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## Tourism to Memorial Sites of the Holocaust

Rudi Hartmann

### Introduction

Few historical periods in human history are so fatally associated with the destruction of human lives as Hitler's 'Third Reich'. Historic places honouring the victims of National Socialistic Germany form a wide and expanding network of heritage sites in Europe. Most of the places where the horrific events occurred during 1933–1945 have been broadly denoted as Holocaust memorial sites in the remembrance of the six million Jews who died, and the many other ethnic, religious, social, and political groups which were subjected to persecution. This chapter, therefore, reconstructs the evolution of this memorial landscape. It is important to understand that not only has the memorial landscape been substantially expanded and changed over the years but also the approaches in the study of these sites and their management practices. Ultimately, this chapter gives an overview of the various traditions of research in this field.

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R. Hartmann (✉)

University of Colorado Denver, Denver, CO, USA

## A Changing Memorial Landscape for the Victims of National Socialistic Germany

### Beginnings: The Majdanek Memorial Site 1945/1946

During Nazi Germany's occupation of Central and Eastern Europe in 1941–1945, 20 main concentration camps, several extermination or death camps, and more than a thousand subsidiary or satellite camps were in existence (see, e.g., Gilbert's *Atlas of the Holocaust* 1982 and United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's *Historical Atlas of the Holocaust* 1996). All the main camps, death camps, as well as hundreds of satellite camps have become memorial sites for the victims of National Socialistic Germany over the past decades.

The first memorial site was established at Majdanek near Lublin, Poland, in 1945–1946. It was here that the Allied Forces (Red Army) reached the first concentration camp in July 1944. As the Soviet forces moved very quickly in the direction of Lublin, the SS had little time to destroy or conceal facilities used in the mass murder of the prisoners – as they did, for instance, in the case of the early death camps of Belzec and Sobibor which were inoperative by 1943. Thus, the physical infrastructure of the Majdanek concentration camp found at liberation was largely unchanged and still had the gas chambers and the crematorium in place, as well as the storage of collected clothes and shoes of victims. Majdanek was the proof of what had been suspected about the nature of Nazi concentration camps in the early 1940s, and (Soviet) journalists visiting the camp shortly after made it public news (reported also in *Time Magazine* 1944, p. 38).

In November 1944, the Majdanek State Museum was founded by the Polish Committee of Liberation. It declared the camp a 'memorial site of the martyrdom of the peoples of Poland and other nations' (Marcuse 2010a, p. 192/193) which became accessible to the public in 1945–1946. It is estimated that 300,000–400,000 people visited the museum and site during the first two years (Jalocha and Boyd 2014). By 1947, the Polish Parliament passed a decree that the remains of the Majdanek camp site (jointly with those at Auschwitz and other concentration camps on Polish territory) were to be preserved. In 1965, Majdanek received the status of a national museum. However, Majdanek as the second largest concentration camp in Poland would remain in the shadow of Auschwitz which became a leading symbol of the Holocaust.

## **The Afterlife of the Camps: Uses and Abuses of the Camps 1945–1955**

The historian Harold Marcuse reconstructed in great detail what happened to the former concentration camps, the prisoners, and the SS guards in the immediate years after liberation (2010a). He lists five uses of the camps. Firstly, the Allied Forces who were confronted with horrific atrocities when reaching and liberating the camps took measures to educate the populations living in the towns nearby such as Bergen-Belsen or Dachau about the conditions they found. Secondly, there was an urgent need to bring tens of thousands of survivors back to health. A third use was directed to imprison the Germans who were held responsible for the crimes committed at the sites. Thus, former camps like Dachau became the place where SS guards and others were kept in captivity while the trials proceeded. Fourthly, efforts were made to preserve components of the camp environment which were considered important for future educational purposes. Finally, Marcuse reviews the lack of attention given to the more remote camps in the concentration camp system, such as Natzweiler and Gross-Rosen, as well as death camps such as Belzec and Sobibor in Eastern Poland. These sites as well as the majority of the satellite camps were simply abandoned and ignored before they were included in the commemoration practices much later, in the 1960s and 1970s, and some as late as in the 1980s and 1990s (Marcuse 2010a).

### **Camp Liberation Anniversaries as Major Events of the Commemoration Practices**

In the absence of accessible and inoperative memorial sites, it was the camp liberation anniversaries in the 1950s and 1960s that had importance for the former prisoners who vividly remembered liberation which marked a turning point of their lives. The dates of liberation for the larger camps – Buchenwald on April 11 (1945), Bergen-Belsen on April 15 (1945), and Dachau on April 29 (1945) – became major annual events which brought thousands of former prisoners together. Moreover, the gatherings at the early camp liberation anniversaries served as a forum for the discussion of how to establish first memorials, markers, and exhibits on the grounds. On the tenth anniversary of the liberation of Dachau concentration camp in 1955, a prisoner organisation was formed which eventually played a crucial role in the establishment of an official memorial at the former concentration camp – the Comité International de Dachau.

While the number of surviving concentration camp prisoners has dwindled over the past decades due to natural attrition – in the case of Dachau reduced to a few hundred in 2005 and a few dozens in 2015, 50 and 60 years after the liberation of more than 30,000 prisoners – anniversary events are still held. Programmes organised for the liberation anniversaries at the memorial sites of the larger camps continue to have relevance in the public debate, with sizable coverage in the media. In 2005, the United Nations General Assembly resolution 60/7 recognised the liberation of Auschwitz on January 27 (1945) as *International Holocaust Remembrance Day*. It commemorates the genocide that resulted in the death of an estimated 6 million Jewish people, 2 million Romani people ('gypsies'), 250,000 mentally and physically disabled people, and 9000 gay men by the Nazi regime and its collaborators.

### **Anniversaries of the Night of Broken Glass (Kristallnacht, November 9/10, 1938)**

The Night of Broken Glass ('Kristallnacht') pogroms on November 9/10, 1938 (more recently, also known as the November Pogroms) is an equally important anniversary in the commemoration of the Holocaust. A series of systematically organised vicious actions staged by the SA paramilitary forces resulted in the burning of more than 1000 synagogues and serious damage to or destruction of about 7000 shops and businesses still owned by Jews in German and Austrian cities. It marked a new stage in an openly orchestrated persecution of Jews, with the first large deportations of Jewish citizens to several concentration camps. In the years after WWII, public commemoration services have been held in many German and Austrian cities, frequently at sites of the former synagogues which were burned down. To date, civic leaders and re-founded local Jewish organisations join hands to remember the pogroms widely considered the beginning of the end of the Jewish communities in Central Europe in the late 1930s/early 1940s and of the Holocaust.

While various traditions in the commemoration practices evolved in different cities over time (see Jacobs 2008, 2010), one example should be discussed in more detail: the walk of memory ('Erinnerungsgang') in Oldenburg, a mid-size college town in northwestern Germany. It is the re-enactment of the walk through the town that Jewish citizens of Oldenburg were forced to make on November 10, 1938. The first walk of memory was in 1981. During the 1988 walk of memory, 50 years after the original event, about 1500 citizens participated. The silent, solemn walk through parts of Oldenburg each November 10th is organised by a local committee and working group ('Arbeitskreis Erinnerungsgang'). The general motive for preparing and re-

enacting the walk is 'Remembering is the basis for reconciliation'. Each year a different school from Oldenburg takes on a major responsibility for the commemorative events. Thus, it has become a living body of a memory culture setting new initiatives each year.

## The Slow, Complicated, and Difficult Path to Memorial Sites at Former Concentration Camps

Establishing memorials at former concentration camps and at subsidiary camps was not an easy undertaking. It took many years if not decades in some cases to reach the goal of setting up appropriate markers, memorial plaques, first exhibits, and finally official memorial sites equipped with museums and salaried staffs. A first permanent memorial at a concentration camp in Germany was established in Bergen-Belsen. A collective Jewish monument was established in September 1945. On the first anniversary of the camp liberation on April 15, 1946, a stone monument with Hebrew and English inscriptions was inaugurated by the Central Jewish Committee of the British Zone. In 1947, efforts were started to create a central memorial in the form of an obelisk and memorial wall naming 14 nations of the victims in Belsen. The memorial was formally dedicated in a commemorative ceremony in 1952 attended by West German president Theodor Heuss and the President of the Jewish World Congress Nahum Goldman. The Bergen-Belsen camp was liberated by British and Canadian troops who found horrific conditions at the site. It is estimated that more than 70,000 people died at the POW and the Concentration Camp before and during the immediate weeks following liberation. A typhus epidemic raged during the final phase of the camp, and thousands of corpses of diseased prisoners were buried in nearby mass graves. Shortly after liberation, the camp grounds had to be completely cleared for health reasons. The uncontested, widely reported magnitude of the fatalities in Belsen, the presence of a large nearby community of displaced persons, many of them survivors of the camps, as well as the complete removal of the structures on the grounds facilitated the allocation of the memorial. This may have contributed to a relatively fast decision for a memorial and the later approval by the State of Lower Saxony in charge of the site by 1952. The memory of young author Anne Frank who died with her sister, Margot, in Belsen in March 1945 gave further momentum to the memorial site in the mid/late 1950s. The Bergen-Belsen memorial site saw more changes in the 1960s and the following years, from the addition of a small 'document house' in 1966 to the development of a new memorial site museum which opened in 2007 (Marcuse 2010a, Stiftung niedersaechsische Gedenkstaetten/Gedenkstaette Bergen-Belsen 2012).

