

# THE BERLIN WALL AND ITS RESURRECTION AS A SITE OF MEMORY

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## ABSTRACT

Initially after the fall of the Berlin Wall on 9 November 1989 and its state-sponsored demolition over the following year, only a handful of sites remained with pieces of the Berlin Wall still standing. These were magnets for foreign tourists, but Germans themselves, including German officials, were far more interested in creating a united future than in preserving parts of the divided past. With the passage of time, however, the Germans have increasingly come to believe in the importance of explaining the history of the Wall, commemorating its victims, and preserving its few authentic remains in Berlin. This article examines several key moments and debates in the process of the Germans coming-to-terms with the history of the Wall. It charts the process whereby the public and political leaders have devoted greater attention to the Wall in recent years, particularly on the occasions of the fifteenth and twentieth anniversaries of the fall of the Wall in 2004 and 2009 and the fiftieth anniversary of the erection of the Wall in 2011. Finally, the article analyzes lessons German politicians are drawing from the history of the Berlin Wall.

## KEYWORDS

Berlin Wall; German Democratic Republic (GDR); collective memory; Berlin Wall Memorial; lessons of history; victims; united Germany

## Introduction

*F*ifty years after the Berlin Wall was erected and twenty-two years after its peaceful toppling, less than two kilometers of it remain. Unofficial and official dismantling of the forty-three-kilometer, inner-city section of the



Berlin Wall from 1989-1990 was the rapid work of thousands of individuals who took home their own personal souvenirs of the Wall—the so-called “wall peckers”—together with foreign governments, institutions, and private citizens who bought whole sections of the Wall and shipped them to more than 125 different locations on the globe, and not least the rapidly disappearing East German government which began the official demolition of the Wall on 13 June 1990.<sup>1</sup> The majority of Germans understandably felt: “Die Mauer muss weg!” (“The Wall must go!”) Germans and non-Germans were happy to play their part in making this happen.

While a small group of activists preserved pieces of the Berlin Wall at the East Side Gallery, Niederkirchnerstrasse, and Bernauer Strasse, for the most part the German people and officials were eager to move on and focus on rebuilding a united city and country and not linger over the difficult and divided past. Foreign tourists had the greatest interest in the Wall, and local entrepreneurs happily struck up a brisk trade in selling “authentic” pieces of the Berlin Wall at key tourist sites in Berlin, a practice which continues to this day. Yet, most Germans, including politicians, had little to no interest in the Wall, viewing it solely as something in the past. Willy Brandt, who had been the mayor of West Berlin when the Wall was erected and went on to become the chancellor of West Germany, found himself in the minority when he publicly proposed on 10 November 1989, the day after the opening of the Wall: “[W]e should leave a piece of this horrible edifice standing to remember a historical monstrosity.”<sup>2</sup>

This article examines the complicated and contentious process by which Brandt’s view ultimately, years later, has come to dominate official German approaches to the Wall. As is often the case in countries with dark sides of their history, it has taken years for the Germans to come to a consensus that they should do more than forget about the Berlin Wall. After all, the Wall stood for twenty-eight years preventing East Germans from escaping to freedom in West Berlin and became a symbol of the cold war and of communist repression. Many people were killed trying to escape and many more suffered from the practical and psychological effects of being imprisoned in East Germany under the ruling regime of the Socialist Unity Party (SED). Thousands of border guards were responsible for making sure that their fellow-countrymen could not flee, and the whole East German leadership was directly or implicitly responsible for the deadly border. Indeed, it was the East German leader, Walter Ulbricht, who finally persuaded the reluctant Soviets to allow him to seal off the border to West Berlin fifty years ago in the summer of 1961, beginning on the night of 13 August. The Soviets had refused Ulbricht’s pleas

for eight years, arguing that they would suffer terribly in the eyes of German and world public opinion and in relations with the Western Allies if they sealed the border. The Kremlin leaders also told their East German ally that closing the border in Berlin would pose too great of a technical challenge, since the city functioned as a whole.<sup>3</sup> The Kremlin leaders urged Ulbricht to find other ways to keep East Germans from fleeing. When Ulbricht did not find other ways, the Soviets finally agreed to close the border and create what would become known as the Berlin Wall.<sup>4</sup>

For its part, the West acquiesced to the Wall, responding with only verbal protests. The main reason for this relative Western passivity was a fear of starting World War III in the center of Europe. Since the East Germans had carefully built the Wall on East German territory, not impinging on the territory of West Berlin at all, tearing down the Wall would mean trespassing on East German territory and could provoke a military response. Some in the West also felt a sense of relief that the East Germans had solved their refugee crisis on their own without somehow embroiling the two Germanys and their superpower allies in a military conflict. They also saw the Berlin Wall as a defensive move to shore up the East German regime, not as an aggressive move against the West.<sup>5</sup>

