroics, in which even the athletes representing Nazi Germany were all gracious, depoliticized competitors like Luz Long.

Owens' 1936 performance was permanently etched into the space's memory after the athlete's death in 1980, when four years later a street running along the southern edge of the stadium grounds was renamed Jesse-Owens-Allee in his honor. His wife, Ruth, was on hand in Berlin in 1984 for the special ceremony.

Two recent films depicting Olympiastadion provide alternative interpretations to that of Greenspan. The first tells another story from the 1936 Olympics and centers on the Nazis' inability to separate politics from sport, thereby demonstrating a contrast to Greenspan's documentary story set in the same stadium. Released in 2009, Kaspar Heidelberg's *Berlin 36: Die wahre Geschichte einer Siegerin*, is a historical drama based on the story of Jewish high

jumper Gretel Bergmann. Bergmann, who had been expelled from her sports club in Ulm on the basis of racist policy and emigrated to the United Kingdom where she became a national champion, was invited to return to Germany and train for the Nazi team leading up to the 1936 Olympics. The invitation was simply a political ploy to prevent an American boycott from the Games; the day after the American team set sail, Bergmann received word that she was being excluded from competition (Weigelt). In contrast to Greenspan, Heidelberg's film is more representative of the acutely sensitive and, at times, hypercritical view of the German past held by the post-reunification generation responsible for the influx of monuments throughout the country, and particularly in the German capital.

The second film, Thomas Schadt's *Berlin: Sinfonie einer Großstadt*, is a montage of hundreds of scenes from all over Berlin shot in 2002.⁷⁹ The scenes are arranged to portray the city of Berlin on one typical day. One two-minute sequence pauses, as if for reflection, at Olympiastadion. Whereas many scenes depict movement and pace of the living and working city, this particular one is noticeably calm and still. Schadt uses a constant high-pitch of a single violin note to invoke a slight uneasiness, as the camera aimed at the shadows inside the concourse pans downward to show the numbers 36 and 37 marked on the walls of the section entrances. Given that this is the first shot of the two-minute sequence, the viewer can read the "36" as a reference to the 1936 Olympics. The number and the music combined with the site itself all signify the heaviness of the surroundings, confronting the viewer with the city's National Socialist past.

Schadt identifies the stadium without naming it, points out Germanist Evelyn Preuss, showing distinct features but leaving it "up to the viewer to recognize the site, to uncover its

⁷⁹ Schadt's film was made in honor of Walter Ruttmann's 1927 classic, *Berlin: Die Sinfonie der Großstadt*, presenting a modern interpretation 75 years after the original.

references to the past, its history, and to place it in the contemporary debates surrounding Berlin's topography" (127). The sequence includes images of the stadium corridors, seating, the Olympic rings, the track, and several original sculptures in the Nazi aesthetic, such as Joseph Wackerle's *Rosseführer* at the entrance to the Maifeld. For those viewers still unfamiliar with the visual clues, before the scenes return to the urban center and the music speeds up again, Schadt provides one last queue at the end of the sequence: a sign missing only its first few letters. For Preuss, the image is "as paradoxical as it is revealing: while refusing to place his images into temporal and spatial coordinates, Schadt renders one line in the sign marking the site fully legible: 'iastadion – Eine Investition in die Zukunft'" (128). Before leaving the stadium site, the film shows two construction workers emerging from their booth located just outside the Marathon-Tor, as a low but menacing piano rhythm emerges. As alluded to by the sign in the previous image, which also contained the years "2000-2004," the "investment in the future" is the remodeling of the stadium by the Hamburg firm Gerkan, Marg und Partner (gmp) in preparation for the 2006 World Cup.

In the postwar decades Olympiastadion also became an important site for football, regaining its significance on both local and national levels. The West Berlin club Hertha BSC Berlin qualified to begin playing in the top flight of the newly-founded Bundesliga in 1963, playing its home games at Olympiastadion. A bid to host the 1966 European Cup final was denied because of the lack of lights for a match at night; they were installed in November that year (Kluge 135). In 1966 West Germany was also appointed host nation for the 1974 World Cup. Berlin was included as a host city and the stadium was renovated and received partial roofing over the center sections of the main tribunes. Since 1966, the stadium's form has been

officially preserved, as it was added to the list of historical German buildings, monuments and architectural works protected by the national Denkmalschutz initiative (Trimborn 143).

In the 1974 World Cup, both the West German and East German sides played first round matches with Chile in Olympiastadion. More than 83,000 watched the West Germans' 1:0 victory, while just less than 30,000 were on hand for the East Germans' 1:1 draw with the Chileans.⁸⁰ Even during the World Cup, the British reminded the public of their occupying authority by holding a parade on the Maifeld in honor of Queen Elizabeth II's birthday. Though the queen's birthday was celebrated each year with a parade – she had already even made a state visit at this site – this year the queen's visit was scheduled for June 15, the day after West Germany's match with Chile (Kluge 178).

Since 1985 the stadium has served as host venue – and Berlin as host city – for the final of both the women's⁸¹ and the men's Deutscher Fußball-Bund Pokal (German Football Association Cup or, as hereafter, DFB-Pokal). The stadium had hosted the men's DFB-Pokal several times between 1936 and 1943, when it was known as the Tschammer-Pokal after Hitler's Reichssportführer, Hans von Tschammer und Osten. Six times between 1950 and the founding of the Bundesliga in 1963 the stadium also hosted the men's German championship (Kluge, *Steine beginnen zu reden* 154). Since 1985 the event has once again been bringing fans of four German

⁸⁰ While West Germany and East Germany did meet that year, resulting in a historical 1:0 East German victory over the eventual World Cup champions on Jürgen Sparwasser's memorable goal, the match was played in Hamburg – and not Berlin.

⁸¹ The women's final has traditionally been held the day before the men's final. It was played in Berlin's Olympiastadion until 2010.

clubs (two women's and two men's) to Berlin each year in late spring, providing a significant annual boost to local tourism.⁸²

I would argue that at events like these, the stadium has primarily represented the city of Berlin, while representing Germany only secondarily. This is evidenced by the local tourism shown in the one-hour documentary film *Hinein – Ein Film um die deutsche Fußballmeisterschaft 1950*, which centers on the two teams who traveled to Berlin for the 1950 German Football Championship: VfB Stuttgart and Offenbacher Kickers (BArch-FA, K 308503). After an introduction showing both teams winning their respective semifinal matches and stadium renovations in Berlin, the players are shown visiting various attractions in Berlin. In addition to the bustling commercial areas around Kurfürstendamm, the Rundfunkturm, and the Soviet Monument in the Tiergarten, the film shows a café's advertisement of the local beer, Berliner Kindl. One woman is shown window-shopping, as the narrator qualifies: "Auch die schönen Frauen sind Berlin treu geblieben" (K 308503). Here the comment implies that some have abandoned the former capital and encourages them to return. The Siegessäule is also mentioned, though it is established not as a discredited or conflicted national monument, but as a local tourist destination introduced by the narrator's words: "Ein Wahrzeichen steht noch – die Siegessäule" (K 308503).

The stadium is shown "mit den Augen der Stuttgarter Mannschaft gesehen, die im Anflug auf Berlin ist" (K 308503). Stuttgart's 2:1 victory is shown in front of nearly 100,000 fans.⁸³

The opening and closing images of the film are the same sketch of an outline of Olympiastadion.

⁸² Starting in 2010, the women's final has been held in Cologne, in an attempt by organizers to separate the event from the men's final.

⁸³ Kluge lists the paid attendance for the match at 95,051, making it officially the largest crowd since the 1937 final between FC Schalke 04 and 1. FC Nürnberg, when 101,000 fans were on hand (*Steine beginnen zu reden* 154).

The film employs the stadium as a clear symbol of football, fairness and “Kampf,” while there is no mention of the building’s history in the entire film.

The stadium’s most recent history can be characterized by bids to host two of the world’s largest sporting events: the Summer Olympics in 2000 and the World Cup in 2006. The Olympic bid was met with a fair amount of opposition among certain groups of Berliners, and eventually fell short as the Games went to Sydney. Germany won the 2006 World Cup bid, however, and Berlin was given six matches, including the final. The stadium’s reconstruction “wird...zur nationalen Aufgabe,” writes art historian and biographer Jürgen Trimborn, as Bundeskanzler Gerhard Schröder approved the large-scale renovation and construction of a full roof (143). The mesh of the stadium’s heavy historical presence and its new state-of-the-art design impressed critics and visitors alike. Lest we become too comfortable, however, with commodifying history – bottling and selling it as local identity, attracting tourists to a given city – Andrew Webber cautions against forgetting the other meaning of a place like Berlin’s (in)famous stadium: “Perhaps we should think of the Berlin Olympiastadion, elegantly refurbished for the World Cup, but with a historically laden substructure that speaks of other kinds of dreams of world championship” (42).

A renewed skepticism before the renovation project began in 2001, as illustrated by the scene from Schadt’s film described above, subsided after the project was completed. On July 31, 2004, more than 53,000 fans were on hand to celebrate the grand opening of the stadium – dubbed “Die Show” – with fireworks and special guests, including Jesse Owens’ granddaughter, who joined Luz Long’s granddaughter in lighting the Olympic flame (Trimborn 144-45; Kluge, *Olympiastadion Berlin* 157). After the remodeling and dedication, however, the use of the stadium in spite of its Nazi origins received surprisingly little criticism, given the strong public

opposition to the recent Olympic bid. The design of Volkwin Marg, the project's lead architect with gmp, was internationally lauded as a great success, and the stadium was honored with the prestigious five-star ranking by the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA).⁸⁴



Figure 4.3. These two reliefs sculpted into the limestone are part of the network of National Socialist art from 1936 that is preserved at the Olympic complex. These reliefs are located west of the Langemarckhalle at the entrance to the Waldbühne, which is today used as an outdoor concert venue. Two historical markers to the left, only recently erected, explain the friezes and the Waldbühne. Photograph by the author.

One of the reasons for the success of Marg's project is the attention he gave to the preservation of the historical form of Werner March's original structure, an aspect that will be discussed in further detail in chapter 5. Besides the stadium's form itself, the statues in the Nazi aesthetic have also been purposefully preserved on the Olympic grounds and a series of historical markers have been added (see Figure 4.3). The series of statues in particular have, in their

⁸⁴ The designation for UEFA's highest-ranking stadia is now referred to as "Category 4."

positioning and function, a striking similarity to those in Budapest's renowned Szobor Park (Statue Park), mentioned in chapter 1 (see p. 21). Szobor Park is a collection of several dozen of the city's monuments from the communist era, which were put on display in 1993 in a rural space several miles outside of Budapest.

Olympiastadion's statues are similarly isolated, located around the stadium in the quiet environs of the green landscape on Berlin's western edge. With the exception of the occasional sporting event or concert – they are seen only by those willing to travel outside of the center to see them. Even when there is a concert or sporting event, the statues are greatly deemphasized. They do not adorn the stadium façade itself, nor are they found anywhere inside where they would be seen by those entering and exiting. Instead, they lie around the periphery of the grounds outside the stadium, unlit and some of them in ruin. Only those visiting the stadium as a memorial site see them on a guided or self-guided tour. These visitors visit during the day, since the grounds are only open until 6:00 p.m. On days when there are large events, tours are not typically held for visitors. In this way, much of the Nazi art that is an important part of the stadium complex is not presented to those utilizing the stadium in its modern function. Rather, visitors traveling outside the city to see the stadium and Olympic grounds – like visitors to Szobor Park – are those who can consider these elements in quiet reflection. To the few who seek them out, these imposing stone figures – like the communist statues in Budapest – testify to the art and ideology of a fallen regime.