In the case of Dachau, where at least 40,000 people died during the 12 years the camp existed, the push for a memorial site played out at a much slower pace and in more complicated ways. Early initiatives for a memorial turned out to be failures. Several proposals were turned down for a variety of reasons or were soon forgotten by the public (Marcuse 2010a). Local initiatives and plans for the closure and the demolition of the crematorium (with a first exhibit about the camp) in the early 1950s were prevented by the Paris Treaty which West Germany had signed with France in 1954. Several clauses in the treaty protected the burial sites of the concentration camp prisoners and the access to the camp. After 1955, it was most of all the re-founded *Comité International de Dachau* prisoner organisation which tenaciously stood up for the preservation of the camp site. In 1960, a first individual memorial was dedicated on the grounds by the Catholic Church. Memorials of the Jewish Community and of the Protestant Church followed in 1967. The International Memorial *Never Again* was dedicated in 1968. Eventually, a Russian Orthodox Memorial was established near the Crematorium in 1994. The official Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial with a museum and a small salaried staff funded by the State of Bavaria was opened to the public in 1965. The site was administratively integrated into the Bavarian Castle and Gardens Administration. Despite the formal establishment of the Dachau memorial site, considerable resistance among the Dachau residents persisted (Hartmann 1989; Marcuse 1990, 2001, 2005, 2010a). People living in Dachau and the County of Dachau had a hard time coming to grips with the fact that the first concentration camp of Nazi Germany was established next door to their market town. The concentration camp developed into a large military-industrial complex in 1933–1945. The predominantly Catholic community was eventually taken over by officials of the NSDAP (‘Gleichschaltung’) and a broadening support for the camp in the general populace developed, in particular, within the business community (Steinbacher 1993). In the years after 1965, the new memorial site on the northeastern edge of town was considered an annoying ‘black spot’ in the distinguished twelve hundred years past of the town. While the memorial site saw a growing number of visitors reaching close to one million per year in the mid/late 1980s, tensions between the City of Dachau and the Dachau Memorial Site continued throughout the 1980s and 1990s. These animosities re-emerged, for instance, over the City’s obstruction and/or delay of approval for a new youth meeting centre (‘Jugendbegegnungsstätte’) in support of joint educational events with the memorial site (Stadler 1995). It was a new generation of Dachau citizens and elected politicians that sought a better and more constructive relationship in the 2000s/2010s – after the site and the entrance was

restructured, many of the museum exhibits were redesigned and a new visitor centre was added (in 2003/2005/2009). In addition, more programmes in collaboration with local Dachau historians were developed (Schossig 2010).

Two other concentration camps in Germany with satellite camp systems, in Flossenbuerg in far eastern Bavaria and in Neuengamme near Hamburg, saw a complicated history in the commemoration of the sites where about 100,000 prisoners were held, with an estimated one third in Flossenbuerg and half of prisoners in Neuengamme put to death. While several memorials, monuments, and markers were placed at both sites in the late 1940s/1950s to the 1980s, appropriate memorial sites with sizable museums were developed and opened to the public only recently during the mid-2000s. For extended periods, both sites were misused Flossenbuerg for housing ethnic German refugees and low-income town residents on the camp site with new amenities and structures built on the grounds and Neuengamme for prison populations kept in an older and a new prison building. In 1989, the Hamburg Senate decided to close and relocate the prisons from the site which finally occurred in 2003/2006. Flossenbuerg, one of the largely “forgotten concentration camps” (Pelanda 1995), went through a significant transition as well, with the removal of the post-WWII structures on the camp grounds so that an expanded exhibition area on the memorial site could be opened in 2007 (Marcuse 2010a). The cases of the memorial sites at Buchenwald near Weimar, at Sachsenhausen near Berlin, and at Ravensbrueck, a camp for female prisoners North of Berlin, will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter as their development was closely tied to the agenda of the German Democratic Republic (DDR), the Communist East German state.

Memorials for the eight concentration camps in Poland, including the extermination camps of Auschwitz-Birkenau, Treblinka, Belzec, Majdanek, Sobibor, and Chelmno, underwent significant changes as well. In 1947, the remains of the camps were protected by a law passed in the Polish Parliament. The new memorials, first in Majdanek then in Auschwitz as well as at other camps, were largely set up for the purpose of designing and dedicating sites commemorating the ‘martyrdom of the Polish nation (and other nations)’. The main concentration camp (Auschwitz I) saw the murder of thousands of Polish resistance fighters as well as many Polish Catholic priests and nuns including Father Maximilian Kolbe and Edith Stein now both saints within the Catholic Church. Auschwitz became the deadliest site where the ‘Final Solution (of the Jewish question)’ was planned and carried out by Nazi Germany during 1942–1945. It is estimated that in the three Auschwitz camps, including the death camp Auschwitz-Birkenau, at least one million Jewish lives perished. At the memorial site, an enduring and bitter conflict developed between Polish (Communist) officials as well as members of the



Polish Catholic Church and the international Jewish community. In the 1960s and 1970s, the Auschwitz memorial site was declared an 'International Monument to the Victims of Fascism' without any mention of Jewish victims in the museum exhibits. In the 1980s and 1990s, a 'War of the Crosses' raged when first a large cross was erected, then a Carmelite Convent established on the grounds which made its presence felt with close to 200 smaller wooden crosses. Pope John Paul II, a native of Krakow, Poland, eventually ordered the relocation of the nuns. Geographer Andrew Charlesworth who reconstructed and discussed the conflict between different groups over the memorialisation processes at Auschwitz argued that it was an intended and at times de facto 'De-Judaization' of the sacred site (for many) that was at the core of the long-lasting controversy (1994).

With the fall of the 'Iron Curtain' in 1989/1990, the situation at Auschwitz and other memorial sites in Poland fundamentally changed. In the following years, Auschwitz became more easily accessible to the international visitor. Subsequently, its redesigned memorial site and museum addressed the role of the Auschwitz camps in the extermination of Jews and the Holocaust. The number of tourists to Poland, in particular to Krakow with an intact old town and the nearby Auschwitz memorial site as a well-established destination, rapidly increased in the 1990s and 2000s. By the 2010s more than 1.3 million people annually visited the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Memorial and Museum. Consequently, Auschwitz had eclipsed Dachau in terms of visitation numbers while it has become 'the most widely recognized symbol of Nazi atrocities' (Marcuse 2001, p. 118).

Belzec and Sobibor, two extermination camps where an estimated 600,000 and 250,000 people respectively, almost all of them Jews, were murdered during 'Operation Reinhard' in Eastern Poland, received little recognition until the mid-1960s. Both death camps were discontinued by the SS in 1943. The sites with its structures and human remains were covered and concealed as farms. Few prisoners from neither camp survived, as all the 'Sonderkommando' prisoners were gassed as well. The last 300 Belzec inmates forced to clean up the camp were deported to Sobibor where their final fate awaited them. Seven Belzec prisoners survived WWII; and only one witness report was recorded (Reder 1946). In the late 1990s, archaeological studies were conducted at the site when, finally, an appropriate memorial site was opened in 2004. Sobibor, which saw an uprising of the prisoners in October 1943 (dramatised in the 1987 British TV film *Escape from Sobibor*), gradually gained stature as a destination as more international visitors arrived there in the 1990s/2000s, including from the Netherlands. The large majority of Dutch Jews were deported either to Auschwitz-Birkenau or to the Sobibor death camp (Schelvis 2004). In 2003, the Dutch Government made substantial contributions to the



upgrades of the memorial site, with new monuments, markers, and exhibits within the grounds as well as continued research at the site.

By the 1980s/1990s, hundreds of memorial sites commemorating Nazi atrocity victims were established Europe-wide. In the German-occupied areas of Europe (1939–1945), populations had endured persecution, crime, and mass murder. Besides the above-mentioned places in Poland, many memorial sites were set up in Eastern and South Eastern Europe, France, Italy, and other countries within continental Europe. The Netherlands were occupied by Nazi Germany for five long years. Several memorial sites were developed starting in the 1970s. They included Kamp Vught (the concentration camp near 's-Hertogenbosch) and Kamp Westerbork, the former transit camp in the far Eastern Province of Drenthe which is considered the national memorial site for the Netherlands (jointly with the recently established Dutch Holocaust Memorial at the Schouwburg, the deportation center in Amsterdam). There is one Dutch site which has gained wide international recognition: the Anne Frank House. The house on 263 Prinsengracht in Amsterdam, with a Secret Annex, was the place where young Anne Frank wrote her diary 1942–1944 and which is now published in more than 60 languages and read by millions. The house was preserved and opened as a small museum in 1960. By 2007, the historic site and educational centre with the mission to disseminate Anne's oeuvre and humanistic values has received more than one million visitors annually (Hartmann 2013, 2016). Contemporary historians have compared Anne's compelling story and her short life in troubled times with an 'accessible window into the Holocaust' (Young 1999).