Thus, in the years since the peaceful fall of the Wall in 1989, there have been many reasons that Germans from the east and the west have often preferred to leave the Berlin Wall in the past and not re-examine the history of the Wall or the victims of the Wall. It is uncomfortable history for almost everyone involved. Yet, the consensus on ignoring the history of the Berlin Wall has undergone profound changes in the past several years, culminating in the celebrations of the twentieth anniversary of the fall of the Wall in 2009 and in the commemoration in 2011 of the fiftieth anniversary of the building of the Wall. A variety of factors has caused a change in the German consensus, particularly among federal and state officials with the financial and other resources to devote to commemoration, on handling the history of the Berlin Wall. These include the passage of time, the dwindling remains of the Wall, the opening of archives with information on the history of the Berlin Wall, the persistent work of some key individuals who believed it was important to highlight the history of the Berlin Wall, the growing focus in Europe on commemorating historical anniversaries, and tourists' persistent desire to see the Berlin Wall. The cumulative effect has been an increased interest in the Wall on the part of Germans, especially by those who feel that their children and grandchildren and other younger Germans should know the history of the Berlin Wall and the division of Germany. To the extent that the history of the

Berlin Wall has lessons to teach about tyranny and freedom, many older Germans want younger Germans to study this history to understand that their current freedom and democracy cannot be taken for granted.

This article will focus on official approaches to the history of the Berlin Wall in recent years. While the actions of some private citizens and the views of the general public will be discussed at appropriate points, the author is mainly interested in how these have affected official policies related to the public history of the Berlin Wall. This article traces the process by which federal and state officials have come to place great importance on keeping the history of the Wall alive and have thus supported a certain resurrection of the Wall, this time as a site of memory.

All countries highlight various parts of their history and make efforts to channel “collective memory,” whether around things they are proud of in the past or around learning from and/or atoning for things they regret from the past.<sup>6</sup> Since grappling with the Holocaust, the Germans have devoted their attention especially to dealing with their past. This process of coming-to-terms with the past, known in German as *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* or *Aufarbeitung der Vergangenheit* is part of the culture of memory, *Erinnerungskultur*, in Germany and often exerts significant influence on politicians and the politics of history, *Geschichtspolitik*, as will be described below in the case of handling the history of the Berlin Wall.<sup>7</sup>

## Dealing with a Difficult Past, Part II

Until very recently, there was a significant intellectual and political hurdle blocking the willingness to confront the demons of the history of the Berlin Wall. Historical, cultural, and intellectual debates in Germany are still largely dominated by the West. For many people in western Germany, the main focus on working through the German past has been the Nazi period and the Holocaust. They thus reacted very defensively to the notion that attention and resources should be devoted to another difficult aspect of German history—that of the communist East German regime and its Berlin Wall. By bringing up the East German past, some feared this would reorient the attention and resources of politicians and the public from the victims of the Nazis and the preservation of concentration camps and other historical sites instead toward victims of the communist regime and the Berlin Wall and sites commemorating these. Even worse, they feared that a focus on the atrocities of East Germany (the German Democratic Republic, GDR) meant a downplaying of the horrible uniqueness and

crimes of the Nazis and an elevation of the importance and crimes of the communist East German regime. For many, even speaking of the two regimes in the same sentence, calling them “the two dictatorships of twentieth-century Germany,” was anathema and seen as an implicit equalization of the two.<sup>8</sup> For East Germans raised in a system where the regime prided itself on the role of communists in fighting against the Nazis, any sort of comparison between the SED and Nazi regimes was seen as nonsensical and near treasonous to the memory of the GDR

For those people, however, who felt it was important to deal with the East German past, including the Berlin Wall and its victims and perpetrators, their goal was certainly not to downplay the Nazi past. In fact, their goal had nothing to do with the Nazi past; it was rather to expose the dark sides of the East German regime and give voice, support and recognition to those who had suffered from it. It would take almost twenty years to come to a comfortably accepted understanding of the relationship between the separate, but simultaneously, ongoing processes of working through the Nazi past and working through the East German past. Addressing this issue, the Federal Plan for Memorials released in 2008 stated that: “Any remembrance of the dictatorial past in Germany must proceed from the understanding that the national socialist crimes should not be relativized, nor should the SED dictatorship’s injustices be downplayed.” This language had been carefully worked out behind the scenes so that neither “side” would feel they had lost. In more detailed wording, the federal memorial plan noted that: “It is absolutely essential to take into account the differences between the NS [National Socialist] dictatorship and the SED dictatorship,” whereby the “Holocaust was unique ... in its systemic aim of genocide ... Yet, it is also the task of the state and society to remember the injustices of the SED dictatorship and to commemorate the victims of communism in Germany. For years behind the Wall and barbed wire, people suffered from the lack of freedom, repression and pressure to go along with it all ...” Almost twenty years after the GDR had ceased to exist, federal officials pledged to “strengthen” their work supporting the “reappraisal of the (East German) dictatorship and the commemoration of its victims.”<sup>9</sup>