Because both the stadium's function and form are essentially unchanged from 1936, both provide the potential to naturally aid in recalling the past at that site. Yet Berlin's visitors and locals who wish to learn about the Nazi past today visit places like the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, the Jewish Museum, Topography of Terror or the former concentration camp at

Sachsenhausen. These sites are the core of what many consider a monument-saturated German capital in regard to World War II and Holocaust memory. Olympiastadion is generally a perpetrator site rather than a victim site, though the hundreds of boys who rallied behind the cries of “Ich rufe die Jugend der Welt” and perished here in what was a senseless defense of the city during the final weeks of the war might also be considered victims. In any case, the stadium is only peripherally relevant to the Nazi past in Berlin today – despite daily tours and the series of historical markers. Instead, the stadium is an international sports venue, or as Berlin’s current mayor Klaus Wowereit calls it: “ein Wahrzeichen der deutschen Hauptstadt und zugleich ein Symbol der internationalen Sportmetropole Berlin” (Kluge 6).

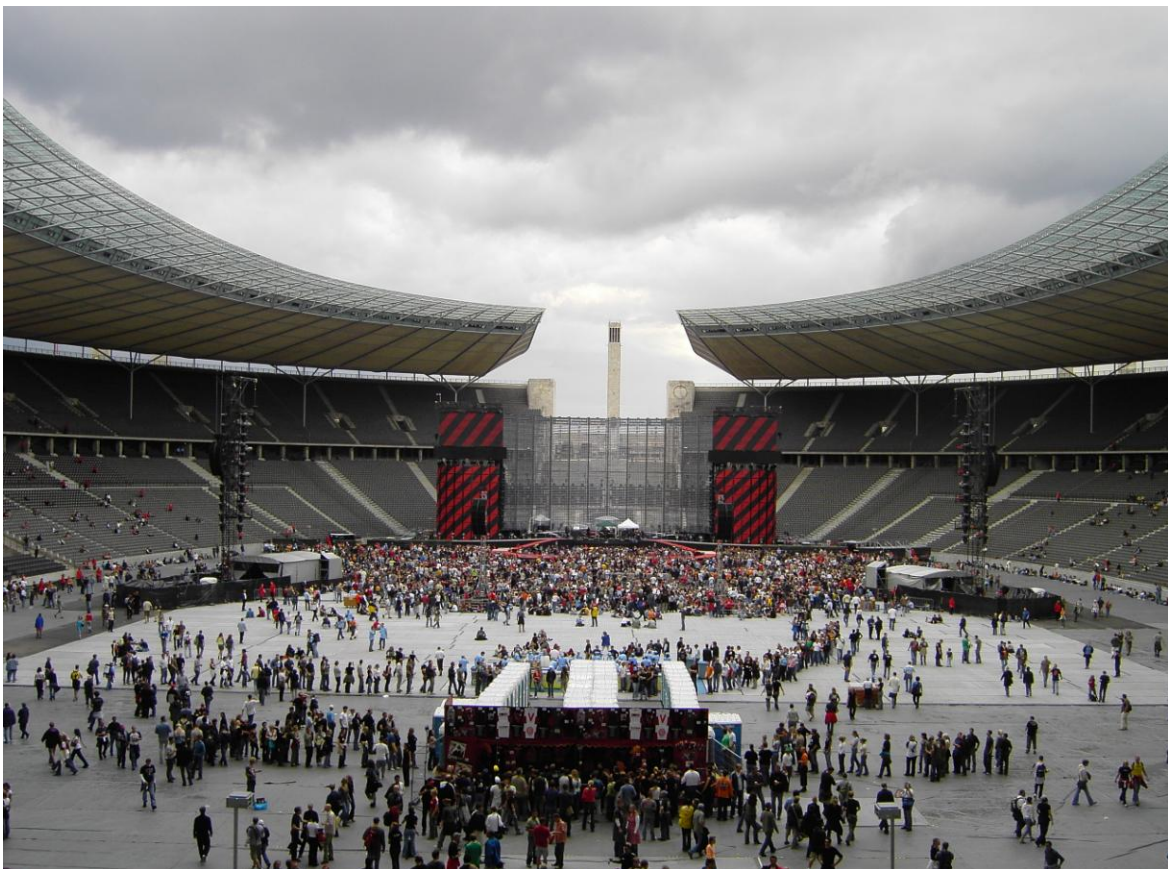


Figure 4.4. The crowd begins to assemble hours before a U2 concert on July 7, 2005. Over 70,000 were in attendance for the event. Photograph by the author.

Today the stadium's image is much more linked to sports and entertainment than to history. According to a Lonely Planet guide: "These days, the more than 74,000 seats are often filled with fans cheering on the local Hertha BSC football (soccer) team, the Pope or Madonna" (Schulte-Peevers 134). In addition to sports, the stadium has also been used since the end of the war as a venue for large concerts, such as the Rolling Stones and U2 (see Figure 4.4), and religious gatherings, such as the Deutscher Evangelischer Kirchentag Berlin (see Figure 4.5) and Pope's visit for a mass in 2011.



Figure 4.5. Olympiastadion has hosted a number of religious gatherings as well, most recently a mass for 61,000 led by Pope Benedict XVI on September 22, 2011. Pictured is the closing service of the annual Lutheran state church's "Evangelischer Kirchentag" on June 11, 1989. Courtesy of Landesarchiv Berlin. Used by permission.

In his book chapter on Olympiastadion as one of several *Böse Orte* – as the volume is titled – in today's Germany, Trimborn strongly criticizes this blind focus on international sporting competition that conveniently ignores the Nazi past. Most, however, seem impressed –

or at least satisfied – with the new renovations. Julian Rose's take on the stadium's current function, discussed in chapter 2, merits a second mention. According to Speer's *Ruinenwert* theory, leaving Nazi structures in disrepair would fulfill Hitler's architectural wishes. Rose argues, therefore, that by continuing to use Olympiastadion, Berlin is specifically denying Hitler his desired legacy of the ruin (89).

V.

Siegessäule

After the lowering of the French flag in May of 1949, the Siegessäule became increasingly identified with West Berlin's landscape and was a frequent destination for visitors. Alings reports that the viewing platform was opened to tourists in 1951 and by 1953 there were already 62,000 annual visitors (*Vom Geschichtsbild* 112). The following year the Viktoria statue was repaired and received a fresh layer of gold leaf, and over the following decades various elements of the monument were renovated as the Siegessäule reestablished itself as a symbol of the city.

Its depiction in postwar film advertisements and documentaries illustrates the historical monument's place as a symbol of the city. The 1955 short film *Berliner Erinnerungen* nurtures nostalgia for the pre-Nazi city by showing images from the years 1918 to 1933 (BArch-FA, MAG 16288). The Siegessäule is shown along with the Brandenburger Tor, Unter den Linden, Friedrichstraße, the Berliner Dom, and the Bodemuseum. Like the other sites, the Siegessäule is shown in its 1919 form – with three segments instead of four and located in front of the Reichstag. Avoiding the 1955 version, in its post-Nazi reconstruction form, can be read as an association of the current four-segment column with the Nazi regime. Later, as images of the burned out Reichstag and Dom at the war's end are displayed (though the post-war Siegessäule

is never shown), the narrator addresses the post-war city: “Berlin, Stadt an der Spree, wir lieben dich. Hast du auch schwer gelitten, und bist du auch noch nicht so schön wie einst, wir glauben an dich” (MAG 16288). Though the film is about nostalgia, it does not completely ignore the Nazi past, like some other such films from the era have done. There is a short sequence near the end referencing the Nazi era: the Brandenburger Tor is draped in Nazi and Japanese flags and loud shouting is heard, but then fades out as the shot of the Brandenburger Tor changes to its photographic negative, is held for three seconds of silence, and finally replaced by a silhouette of the 1955 version of Berlin’s most famous gate. The film then resumes with images of the city from 1919, and the final two shots before the credits are of the three-tiered column, and a close-up of Viktoria. The film works to connect the post-war present in Berlin to the city’s pre-World War II past, a common tactic of essentially ignoring the Nazi past and writing it out of history. Interesting for this study, however, is the fact that only the pre-Nazi Siegestsäule is shown – unlike the Brandenburger Tor and other symbolic structures, which are shown both before and after the war. The Siegestsäule is portrayed as an emblem of the “beloved” city, yet its current form is avoided, suggesting that the structure was still seen as stigmatized because of its renovation and role under the Nazi regime.

Similarly, there is currently a recent series of nostalgic black-and-white postcards for sale in tourist shops on Unter den Linden. The postcards depict scenes from Berlin in the 1920s, defined by a simple caption on the backside such as “Berlin 1929.” One postcard shows the Siegestsäule, except that the post-1939 four-segment column and its location at the Großer Stern prove an obvious anachronism with the Weimar-era caption: until its disassembly in 1938 and rededication on Hitler’s birthday in 1939, the Siegestsäule was located at Königsplatz (currently Platz der Republik) and its column consisted of only three segments (see Figure 4.6). It is

certainly possible that someone might wish to forge the postcard's date in order to avoid conjuring war associations with a tainted year such as 1939 in the caption, thus promptly spoiling any hopes at providing the postcard's viewer with feelings of nostalgia. Much more likely, however, the label "Berlin um 1930" is simply an unintentional misrepresentation, which would clearly evidence the current lack of awareness of the monument's Nazi connection. In either case, the effect is the historical exclusion of the Nazi past.



Figure 4.6. This postcard is part of a series using black-and-white historical images in an attempt to create nostalgia for the Berlin of the Weimar Republic. The caption on the back side reads "Berlin um 1930." However, the Siegessäule's location at the Großer Stern, the four segments in its column and the guard houses flanking it reveal a misrepresentation of a photograph taken during the Third Reich. Speer moved and altered the column, which was opened for Hitler's birthday in April 1939 – the earliest date this photo could have been taken. Produced by Kartenedition Pawlowski, Berlin. Used by permission.

The public ceremony recognizing the return of the friezes in 1987 was meant to recast the monument of victory as a symbol of reconciliation. "Seitdem," writes journalist Christiane Peitz

for *Der Tagesspiegel*, “steht die Siegestsäule auch für das neue Europa, für Versöhnung und Überwindung von Erz- und Erbfeindschaften” (“Sieg und Frieden”). Nevertheless, simply making this recognition required admittance on the side of the French to having stolen the friezes in the first place – a fact that was generally unknown among Germans, the reliefs having been written off as another casualty of war. When they were returned, however, the reliefs were deliberately reinserted by Berlin authorities with a number of sections missing, in an attempt to reflect the full history of the monument – that is, to represent both World War II and their decades-long absence (Alings 45, 115; Matthias Braun 68). The reinserted friezes with their missing fragments seem almost intended as a forced *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, an apology for a dubious monument’s existence. Precisely this approach to history attracted criticism from *Die Zeit* already in 1983 when Chirac announced the first relief’s return. Initially afraid to display the nationalist depiction of the Franco-Prussian War, the Berliner Senatskanzlei decided “[m]an dürfe das Relief...nicht wieder anbringen sondern solle es einlagern” – prompting the (West) German newspaper to ask its readership: “[W]arum aber sollten wir französischer sein als die Franzosen?” (Zt, 4 November 1983).