## Former Nazi Concentration Camps Become Known as Memorial Sites of the Holocaust

The term Holocaust is a fairly new concept denoting the genocide of European Jewry (including other ethnic, religious, social, and political groups persecuted and murdered by Nazi Germany). The term became more widely used in the 1960s due to the publicity of the Eichmann Trials in 1961–1962. The highly successful NBC mini-series 'Holocaust' shown in the United States, in Germany, and other countries/TV markets in 1978/1979 was instrumental in popularising the term Holocaust and some of the historic sites such as the Theresienstadt-Terezin Ghetto and Concentration Camp and the Sobibor death camp. Holocaust movies have become a new genre, with a sizable number of film and TV productions completed and introduced to the market every year. Several Holocaust movies such as 'The Diary of Anne Frank' (1959), 'Schindler's List' (1993), and 'Son of Saul' (2015) have won Academy

Awards ('the Oscars'). These movies also remind audiences of the historic sites of the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam; of Kazimierz, the Jewish neighbourhood in Krakow; and of Auschwitz-Birkenau respectively.

By the 1980s, the term Holocaust was regularly applied to many sites where Nazi atrocities had occurred. Former concentration camps became internationally (as well as nationally in Germany) known as Holocaust memorial sites. Holocaust education formed a part of public education in many school systems worldwide (see Ehmann et al. 1995; Genger 1995 for Germany). At the same time, a parallel term emerged – 'Shoah' – a Jewish word denoting a catastrophic experience. The term found predominant use in Israel as well as in the scholarly works of European historians. While 'Holocaust' (and to a lesser degree, 'Shoah') has become the widely used term within international communication, the most common German term(s) defining the new type of memorials for the victims continued to be closely tied to the perpetrators, the NSDAP/ Nazi Party: 'Gedenkstaetten fuer die Opfer des Nationalsozialismus' (memorials for the victims of National Socialism), also abbreviated as 'NS-Opfer' (NS victims), or, more specifically, the 'Opfer der Nationalsozialistischen Gewaltherrschaft' (victims of the national socialistic rule of terror).

Two leading Holocaust memorial museums and of the Shoah were established outside Europe: Yad Vashem in Israel in 1953 (Krakover 2005) and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington D.C. in 1993 (Linenthal 1995; Piper 2006). They represent a new type of carefully created places of commemoration, outside the in situ memorial sites (as discussed earlier). Besides the Holocaust museum in Washington, D.C., other Holocaust memorials and museums were formed in Los Angeles (in 1961), New York, and a few other places in the United States. In Denver, for example, a memorial to the 200,000 victims of the Babi Yar massacre in Kiev/Ukraine was established in 1982. In a public park, a walkway to a memorial and a bridge over a ravine was designed. However, a controversy evolved over the inscription originally leaving out victims of the 1941 massacre (Young 1993, pp. 294–296).

## The Design of Holocaust Memorials as a New Genre

How to adorn, recognise, or characterise the places of commemoration for the victims of the Holocaust? It was a new genre in public art which evolved in the post-WWII years and decades – as convincingly shown and discussed in great detail by historians Young (1993) and Marcuse (2010b). While Young focused on about 15 sites in his seminal work 'The Texture of Memory', Marcuse preferred a close examination of exemplary memorials in a more chronological

order. Young (1993, p. 13) argued that ‘Holocaust memorials are neither benign nor irrelevant, but suggest themselves as the basis for political and communal action’. In his treatise Marcuse elaborates on the complexity of communal actions and political decision-making that eventually resulted in a series of new memorials, from the mid-to-late 1940s through to the late 1960s.

Majdanek, with a first memorial site at a concentration camp (as discussed earlier), was also the place where a remarkable monument was created in 1943, more than a year before liberation. The erection of a tall statue with three eagles taking flight, a proposal for ‘beautification’ of the camp made by Albin Boniecki and fellow prisoners, was granted by the SS camp authorities. They recognised the eagles as a Nazi symbol, whereas in the mind of the creator, the monument represented the ultimate freedom of three imprisoned groups: the men, the women, and the children at the camp (Marcuse 2010a, b, p. 56). It was a precursor of the predominantly symbolic nature of the memorials that took shape at many memorial sites. Most often, tall monuments such as obelisks were chosen for the memorials at the sites during the late 1940s and 1950s. There was an avoidance in the depiction of graphic themes for the monuments. For instance, an early memorial monument reflecting the harsh reality of the prisoner life in the camp (‘Inferno’) had to be redesigned by artist Fritz Koelle in Dachau. The result was a gentler, inoffensive statue of *The Unknown Concentration Camp Inmate* placed near the crematorium in 1950 (Marcuse 2010b, 72/73).

At some memorials sites, distinct and artistically impressive uses of Jewish symbols are evident. The Treblinka memorial site consists of 17,000 broken tablets ‘resembling a great raggy graveyard’. In the centre of ‘a landscape of fragments’, an obelisk with a crack running through the monument is placed (Young 1993, 187–192). The memorial at the Babi Yar site in Kiev/Ukraine has as its prominent feature a menorah. Other examples of Jewish symbols at Holocaust memorial sites are found at Kristallnacht memorials in Germany cities. They show a desecrated Torah at the Oberstrasse synagogue in Hamburg and at the Cologne Jewish Museum:

Without reference to the deportations and the genocide that followed the pogroms, the museum’s history is framed through the imagery of a violated and tattered Torah. (Jacobs 2010, 85–2103)

Two contrasting options for the design of memorial sites were the creation of a new memorial landscape (e.g., Bergen-Belsen where the camp grounds were completely cleared) or leaving the grounds – as found at liberation – largely intact. Majdanek and Auschwitz are both examples of the latter. In the case of Auschwitz-Birkenau and the preserved rail entrance to the camp, the

tracks leading to the 'gate of no return' leaves an iconic landscape for the visitors. It has become one of the most widely recognised visual marker of the Holocaust. Eventually, a memorial monument was developed within the grounds of the Birkenau site. A design competition launched in 1957/1958 led to the selection of three teams, and their winning models for the monument were built in 1967. The extensive remnants of the Auschwitz camps have remained, however, its true memorial (Young 1993, pp. 128–144; Marcuse 2010b, pp. 81–84).

In the case of the International Dachau Memorial (*Never Again* in six languages), the procedure for selecting the memorial model was decided in a design competition as well. The winning design by Nandor Glid reflected a more abstract and expressive style which became more common in the mid- and late 1950s. The chosen memorial model displayed '... a tangled mass of highly abstract emaciated bodies with angular barbed hands, supported by two fence posts with fragments of stylized barbed wire to suggest human beings entangled in the fencing that surrounded the concentration camps' (Marcuse 2010b, p. 85). The memorial was inaugurated in 1968 and continues to be a centrepiece of the Dachau memorial landscape.

A different style that became important for the design of the memorials was embedded in socialist heroic symbols. *The Monument to the Heroes of the Warsaw Ghetto* created by Nathan Rapoport was the first prominent example for this heroic, realistic design direction. Other monuments and memorials in the heroic memorialisation tradition followed in Eastern Europe including in East Germany. At the Sachsenhausen concentration camp memorial site, a central theme was the depiction of the help the inmates received from the Soviet soldiers who liberated the camp. Similarly, at the Ravensbrueck site (see, for instance, Jacobeit 1995), a concentration camp for female prisoners and their children, heroic mother and fellow inmate figures were chosen for the main monuments symbolising the support women (comrades) showed for each other in face of terror and death.

## **The Buchenwald Memorial Site in Former East Germany, Before and After Re-unification of Germany: Winds of Change and Lasting Implications for a New Management Style of the Memorial Sites**

The memorial for the Buchenwald concentration camp, where more than 50,000 people died during 1937–1945, became a paramount project of Communist East Germany (DDR) after the establishment of the State.

Buchenwald was augmented to be a national symbol of the socialist resistance against Fascism. The 1958 Buchenwald National Site of Commemoration and Warning ('Nationale Mahn- und Gedenkstaette'), with remarkable design features, has been one of the largest and most carefully crafted memorials. The site chosen for the monumental memorial ensemble was away from the original camp hidden in the beech forests ('Buchenwald'), facing toward the City of Weimar. Thus, the new memorial site was visible from the valley floor and well suited for the representation of the Communist Party's programmes and activities at the site.

The expansive new memorial consisted of a wide sloping walkway, along 7 bas-reliefs which showed the plight and ultimately successful struggle of the prisoners against Fascism, to a large gathering place lined by an avenue of 18 featured nations with a series of massive pylons. High up from the gathering place which held up to 20,000 people was a 55-metre-tall bell tower. The main memorial monument just underneath the tower displayed a group of 11 oversized human figures heroically standing for the socialist resistance that resulted in the 'self-liberation' of the camp (according to the Communist Party's interpretation of the events during the final days at the Buchenwald camp). Prime Minister Otto Grotewohl worked closely with designer Fritz Cremer on this central sculpture project in the 1950s (Marcuse 2010a).