There is another reason it took years to develop a consensus on the need to come to terms with the East German past. The process of uniting eastern and western Germany has been much more complicated than many anticipated. People in the East became increasingly disillusioned in the 1990s and felt that they had been “colonized” by the West, which seemed to believe that nothing from the GDR past was worthy of being

continued in the united Germany.<sup>10</sup> In the meantime, many eastern Germans lost their jobs in the aftermath of unification, deepening their disillusionment. Increasingly defensive about the lives they had lived as East Germans, they were alienated by a growing public portrayal of East Germany as defined by the secret police (the Stasi) and the Wall, leading to claims that, “es war nicht alles schlecht.” (“not everything was [so] bad”).<sup>11</sup> Western Germans who were sensitive to this and wanted to reduce frictions between East and West in the interests of promoting the ongoing unification process were wary of calling for more attention to the history of the Berlin Wall. Thus, for a variety of reasons, there was widespread initial reluctance to direct much attention to the history of the Berlin Wall. The diverse ways that people on both sides had accommodated themselves to the Berlin Wall also favored silence on the issue, since few in retrospect were probably proud of how they handled the Wall while it stood. So what changed to enable the increasing public focus in the past few years on the Berlin Wall and its victims?

### **Turning Points in Gaining Support to Highlight the History of the Berlin Wall**

While there always had been some people pushing for the preservation of sections of the Wall so as not to forget its brutal history, most notably Pastor Manfred Fischer and Helmut Trotnow at Bernauer Strasse,<sup>12</sup> and while some forms of commemoration had been erected before and after the fall of the Wall, particularly in the form of crosses for victims of the Wall such as Peter Fechter and an exhibit and memorial at Bernauer Strasse,<sup>13</sup> there was not generally widespread support among politicians, the media, or the public for keeping alive the history of the Berlin Wall until fifteen years after the fall of the Wall in 2004. The passage of time was important in several ways. First, less than two kilometers of the Wall remained standing. It was one thing not to favor preserving the Wall while multiple parts still stood visibly and perhaps with vestiges of a threatening aura in the city. It was another thing to realize over time that the Wall was almost completely disappearing.<sup>14</sup> Second, the new generation of Germans is learning very little in school about the Berlin Wall and the GDR,<sup>15</sup> and some of these young Germans are displaying a growing interest in learning about this history.<sup>16</sup> Third, tourists visiting Berlin are particularly eager to see the Wall. Indeed, the top destination of foreign tourists in Berlin is increasingly the Berlin Wall, the most well-known symbol of the city

around the world, and many tourists are frustrated that there is not more to see.<sup>17</sup> The money that tourists bring is also much needed in a city that has struggled financially since unification. Finally, with the passage of time, the Wall and its history are less emotional for many Germans, although certainly not all. After fifteen years, some Germans began to see that the history of the Wall is found not just in the deadly repressive side of it, but also in the joyous, peaceful toppling of it in 1989.<sup>18</sup>

The key turning point in the public debate about handling the history of the Berlin Wall came with the fifteenth anniversary of the fall of the Wall in November 2004. Newspapers were filled with information on the Wall and particularly the joyous events of 9 November 1989 and how people experienced the fall of the Wall. The Berlin tabloid, *B.Z.* urged its readers, “Remember!” at the top of the front page on the anniversary on 9 November.<sup>19</sup> Realizing that in fact people’s memories were getting foggy after fifteen years, Thomas Rogalla asked in the *Berliner Zeitung*, “Mensch, wo stand denn die Mauer?” (“Man, where did the Wall actually stand?”), and told readers where they could still see parts of it.<sup>20</sup> Rogalla expressed the feelings of many Germans who had experienced the real Wall and realized with a rather strange sense that they could no longer always tell where it had stood and that this history was slipping away from their memory.