* * *

In 1987, the same year that the final relief was returned to Berlin, Wim Wenders used the Siegestsäule in an innovative and meaningful way in his acclaimed film *Der Himmel über Berlin*. The film tells the story of two angels, Damiel and Cassiel, who observe people’s thoughts and conversations throughout the divided city. Among their favorite observation points is alongside Viktoria at the Siegestsäule’s pinnacle. By using the monument as an angel’s perch, Wenders reinvents the winged goddess of victory as an angel, to match his main characters.

The film also addresses German history by means of a narrator figure, a venerable man identified in the credits as “Homer.” Writes film scholar Alexander Graf: “Homer represents the collective memory of Berlin and the world beyond, the ‘immortal poet’ who keeps alive the myths of his time passing them down to his listeners through the generations” (128). Graf sees Wenders’ narrator as a parallel to the filmmaker, lamenting the loss of an audience (129). He can also be seen, however, as the lonesome, fading representative of the generation with a personal knowledge of history, having experienced World War II and the Weimar Republic before it. In the film Homer wanders about the barren, undeveloped void that was once Potsdamer Platz, mumbling to himself about the bustling symbol of the modern metropolis, seeking Wertheim and Café Josty, where he recalls having sat enjoying coffee, in the days before “people stopped being friendly” (*Der Himmel über Berlin*). Frustrated with his unfulfilled search, he finally collapses onto a sofa in the vacant lot.

Wenders’ film depicts the German past of World War II only in a reproduced form, courtesy of Peter Falk and an American film company. As discussed in chapter 1, Maurice Halbwachs’ term *social memory* refers to a society’s memory of an event based on its own personal experience, as opposed to *historical memory*, which is reliant on textual representations. Already in 1987, as the film highlights, Germans’ *social memory* of World War II was marginalized, reduced to the lamentations of an elderly narrator, disoriented at the change of the physical face of the city, and discouraged by the insignificance of his own voice. Only the invisible angel, Damiel, was still willing to listen to him – and, of course, we, the viewers of the film.

Homer’s lamentations form a central message of the film, while providing the perfect metaphor for the suppression of (social) memory during the Cold War, a time when Germany

was politically divided, each side conveniently assigning the responsibility of the Nazi past and *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* to its counterpart across the Wall. It was during this era of negligence and political self-legitimization that sites like the Siegessäule and Olympiastadion – like the Zamek cesarski in Poznań – effectively lost their memory.

Olympiastadion had maintained its function as an arena for major sports and entertainment events as well as large cultural gatherings. The Zamek – first maintained in its original political function, later received a new function, namely that of a cultural center. As for the Siegessäule, ironically, it was Wenders' *Der Himmel über Berlin* that brought attention back to the long-forgotten monument in divided Berlin's Tiergarten. The focus had nothing to do with the monument itself, its meanings, origins or Nazi past, however. Rather, it was simply the angel motif that Wenders employed as an observation point for Daniel and Cassiel, despite the fact that the monument is, compared to elsewhere in the city, relatively isolated from the population by the Tiergarten's extensive greenery.

Two of Daniel's recognizable observation points are historically significant, though both function today in a manner of paradox. The Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche, with the violent edge of its jagged steeple piercing the sky, is one of Berlin's most visible reminders of World War II – a *Mahnmal* to the horror and destruction of war. Despite its construction as a place of worship, the building now functions as a monument, one that admonishes (*mahnen*). The Siegessäule, on the other hand, was originally constructed as a *Denkmal*, a monument to commemorate (*gedenken*) several military accomplishments during the Kaiserreich. Later it was employed as a Nazi propaganda tool, the angel of victory rotated westwards into a permanent gaze towards subjugated rival France. Wenders made a sequel film in 1993, entitled *In weiter Ferne, so nah!*, which employs the Siegessäule in precisely the same manner, and the band U2

made a video of their cover “Stay (Faraway, So Close!)” which was featured on the film’s soundtrack. In the video, Bono and the other band members are also pictured perched atop the Siegessäule’s winged “angel,” echoing Wenders’ imagery from the film. Gradually fewer still thought about or “remembered” any of the monument’s past, instead using the column as Daniel and Cassiel did – as a chance to share an angel’s viewpoint and gaze down on the city as a tourist. Instead of history they associate the monument – if with anything at all – with Wenders’ films and the U2 video, or with one of several subsequent events.

A satirical opera entitled *Goldelse* was also written in 1987, for the occasion of the city’s 750th anniversary. The opera honored the Viktoria statue that has been so playfully dubbed “Goldelse” by Berliners since the monument’s erection, originally in reference to E. Marlitt’s title character from her 1866 novel that appeared in the periodical *Die Gartenlaube*. Composer Karl Heinz Wahren’s and librettist Volker Ludwig’s work is a self-critical view of modern German history, depicting a Goldelse who descends her pedestal to observe up close the four political periods she had watched from above during 114 years. According to the program, the work uses national history to tell the local story of the city, portraying “das Schicksal und der Reifeprozess, die Träume, Ansprüche und Verwundungen dieser Stadt” (Tsp, 24 June 1987).⁸⁵

* * *

According to anthropologists John Borneman and Stefan Senders, the first Love Parade was held in 1988 “when 150 people came together on a weekend in mid-July to dance techno on the streets of Berlin” (294).⁸⁶ The Siegessäule became the improbable symbol of the event beginning in 1996, when the Love Parade was moved from Kurfürstendamm because of the

⁸⁵ Qtd. in Alings 128.

⁸⁶ Other sources cite 1989 as the year of the first event, held under the title “Friede, Freude, Eierkuchen” (HB, “Aus für Berliner Love Parade,” 21 April 2005).

growing number of participants. A parade featuring several dozen floats would typically begin at Ernst-Reuter-Platz and proceed to the Siegessäule, culminating in a celebration of eroticism fueled by alcohol and techno that carried on into the night and often featured renowned deejays playing for crowds that numbered up to 1.5 million people (HB, “Aus für Berliner Love Parade,” 21 April 2005). Matthias Braun describes the irony of the event’s location:

[N]iemand hätte zu denken gewagt, dass dieses Bauwerk einmal, wie kaum ein anderes, mit dem weltweiten Bild der Stadt verknüpft sein würde. Der hedonistische Lärm der selbstverliebt trunkenen Spaßgesellschaft, der die Säule alljährlich umtobt, gehört an diesen Ort; ein ziviles Satyrspiel nach der Tragödie. (68)

In 2000 Borneman and Senders investigated the Love Parade from various viewpoints, some of which even judged the event a political or religious movement. They point to a German court’s dismissal of an environmental suit brought against the event because of excessive litter in the Tiergarten, ruling that the parade was not a commercial event, but rather a “political demonstration.” Borneman and Sanders write: “What makes this legal definition so fascinating is that few outside the court actually believe it” (299). The authors argue that the event, nonetheless, had later indeed become political by rejecting traditional politics, discursiveness, cognition and the delegation of authority, and replacing them with “a purely sensual mimesis,” employment of “a traditional feminine symbolic” and the location of authority in “an inner religiosity” (313-14). In 2004 the event was canceled, however, when its “demonstration” status was finally lifted and organizers were not able to organize enough sponsors (HB, 21 April 2005). It returned to Berlin and the *Großer Stern* site one final time in 2006.

Since 1984 the monument has also lent itself as both symbol and namesake of the monthly gay and lesbian magazine *Siegessäule*. Schulte-Peevers, while neglecting to mention the Nazi legacy, highlights this particular reading of the monument in her short description of the

site for Lonely Planet readers: “This ego-boosting triumphal column, built as a monument to Prussian military victories, now doubles as a symbol of Berlin’s gay community” (85). Alings shows several visual advertisements playing on this theme that also feature the column and/or “Goldelse” (130-33), and he even historically connects this association to the early twentieth century:

Die Schwulenbewegung nutzte das phallische Monument schon in der Kaiserzeit und in der Weimarer Republik als Treff- und Orientierungspunkt für erwartungsvolle Streifzüge durch den Tiergarten, sowohl damals, in der Nähe des Königsplatzes und des Goldfischteichs in den Zwanziger Jahren, als auch, mehr denn je, heute, wo der Tiergarten rund um die Siegessäule seinem Namen als Volkspark alle Ehre macht. (135)

A number of political organizations and commercial companies also employed “Goldelse” to further their ideas and market their products. Alings shows a political poster for Die Grünen (127) as well as an advertisement for the bookstore Hugendubel (135), both from 1999. An ad for the local beer Berliner Kindl, bearing the headline “Zwei Berliner Meisterwerke,” shows the frothy-headed pilsner alongside an architect’s hand that is finishing a sketch of the Siegessäule (134). A picture in *Der Tagesspiegel* from June 8, 1996, shows a member of Greenpeace perched on Viktoria’s right shoulder, attaching a giant gasmask to the statue’s face; a sign tied to Viktoria’s torso reads “Stoppt Ozonsmog” (132).

Similar to Olympiastadion, the Siegessäule was also used as a symbol of (West) Berlin during the Cold War. Alings discusses its prevalence as an image on postcards and tour guides, but also mentions that prominent guests Mikhail Gorbachev and Ronald Reagan received small metal replicas of the Viktoria as gifts during state visits (136). In 1990, the year after the wall fell in Berlin, a staggering 185,000 people visited the monument and climbed the steps to the platform (116). Soon after reunification, however, “stand die Siegessäule ganz im Schatten eines anderen Berliner Wahrzeichens,” writes Alings – namely the Brandenburger Tor (135). The

symbolic gate – paradoxically part of the wall for decades – and Norman Foster’s newly designed Reichstag with its symbolic glass dome took on national meaning in the city that was chosen to be the capital of a new unified Germany. The Siegessäule, meanwhile, was another site people viewed when they visited Berlin, predominantly for the scenic view it offers from a unique location between the former eastern and western city centers. It was associated not with national history, but with Berlin, with events such as the Love Parade, with Wenders’ film and with local advertisements and organizations.

In 1999 a new tenant acquired the Siegessäule edifice from the Bezirksamt Tiergarten, Berlin’s municipal district authority: the Monument Tales initiative, under the direction of historian Ute Grallert. Explains journalist Uwe Aulich: “Das [Bezirksamt Tiergarten] war nämlich schon seit Jahren auf der Suche nach einem Pächter, der in die Siegessäule investiert und sie wieder zu einer Attraktion in der City macht” (“Oben Ausblick”). Grallert’s organization renovated the interior of the column’s base to house a museum exhibit and remodeled one of Speer’s four adjacent “Wachhäuser” into the gastronomical enterprise, Café Viktoria.

The museum opened in 2002 and displays the embodiment of nationalism in two millennia of national monuments across Europe dating back to the Roman Empire. Grallert explains: “Anhand von Nationaldenkmälern und Wahrzeichen werden wir europäische Geschichte erzählen” (“Oben Ausblick”). The website www.monument-theses.de explains that the monuments “belong to our collective memory,” and defines the Siegessäule as part of “our own contribution to a common Europe.” The goal of the exhibit is explained as such: “This should help us understand our European neighbours and give us an insight into their history” (<www.monument-theses.de>, “Exhibition”). The pronouns “our” and “us” refer not only to Germans, but also to Europeans. This attempt to connect the monument and its nationalistic roots

to a common European ideal reduces the Nazi past to a European event, when instead, though nationalism was prevalent throughout Europe in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, German National Socialism is a unique and specific case that is responsible for both World War II and one of history's most horrifying tragedies, the Holocaust. The monument's connection to the Nazis is largely underplayed in the exhibit, reduced to a single poster entitled "The Monument is Moved" (Vorsteher 31).⁸⁷ In one room that uses several maps to sum up nineteenth-century European history and also explains the Siegessäule's origin, the poster shows several photos from the monument being moved in 1938-39, explaining that it "would have stood in the way for architect Albert Speer's planned North-South axis" (31). Clearly the exhibit displays the monument's origins in German unification and frames it as part of European history – matching the European Union's political narrative of peace and cooperation. Among the Siegessäule's 190,000 visitors in 2001 were "vor allem Franzosen, Engländer und Osteuropäer," which Aulich identifies as "[e]in guter Grund für Ute Grallert und ihr Team nicht aufzugeben" ("Oben Ausblick").