The new memorial was an impressive backdrop for political action. It was at the Buchenwald memorial site where soldiers and young party members took their oath, where school classes from all over the DDR came to learn about the victory of the German Communist movement and the continued successes of the East German State. The design of the memorial sites of Buchenwald, Sachsenhausen, and Ravensbrueck, as well as of Dachau, Bergen-Belsen, Flossenbuerg, and Neuengamme, reflected the Cold War situation in the 1950s and 1960s. At all the sites, most of the structures including the barracks were razed and immediately or later completely removed, for different reasons. While it was essential for the East German state to minimise the original camp environments in order to create a new memorial landscape with a distinct political mission (Young 1993; Overesch 1995; Knigge et al. 1998; Kahl 1999, pp. 892–903; Marcuse 2010a), in the West fighting a perceived Communist threat and preventing a further military expansion of the East Block became important goals for the political agenda. Dealing with the National Socialist past was no longer a high priority, while more and more former members of the Nazi Party were re-integrated in the Federal West German government. Thus, getting rid of the physical evidence of the National Socialistic past including artefacts at the sites of atrocities was allowed or even encouraged in many cases. The local populace near the camps and the new bureaucracy of the West German state generally favoured a minimisation of

attention given to the 'black spots' of yesteryear. As the Cold War thawed, the East German economy stagnated and stalled and more interaction and exchanges between the citizens of the divided country were allowed during the mid- and late 1980s; the political climate changed again, and with it, the public memory of the National Socialistic era either channeled into a stale ideological version in the East or repressed and/or forgotten for many years in the West.

How did the political changes after 1989/1990, with the fall of the Berlin Wall and the re-unification of Germany, affect the Buchenwald site and its management? Free elections in the former East German states brought significant changes to the administrative body of the memorial sites. A democratisation in the decision-making processes, most of all with the inclusion of representatives from a wider societal spectrum and the various inmate and victims groups so far neglected, resulted in new guidelines and policies. The outcome was the decision for a fundamental reorientation of the memorial site to the commemoration of the victims (rather than a celebration of the successful fight against Fascism) and from the monumental memorial site back to the former concentration camp. Several memorials were added to the grounds of the former camp, among them the Jewish Memorial (1993) and a Memorial for the Sinti and Roma (1997). In 2002, a memorial for the victims at the Little Camp ('Kleine Lager') where several thousand Jewish lives perished during 1944–1945 under horrific conditions described by Buchenwald survivor Elie Wiesel and Greiser (1998) was established with support of the international Jewish community. The main museum exhibits were redesigned and a new site was added that focused on the history of the memorial site itself ('Historische Dauerausstellung: Die Geschichte der Gedenkstaette Buchenwald'). Most controversial was the establishment of a memorial and museum at the Special Camp Nr. 2 which was in existence during the Soviet occupation of the camp 1945–1950. Seven thousand persons died there, mostly members of the SS and the NSDAP who had functions at the concentration camp as well as socialists who fell out of favour in the early years of Communism in East Germany. While 'winds of change' blew across the Buchenwald memorial site in the 1990s resulting in a different political culture, all the memorials, monuments, and markers were kept in place, including a 1953 plaque for German Communist Party leader Ernst Thaelmann at the crematorium where he was shot in 1944 (Kahl 1999; Haertl and Moench 2001; Wenzel-Orf and Kirsten 2003; Azaryahu 2003; Knigge 2006).

Permanent changes in the management of the sites came with a new administrative organisation for the larger memorial sites in both the new states (in former East Germany) and in the West German states during the 1990s and

2000s. New foundations for the administrative support of the memorial sites were formed on a state level (in charge of cultural affairs). These state-supported agencies gave the memorials financial and personal stability at last. The enormous discrepancies in the staffing of the memorial sites in the East and the West from the 1980s, for example, Buchenwald with a hundred-plus staff members servicing 400,000 visitors and Dachau with less than 20 employees in charge of the administration, museum, archives, and accessibility/security of the grounds for close to one million visitors, were finally reduced. A general consensus emerged in re-unified Germany that supporting the memorial sites was a crucial public responsibility to be sufficiently and consistently taken on. New generations of school teachers and educators in the public arena joined in helping to transform the political consciousness of the country, from a mere reactive 'coming to terms with the past' approach ('Vergangenheitsbewaeltigung') to actively rediscovering the traces and remnants of the past ('Spurensuche'). Providing education at the memorial sites became more widely appreciated (see Ehmann et al. 1995; Lutz 1995; Bayerische Landeszentrale fuer Politische Bildungsarbeit 2000) and was now understood as a necessary service to the public, as 'work' ('Gedenkstaettenarbeit'). A large network of memorial sites across re-unified Germany and some of the neighbouring countries developed, and its newsletter on the internet [www.gedenkstaettenforum.de](http://www.gedenkstaettenforum.de) formed an effective forum for the exchange of ideas and initiatives.

## **Memorials to Uprisings in the Ghettos and Camps: Memorial Sites to Resistance Against the National Socialistic Regime**

One of the frequently asked questions younger generations have about the horrific events of the Holocaust, is whether, and if so, where and when opposition, resistance, and open revolts to the powers of Nazi Germany formed as the 'Final Solution (of the Jewish question)' took its course first in Germany and then in the German-occupied countries. Oral history and written memories of survivors support the general observation that millions of European Jews more or less obediently followed the orders to assemble for the deportations to the camps, and this without substantial resistance or a shared collective response to their fate. It also was evident that tens of millions of German citizens hardly objected to the open persecution and ultimate murder of their fellow citizens and, as Daniel Goldhagen put it, were 'Hitler's willing executioners' (1996). Were there truly acts of defiance and forms of uprising?



Memorial sites for the victims of resistance to Nazi Germany had and continue to have a considerable role in the public memory, within and beyond the international Jewish community, in and outside Germany, and in many of the German-occupied countries. The most prominent memorial in this respect is in Warsaw, now widely recognised a 'memorial icon' (Young 1989, 1993, Chap. 6). The memorial which was unveiled in 1948 at the fifth anniversary of the historic event commemorates the 13,000 resistance fighters who died during the four-week period of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising April 19–May 16, 1943. Another uprising at a Jewish Ghetto in 1943 is remembered at Bialystok. On August 16, 1948, five years after a one-week long uprising, a memorial was inaugurated in commemoration of the 71 people who died in resistance to the planned deportations from the ghetto (Grossman 1991, 102–118).

Several open revolts against the SS at the death camps, in the form of armed uprisings and prisoner escapes, have been documented for Treblinka, Sobibor, and Auschwitz-Birkenau. On August 2, 1943, 700 people launched an insurgency in Treblinka. Approximately 200 people were able to escape from the camp, and 70 are known to have survived WWII. The Sobibor uprising occurred on October 14, 1943, and precipitated the planned closure of the camp. About 300 inmates fled to nearby forests, while 58 are known to have survived. Tragically, the Auschwitz-Birkenau revolt was the least carefully planned attempt to wrestle control from the SS guards; all the escapees and 250 of the Sonderkommando inmates in the camp were eventually caught and murdered. A recent movie (*Son of Saul*, 2015) re-enacted the major phases of the October 7, 1943 uprising. However, about 100 Sonderkommando prisoners at one of the other Auschwitz crematoria – not directly involved in the uprising – survived with more than 5,000 prisoners who lived to see the liberation of the camp on January 27, 1945, and bore witness to the event. In all three cases, commemorative notes, plaques, and monuments as well as an oral history of the events now exist. However, at times the memory of the uprisings appear to have been lost or forgotten (see, for instance, in the case of Sobibor Blatt 2000; Roberts 2015).

In his reconstruction of the Nazi concentration camp system and the final deadliest stage, Wachsmann included a section on defiance, resistance, and uprisings entitled the 'Resistance by the Doomed' (2015, pp. 536–541). He argued that in the case of Auschwitz, prisoner attitudes were split about possible responses to the SS in the autumn of 1944. While some of the inmates working in the Sonderkommando units realised that their death was imminent because of the acquired knowledge about the mass murders in Birkenau, other prisoners simply hoped to hold on to survival until liberation – as the

Allied forces advanced. However, the last few months of Auschwitz would be also the most lethal for the inmates: 'the closer these men, women, and children came to freedom, the more likely they were to die in the concentration camps' (Wachsmann 2015, p. 541). In various recollections of Auschwitz survivors, memories of defiance in the camp were handed to the outside world. Some of the former prisoners told, for example, of the admiration they had for the courage of one camp couple, Mala Zimetbaum and Edek Galinski, doomed to die. During their public execution, they openly challenged the powers in place – Mala hitting an SS man, Edek shouting a rallying cry – and staged their final moments (Wachsmann 2015, pp. 536–537).

There were also forms of resistance at the concentration camps in Germany, most notably during the final days of Dachau and Buchenwald. However, the outcome as well as the memorialisation of the revolts differed significantly. While the Buchenwald inmates headed by the well-organised political prisoners were able to take over the camp in the final hours before the arrival of US troops, the Dachau revolt failed. The rather spontaneously initiated action by a small group of Dachau citizens and camp prisoners was 'too little, too late'. The death of six people is remembered in Dachau where a square in the Old Town was renamed Place of Resistance ('Widerstandsplatz') as were six street names for the fighters and victims (see for more information about the 'Dachauer Aufstand' Richardi et al. 1998, pp. 149–157, 210–212). In the case of Buchenwald, a 'self-liberation' myth was born and effectively disseminated by the East German state, the SED party, and the prisoner organisation throughout the 1950s to the 1980s. After the changes in the management of the memorial site in the 1990s, a different (compromise) version was told: 'the camp was freed from the inside and from the outside'. The historic facts supported the greater role the approaching US troops had in freeing all the prisoners – as the leading SS officials left the site and willingly turned over the control of the camp to the Communist elders.