#### *Crosses for Victims of the Wall at Checkpoint Charlie*

It was not just the passage of time and the attention of the press that gave a new focus on the Wall in November 2004. There was a very specific event that served to galvanize the attention of the public, politicians, the press, historians and others. A few days before the fifteenth anniversary on 9 November, in a dramatic, emotional gesture to the victims of the Wall, the head of the private Wall Museum at Checkpoint Charlie, Alexandra Hildebrandt (herself from Ukraine, not Germany), unveiled 1,065 wooden crosses outside on a plot of land at the former Allied Checkpoint between East and West Berlin. The crosses were memorials to the 1,065 people Hildebrandt claimed had been killed at the borders of East Germany—not just at the Berlin Wall. Hildebrandt called it a “Freedom Memorial” (*Freiheitsdenkmal*) and invited former East German victims and their families to the dedication ceremony. In opening the installation, she was very critical that the Berlin government had not done more to commemorate the victims and protested the lack of a memorial plan by the Berlin Senate.<sup>21</sup>

The public flocked to see the memorial and found it very powerful. The crosses were particularly moving, since many of them had a photo-

graph of a victim with their name, birth date, date of death and the reason for death, such as being shot by a border guard or drowning (see Figure 1). Hildebrandt had now given the victims names, faces, public attention, and commemoration—something that no one else had done on such a scale. Since Checkpoint Charlie is one of the top tourist destinations in Berlin, there were also throngs of tourists who visited the memorial, getting the attention of the foreign press as well.<sup>22</sup>

**Figure 1:** Alexandra Hildebrandt's Memorial to Victims of the Wall



*Source:* Hope M. Harrison

While many officials and historians were sharply critical of the inaccuracies in Hildebrandt's memorial, everyone recognized that her action served as a spark to the rather quiet debate about whether and how to handle the history of the Berlin Wall. In contrast to what a non-expert visitor would infer from her memorial, no one had actually died at Checkpoint Charlie. In fact it was the crossing point for the U.S., British and French allies, not for Berliners or Germans. Hildebrandt's Checkpoint Charlie Museum has no scholarly advisory committee, and she offered no evidence for her claim that 1,065 (soon raised to 1,075) people had been killed at the border. Many critics believed that Hildebrandt's main goal in



exhibiting the crosses was to lure more (paying) visitors to her museum, located a few steps away.<sup>23</sup> Hildebrandt's critics grew in number when she declared at the opening of her memorial: "With this, we are bringing a counterpart to the Holocaust Memorial," which was due to be unveiled a few months later in May 2005, with its 2,711 huge rectangular stones.

In spite of the criticism of Hildebrandt's memorial, more than any other action since the fall of the Berlin Wall, her installation of crosses for victims of the Wall put serious public pressure on both the Berlin and federal governments to do more to commemorate victims of the Wall and to deal with its history. To this day, the effects of Hildebrandt's action are visible in the culture of memory connected to the Berlin Wall, as will be seen below.

Days after Hildebrandt unveiled her memorial of crosses, four Bundestag members (two from the former East and two from the former West), representing the SPD, FDP, Greens, and CDU, initiated a proposal for a "Site of Memory" (*Ort des Erinnerns*) at the Brandenburg Gate.<sup>24</sup> They called for a central monument there to commemorate the victims of the Wall and the division from 1949/1961-1989 and also to celebrate the peaceful demolition of the Wall in 1989. The Wall at the Brandenburg Gate had been the site of the celebrations, televised around the world, of people dancing on the Wall in the peaceful revolution of 9 November 1989. The Bundestag members were motivated by frustration at not being able to show their children and other young people and guests anything about what it was really like in the center of Berlin when the Wall stood.<sup>25</sup> The parliament members declared that the following year's anniversary of the erection of the Wall, 13 August 2005, should be the deadline for a joint federal and state plan for how to document and remember the Berlin Wall.

#### *The Berlin Senate's Overarching Plan for Commemorating the Berlin Wall*

The key institutional result of Hildebrandt's memorial and the Bundestag proposal was an Overarching Plan for Commemorating the Berlin Wall (*Gesamtkonzept zur Erinnerung an die Berliner Mauer*) passed by the Berlin Senate in June 2006 for EURO 40 million.<sup>26</sup> The Berlin Senator for Culture, Thomas Flierl, formed an interagency Working Group on a Commemorative Plan for the Berlin Wall (*Arbeitsgruppe Gedenkkonzept Berliner Mauer*) in November 2004, which was coordinated by his indefatigable deputy Rainer Klemke. Over a period of eighteen months, there were intensive consultations in private and in public hearings among officials at the federal, state, and municipal levels, and with victims groups, historians, preservationists, directors of related memorials and museums, and

other experts about how to more visibly and engagingly commemorate the history of the Berlin Wall and its victims.<sup>27</sup>