In 2001 one of the great voices of contemporary German literature, Uwe Timm, wrote a multileveled novel that entails – at least on the surface – a political plot to blow up the Siegessäule. In Timm's *Rot*, the protagonist, Thomas Linde, is a middle-aged eulogist and jazz musician who reflects on the days of his political activism in 1968 with a measure of distance and a lack of fulfillment. The recollection of his political youth is set off when he receives word

⁸⁷ The descriptions of the exhibit are cited from a booklet published by Monument Tales GmbH, which displays the posters from museum's exhibit on the monument's history, its various elements, and the maps explaining nineteenth-century European history, all of which are reproduced in the 38-page booklet. The booklet is listed in the bibliography under Dieter Vorsteher, who wrote the text for the exhibit and whose name is listed as author of the publication. The booklet is available in both German and English, and both versions are shown side by side in the museum. The English version is cited here.

that a friend from this part of his past has died, and requested in his will that Thomas give the eulogy at his funeral. The friend, Aschenberger, on account of what Germanist William Collins Donahue calls “years of isolation...and unstinting dedication to the cause” (“Normal as Apolitical” 188), was plotting to blow up the Siegessäule to make a political statement. The problem is – and even Thomas, throughout the course of the novel, comes to the same conclusion – the symbol no longer carries the same meaning it once had. Like the actual failed attempt in 1991 that went unnoticed for two days – which will be addressed in chapter 5 – no one was likely to understand the purpose behind such an attack on the monument anyway, which would not make for much of a political statement. Donahue therefore concludes: “So to plan the bombing of this popular Berlin attraction seems ridiculous, if not simply mad” (189). The monument, in spite of its origins and outward appearance, is simply no longer seen as a political symbol.

During the 2006 World Cup, Berlin was engrossed in *Fußballfieber* and like many of the city’s well-known sites, the Siegessäule was associated with the tournament as well. Perhaps inspired in part by the Love Parade and annual New Year’s Eve celebrations stretching down Straße der 17. Juni from Brandenburger Tor, city organizing officials set up what was called the *Fanmeile* to provide fans a public area to view matches on a series of large projection screens. The area stretched from Brandenburger Tor across the Tiergarten’s main thoroughfare, of which the Siegessäule was the natural geographical focal point at the Großer Stern. The former Ost-West-Achse had become the *Fußball-Achse*, connecting the host stadium in the West with over one million fans watching in the Tiergarten – even a miniature Olympiastadion, holding 10,000 fans, was erected nearby in front of the Reichstag, where for €3 a fan could purchase a ticket and enter the replica stadium to watch the match on one of two large screens.



Figure 4.7. This image shows the Großer Stern and Tiergarten from the bird's eye. Straße des 17. Juni stretches eastward through the Tiergarten toward Brandenburger Tor and Berlin-Mitte. Once the focal point of the Nazis' Ost-West-Achse, the avenue is now better known for events such as the Fanmeile. Postcard by Skowronski & Koch Verlag, Berlin. Photograph by Günter Schneider. Used by permission.

The Siegessäule, a true physical symbol of the city of Berlin, was closed in 2010 for full-scale renovation that included cleaning the mosaic and furnishing Viktoria with another layer of gold leaf – her third coat since 1945. When the monument was opened again in April 2011, city authorities' message at the press ceremony was pretty clear: despite its history, the site is a symbol of Berlin's tolerance and diversity. This message matches that of the other two sites, and will be discussed in the following and concluding chapter.

CHAPTER 5

Part of “Our” History: From Nationally Forgotten to Locally Remembered

“Hielt nur zwölf Jahre, wirft aber einen kolossal langen Schatten.”
- Günter Grass, *Ein weites Feld* (67)

I.

Introductory Scenes: Latent Memory and the Physical Presence of the Past

Berlin, April 13, 1992

When, in April 1992, Berlin put forth a bid to host the 2000 Summer Olympics, including a renovation of Olympiastadion and the entire 1936 Olympic complex, the initiative was met with a great deal of opposition among Berliners, and eventually failed. An “Anti-Olympia-Komitee” was founded and according to one poll 49% of all Berliners were opposed to hosting the Games, writes Jürgen Trimborn, who also recalls 10,000 protestors “welcoming” the president of the International Olympic Committee as well as a special unit of Berlin police handing out fines to protestors for certain offenses (139).⁸⁸ Volker Kluge mentions the plaque honoring the controversial sport director Carl Diem being stolen from the wall of the Marathontor in 1992 (152).⁸⁹ The prominent Berlin author Günter Kunert summed up the opposition by posing the question: “Nichts gegen Olympia, schon gar nichts gegen Berlin – aber sollten die Spiele wirklich wieder dort sein, wo ‘Deutschland über alles’ sich hinwegsetzte?” (152).

⁸⁸ For details of correspondence by the initiatives Anti-Olympia-Komitee and Berlin 2000 NOlympic City, see also *Der Spiegel* 37/13 September 1993.

⁸⁹ Involved in German sports organizations since 1899, Diem (1882-1962) was appointed General Secretary of the 1936 Olympic Games in 1932. He held his position and continued to work under the Nazis, and today is criticized in particular for his 1945 speeches to assembled groups of Hitlerjugend, many just 10 to 14 years old, encouraging them for what proved a senseless defense of Berlin by glorifying war and death (see Kluge 108-11). After his plaque was stolen from Marathontor in 1992, it was replaced using the original mold.

This question lingered in large part because of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, or lack thereof: the space provided no historical documentation of its Nazi past. With no mention of the 1936 Olympics, it was as though the significance of the past was being ignored by the organizing committee, masked by silence as well as by proposed renovations that included a wagon-wheel-design roof (“ein wagenradähnliches Dach”) over the stadium and a softball field on the Maifeld (152). After the stadium had for decades hosted large crowds that had come for a wide array of sporting and non-sporting events without giving a second thought to the space’s past, suddenly the prospect of hosting another Olympics struck a nerve in the collective memory of the former Nazi capital. In his monograph addressing the wealth of controversial sites in post-communist Berlin, Brian Ladd summarizes the anti-Olympic sentiment: “For many Olympic opponents, a boost to national pride was the last thing Germany needed. Many of them feared that a second Berlin Olympics would represent a renewal of the dangerous traditions of 1936 and, at the same time, an attempt to wipe away the memory of them” (144).

Following Berlin’s inclusion in Germany’s 1997 bid for the 2006 World Cup, however, the renovation and design of Olympiastadion took a much different approach, as mentioned in chapter 4. Berlin had purchased the stadium from the federal state, and the politicians and architects involved in its (re)design were much more conscious of the past than those in 1992. Despite some voices in favor of a modern stadium, the Berliner Senat ultimately decided in 1998 not to cover up the National Socialist past: the renovation would be “denkmalgerecht” – preserving the historical form of Werner March’s 1936 design (153). The Senat chose Volkwin Marg’s concept with Gerkan, Marg and Partner (gmp), which, according to Kluge, was the only one of 57 submissions to resist “[die] Verführung einer hypermodernen Konstruktion” (154). Marg’s design included only a modern roof supported on steel beams so thin that the roof

appears to hover above the heavy stone frame of March's original stadium. The historical character of the entire Olympic complex has been consciously preserved, including the view of the Glockenturm (western source of Speer's Ost-West-Achse) from inside the stadium, visible because of the gap in the roof over the Marathontor (see Figure 5.1).



Figure 5.1. The new roof, designed by Gerkan, Marg and Partner in 2004, is open at one end in order not to obstruct the view of the Glockenturm, thereby preserving the stadium's historical design. Photograph by the author.

Not least because of the persistence of a group of what Jennifer Jordan terms “memorial entrepreneurs” (2) in negotiating a portion of the public funding associated with the renovation, a series of 27 historical markers in both German and English were set up in strategic places outside the stadium, explaining the history and symbolic use of various elements under the Nazi

regime.⁹⁰ A small circle of scholars, including art historian and publicist Stefanie Endlich, authored the signs. Endlich's article in the Rundbrief publication of the initiative Verein Aktives Museum – one of the supporting organizations – recounts the long but ultimately successful process of establishing the markers before the start of the World Cup:

Durch das Engagement vieler Einzelner, aber auch durch den politischen Druck, den internationalen Besuchern der Fußballweltmeisterschaft 2006 die erste große Bauanlage der Nationalsozialisten nicht ohne Erläuterungen zu präsentieren, konnte ein Scheitern verhindert werden. (12)

Later a second series of historical markers, identifying places throughout the Olympia complex – such as the Waldbühne, Glockenturm and Langemarckhalle – was erected as well.

On May 4, 2006, just a few weeks prior to the start of the 2006 World Cup, the permanent exhibit “Geschichtsort Olympiagelände 1909 – 1936 – 2006” opened in the Langemarckhalle, across the Maifeld from the stadium. The thorough exhibit, which specifically addresses the Nazis' misuse of sport at the site as well as documenting the history of the space, was conceptualized by Deutsches Historisches Museum and its cost of €6.5 million was carried by federal and Berlin state funds, as well as by the Stiftung Denkmalschutz (Kluge 159).

Yet even with the Langemarckhalle's new exhibit and the added historical markers, some are still wary of Berlin's (and Germany's) employment of the stadium to host major international events. Though the stadium is chiefly representative of Berlin, and most days it is nothing more than that, it also has the potential to symbolize the nation. For such occasions as the 2006 World Cup, the 2009 World Track and Field Championships and the 2011 Women's World Cup, the Olympiastadion welcomes international guests to events hosted by Germany. For the final of each year's men's (and, until 2010, women's) DFB-Pokal, the two best teams in the national

⁹⁰ According to Endlich, the figure was originally €980,000, though the group charged with developing the signage and text was later given much less (13-16).

tournament advance to the *national* championship – in Berlin. Like the public opposition to the 2000 Olympic bid, it is the use of the stadium as a national venue that has the potential to cause a few furrowed brows and uneasiness about what the stadium now symbolizes given its past.



Figure 5.2. The German National Team played its match against Ecuador in Olympiastadion during the group stage of the 2006 World Cup. The picture shows fans in the stadium celebrating the team with a Choreo – a choreographed effort to display a message. Here the eagle and colors of the national flag are displayed with the message: “Getragen von des Adlers Schwingen werden wir den Sieg erringen.” National associations such as this one have caused some to criticize the use of the stadium for such events. Courtesy of Landesarchiv Berlin. Used by permission.

In his chapter on Olympiastadion in the volume *Böse Orte*, published the summer the World Cup was played in Berlin, Trimborn describes Bundespräsident Horst Köhler’s visit to the new Langemarckhalle exhibit on the 1936 Olympics, admitting: “Dennoch erweist sich das Stadion an diesem Tag als Ort, an dem einmal nicht versucht wird, die Spuren einer unbequemen

Vergangenheit zu vertuschen” (150-51). Yet while there may be an opportunity to confront the past for those few daily visitors who manage to reach the exhibit, several hundred meters away from the stadium across the inaccessible Maifeld, the “masses” come for football and most are oblivious to any such exhibit. Trimborn sums up his critique:

Der Großteil der Menschen, die sich anlässlich der Fußball-WM dem Olympiastadion nähern, nimmt diesen Ort nicht als Teil einer diktatorischen Vergangenheit wahr. Manch einer beklagt Geschichtslosigkeit, Unwissen und Desinteresse. (150)

Though most seem comfortable with the stadium as international venue after the perceived *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, clearly those voices also remain who would prefer to avoid any nationalistic associations in the stadium built under the National Socialists (see Figure 5.2).