The Yad Vashem memorial and museum in Jerusalem has honoured 'righteous' gentiles who in defiance of orders saved the lives of Jews. Prominent examples are Raoul Wallenberg, a Swedish diplomat and businessman who saved more than 10,000 Jews in Nazi-occupied Hungary, and Oskar Schindler, a German industrialist who courageously protected his Jewish employees in Krakow. In the latter case, it was the publication of *Schindler's Ark*, a Pulitzer Prize award-winning novel by Thomas Keneally, which subsequently served as the inspiration for Steven Spielberg's popular movie 'Schindler's List' that made Schindler's actions more widely known. In Berlin, a similar institution, The Memorial Site for Silent Heroes, honors Germans who saved or tried to save Jewish fellow citizens.

There was opposition to the Nazi Movement in Germany in particular during the early years after the Nazi seizure of power (1933/1934) and during the years of WWII (1939–1945). A multitude of forms of resistance initiated and carried out by different groups and individuals in National Socialistic Germany have been documented (see Benz and Pehle 1996). However, there was no firmly connected network of the resistant groups and the effect the various acts of defiance, protests, and challenges to the system never reached the magnitude – with few exceptions – that could have threatened the autocratic rule of Hitler and the NSDAP.

Again, differences in the commemoration of persecuted and murdered individuals and groups in the German resistance in West Germany and in East Germany were evident. Early on, the East German State paid tribute to people who were in opposition to the Nazi Regime, with focus on the resistance among Communists, Socialists, and the labour unions (Young 1993; Puvogel 1999; Endlich 1999). In particular, many memorials for anti-fascist fighters were established in and near Berlin (in the East sector of the capital city and the Soviet-controlled part of Germany). A memorial near the Berlin Dom along Karl-Liebknecht Strasse in Berlin-Mitte honoured young Socialists with Jewish backgrounds led by Herbert Baum, Marianne Cohn, Martin Kochmann, and Sala Rosenbaum ('Widerstandsgruppe um Herbert Baum'). The members of this 1938 forbidden left-wing youth group, many of them women, produced critical leaflets and were in contact with individuals in forced labour camps before they were arrested in 1942. More than 20 of the members were eventually executed (Endlich 1999, pp. 111/112).

The main official memorial to the German resistance for West Germans is in West Berlin, in the courtyard of the Bendlerblock, location of the former German Reichswehr Headquarters. It is here where Claus Schenk Graf von Stauffenberg and several other members of the military in opposition to National Socialistic Germany were shot after the unsuccessful Hitler assassination attempt on July 20, 1944. The anniversary of the attempted assassination was declared a Day of Remembrance in West Germany/Federal Republic of Germany. While the professional and personal integrity of Stauffenberg and other high military leaders involved in the coup (that could have threatened and overturned the ruling regime) has unquestionable merit and commanded respect, it did not create a sense of compassion and/or enthusiasm among younger Germans. Arguably perhaps, it was the elitist, aristocratic/high echelon background of the 'men of the 20th July 1944' that contributed to the emotional distance. 'Valkyrie' (2008), an international movie highlighting the Hitler assassination attempt (with Tom Cruise in the leading role

of Claus von Stauffenberg), was a moderate success in the United States with reviewers questioning the validity of the newly introduced theme of an existing German resistance.

Two resistance events and groups have gained broad acceptance in Germany in the 1990s/2000s/2010s, with highly recognised and well-visited memorials in Berlin and in Munich: firstly, the memorial for women of Rosenstrasse who demonstrated for the release of their Jewish husbands ('die Frauen der Rosenstrasse') and, secondly, a memorial which spreads out on the grounds of the walkway to the entrance area at Munich University – depicting headlines of distributed leaflets with a call to disobedience and individual faces of members of the White Rose ('Weisse Rose') student resistance group. The Rosenstrasse memorial near Alexanderplatz has become a major stop for historic tours as well as for casual bicycle explorations in Berlin. The square where the memorial ensemble was placed in 1995 and the adjacent new Plaza Hotel offer information about this part of the old Jewish community in Berlin in general and the protest of the women in 1943 in particular. The arrest of the about 2000 Jewish men who were married to 'Aryan' women triggered a persistent unwavering push for the release of their husbands which eventually happened after several days. The events may have been embellished in the course of the first few years after WWII (with the desire and need of proof for wider protest actions against National Socialistic Germany), but nevertheless speak for themselves (Jochheim 2002; Gruner 2002). Like the 'White Rose' resistance in Munich, it was a selfless, humane form of rebellion and a courageous joint action younger generations of Germans can admire and identify with. While few of the Rosenstrasse women are known and mentioned by name during the tour stops, the six core members of the White Rose resistance group have become household names. More than a hundred high schools in Germany have been named in their honour; siblings Sophie Scholl and Hans Scholl are resistance icons in present-day German society. Moreover, Munich University has displayed a permanent exhibit since 1987, and there are close to 20 monuments and markers now in Munich, at the places where members lived, where they were arrested, held in prison, and executed, and where they are buried. Additionally, there is a memorial plaque at the Palace of Justice where the trials were held in 1943 and where a young Sophie Scholl in a most memorable way stood her ground and confronted her Nazi judge over ethics and human principles (Pfoertner 2001; Bayerische Bundeszentrale fuer politische Bildung 2013; Kronawitter 2014, pp. 80–91).

## New Perspectives, New Exhibits and Forms of Commemoration, New Sites

Over the past 20 years a multitude of new sites, new exhibits, and new commemoration practices have emerged in Germany. In the following, cases from Weimar-Buchenwald, Frankfurt, Cologne, and Berlin will be highlighted and discussed. They serve as examples and evidence that public memory of the National Socialistic era is still evolving and continues to change.

Since the early to mid-1990s, the Weimar-Buchenwald memorial site under the leadership of Volkhard Knigge has provided many stimuli in reshaping the memorial work in and outside Buchenwald. First in summer workshops, then in programmes of the new Youth Meeting Center ('Jugendbegegnungsstaette'), young people from Germany and abroad took up the laborious job of unveiling/tracing important artefacts from the 1937–1945 period, which had been 'overgrown' or deliberately removed and concealed by the 1950s/1960s authorities. Such search for lost traces ('Spurensuche') project work led to the finding and marking of the prison cell where Martin Bonhoeffer, an outspoken pastor of the 'confessing church' ('bekennende Kirche'), was held, and the uncovering of the original railway tracks and other pathways which had meaning in the arrival or the deportations of the camp prisoners (Hantsch 1994; Rook and Hofmann 1995). A unique programme was developed with the 'Zeitschneise'/ timeline project inviting historically minded people to revisit sites connected to the revered German classics on the Ettersberg hill near Weimar, with a designated walk to the Buchenwald Camp (Haertl 1999). More recently, Knigge has actively participated in the discussion over a new approach and re-conceptualisation of the work at memorial sites ('Fortschreibung der Gedenkstaettenarbeit'), in particular the debate over how to address and integrate the dark heritage of the socialist state in former East Germany 1950–1989 (see Knigge 2006; Von Oehmke in *Der Spiegel* 21/2008).

After a long pause in the appreciation of the works of Frankfurt-born Annelies Marie 'Anne' Frank (1929), the community has taken major steps in re-integrating or taking back the worldwide known heroine and her Jewish family, with roots going back to the 1600s in the Frankfurt Jewish Ghetto. The situation changed with a 'Spurensuche' project in the Dornbusch city district, the Frankfurt neighbourhood where the Frank Family lived during 1927–1933. Two hundred people, among them many teenagers, participated. The results were markers at the house where Anne Frank was born and at another house where the family later lived, as well as the foundation of the Youth Meeting Center Anne Frank ('Jugendbegegnungsstaette Anne Frank'), with a permanent exhibit 'Anne Frank – Ein Maedchen aus Deutschland' (Anne Frank – A

Girl from Germany). The renamed Anne Frank Education Centre will be expanded, with the addition of a second floor for a larger exhibit. The Frankfurt Jewish Museum plans to have a new wing, with focus on the Frank Family in Frankfurt, a project which is in preparation for the reopening of the Museum. In 2015, the City chose as its suggested annual reading 'Frankfurt liest/ Frankfurt reads', a recently published book about the Frank Family ('Gruesse und Kuesse an alle – Die Geschichte der Familie von Anne Frank/Treasures from the Attic: Anne Frank's Family'), which was a large success (Jugendbegegnungsstaette 2004; Rahlwes and Wawra 2014; Hartmann 2016).