The final, decentralized *Gesamtkonzept* highlights seven key sites as well as a variety of smaller sites around the city connected with the Berlin Wall, including the Berlin Wall Memorial at Bernauer Strasse, the Brandenburg Gate, Checkpoint Charlie, and the East Side Gallery. The plan calls for the sites to be preserved, improved, expanded and made more educational and visitor friendly. Maps, an internet portal, easier public transportation service connecting the various sites in the form of a special “Wall ticket,” and a GPS *MauerGuide* (Wall Guide, introduced in 2008) are to help unite the various sites. By highlighting a diversity of sites around the city, the goal is “to show how it [the Berlin Wall] affected the city and how it destroyed everyday life.”<sup>28</sup>

*The Berlin Wall Memorial, die Gedenkstätte Berliner Mauer*

The Berlin Wall Memorial and Documentation Center at Bernauer Straße takes pride of place among the sites of memory of the *Gesamtkonzept* and as of 2011 forms part of a vastly expanded and improved national Berlin Wall Memorial, Gedenkstätte Berliner Mauer (see Figure 2). Bernauer Strasse has the largest number of authentic remnants of the Wall and of the former death strip. Key parts of the dramatic history of the Wall at Bernauer Strasse include the fact that the border ran down the sidewalk in front of buildings on the East Berlin side, such that the apartment buildings were in the Soviet sector of East Berlin, but the sidewalk in front of them was in the French sector of West Berlin, leading people to jump out of windows, some successfully, some to their death, to escape from the East. Approximately 2,000 people living on the East Berlin border there were forced to move, and their houses were bricked up and ultimately destroyed or partially used as part of the border zone. Ten people died trying to escape there, but many also successfully escaped via tunnels built under the Wall at Bernauer Strasse.

Due to the particularly historic nature of this section of the Wall, the last session of the East German parliament, the Volkskammer, voted on 2 October 1990 to grant the one-block-long section of remaining Wall at Bernauer Strasse between Bergstrasse and Ackerstrasse landmark historic preservation status, and the united Berlin government continued this commitment in a resolution on 13 August 1991, calling for the “creation of a site of memory for the Wall and a memorial to the Wall and its victims” at Bernauer Strasse.<sup>29</sup> Fischer, the West Berlin leader of the parish of the Church of Reconciliation, the Versöhnungsgemeinde, which had been

**Figure 2:** The Central Expanded Area of the Gedenkstätte Berliner Mauer



Source: Gedenkstätte Berliner Mauer

divided by the Wall, then dedicated himself to protecting the Wall there and opening an exhibit in his parish building on the history of the Wall.<sup>30</sup> By the fortieth anniversary of the erection of the Wall in 2001, the site included remains of the Wall, a memorial “in memory of the division of the city from 13 August 1961- 9 November 1989 and to commemorate the victims of the communist dictatorship,” a Documentation Center, and a newly rebuilt Chapel of Reconciliation, *Versöhnungskapelle*. Increasingly after 2001, politicians have come to the memorial to lay a wreath in memory of victims of the Wall on 13 August and 9 November. In 2003, an observation tower was added to the site so that visitors could view from above the former death strip in full.

Nonetheless, the Gedenkstätte at Bernauer Strasse had long been criticized for being cold and unappealing and insufficient for conveying the history and the emotion of the Berlin Wall and its deadly effects. It was also not a popular site. Many observers felt that the emotional power of Hildebrandt’s crosses, which quickly and consistently drew many people, was in direct contrast to the Gedenkstätte Berliner Mauer at Bernauer Strasse, where the actual memorial itself, designed by Kohlhoff and Kohlhoff and dedicated in 1998, was a rust-colored wall that intersected with the real concrete Wall, forming a rectangle. This led to confusion

about what had been the real Wall and resulted in it being seen as an ineffective and unengaging memorial.

The *Gesamtkonzept* of 2006 aimed to change this. An international competition was announced in July 2007 for “the expansion of the Gedenkstätte Berliner Mauer,”<sup>31</sup> and a winning design was chosen in December.<sup>32</sup> The expanded site spans 1.3 kilometers and 4.4 hectares (44,000 square meters) of the former border, including the forward and rear sections of the Wall and the five-meter-wide former patrol route in between. Entrants in the competition were told to “more strongly emphasize the overall connection” of eight blocks of the former Wall zone along Bernauer Strasse and to “make it much more understandable for visitors” as the former border between East and West Berlin.<sup>33</sup> They were also instructed to include a plan to unite the already existing parts of the memorial site, create a new visitors’ center, formulate a design for the core area of the expanded open-air exhibit between Gartenstrasse and Brunnenstrasse, illuminate personal stories about escapes, deaths, tunnels, demolished houses, and the border zone, and devote particular attention to the block-long concentration of 212 meters of authentic remnants of the Wall between Gartenstrasse and Ackerstrasse. A further area of expansion of the site along Bernauer Strasse would extend between Brunnenstrasse and Schwedterstrasse. The federal German government, the city of Berlin, and the European Union together would fund the expanded site for about EURO 37.5 million, including EURO 11.6 million for the 2007 competition.