Berlin, July 24, 2008

During his campaign for the 2008 United States presidential election, Barack Obama traveled to Europe in July, scheduling a campaign speech in Berlin. Obama had originally hoped to speak in front of the Brandenburger Tor, much as Ronald Reagan some 25 years earlier, when the iconic gate still paradoxically divided the city into East and West as part of the Berlin Wall. German Chancellor Angela Merkel decided that the now open gate – arguably her nation’s most prominent and meaningful symbol – was not the proper backdrop for an American presidential campaign tour, and Obama was forced to look elsewhere for a place to speak. His campaign management chose the space in the center of the Tiergarten with the Siegessäule as backdrop, a location some German politicians and journalists questioned as a curious choice for a political speech (SpO, 20 July 2008, “Obamas geplante Rede an der Siegessäule stößt auf Kritik”).



Figure 5.3. While campaigning in Europe as a candidate for the American Presidency, then-Senator Barack Obama spoke in front of the Siegessäule on July 20, 2008. Some 200,000 people attended. Courtesy of Landesarchiv Berlin. Used by permission.

In an article written in the days leading up to Obama's appearance, published in English for both *The New York Times* and *Spiegel Online*, William Kristol introduces an American readership to the German monument: "The Siegessäule is an impressive structure (especially if you have a militaristic bent). It's a large fluted sandstone column on a base of polished red granite, topped by a golden statue of winged Victory" (SpO-Intl, 22 July 2008). Kristol's

description is accurate, though even he fails to mention the dozens of French, Danish and Austrian cannons taken as war booty and now enshrined in 24-karat gold leaf and mounted in three rings encircling the sandstone column. Nor does he mention the four bronze reliefs displaying the Prussian military's series of victorious endeavors, nor the proud mosaic featuring Hohenzollern monarchs standing against the French to the approval of an allegory of Germania looking on.

When Obama's campaign team announced the Siegessäule as the location for the speech four days ahead of his visit, leading representatives of the German political parties Freie Demokratische Partei (FDP) and Christlich Demokratische Union (CDU) criticized the location for its "unglückliche Symbolik" (SpO, 20 July 2008, "Obamas geplante Rede"). Rainer Brüderle, deputy leader of the FDP, spoke specifically about the monument's Nazi past: "The Siegessäule in Berlin was moved to where it is now by Adolf Hitler. He saw it as a symbol of German superiority and of the victorious wars against Denmark, Austria and France." Brüderle further questioned "whether Barack Obama was advised correctly in his choice of the Siegessäule as the site to hold a speech on his vision for a more cooperative world" (SpO-Intl, 20 July 2008, "Barack in Berlin: Is Obama Speech Site Contaminated by Nazi Past?").

Ladd wrote, in 1997, that "despite the cannon barrels, the Victory Column [had] shed its militarist symbolism and become one of Berlin's *least controversial monuments*" (*The Ghosts of Berlin* 199).⁹¹ The question to be considered, then, following the Obama event is: Why were there German politicians and journalists who were suddenly wary of the Siegessäule as the

⁹¹ The emphasis in the citation is my own.

backdrop for a twenty-first-century speech?⁹² The majority of the press leading up to and reflecting on Obama's visit had a positive or neutral spin, and some 200,000 Berliners attended the speech of the then presidential hopeful.⁹³ Did something happen between 1997 and 2008 that changed the meaning of the space? Is Berlin so saturated with controversial sites and reminders of its jaded political past that a journalist could question almost any site? Or is there some latent meaning imbued in this particular place?

Writing a guest article for *Der Tagesspiegel* a few years later in 2012, former CDU general secretary Heiner Geißler also spoke out against the Siegessäule, calling it "das dümmste Monument der Republik":

Die Stadt Berlin findet nichts dabei, dass das dümmste Monument der Republik, nämlich die Siegessäule mit ihren blutrünstigen Reliefs und eingelassenen Kanonenrohren, mit denen die Preußen auf Württemburger, Österreicher, Hessen und Franzosen geschossen hatten, umgeben von Standbildern der preußischen Generalität, mitten in der deutschen Hauptstadt ihren Standort hat. (Tsp, 1 February 2012)

Whether the use of the monument in 2008 as the backdrop for a political speech either impacted his perspective or motivated him to voice his opinion of the monument publicly, cannot be said

⁹² There were also politicians and members of the media who answered the critique of the site, arguing that the Siegessäule is no longer representative of war and is not a Nazi symbol. Kristol concludes as much in his article. See also, for example, the *Focus Online* article "Obama Rede: Die Siegessäule ist für Berliner kein Kriegssymbol" (Foc, 21 July 2008). *Focus Online* maintains the site is "ein beliebter Treffpunkt der Szene" and has developed into a "beliebte[r] Veranstaltungsort." The article cites the argument of Berlin Kultursenator Christoph Stölzl: "In Berlin wisse heute kaum jemand, dass die an der Siegessäule befindlichen Kanonen Beutestücke von Dänen, Österreichern und Franzosen seien....Heute sei die Siegessäule ganz einfach eine beliebte 'Location', die sich für gute Fernsehbilder eigne. Und darum gehe es schließlich für den designierten Präsidentschaftskandidaten" (Foc, 21 July 2008). The authors cite another source who compares the monument to the Statue of Liberty in New York City, suggesting it may have been chosen because of the golden Viktoria's similarity to the allegory of liberty.

⁹³ For a tone more typical of the positive reporting on the event, see, for example, the *Spiegel Online* article "Volksfest an der Siegessäule: 200.000 Fans pilgern zur Obama-Andacht" by Florian Gathmann, Severin Weiland and Philipp Wittrock (SpO, 24 July 2008).

for sure. He was, in fact, writing to advocate the naming of a street in honor of the first Reichsfinanzminister of the Weimar Republik, Matthias Erzberger. Interestingly, Geißler makes no mention of the monument's Nazi past, criticizing instead its Prussian militaristic pomp. What is certain from both examples, however, is that the Siegessäule space has not been perfectly disassociated with its past once and for all. As with Olympiastadion, there is a latent meaning representing the structure's origins, as the most literal reading of the "text" of the architectural work will reveal. There are currently – and may always be – some detractors unwilling to separate this monument from its militaristic and/or National Socialist past.

Poznań, Summer 2009

In Poznań there are certainly also some uncomfortable with the Zamek being so prominently identified with their city. In August 2009, one year before the centennial celebration, Leszek Pobojewski wrote in an article for *Gazeta Wyborcza*: "I feel a sense of disgust, that the symbol of Prussian hubris, the seat of Greater Poland's butcher Greiser and accommodation for Hitler during his visits in 'German' Posen is an official landmark of the capital of Greater Poland" (GWyb, 4 August 2009: "Cesarski zamek nie może być symbolem Poznania").⁹⁴ Of course, Hitler never actually visited Poznań, according to thorough historical documentation – but that may be beside the point. The fact that it was built for him, not to mention functioning as the seat of Greiser's administration (though the Zamek was still under construction until 1945), is certainly plenty to warrant the sense of *niesmak* – i.e. "disgust" or "distaste" – that Pobojewski describes in association with the sandstone fortress. This sentiment forms an important part of

⁹⁴ Translation by the author. Orig.: "Odczuwam niesmak, że symbol pruskiej buty, siedziba oprawcy Wielkopolski Greisera i miejsce pobytu Hitlera w czasie wizyt w 'niemieckim' Posen jest oficjalną wizytówką stolicy Wielkopolski."

the collective memory of Poznań's citizens – even if it represents a point of view that is slowly receding. Given the passage of time, the building's current function as a leading cultural institution, and the city's authorities' supporting vision, this memory is being increasingly marginalized as the Zamek has taken on new meaning – particularly with younger generations.

Two recent discoveries in the Zamek leading up to the centennial celebrations also provided Poznanians with concrete reminders of the building's function during the last two eras of German occupation. Piotr Bojarski reported on the findings in an article for *Gazeta Wyborcza*. While renovating a set of stairs in a restaurant located in the Zamek's former stables and service quarters, a signature from 1908-09 was discovered written in pencil on a large pine board: "Franciszek Kelm, podmistrz ciesielski"⁹⁵ along with the years "1908-1909" and the messages "Long live freedom and the proletariat"⁹⁶ and "May God bless you, brothers,"⁹⁷ (GWyb, 28 June 2010, 4: "Zamek: niespodzianki sprzed lat"). Janusz Pazder, art historian and author at Centrum Kultury "Zamek" who is responsible for the building's historical preservation, referenced the worker's name in the city's address records and found that in 1910 Kelm lived just a few blocks away on Luisenstraße (present-day ulica Taczaka).

A second discovery was made in a basement hallway running parallel to the courtyard. Here a concrete panel was found with the following inscription scratched into it: "Praca Zamkowa 9.IX.1944 Felek Okupniak."⁹⁸ It is clear that Okupniak was part of a labor effort (possibly forced labor) working under the Nazis on Grieser's and Hitler's long renovation project

⁹⁵ "Podmistrz ciesielski" is a reference to the worker's occupation as carpenter.

⁹⁶ Translation by the author. Orig.: "Niech żyje wolność i proletariat."

⁹⁷ Translation by the author. Orig.: "Szczęść wam Boże bracia."

⁹⁸ "Praca Zamkowa" translates to "Castle Labor"; the date is September 9, 1944.

on the castle. According to Bojarski, it is not yet known whether Okupniak was from Poznań or elsewhere (see Figure 5.4).



Figure 5.4. This inscription by the laborer Felek Okupniak, dated 1944, was discovered in a basement hallway of the Zamek in 2010. Photograph by the author.

Not all such surprises have been uncovered as of yet. Architect Zbigniew Antczak has been working on various projects regarding renovation, revision and preservation of the Zamek's interior and exterior since 1994. He maintains that interesting new discoveries about the building's past are made quite regularly. While landscaping some bushes and greenery just a few years ago in the courtyard where the Katyń memorial is located, a truck's tire sank into a hole in the ground that revealed a separate World War II bunker. In the basement of the Zamek, there is also a hand-railing that runs diagonally down to the floor right as the hallway ends. Antczak believes it may lead to a former tunnel connecting the Zamek to another building. Currently the

funds are not available to investigate, he says (Personal interview). Some might also speculate that administrators are currently content to leave certain things buried.

II.

The Invisible Monument

What these three recent examples show is that each site still has a measure of latent meaning from the National Socialist past. There is potential for that meaning to be conjured up under the right (or wrong) circumstances. Because of the human tendency to associate memory with physical space, that past could once again become part of a given generation's "memory" at any of these sites.