Cologne artist Gunter Demnig came up with a new way of commemorating Jewish citizens who became victims of National Socialism. Starting in his home town in 1992, he placed commemorative stones – stumbling blocks ('Stolpersteine') in the form of cobblestone-sized brass memorials – in front of the final home of residents who were deported and murdered during the years 1933–1945. Since 1995, more than 56,000 stumbling blocks have been installed in almost 1000 German/European cities in 22 countries. Demnig's list of cities and towns where his commemorative art project found resonance comprises major cities such as Berlin and Frankfurt as well as small towns like Dachau, with 10 stumbling blocks. However, it excludes nearby Munich where the City Council (upon recommendation of the local Jewish Community leader) rejected the project idea, though with a continued debate over individual supportive actions in town (Goebel 2010). The 'Stolpersteine' stumbling blocks, though small in size, have had quite an impact. It is a practice of commemoration that allows citizens to participate and to help to reshape the public memory in their community.

No other city in Germany has seen the establishment of so many new memorials over the past 20 years as Berlin. The city itself underwent tremendous changes after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989/1990 and the subsequent political, social, and economic re-integration of the West Berlin and East Berlin sectors after re-unification. Berlin used to have a large Jewish community, with distinct landmarks and neighbourhoods where once Jewish life flourished. While a revival brought back some of these qualities, a retrospective of the losses in Jewish community life during 1933–1945 has contributed to several memorials and museums. The New Synagogue on the Oranienburger Strasse restored and reopened with a museum in the mid-1990s and the Jewish Museum, a new landmark building (with a unique design by Daniel Libeskind) in Berlin opened to the public in 2001, are prominent examples for this 'museum' trend (Piper 2006). In the case of the Memorial for the Murdered Jews of Europe, the planning process and completion took many years in long drawn-out debates over how to design the memorial site. In 2005, an approximate 20,000-square-metre-large memorial site with 2700 concrete slabs and an underground information centre ('Ort der Information',



with three million names of victims of the Holocaust) was finally inaugurated at the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the end of WWII. There are many other interestingly designed memorials in Berlin including a reminder of the Nazi orchestrated book burning, in form of a glass plate providing a view into a sunken room full of empty bookshelves, at the site in Berlin where it happened on May 10, 1933. Another major effort was made with the 'Topography of Terror' history museum at the former Gestapo headquarters. Commencing in 1987 it eventually resulted in indoor and outdoor exhibits with a focus on the practices and cruelties done to people held in prison there. Joint work of West and East German historians laid the basis for a new document centre which opened in 2010. Berlin also has memorials for several groups neglected for a long time in the commemoration of the victims of National Socialism. They include memorials for the persecution and murder of gay men, the prisoners with the pink triangle ('Totgeschlagen – Totgeschwiegen/put to death – put to silence' in Berlin-Schoeneberg 1989, and the formal memorial in the centre of Berlin 2008), for the Sinti and Roma (1992), and, most recently established, for mentally disabled victims (killed in the 'Euthanasia' campaign). Other ongoing projects have resulted in memorial sites at subsidiary camps/work camps for forced labour in Berlin-Schoeneweide and on Billerbecker Weg.

## **The Leading Memorial Sites for the Victims of National Socialistic Germany and the Holocaust**

Which are the most visited and widely known destinations for this new type of 'Holocaust tourism'? Which places can be considered crucial and enduring reminders for the public memory of the fatal events? Among several thousand European and worldwide memorial sites now in existence with markers, plaques, monuments, museums, and visitor centers, about three dozen memorial sites stand out nationally and internationally.

In terms of volume of visitation to the sites, completely reliable or comparable numbers are usually not available - with the exception of sites where visitors have to pay an entrance fee. Most often, visitation of the sites is free of charge. Frequently, only estimates for the visits to, for instance, memorial sites at the former concentration camps exist. There is also a general hesitation or reluctance to fully assess and publish annual visitation trends. Most modern technological tools that would allow a precise count of the incoming visitors are not in use or are not even considered. Such methods are perceived as



inappropriate surveillance of the visitors at memorial sites of the concentration camps where the prisoners once experienced tight and perpetual control by the SS guards. Websites of the major memorial sites usually offer a wealth of information (including figures about how many people died at a site) but rarely give visitation numbers to their sites which are most often buried in lengthy annual business reports.

After 70 years of expansion and adjustments to the memorial landscape for the victims of National Socialistic Germany and the Holocaust, 12 leading *in situ* sites evolved which receive annual visitation of 150,000 to 1.5 million and/have a wealth of programmes for incoming visitors. These are the memorials at the following concentration camps: in Dachau and Bergen-Belsen in West Germany; in Buchenwald, and Sachsenhausen in former East Germany; in Auschwitz-Birkenau, Majdanek, and Treblinka in Poland; in Mauthausen in Austria; and in Theresienstadt-Terezin in the Czech Republic. Berlin houses two top attractions: the Topography of Terror Exhibit on the grounds of the former Gestapo headquarters and the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe (with an underground Holocaust Information Centre) both in the center (Stadmitte) of Berlin. Probably, the leading *in situ* site - jointly with Auschwitz-Birkenau - is the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam which receives close to 1.3 million visitors (1,295,585 in 2016). In addition, the Amsterdam historic site has developed partner organizations in Berlin (Anne Frank Zentrum), in London (Anne Frank Trust), in New York (Anne Frank Center for Mutual Respect), in Buenos Aires (Centro Ana Frank) and in Vienna (Anne Frank Verein). Two important national memorials and museums outside Europe, Yad Vashem in Jerusalem and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., maintain many programmes and continue to develop new ones. Visitation at each site has reached 1.5 million annually. Another highly visited and fairly recently opened Holocaust memorial and museum is found in New York ("Museum of Jewish Heritage", with extensive exhibits on the Holocaust), with annual visitation of close to 1.5 million.

## Continuity and Change of the Memorial Landscape

Over the past few decades, the memorial landscape for victims of National Socialistic Germany and the Holocaust has seen consistent growth, as to the number of memorial sites, the amount and substance of information provided at visitor centres and museums, as well as the professional management

of these sites. In general, there have been constructive and destructive processes which need to be addressed in the following discussion.

In many of the memorial sites, forms of improvement, modernisation, and adjustments (e.g., to the needs of new user groups) did not only include an update of the historic information given in the exhibits and in the museum technology, with the use of more interactive techniques, but also a trend to broaden the themes introduced at the sites. Starting in the 1980s, displays of art collections, literature, and poetry readings became part of the programmes – for instance, at the Dachau Memorial Site under the leadership of Barbara Distel. After the restructuring of the Buchenwald site during the 1990s, a new permanent art exhibit entitled “Tools of Survival: Testimony, Works of Art, Visual Memory” was included on the camp memorial grounds. These and other cultural offerings to expand the topics for incoming visitors and/or people living in nearby communities took aim at addressing the human condition in and outside the camps from 1933 to 1945. In some of the ghettos and camps, the performing arts and music were an essential part or a side aspect of the camp reality, for varying reasons. This applied to the early Emsland camps 1933–1936, most of all to the Boergermoor and Esterwegen camps, where the (later internationally known) ‘Moorsoldaten/Peat bog soldiers’ song was created by the prisoners in a show (Fackler 2000). Prisoners in many camps had to sing while marching in and out of the camps. Some of the individuals and groups at the camps felt at ease singing while on and off work, and it is known that some people broke into political songs or religious hymns when entering the gas chambers (Wachsmann 2015, p. 537). Shoshana Kalisch’s (1985) collection of songs ‘Yes, we sang! Songs of the Ghettos and Concentration Camps’ is an indication of the role music and the arts had in even extreme situations. In Theresienstadt, groups of musicians and artists performed for camp music events and theatre performances; this may have saved the lives of some of the prisoners or delayed their deportations. Increasingly, such more general camp observations and intimate personal reflections on the situation have become part of the memory and of the commemoration practices. On a different note, by the 1990s, the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam – under the leadership of Hans Westra – broadened their educational programmes and seminars for younger visitors with the discussion of current political, social, and ethnic issues, as Anne Frank may have addressed them. All this, and a multitude of other events, have led to a greater relevance of the programmes and ultimately strengthened the mission of the memorial sites over the past years.

That said, it is sad but important to mention that there continue to be destructive forces at work. The activities of Neo-Nazis and of other hate

groups have caused considerable damage to the sites. There is hardly any Jewish cemetery – often in a remote or peripheral location – that has not seen forms of vandalism. Even inner city memorial sites such as the Memorial of the Murdered Jews of Europe in Berlin have been marred by acts of vandalism, notably in 2005, 2009, and 2014. Artefacts of a highly symbolic value, such as the ‘Arbeit Macht Frei’ (Work Makes You Free) inscription at the gate to the Auschwitz Memorial Site and to the Dachau Memorial Site, were stolen in 2009 and in 2014 respectively. Fortunately, both gates have been retrieved and re-installed at the sites. There have been ups and downs in the numbers of occurrence which seem to follow the rise or decline in the popularity of such groups aiming at publicly denying or questioning the validity of the Holocaust and other facts about the National Socialistic era. Although they represent a fairly small segment in German/European societies, they continue to be a threat and, consequently, a challenge to the management of memorial sites (Hartmann 2017).