Propelled by public attention to Hildebrandt’s crosses, the *Gesamtkonzept* itself was dedicated clearly on its first page to the victims of the Wall and all victims of the SED dictatorship and Germany’s division. It called for “giving space for individual commemoration—documenting faces and names, dates of birth and death.”<sup>34</sup> Accordingly, the guidelines for the 2007 competition for Bernauer Strasse stated: “At the center of the design plan must be the sensory experience of the violent character of the border area, which served the SED as an instrument to secure its dictatorship which had no democratic legitimacy and which was the condition for the existence of the GDR. The violent character of the system is seen particularly in those places where people were purposely killed while attempting to flee to West Berlin or died as the result of the use of force. The task of the memorial site is to name these dead by their names, show their faces and their biographies to the public, anchor them in public memory, and create a site for individual mourning as well as collective public commemoration.”<sup>35</sup> The open-air exhibit would also provide information on the history of the East German border regime in general and its effects on people in East and West.

Parts of the expanded site were ready in time for the twentieth anniversary of the fall of the Wall in 2009, including a new visitors' center, an exhibit at the adjacent Nordbahnhof on "ghost train stations" that were closed while the Wall stood, the re-installation of an authentic guard tower, and descriptive markings about the history along the former site of the Wall. The winning proposal, announced in December 2007, was by the landscape architects Sinai, Faust, Schroll, Schwarz, the architects Mola/Winkelmueller, and ON Architektur C. Fuchs. In a controversial part of the winning design, the architects installed tall, narrow columns of rust-colored Corten steel to mark the location of the Wall where there were gaps between remnants of the real Wall instead of re-installing nineteen meters of original pieces of the Wall that had been removed (see Figure 3). The Sophie Church (Sophienkirche) owns a key part of the land where the Wall stood and in 1997 had removed the segments of the Wall that stood on church graves. In doing so, the church community also sought to emphasize that their cemetery had been there long before the Wall was erected and insisted that the Berlin Wall Memorial should depict not just the history of the Wall when it stood, but also the history of the site before and after the Wall stood. They argued that the gap in the Wall showed developments at the site since 1990 and thus also represented the general overcoming of the Wall.<sup>36</sup>

**Figure 3:** The Hole in the Wall Filled in with Corten Steel Posts



Source: Hope M. Harrison

Opponents, including some victims groups and the CDU, argued that filling in the gap with a porous row of Corten steel rods instead of the original pieces of the Wall made the Berlin Wall and the border regime seem much less oppressive and deadly than they had been and that the leaders of the Berlin Wall Foundation, formed in late 2008 to oversee the Gedenkstätte, were trying to downplay the brutal nature of the East German regime. These critics preferred as elaborate a reconstruction of the Wall and the whole former border regime as possible, which the architects and their supporters at the Berlin Wall Foundation called an attempt to create “Disneyland at Bernauer Strasse.”<sup>37</sup> The issue threatened to stop any further progress and expansion of the Gedenkstätte when the Sophie Church announced it would block the use of their land by the Gedenkstätte if the pieces of the Wall were returned to the site. The board of the Berlin Wall Foundation decided to stick with the Corten steel rods proposed by Sinai, and the design was implemented as planned.<sup>38</sup> The later addition of other, more powerful, and evocative elements to the Gedenkstätte, discussed below, has largely silenced the criticism.

*The Window of Commemoration, Fenster des Gedenkens*

Following on Hildebrandt’s crosses of 2004 and the *Gesamtkonzept* of 2006, in May 2010, the new heart of the Berlin Wall Memorial was unveiled: a memorial to the victims. Called the Window of Commemoration, *Fenster des Gedenkens*, it is comprised of a Corten steel wall with individual “windows” featuring photographs of people killed at the Wall (see Figure 4). It sits in the former death strip at Bernauer Strasse, near the outer Wall that was the last part of the death strip before reaching West Berlin. There are 128 windows for the thus-far identified victims of the Wall, featuring their names and the dates of their birth and death. At the moving dedication ceremony on 21 May 2010, family members of the victims were the guests of honor and were given white roses to put at the windows of their lost loved ones. In speeches by Berlin Mayor Klaus Wowereit, the Federal Minister of Culture Bernd Neumann (with his deputy, Ingeborg Berggreen-Merkel speaking for him), Gedenkstätte director Axel Klausmeier, Horst Kulick of the Sophie Church, and Rainer Wagner of the Union of Groups of Victims of Communist Dictatorship (UOKG), the emphasis was put on the memorial as a place for private and public mourning of the victims of the Wall.<sup>39</sup> The dedication of this memorial took place after research carried out from 2006-2009 by the Gedenkstätte and the Center for Contemporary History in Potsdam identified individuals who had been killed at the Berlin Wall.<sup>40</sup>