Educators, journalists and scholars in our society regularly remind us of the past by telling and retelling historical narratives. Yet just as part of the past can be called back into public memory, a portion of the past can be equally and just as easily neglected, ignored or forgotten. One might consider Austrian author Robert Musil's oft-cited quip: "Es gibt nichts auf der Welt, was so unsichtbar wäre wie Denkmäler" (Musil 59). While Musil's short essay from the 1920s entitled "Denkmale" was written with a clear air of satire, his observations also shed light on the nature of monuments and how, given how familiar they are in our cities and public spaces, they can also be easy to ignore. Musil writes:

[D]as auffallendste an Denkmälern ist nämlich, daß man sie nicht bemerkt. Es gibt nichts auf der Welt, was so unsichtbar wäre wie Denkmäler. Sie werden doch zweifellos aufgestellt, um gesehen zu werden, ja geradezu, um die Aufmerksamkeit zu erregen; aber gleichzeitig sind sie durch irgend etwas gegen Aufmerksamkeit imprägniert, und diese rinnt Wassertropfen – auf Ölbezug – artig an ihnen ab, ohne auch nur einen Augenblick stehenzubleiben. (59-60)

All three structures in this study are stately, visible objects that were conceived in a way so as to attract attention, as Musil describes, and each of them certainly does attract the gaze of the

passer-by. Yet in spite of their stature each can also be like a monument that is seen but not noticed. The following three illustrations, in the context of Musil's words, provide concrete examples of historical forgetting at each space.

* * *

According to Kluge, the South Korean parliamentary representative Park Young Rok locked himself into Olympiastadion one evening in October 1970 (*Steine beginnen zu reden* 87-88). On the northern wall of the stadium's open Marathontor are three large limestone plaques displaying the names of the track and field and other event winners at the 1936 games, and the seventh line down, under "Marathonlauf," the plaque reads "Son Japan" (see Figure 5.6). The winner of the marathon had been Korean runner Sohn Kee-chung (also Son Ki-jong or Son Ki-jung), who qualified and competed for the occupying Japanese.⁹⁹ He was made to compete under the Japanese name "Kitei Son" and, after winning, stood on the podium with head bowed in shame as the Japanese anthem played (Walters 233).

During that night in 1970 the parliamentarian Park undertook a minor project in stonemasonry: in the course of five hours he chiseled the word "Japan" out of the stone and replaced it with "Korea." No one noticed the change for years afterwards – or at least no one reported it. When it finally came to the attention of West German officials, Horst Korber, senator of sport, appealed to the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in Lausanne (Kluge 87-88).¹⁰⁰ The IOC

⁹⁹ Korea was occupied by Japan in 1905 and annexed as a colony in 1910. It remained under Japanese control until 1945.

¹⁰⁰ Historian Guy Walters references a 1983 request to the IOC by the Korean Olympic Committee to change the official record and ascribe Sohn's medal to Korea. After this was denied, they appealed again in 1987, writes Walters, including a request to alter the stadium inscription (309). Kluge mentions Korber's appeal to Lausanne in both his books (*Steine beginnen zu reden* 87-88; *Olympiastadion Berlin* 164), but does not specify the year of the appeal.

insisted that history not be altered, and the Olympiastadion inscription after Son's name was finally changed back to "Japan." The only remaining evidence is the lighter shade of gray stone around the word "Japan." The inscription, though no doubt of interest to visitors from Japan and Korea, is not intended to be noticed by visitors to the stadium, even if they do bother to glance at the historic table of victors.¹⁰¹



Figure 5.5. This Ehrentafel commemorates the winners of individual men's and women's events from the 1936 Olympics. Jesse Owens' name is listed three times, including twice at the top left. Photograph by the author.

¹⁰¹ At the 1988 Summer Games in Seoul, Sohn, at age 73, was invited to run the final leg carrying the Olympic torch and light the Olympic flame at the opening ceremony. In Korea he is regarded as one of the greatest Olympic heroes. For more on Sohn's efforts at the 1936 Games and his Olympic legacy, see: Walters 230-33 and 308-09; Tetsuo Nakamura, "Japan: The Future in the Past," *The Nazi Olympics: Sport, Politics and Appeasement in the 1930s*, Arnd Krüger and William Murray, eds. (Urbana, IL: UP, 2003), 127-44; and David Clay Large, *Nazi Games: The Olympics of 1936* (New York: Norton, 2007), 257-59.



Figure 5.6. In addition to Jesse Owens' accomplishments recognized at the top of the list, the Korean runner Sohn Kee-chung is significant. He won the marathon for occupying Japan under the Japanese name Kitei Son. In 1970 the country listed behind his name was changed during the night from "Japan" to "Korea," only to be changed back under the instruction of the International Olympic Committee. Photograph by the author.

* * *

It was not only the bomb that failed to ignite: the story of a terrorist plot to blow up one of the city's largest monuments did not exactly catch fire in the press either. *Der Tagesspiegel* ran a short dépêche on the bottom of the front page and a feature article on page 17. The dépêche included information on European and American protests against the threatening Gulf War, which began with a United Nations air strike on January 17 (1). On page 17 the article was accompanied by a separate box with a brief explanation of the monument's history and meaning – readers might otherwise have struggled to understand why the RZ identified the monument as a "Symbolobjekt für Nationalismus, Rassismus, Sexismus und Patriarchat" (17).

The page-22 report “Anschlag auf ‘Gold-Else’” in the “links-alternative” daily *die tageszeitung* (or *taz*) was even shorter. The subheading announces the attack as: “Erster Anschlag im Zusammenhang mit der Golfkrise,” and follows it with the question “Wie wollen sich gefährdete Firmen und Einrichtungen gegen mögliche Attentate schützen?” (Taz, 3308/17 January 1991, 22). After a few sentences explain the failed attempt, the paper recounts the answers it received from eleven different public, commercial and political organizations as to measures they are taking to guard against protest-related violence. Thus, in this initial reaction to the attack, the Siegessäule itself was effectively ignored by a newspaper that at other times was eager to voice critique of the monument.¹⁰²

William Collins Donahue addresses, if somewhat indirectly, the muted public reaction to the 1991 attack in his 2006 article on Uwe Timm’s novel *Rot*. In *Rot*, which was written in 2001, the protagonist, Thomas Linde, is a former Marxist activist from the 68er generation who is asked to speak at the funeral of a former friend and fellow activist, Aschenberger. Linde becomes aware of the latter’s plans to blow up the Siegessäule “on the exact day when the German government was going to move from Bonn to Berlin” (A. Müller 141). Germanist Anne Friederike Müller notes that for Aschenberger, “the Column stood for everything that was reprehensible about recent German history: militarism, wars, authoritarianism, the Nazi terror”

¹⁰² An article later that year, discussing a number of symbols in Berlin, called attention to the origins and past of “die anschlagrelevante Siegessäule” in a brief but sharp critique of the monument (Taz, 3449/6 July 1991, 35: “Lenin oder langer Lulatsch?”). Another article by Gereon Asmuth in 1999 criticized the upcoming millennium celebration planned at the site that would feature a 70-km-high stream of light, which would allegedly be seen from Dresden to Hamburg, because of its reminiscence of Albert Speer’s “Lichtkatedrale” (Taz, 6014/11 December 1999, 27: “Sie erheben den rechten Arm”). Alings also mentions a motion in 1991 by a few parliamentary members of the Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus (PDS) and Union/Die Grünen to remove the Siegessäule for the same reasons the Lenin monument was removed in Friedrichshain. The motion was denied. On this motion Alings cites a *taz* report from October 19, 1991 (*Vom Geschichtsbild* 116).

(141).¹⁰³ Donahue, nonetheless, explains the pointlessness such an attack would have because of how drastically the perception of the monument has changed:

The problem with all of this of course is that as a political act in the twenty-first century it is fairly meaningless. No one in the novel (except Aschenberger), and probably few people in real life, associates this “Angel of Berlin,” as the popular song¹⁰⁴ has it, with anything but the annual Love Parade, Christopher Street Parade, or other kinds of mass celebration. People still love to climb up the column and peer out from the observation balcony upon the park’s joggers, Frisbee tossers, and Turkish picnickers. But no one seems to pay heed to the obscure inscriptions that are in fact chauvinistic. So to plan the bombing of this popular Berlin attraction seems ridiculous, if not simply mad. (188-89)

Müller also contrasts Aschenberger’s dark perceptions of the monument with those of Linde’s much younger girlfriend, Iris, who points out that “in the new Germany, the *Siegestsäule* is a landmark sign for the *Loveparade*” (Müller 142; Timm 99). Returning from Timm’s fictional account to the reality of the 1991 attack, the plot failed in two ways: tactically, because the explosives did not fully ignite; and symbolically, because the public in 1991 did not share the activists’ interpretation of the monument as a symbol of militarism. The public’s relative indifference gives evidence of a change in meaning at the site.

* * *

To a significant extent, the Nazi past of the Zamek in Poznań was forgotten as well. By the time the Solidarność trade union’s candidates swept nearly all open seats in the first (partially) democratic election in June 1989, signaling the fall of the communist regime in Poland, the general populous in Poznań no longer associated the castle remodeled for Hitler either with the dictator or with his regime, as it once did. Nor might anyone have expected as much. The Nazi

¹⁰³ See also Timm 103-04.

¹⁰⁴ Donahue is referring here to Martin Kesici’s 2003 single “Angel of Berlin,” which spent several weeks at the top of the German pop charts that year. The video shows only very brief clips of Kesici singing on Straße des 17. Juni, with the Siegestsäule in the distant background. No direct lyrical reference is made to the Viktoria statue.

dictator never visited the castle, despite having taken such an interest in how it should look. This likely influenced a public association of the castle with the Gauleiter, Arthur Greiser. Even Germans living in Poznań during World War II heavily criticized Greiser for the costly renovation project, as both Schwendemann (126-28) and Catherine Epstein (260) have pointed out. Chapter 4 also outlined the subsequent history that molded the social memory of Poznanians.

Thus, when German historian Heinrich Schwendemann first saw the Zamek in 2001, he was surprised by the well-preserved interiors so similar to those of Berlin's long-buried Reichskanzlei and so representative of National Socialist architecture. The building, beginning to blossom as cultural center after the fall of communism, had the feel of having been genuinely forgotten. In fact, shortly after his first visit, Schwendemann wrote in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* in 2002 that the Zamek is "[b]is heute völlig unbekannt," explaining as follows: "Da sie Speer in seinen Erinnerungen nicht erwähnte, war kein Historiker auf die Idee gekommen nachzuforschen" ("Hitler selbst brachte das Startkapital auf" 49). This castle that contained a fully intact office and residence specially designed for Hitler – whose infamous locales in Berlin, Berchtesgaden and East Prussia were all long destroyed – had been effectively lost to German scholarship for decades.

A wave of publications in the decade since 2002, led by the work of Schwendemann, Janusz Pazder, Evelyn Zimmermann and others, has reawakened in both Poland and Germany a public awareness of all phases of the castle's history. The new scholarship also coincided with the restoring of the Zamek's blackened sandstone façade to its original shade of light gray, which improved the castle's image, as discussed in chapter 4. Yet even the title chosen for the popular-academic conference arranged in 2010 in honor of the Zamek's one hundred years suggested an

element of the unknown in the Zamek's past. The conference carried the title "Odkryj Dzielnicę Zamkową" ("Discover the Castle District"), and promotional posters and postcards featured a historical image of the district cut into pieces like a jigsaw puzzle (see Figure 5.7). The prompt invited the local viewer to discover the *unknown* in what has nevertheless always been an extremely familiar public space for Poznanians.



Figure 5.7. This poster from 2010 promoted an educational contest as well as a conference connected to the Zamek's 100th anniversary celebration in Poznań. The project's title "Odkryj Dzielnicę Zamkową" ("Discover the Castle District") invites Poznanians to uncover the past at this historical urban space. Project design by Anna Piśula, Centrum Turystyki Kulturowej TRAKT. Used by permission.

III.