## Changing Approaches to the Study of the Memorial Sites

### Reconstructing the Holocaust 1933–1945, Reconstructing the History of the Memorials

Over the past decades, a multitude of studies have been conducted in the reconstruction of the historical events during the rule of terror of National Socialism 1933–1945. Several comprehensive studies of the Nazi concentration camps have been presented including the following: ‘Der Ort des Terrors: Geschichte der nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager’ – a series by German historians edited by Wolfgang Benz and Barbara Distel (2005–2009, with nine volumes on the history of the concentration camps published), two volumes of the Encyclopedia of Camps and Ghettos 1933–1945 edited by a United States Holocaust Memorial Museum team (Megargee 2009, 2012), and, most recently, a systematic study and detailed analysis of the history of the Nazi Concentration Camps by Nikolaus Wachsmann (2015).

While there is a tremendous wealth of information about the Holocaust, studies of the many memorial sites for the victims of National Socialistic Germany have been lagging. Systematic or selective in-depth research on the memorials and commemoration practices were not conducted until the early 1980s. Harold Marcuse, a historian with pioneering work in this field, argues

that it has been a neglected topic and that there remains work to be done, particularly for the lesser known memorial sites. In the concluding section of his article on the ‘afterlife of the camps’, where he summarises all the efforts made in the different countries as to memorialisation of the historic events, Marcuse writes, ‘the study of memorial site didactic and the effects of those memorial conceptions on the millions of visitors to former concentration camps each year is still in its infancy’ (2010a, p. 204).

For the remainder of this chapter, it will be attempted to reconstruct some of the research traditions regarding an examination of the memorial sites, of their history as well as a discussion of current issues. The emphasis is particularly on visitation to the sites and their management for tourism. Furthermore, a review of the changing approaches in the heritage and tourism research field is provided, as they apply to the study of memorial sites for the victims of National Socialistic Germany.

### **Initial Studies About the Memorial Landscape in the 1980s/1990s**

As more memorial sites were established in the 1960s and 1970s, it was noted that they received little attention and that the support for the new sites (in terms of financial resources, staff, and recognition in the bureaucracy) was negligible. Detlef Garbe (1983), an early observer – as a researcher and administrator at the sites in West Germany – talked about the forgotten legacy of the former concentrations camps in the 1970s. Though he was able to witness substantial changes by the mid/late 1980s and, in particular, after the reunification of Germany in the early 1990s, a path ‘from the forgotten concentration camps to memorial sites (now) appreciated and carried by the authorities’ (1992). Other authors of early studies about the memorial sites came to similar conclusions – for example, Bernd Eichmann (1985). He characterised the deplorable situation of the memorial sites at the former concentration camps with three adjectives: *Versteinert*, *verharmlost*, *vergessen* – sites which were physically and institutionally ‘petrified’, where the historic events were ‘downplayed’, with the result of the memorial sites being ultimately ‘forgotten’. In a journalistic review and close-up of the leading 19 concentration camps, Konnilyn Feig (1981) critically examined a disturbing situation regarding the memorialisation of the historic events at the memorial sites as well.

Most internal studies and surveys were aimed at improving the management practices at the memorial sites for educational tourism. Dachau and

other destinations were conceived as ‘places of learning’ (‘Lernorte’) for the rapidly growing incoming groups of young people after the ‘Holocaust’ TV series was shown and widely discussed in 1978/1979/1980. By the 1980s, memorial sites were considered an extended ‘outdoor classroom’ – more frequently used by committed German teachers born after 1940, with little personal baggage and involvement in the era as was often the case with representatives of the older generations. An example for this type of approach and literature in the field is Peter Steinbach’s ‘Modell Dachau’ (1987). Here, he explains the ‘Lernort’ concept, its potential, and the need to educate a younger generation about the facts of a troubled past.

Another trend in the literature was the inclusion of studies that shed light on the complicated and difficult relationship several towns had with the nearby concentration camps, such as Dachau and Kaufering, with the first national socialistic concentration camp and a later series of subsidiary camps respectively – Weimar (with the Buchenwald camp) and Neuengamme near Hamburg (see Raim 1989; Hartmann 1989, Marcuse 1990, Steinbacher 1993, Schley 1996, Kaienburg 1996). Marcuse presented an in-depth study on the Dachau concentration camp (1933–2001) including the relationship the town of Dachau developed with the camp before and after 1945. He discussed and connected both periods, while the concentration camp was in existence (1933–1945) and after liberation when the site eventually became a memorial site (1965), with changes of the site up to the late 1990s (Marcuse 2001). Changes in the relationship during the 2000s between the City and the Camp were discussed by Schossig (2010).

## **Comprehensive Documentations of Memorial Sites to the Victims of National Socialistic Germany**

By the mid/late 1980s, a need for a more comprehensive assessment of the history of the camps as well as of the history of memorial sites became evident. A new journal series, *Dachauer Hefte* for the study of the national socialistic concentration camps (Studien und Dokumente zur Geschichte der nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager), was launched in 1985. This series and related research efforts paved the way for a systematic documentation of more than 1000 memorial sites in West Germany/Federal Republic of Germany. A first version – initiated and supported by the federal agency for political education (‘Bundeszentrale fuer Politische Bildung’) – was published in 1987, with a revised and expanded edition presented in 1995. This volume (840 pp.) and Volume II, with focus on the memorial sites in the new states/

in former East Germany (991 pp.), have become a valuable resource and standard reference (Puvogel et al. 1995; Endlich et al. 1999). In 1998, a detailed map showing the memorial sites in re-unified Germany (as listed in the two volumes) was presented. It comprised of memorials and memorial sites in the following eight categories: larger concentration camps, subsidiary camps, memorials at synagogues, memorials at prisons/Euthanasia sites/sites associated with the German resistance, memorials at cemeteries for the victims of National Socialist Germany, other monuments and plaques, memorials at Jewish cemeteries, and memorials for the victims at Death Marches. While this map includes close to 2000 places, the authors of the map (and of the two volumes) emphasise that it is not a complete list and that it does not include every place in the public memory of Germany.

## **New Approaches in Tourism Studies: Dissonance at Heritage Sites, Dark Tourism, and Thanatourism**

As the memorial sites multiplied and more studies were conducted about them, new fresh approaches in the study of tourism to these sites and other sites of atrocities were introduced to the multidisciplinary field of heritage and tourism studies. Memorial sites were now understood as places with a controversial past and as a dark heritage. In the mid-1990s, three new terms appeared in the academic tourism literature denoting dissonance at contested heritage sites, including places of atrocities, and the tourist's apparent fascination with death and tragedy: *dissonant heritage*, *thanatourism*, and *dark tourism*. In their first overview study on the topic of dissonance, Tunbridge and Ashworth presented a book entitled *Dissonant Heritage: The Management of the Past as a Resource in Conflict* (1996). Shortly after, Lennon and Foley – they had just coined the new term of ‘dark tourism’ (Foley and Lennon 1996) – published a volume with a dozen case studies in *Dark Tourism: The Attraction of Death and Disaster* (2000). It received considerable attention in the media and among tourism researchers. In both texts, one of the selected case studies or chapters was Auschwitz accessible to the international tourist by 1990. For both book covers, the iconic picture of the rail tracks to the gate was chosen (Hartmann 2014).

Ashworth and Tunbridge argued that dissonance is intrinsic to all forms of heritage – whatever the scale, context, or locale. Dissonance is implicit in the commodification processes, in the creation of place products, and in the

content of messages which may in some cases lead to disinheritance. Furthermore, they discuss visitor motives and management strategies for atrocity sites, elaborating on how these motives and strategies differ between three groups: the *victims*, the *perpetrators*, and the (more or less uninvolved or innocent) *bystanders*. For their discussion they chose the example of the Nazi concentration camps in Central and Eastern Europe. In separate publications, Ashworth (1996, 2002) examined the case of revived tourism in Krakow-Kazimierz, the former Jewish neighbourhood in Krakow, which was featured in the 1993 movie *Schindler's List* (Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996; Ashworth 1996, 2002; Ashworth and Hartmann 2005; Hartmann 2014).

The new terms of thanatourism and dark tourism are complementary concepts (or 'sister terms'). Tony Seaton (see Chap. 1) who introduced the concept of *thanatourism* (1996, 2009) recognised the deep fascination some visitors to battlefields and cemeteries have with death and dying. His analysis of the motives and lifeworld of thanatourists ('motivated by the desire for actual or symbolic encounters with death') was paralleled in studies launched by fellow researchers John Lennon (see Chap. 24) and Malcolm Foley from Glasgow Caledonian University in Scotland, who came up with a much broader, albeit more nebulous concept – *dark tourism* (1996, 2000). The 'dark tourism' agenda has been substantially expanded by Philip Stone (see book introduction and Chaps. 8, 10, and 11), founder of a dedicated university research centre (Institute for Dark Tourism Research) at the University of Central Lancashire, UK, as well having prominent online subject presence (see [www.dark-tourism.org.uk](http://www.dark-tourism.org.uk)). At this much visited and effective website, dark tourism was defined as 'the act of travel and visitation to sites, attractions and exhibitions which have real or recreated death, suffering or the seemingly macabre as a main theme' (Stone 2005). While Seaton focused his research largely on tourism to WWI sites, Stone included Auschwitz in his in-depth studies. Indeed, at the Institute for Dark Tourism Research, 'dark tourism' was given fresh multidisciplinary conceptual dimensions and philosophical underpinnings. Among others, Stone developed a 'Dark Tourism Spectrum' typological model, from lightest sites (such as a 'Dracula Castle' commercial venture) to darkest sites (like the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Memorial and Museum) which served for a categorisation and analysis of a multitude of sites to be included in a broadening dark tourism research agenda (Miles 2002; Sharpley 2005; Stone 2006). Stone, Sharpley (see Chap. 14), and other researchers successfully expanded their perspectives in many directions and fields (Stone and Sharpley 2008; Sharpley and Stone 2009, 2011, 2012), ultimately also including tourism to the memorial sites of the Holocaust. The



notion of dark tourism – for a long time confined to scholarly research in the United Kingdom – eventually found acceptance in other countries and regions such as the United States and German-speaking countries (Quack and Steinecke 2012; Hartmann 2014).