**Figure 4:** Window of Commemoration (Fenster des Gedenkens)



Source: Hope M. Harrison

With the dedication of the *Fenster des Gedenkens* at Bernauer Strasse in May 2010, a steel column nearby was also unveiled with information about eight border guards killed at the border. There was controversy over including these border guards at the Gedenkstätte, but a compromise was found by giving them a separate site from the civilians killed at the Wall. The expanded site unveiled at the Gedenkstätte Berliner Mauer in May 2010 also includes the foundations of buildings that were destroyed to make room for the Wall, the location of parts of the former signal barrier alerting border guards that someone was in the death strip, sites of individual deaths, the locations of escape tunnels, and other information about the history of the site, including maps, multi-media descriptions of the history of the site, and the location of the collective graves of victims of a World War II bombing. On 23 November 1943, bombs dropped by the Royal Air Force near this area of Bernauer Strasse resulted in about thirty deaths, including two Jewish men who had been married to non-Jewish German women and were buried with their wives in the cemetery of the Sophie Church. The expanded Gedenkstätte has a cross commemorating the Protestant victims and a separate marker with a Star of David

for the Jewish victims.<sup>41</sup> An explanation of the multiple layers of Berlin history at the site, together with most of the rest of the Gedenkstätte Berliner Mauer, including a new exhibit in the Documentation Center, will be ready in time for the fiftieth anniversary of the erection of the Wall in 2011, with final touches to be completed in 2012.<sup>42</sup>

*The Twentieth Anniversary of the Fall of the Wall in 2009*

The highpoint thus far of public attention to the Berlin Wall came with the twentieth anniversary celebrations of 9 November 2009. Over 1,000 events took place in Berlin in the months surrounding this date, and hotels were sold out during the key days in November. The city established a special website to publicize the activities— [www.mauerfall09.de](http://www.mauerfall09.de)—as well as a twitter site ([www.berlintwitterwall.com](http://www.berlintwitterwall.com)). 170,000 people per month accessed the website, and the two million hits on 8 November nearly shut down the site. Official Germany's embrace of the Berlin Wall had widespread resonance among both Germans and non-Germans.

The anniversary commemorations had been kicked off months earlier by an open-air exhibit at Alexanderplatz on the East German peaceful revolution of autumn 1989.<sup>43</sup> There were also small outdoor exhibits at fourteen key locations throughout the city highlighting moments in the past, present, and future of Berlin, with and without the Wall.<sup>44</sup> The focus of the twentieth anniversary celebrations, however, was the creation by 15,000 students in Germany and around the world of over 1,000 so-called “dominoes,” *Dominosteine*, mimicking pieces of the Wall that would be toppled ceremoniously on the evening of 9 November (see Figure 5). Each “domino” was 2.5 meters high and one meter wide and was painted on both sides with illustrations related to the history of the Berlin Wall, thus ensuring that 15,000 students would learn this history.<sup>45</sup> The *Dominosteine* were then installed in the 1.5-kilometer area where the Wall used to be leading from the Reichstag, past the Brandenburg Gate, to Potsdamer Platz. Berlin Mayor Wowereit opened the *Dominosteine* exhibit on 7 November, emphasizing the focus on young students and getting them involved in learning the history of the Wall.

There were multiple events on 9 November leading up to the celebration in the evening at the Brandenburg Gate. The most serious grappling with the history of the Wall took place in a now well-established tradition at the Gedenkstätte Berliner Mauer, with a service at the Chapel of Reconciliation, the laying of wreaths at the memorial by Wowereit, Neumann, and others, and the opening of the new visitors' center. In a gesture to show that not all of the attention on 9 November should go to the



**Figure 5:** The Wall Dominoes (*Dominosteine*), Created by High School Students for the Twentieth Anniversary of the Fall of the Wall, November 2009