The Acquisition of Alternate Meaning

Comparing this set of illustrations of forgotten past with those at the chapter's beginning on the reemergence of latent memory shows us that today each structure has the potential to embody various meanings for different groups and under different circumstances. For many the National Socialist past that exists at each space is no longer significant, while for others it stains the space to this day. Though for most the Nazi past is no longer the main association, the examples from the opening of this chapter demonstrate the potential each site has to be linked with that past. That layer certainly exists and will inevitably become exposed on occasion. For the most part, however, the weighty Nazi past has been shed from the public's general perception. Time has certainly played a role, as have post-war politics in divided Germany and in communist Poland. Yet the sites have also taken on new meanings – through literature, film, art and marketing, as well as through cultural gatherings and historical events. After 1945 the sites have functioned in new ways as well as for the same purposes. The Zamek as cultural center and the Siegessäule as advertising motif both fulfilled new roles, while the Siegessäule as backdrop for military parades and Olympiastadion as a sports venue functioned in the same way as before 1945.

A major factor in overcoming or replacing the Nazi past in each case, however, has been the association with other events that had a lasting value for generations of citizens. The case of Tempelhof airport and its meaning for Berliners provides a fitting comparison. A massive complex built under the Nazis and one of the quintessential examples of their monumental architecture, Tempelhof was still used as an airfield after the war, both commercially and by the American military.

Just as collective memory of the Zamek's space was impacted by the Poznań June uprising in 1956, Tempelhof still holds a positive meaning for Berliners. The airport was the site where citizens went to greet American and British "Rosinenbomber," who flew in a constant wave between June 1948 and May 1949 to bring food and supplies to citizens during the Berlin Blockade. In 1951 a monument was erected at the site to commemorate the pilots' heroism.

Rudy Koshar comments on the dual meaning of the space:

The Tempelhof example alerts us to the fact that the line between intentionality and chance was very thin. Those who thought of Tempelhof as a symbol of postwar German-American friendship may have wanted to forget the Nazi past. Yet the force of circumstances and the unquestionable drama of events also compelled them to remember the airport for its postwar historical significance. (*From Monuments to Traces* 174-75)

We see the same situation with the Zamek and the events of June 1956 as well as by subsequent commemorations and the erection of the Poznań June monument in 1981. One might argue that in Poznań's case, however, the positive postwar sentiment is even stronger, since the event ties into the national narrative of Poland overcoming Russian influence. In fact, use of the Zamek as a Polish cultural center can be viewed as a striking reminder of Polish perseverance in Poznań in overcoming the three greatest enemies of the Polish national narrative: Prussian-German imperialism, the Nazi occupation and the Russian/Soviet-led communist regime that was in power until 1989. Wilhelm II, Arthur Greiser, and the communist party's city leaders all ruled from the Zamek, the building that represented their authority in Poznań as much as any other until 1962, when city authorities moved to Plac Kolegiacki (Collegiate Square). Visitors to the castle today – whether for a cultural event or to tour the building itself – are reminded of the national struggle on guided tours and by monuments outside.

Even Olympiastadion has been partly destigmatized by a positive historical narrative – namely via Jesse Owens' triumph in the face of political adversity. The exception is that his

victories at the Olympics took place parallel to the Nazi regime – and not afterwards, as with the Berlin Airlift at Tempelhof (1948-49) and the Poznań June at the Zamek (1956). The Owens narrative was readily embraced after the war, since cheering Owens’ triumph places the Berlin (or German) public on the winning side of the racial minority and victim, and *against* Hitler and the Nazis, whom they then defeat through Owens’ gold medal efforts. In addition, Owens had already been extremely popular with German fans in 1936 – despite the Nazi media’s best efforts to discredit him or downplay his feat.

As for the Siegessäule, Christiane Peitz of *Der Tagesspiegel* lists the different meanings Berlin’s famous column has acquired since 1945: “Landeplatz für Himmelswesen, Kriegerdenkmal, Aussichtsturm (285 Stufen), Ikone der Schwulenszene, die ihre Zeitschrift so nennt, Touristenziel, Love-Paradeplatz, Fanmeilenmeiler, Wahrzeichen” (Tsp, 20 July 2008: “Sieg und Frieden”). Among the events Peitz lists are annual events as well as others that built on already established events to utilize the Großer Stern and Tiergarten for accommodating large crowds, but all of them played a part in impacting the image of one of Berlin’s now favorite monuments. Yet it is not merely locals to whom these three sites appeal.

IV.

Tourism, Globalization and the Role of Local Identity in the Twenty-first Century

In the introduction to their edited volume *Memory and the Impact of Political Transformation of Public Space*, anthropologist Lisa Maya Knauer and historian Daniel J. Walkowitz remind us: “Culture and tourism are often promoted as a potent balm to heal the wounds of the past, while providing economic fuel for postconflict recovery” (13). All three structures have become increasingly projected as symbols of their respective cities and tourist attractions. The messages

that city administrators have given while speaking at a recent anniversary or public event hosted by each structure clearly illustrate the phenomenon that Knauer and Walkowitz identify.

When the Olympiastadion's renovation was finished in 2004, Berlin Mayor Klaus Wowereit and Otto Schily, Bundesminister des Innern, both wrote short contributions to a special book published in commemoration of the new stadium. Schily said the stadium "repräsentiert heute den historischen Wandel" and "[e]in Stadion für ein modernes Deutschland" (Bruns 3). Wowereit insisted the stadium was from its original construction "eine Berliner Attraktion" (2). Both politicians referenced Jesse Owens' successes in their short letters. Despite the approaching World Cup being hosted by the entire country, the writers connected the stadium to its local identity and connected it to the positive narrative trope of Jesse Owens' victory over Hitler. Wowereit failed to mention any past other than Owens; the "Wandel" of which Schily spoke was implied as a change in the host nation from evil to good and from defeat to triumph (2-3). In both cases, the Berlin politicians define the stadium as Berlin's rather than Germany's and direct their play to tourists.

In his recent monograph *Berlin in the Twentieth Century: A Cultural Topography*, Andrew Webber notes that by reusing the stadium for the World Cup in 2006, "the 'open city' ...[is] looking to find a redefined, focal place on the world stage and in the world market, opened up as 'Tor zur Welt' ...in a new century" (15). This, Berlin's play "for normalization of its geo-political place," as Webber identifies it, is connected both to tourism and to its international image (15). In the past two decades Berlin has surged past Munich and other German cities to become the country's premier urban tourist destination, and has developed a reputation as one of Europe's most popular young and vibrant cultural centers.

Efforts are being made to make Berlin's entire Olympic complex – beyond just the stadium – more tourist-friendly. According to the Deutscher Olympischer SportBund, the space “galt als terra incognita” in 1994 when the British occupying authorities moved out. Organizers are still trying to develop a concept to utilize the space as “ein wichtiges Stück deutscher Geschichte” for the 300,000 annual visitors who visit the stadium on days when no football matches are being played (“Berlins Olympiapark steht in der Diskussion”). The challenge of integrating the stadium with the complex and its memory markers was discussed at length in 2011 – the 75th anniversary year of the stadium's opening.



Figure 5.8. Two visitors to the Olympia complex relax in the sun not far from two of the statues crafted according to the National Socialist aesthetic for the 1936 Olympics. On the right is one of the historical markers. Photograph by the author.

On May 20, 2011, the Siegessäule was reopened after extensive renovations that lasted 17 months. There was a press ceremony featuring speeches by Mayor Wowereit and Berlin-Mitte

economic councilman Carsten Spallek (see Figure 3.2). Ute Grallert is director of Monument Tales GmbH, the Siegessäule's leaseholder since 1999 (Aulich, "Oben Ausblick"). She said of the newly finished product: "Sieht man das Ergebnis, lässt es einem das Herz schneller schlagen. Alles ist traumhaft schön geworden" (Aulich, "Siegessäule").

Wowereit spoke of the monument's importance, Spallek presented a symbolic key to Grallert's organization, and Berlin delicacies were served for guests from the media – including *Schmalzbrot*, Berliner Pilsner and champagne from Lutter und Wegner. The monument was open to the public the following day. On May 21 all three major Berlin newspapers ran front page photographs as well as a detailed feature story. "Der Glanz von Berlin," read the lead photo of Viktoria in the *Berliner Zeitung* (BZ, 67/21 May 2011, Nr 118, 1). "Endlich wieder offen," celebrated the *Berliner Morgenpost* (BM, 21 May 2011, 1), along with: "Viktoria strahlt jetzt auch von innen heraus" (15). "Glänzendes Comeback," praised *Der Tagesspiegel* (Tsp, 20981/20 May 2011, 9). Mercedes-Benz ran a full-page advertisement in both *Der Tagesspiegel* and *Berliner Zeitung* featuring Viktoria extending her laurel wreath over three Mercedes vehicles.

In an article for the *Berliner Zeitung* the day before the event, Uwe Aulich quotes senator for city planning Ingeborg Junge-Reyer as saying, "[es sei] wichtig gewesen, die Siegessäule als ein Wahrzeichen so schnell wie möglich wieder der Öffentlichkeit zu übergeben" (Aulich, "Siegessäule"). At the event Spallek connected the monument to Berlin events such as the Loveparade, *Fanmeile*, Christopher Street Day and Berlin Marathon. Having shed the militaristic bent, Spallek sees the Siegessäule now as a symbol of the city's "Vielfalt" and "Toleranz" (Personal interview).

In 2010 and 2011, the city sank nearly €1 million into renovating the Siegessäule and its corresponding buildings, such as the tunnels under the traffic circle and Albert Speer's four

Wachhäuser, and also included two kilograms of gold for a new complete layer of leafing for “Goldelse.” The entire cost of renovations, which was largely carried by European funds for regional development, was over €4.3 million.¹⁰⁵ As with Olympiastadion, there is no doubt of its importance to the city. Going far beyond the obligatory *Denkmalschutz* guidelines – where simply not changing or removing a structure can suffice (it is not mandatory to spend money on upkeep) – Berlin authorities have invested in both structures as positive images of their city.¹⁰⁶ They want tourists to visit both sites, to have positive images of both, and to take those memories home with them as reminders of Berlin itself. Both are cared for and presented in the same way as the Brandenburger Tor, Schloss Charlottenburg or the Pergamon Museum.

Art historian Maciej Szymaniak points out that tourism is nothing new to the Zamek in Poznań (6-11). It has always been an important symbol in Poland, he argues, and tourists were curious about the building during the interwar period. In fact, more than 12,000 tourists visited the building during the 1936-37 year (10). “The Castle,” writes Szymaniak, “became a symbol of free Poznań and a fixture on city routes” (10). Poles were aware of the building’s intended “German” symbolism and its ties to Germanization politics, but they were nonetheless fascinated by it. It was a great attraction, and worthy of a visit, given its size and architectural significance.

Today is no different in Poznań, where often over 200 visitors attend the guided tours now offered weekly during the summer season and once a month in the offseason. The castle is

¹⁰⁵ The figures are taken from p. 6 of the “Pressemappe” distributed at the Siegestsäule during the press reception and rededication on May 20, 2011. The Pressemappe carries the subtitle: “Gemeinschaftsaufgabe ‘Verbesserung der regionalen Wirtschaftsstruktur’: Anpassungsmaßnahmen zur touristischen Erschließung des Großen Sterns in Berlin-Tiergarten.”

¹⁰⁶ See “Denkmalschutzgesetz Berlin,” Berliner Rahmenvertrag (BRV) 2130-12, §1 and §8 ff., <http://www.stadtentwicklung.berlin.de/service/gesetzestexte/de/download/dschg_bln.pdf>.

additionally open daily and tourists are encouraged to view its interior on their own, and can also visit one of the many clubs, exhibits, performances or other cultural offerings.