## **Research About the Places Associated with the Victims, About the Places Associated with the Perpetrators**

With a widely established network of memorial sites honouring the victims of the National Socialistic regime 1933–1945, a secondary type of attractions has begun to emerge in Germany and Austria: namely, sites associated with Adolf Hitler and other leaders of the Third Reich. Thus, the ‘Eagle’s Nest/Obersalzberg’ near Berchtesgaden, Hitler’s second home and alternative government centre, receives approximately 250,000–300,000 visitors annually. Subsequently, a new type of research has developed, which focuses on tourism to sites of victims *and* perpetrators (‘Opfer-Orte’ *und* ‘Taeter-Orte’). While Petermann (2012) compared and contrasted tourism to Dachau and the Obersalzberg, John-Stucke (2012) examined visits to the Wewelsburg SS Nordic Academy and the adjacent Niederhagen Concentration Camp. The combined memorial site of the castle and the concentration camp (since 2010) has been carefully developed and recently successfully integrated in a regional heritage tourism plan (Brebeck 2008; John-Stucke 2012).

In recent years, there has been a trend of developing ‘documentation centres’ at sites associated with the perpetrators; for example, at the aforementioned second home of Hitler in Berchtesgaden, as well as at the Nazi Party rally grounds in Nuremberg. The new documentation centres give background information about the sites and historical events. Recently, a documentation centre has been completed in Munich (‘Munich in the NS Zeit’), with a critical analysis of the role the city (then known as ‘Hauptstadt der Bewegung’) had during National Socialism. Another documentation centre is currently (at the time of writing) in the planning stage near Kaufering where close to 15,000 people, mostly Hungarian Jews, died in forced labour camps during the final 10 months of the National Socialistic regime. Research on the Kaufering camps conducted by a local citizen group focuses both on the victims and the perpetrators.

A four-quadrant model *Places Associated with the Victims and Perpetrators in National Socialism 1933–1945* has been introduced by Hartmann (2016; also Figs. 20.1 and 20.2). The quadrants in the schematic models illustrate:

- (a) High recognition places for the victims of Nazi Germany such as Auschwitz, the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam, and the memorial site at Dachau;
- (b) Little known, neglected, or forgotten places associated with the victims such as at some of the subsidiary camps;
- (c) High recognition places associated with the perpetrators such as Hitler’s second home in Berchtesgaden, the Gestapo headquarters in Berlin (‘Topography of Terror’), and the Wannsee Villa on the outskirts of Berlin where a high-level NS Party conference on the ‘Final Solution (of the Jewish Question)’ was held on January 20, 1942; and
- (d) Places associated with the perpetrators which are no longer accessible to the public, such as the prison cell in Landsberg where Hitler was incarcerated in 1924 and where he wrote his book *Mein Kampf*, and where, in the mid-to-late 1930s, hundreds of thousands of young Nazi Party members converged on Landsberg to see the ‘Fuehrer’s cell’.

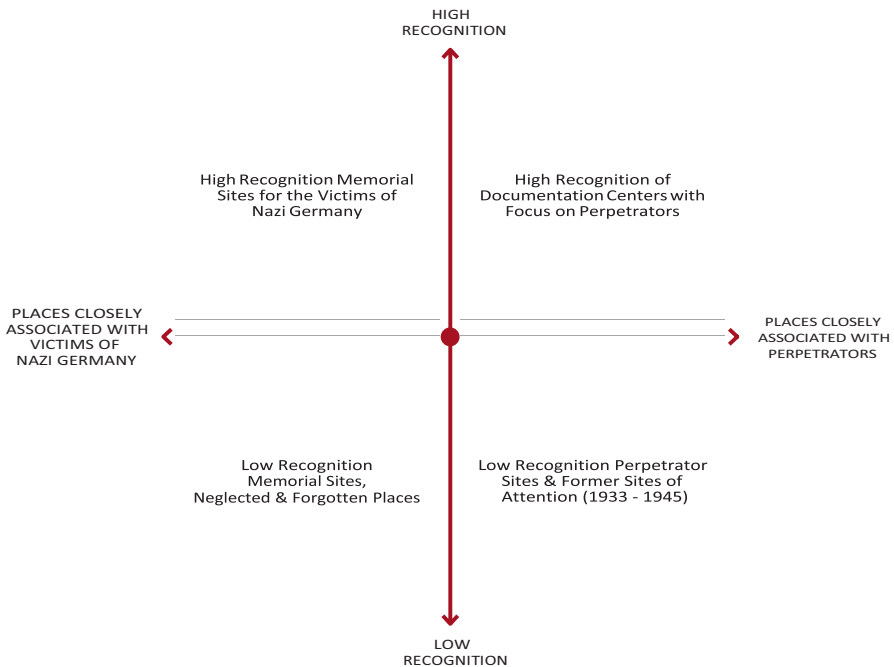
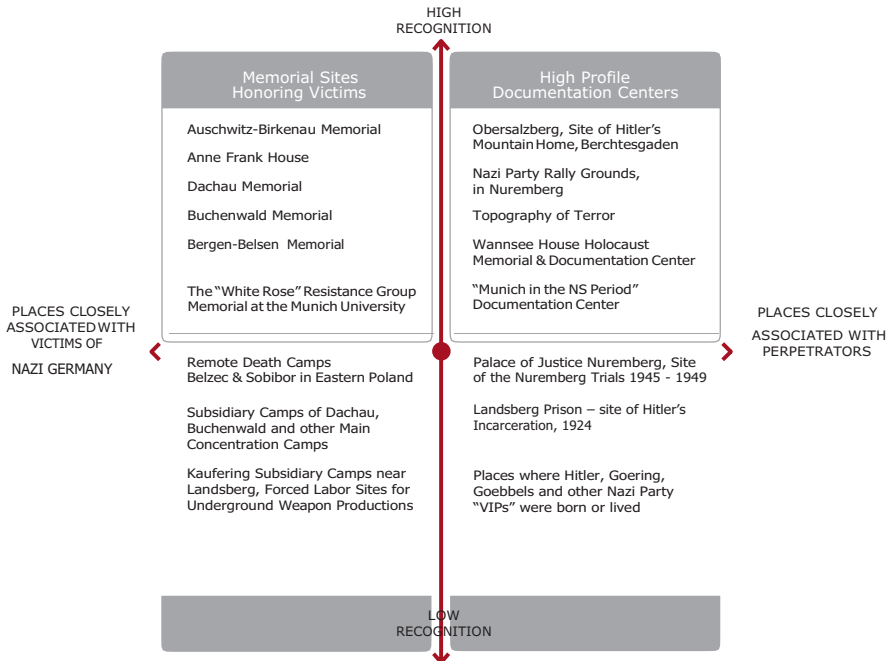


Fig. 20.1 Four-quadrant model for a categorisation of ‘victims/perpetrators’ places



**Fig. 20.2** Sites associated with the victims and perpetrators in Nazi Germany, 1933–1945

It should be mentioned that many of the above-mentioned victims' places, though, are also closely tied to the perpetrators. For instance, the memorial site in Auschwitz I shows the location where camp commandant Rudolf Hoess was executed by hanging in 1947. The Buchenwald memorial site offers not only several tours of the camp site with reference to the prisoners but also one tour focuses on the perpetrators. The four-quadrant model serves as a classification of the sites and is well suited for suggested further action in the commemoration of the events at various types of sites.

## Conclusion

Tourism to now well-known sites closely tied to the Holocaust as well as to many of the lesser known places associated with various victim groups and the perpetrators of Nazi Germany, continues to grow with the formulation of different agendas and management concerns at the sites. This raises the question of how to best address issues and problems confronted at this new type of memorial landscape. Several approaches to the study of 'Holocaust

tourism' have been developed and more studies continue to be launched. The 'dark tourism' agenda has contributed considerably to the further examination of a phenomenon which has found the attention of a wide public in and outside Germany, in many European countries and worldwide.

A need for continued research has been outlined by many researchers. Indeed, the author argues it will be more difficult to properly tell the story of victimisation as more and more Holocaust survivors pass away. What will be the task for management of the memorial sites no longer seen, revisited, and explained by the people who witnessed the fatal events (Hartmann 2005, 2014)? What are pedagogical approaches to the presentation and exploration of the sites for a younger generation which receives a lot of its information by surfing the internet, with the possibility of seeing the sites in virtual reality tours? To that end, many challenges await managers and administrators of the sites as well as academic researchers in the field.

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