Figure 5.9. The Zamek celebrated its 100th anniversary or “Sto lat” in August 2010. A banner hanging from the clock tower advertises the event, which was accompanied by an academic conference on the history of the Castle District as well as a host of cultural offerings throughout the summer. Photograph by the author.

V.

Redefining the “We”/ “Our”

The opening chapter proposed a consideration of the difference between neglect and denial at former sites associated with the Third Reich. This is a topic Ladd addresses in his essay “The View from Berlin” – an epilogue to historian Gavriel Rosenfeld’s and art historian Paul Jaskot’s edited volume *Beyond Berlin: Twelve German Cities Confront the Nazi Past* (295-301). The book is a significant contribution because of its examination of how local memory has developed vis-à-vis the typically “national memory” of the Third Reich. As Ladd insightfully points out, reflecting on the work of the contributing authors, “attention to the Third Reich’s remnants challenges a quiet post-war consensus that has separated the national catastrophe of the Third Reich from local memories that were implicitly understood to have been essentially innocent” (296). The Nazi regime was indeed a national phenomenon and the post-reunification wave of German *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* has been conducted first and foremost on the national level. “The *political* site of memory politics is still national, not postnational or global,” Andreas Huyssen also reminds us (*Present Pasts* 16).¹⁰⁷ Thus, at the local level, there is often room to deflect responsibility for the past onto the nation.

Ladd cues us in to one of the keys to understanding what can seem like a constant fluctuation in the meaning of spaces connected to the National Socialist past: “While Berlin’s local identity has long been viewed through a national lens, other cities have been better able to detach their local traditions from the national ones” (300). By acquiring local meaning a given structure can shed its associations to a national past – in this case the Nazi past. And while Berlin has been the place where many national memory issues have played out, the cases of

¹⁰⁷ The emphasis is from Huyssen’s original.

Olympiastadion and the Siegessäule show us that in Berlin, too, local meaning can function as a mask for the stigma resulting from a connection to the Nazi past. While the potential will always exist at these sites for that latent national past to reintroduce itself – as we saw with the failed 2000 Olympic bid and the Obama speech at the Siegessäule – it can just as easily be forgotten by a generation. In the meantime, local politicians and cultural organizers are connecting the three sites to local identity and history, as well as to regular events such as Olympiastadion's football matches; the *Fanmeile*, Christopher Street Day and Berlin Marathon at the Siegessäule; and the annual "Poznań Poetów" (Poznań of the Poets) event as well as the Polish premier of the World Press Photo exhibit each spring. Ultimately, by defining each site as part of what makes each city unique has the effect of reducing any emphasis on a national or imperial past.

Poland and Germany both moved away from local identity toward national memory after the *Wende*. In Poland, there was finally a sense of autonomy, as the country enjoyed – aside from the brief interwar period from 1918 to 1939 – its first years as a state without Russian and/or German military presence since the 1770s. The nation's geographical westward shift after World War II finally in the 1990s presented cultural and economical opportunities to identify with the West.

In Germany, reunification brought for many a sense of national belonging and resolution after decades of fluctuation, migration and political turmoil, while for others it meant increased economic and political concerns. In any case, the new Berlin Republic was confronted with the German past that governments in Bonn and East Berlin too often conveniently avoided. For these initial years, questions regarding the Nazi past were addressed on a national level. As Rosenfeld and Jaskot demonstrate, however, the Nazi past is beginning to be addressed on the local level as well – in places like Wolfsburg and Nürnberg, Quedlinburg and Dresden.

Part of the reason for local past identifying these questions is the surge of global influence that has rapidly increased after the fall of communism and the growth of the digital age. In addition to Rosenfeld's and Jaskot's volume, this study – and the case of the Zamek in particular – also fits very well into the context of another recent edited volume that was mentioned in chapter 4: *Cities after the Fall of Communism: Reshaping Cultural Landscapes and European Identity* by John Czaplicka, Nida Gelazis and Blair Ruble. The authors demonstrate how local actors in Central and East European cities have used local historical ties to past political and economic establishments such as the Habsburg Empire and Hanseatic League to reestablish past connections to “Europe” and the West (341). Historian Jan Musekamp's chapter on the Polish city Szczecin (formerly German “Stettin”) demonstrates how, “by asserting the city's German connection, Szczecinians have been able to overcome, in part, their feelings of inferiority toward Warsaw, which had dominated them for decades” (339). There is a striking similarity to the Zamek and its district in Poznań, a city that also has a long rivalry with Warsaw. The Zamek provides a connection to Berlin – one that Poznanians can highlight locally to distance themselves from Warsaw,¹⁰⁸ and then promptly dispose of in national contexts. Krzysztof Kwaśniewski reminds us that not long ago there was even an unsuccessful motion by politicians in Warsaw to change the name “Zamek cesarski,” lest the imperial palace in Poznań be perceived to trump the capital and its well-known “Zamek Królewski” or “Royal Palace” (285).

¹⁰⁸ Poznań is located directly between the Polish and German capitals, though it is slightly closer to Berlin. Rail connections to Berlin are slightly shorter at just more than two and a half hours. The recently completed *autostrada* A2 now connects Poznań to the Autobahn A12 and will make automobile travel much quicker to Berlin, which for many Poznanians is already preferable to Warsaw as an international travel hub.

Local and even provincial communities also have global audiences through digital media, and as a result, these communities strive to project themselves as places that are interesting in a unique way, but that also conform to global political standards. In Poznań the Zamek is “the last castle of its kind in Europe,” as flyers remind visitors to the building. The fact that Wilhelm II built the castle in 1910 not only gives the city a unique bit of history, but also connects it to the European community. In Berlin the Siegessäule is no longer a symbol of war, but of tolerance and diversity – as Spallek interprets for the public – which reflects positively on the city in the global and international community. Volkwin Marg’s and gmp’s new design for Olympiastadion combines attractive, cutting-edge architecture with maturity and responsibility in regard to the past and preserving the original form – an aspect that is certainly not being ignored, even if it may often be thematically marginalized and spatially deemphasized.

The previous chapter showed how Germans and Poles essentially wrote the three structures out of “their” respective histories in the years after the war, and were willing to give attention to those places again only when something else had happened there that was more recent than 1945. As each place is now being remembered again, it is no longer principally by its respective nation. Rather, people willing to identify each place with the city’s *local* past are interested in finding out – and passing on – all they can find about the history of each site. They are willing to use this interest to draw visitors to the city to engage with that local past. Funded locally and in some cases largely by the European Union,¹⁰⁹ organizers aim to promote the local

¹⁰⁹ European Union funding was used along with national funding to pay roughly €3.3 million of the some €4.3 million spent on renovation of the Siegessäule and the Großer Stern. The remaining funds, nearly €1 million were local state funds (Land Berlin). The Zamek’s project of renovating the Great Hall (Sala Wielka) complex will provide a modern interior with multiple spaces for hosting films, exhibits, lectures, receptions and other events. The project began in December 2010 and is scheduled to be completed by December of 2012. Of the total cost of 49

past to tourists from abroad. Why? As “local” a site can more readily be perceived to be politically harmless while maintaining an appeal for tourists – in spite of any national meaning that may be present. Czaplicka et al. point out that

challenges to any singular monolithic national identity should be seen as further evidence that postcommunist Europe has been moving closer to Western Europe, where decades of continued migration, further transnational integration, and a new appreciation for multiculturalism and diversity have changed the tone of national narratives substantially since the end of World War II. (338-39)

Their study includes several cities each in Poland and Ukraine as well as Vilnius, Tallinn and Novgorod – a context into which both Poznań and Berlin fit quite well. Although both Olympiastadion and the Siegessäule were located in West Berlin, both are certainly an important part of the city’s postcommunist identity after reunification.

Another factor enabling these three structures to more easily shed their past associations is the fact that all of them are generally perpetrator sites in regard to the National Socialist past, and not victim sites. Had these sites in Berlin and Poznań been victim sites or places of suffering, they might well all be somber places of remembrance today. Beginning with – though certainly not limited to – the dozens of concentration camps, both Germany and Poland have numerous examples. Yet because the spaces in this study were directly associated with the perpetrators and their ideology, the meaning has been more easily forgotten (and perhaps naturally ignored) and new meaning has been both anticipated and welcomed.

Finally, each new generation is continually evaluating its own past(s). Though memory concerns the past, it still takes place in the present. Post-memory and historical evaluation are no different: both refer to ongoing processes that happen in the present. No generation can control how its children will remember, think or feel. No generation can program its children to react to

million złoty (roughly \$15.5 million), 30 million złoty (roughly \$9.5 million) is being paid for by the European Union’s funds for regional development.

certain events in a particular way. As far as Germans dealing with their burdensome past, we need look no further than 1968 to see how definitively (and radically) one generation broke from the historical “reading” of its predecessors.

The current generation of Berliners associates neither Olympiastadion nor the Siegessäule with the Nazi regime. Berlin’s contemporary visitors and locals who wish to remember Holocaust victims or learn about the Nazi past visit places like the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, the Jewish Museum, Topography of Terror or the former concentration camp in Sachsenhausen. None of these sites existed in its current form twenty-two years ago;¹¹⁰ today they are part of the core of a monument-saturated German capital in terms of World War II and Holocaust memory. The Siegessäule is simply not a part of this memory network, and Olympiastadion, I would argue, is only peripherally relevant – despite daily tours and a series of historical markers. Instead, the stadium is an international sports venue and the column a city symbol and viewing platform. “Die Goldelse” is more *Berliner Schutzengel* than *Siegesgöttin* and the stadium’s heroes include Jesse Owens, Sohn Kee-chung and recent Hertha BSC football stars like Arne Friedrich, its antiheroes perhaps Zinedine Zidane and Marco Materrazzi.

In Poznań, while there is an awareness of the Zamek’s ties to the Nazi regime – particularly with recent publications and steadily growing interest leading up to and following the centennial events – it is hardly the first phase of the building’s past that is remembered. This is despite numerous elements of the interior that testify to the extensive modifications under Hitler’s and Greiser’s architect Franz Böhmer. This no longer immediate association with the Nazi past may seem surprising, given the place of history and Polish victimhood – especially in

¹¹⁰ The Sachsenhausen camp indeed existed as a national memorial in the GDR, though the focus was almost exclusively on the political prisoners interned and murdered at the camp. After 1990 a museum was opened that has made efforts to present a more balanced history of the camp and all of its prisoners, including those victims of the Soviets from 1945 to 1950.

association with World War II – in Polish national memory. Yet too much has happened at this site in Poznań since 1945 for the memory of the space to be stuck in that year, beginning with the Poznań June uprising and series of memorials outside and continuing with the designation of the castle's spacious halls and corridors for cultural programs and exhibits inside. The Zamek has been the cornerstone of the city's district dedicated to university life, culture and the fine arts. To use Assmann's terms once again, though certainly informed by the *cultural memory* portrayed in the monuments and education, younger Poznanians' *communicative memory* will be colored by their own experiences. As with Berliners cheering on their football club in Olympiastadion or on one of the *Fanmeile*'s large screens in front of the Siegessäule, such contemporary uses will continue to inform public perception of these sites going forward. With promotion and utilization more concentrated on the local level, contested memory tied to national narratives may continue to become increasingly muted. After all, an ever-present past is not necessarily always a remembered one.



Figure 5.10. The Polish flag, here at half mast, now flies above the Zamek on certain state holidays and observances. Photograph by the author.

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