Source: Hope M. Harrison

happy event of 1989 but should also be shared with the commemoration of the Night of Broken Glass, *Kristallnacht*, when the Nazis attacked synagogues on 9 November 1938, the main invited speaker at the service was Ernst Cramer. A journalist and chair of the board of the powerful Axel Springer publishing house, Cramer described the suffering he and others Jews endured under the Nazis but also his joy when the Wall came down in 1989. Most of those in attendance at the service in the small chapel were family members of victims of the Wall and government officials. Following this service, in a ceremony to open the new visitors' center at the Gedenkstätte, Wowerit and Neumann emphasized the importance of teaching young people about the East German dictatorship, the Berlin Wall, and the courageous East Germans who took to the streets to fight for freedom and democracy. Expressing criticism that so few young Germans really understand what the East German regime was all about, Neumann declared: "We have an obligation to teach them not just about the happy events of 9 November 1989 but about the bad parts of the Wall and the GDR as well."<sup>46</sup>

On the afternoon of 9 November, Chancellor Angela Merkel led a ceremony at Bornholmer Strasse at the bridge at the former checkpoint which was the first to open so unexpectedly twenty years earlier.<sup>47</sup> On that memorable night, Merkel and 20,000 other East Germans crossed over for a surprise visit to West Berlin. In the ceremony twenty years later, the focus was on the East German dissidents who had led the struggle against the East German regime. Joachim Gauck, the Protestant minister and former head of the Stasi Archives Authority, gave the main speech and was joined by other former dissidents. Mikhail Gorbachev and Lech Walesa were special invited guests whom the Germans repeatedly thanked for their roles in 1989.

The main event for the twentieth anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall took place at the Brandenburg Gate in the evening and was billed as a Festival of Freedom (Fest der Freiheit). In the presence of the German chancellor and Berlin mayor, world leaders from the U.S. (with President Barack Obama being the only leader who did not attend and was represented by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton), UK, Russia, France, Poland, and prominent former East German dissidents, this was a grand celebration, culminating with the dramatic, drum-accompanied toppling of the students' *Dominosteine* and the explosion of fireworks, all televised live to audiences in Germany and around the world. While the speakers made references to the victims of the Wall and to *Kristallnacht*, the overwhelming focus was on the joyous acknowledgement of something in German history finally to be proud of: the peaceful revolution which led to the toppling of both the Berlin Wall and the East German communist regime that stood behind it. Buoyed up by their own success in toppling a Wall, the German leaders spoke of other walls—whether physical or psychological—in the world that must be toppled, such as the divide between North and South Korea.

Not in time for the twentieth anniversary, but instead on the twenty-first anniversary of the fall of the Wall in 2010, Wowereit dedicated 9 November Square (Platz des 9. November) at Bornholmer Strasse to mark the site of the first opening of the Berlin Wall. Paid for with EURO 350,000 from the funds confiscated from the former East German ruling SED, this open-air site contains original sections of Wall together with over-sized pictures and a description of the history at the site on fifteen panels chronicling the hours between 9 a.m. and midnight on 9 November 1989. The panels also highlight the other important German ninths of November, including the declaration of a German Republic by Philipp Scheidemann in Berlin in 1918, Hitler's beer hall putsch in Munich in 1923, and *Kristallnacht* throughout Germany in 1938.

If German leaders had felt any lack of enthusiasm for highlighting the history of the Berlin Wall, these were overcome with the twentieth anniversary celebrations. The chancellor's office initially demonstrated little interest in being much involved in the celebrations, leaving the planning to the Berlin mayor. As calls to the chancellor's office, however, came in over the weeks prior to 9 November from foreign leaders seeking invitations to the celebrations and from the world media, the chancellor's office realized the significance of the anniversary and got on board with the planning.<sup>48</sup> Although Merkel is in fact from East Germany, she had not generally spoken much about her East German background prior to November 2009 and seemed to want to leave it behind her. Wowereit grew up in West Berlin, near the border to East Germany in the south of the city, and was also for his first years as mayor relatively uninterested in remembering the Wall in any public way. As momentum grew for commemorating the history of the Wall after the fifteenth anniversary in 2004, Wowereit was increasingly persuaded by meetings with victims groups, historians and other experts, and his staff that he should put the support of the mayor's office behind efforts to highlight the history of the Wall. He did this first with the 2006 *Gesamtkonzept* and then with the large-scale commemoration and celebration in 2009. The mayor's interest was of course engaged not just at the chance for 15,000 students to learn the history of the Wall as background for creating the *Dominosteine*, but also at the opportunity to bring German and foreign tourists—and their wallets—to Berlin for the twentieth anniversary party at the Brandenburg Gate. The global media coverage of the celebrations, which initially had not been anticipated in Germany on such a scale, was an added benefit for both Wowereit and Merkel. The experience of these celebrations demonstrated—or reminded—Merkel, Wowereit, and other German politicians of the world-wide resonance of 9 November 1989 as a great moment in German and world history. Their previous reluctance, along with that of many of their fellow Germans, to delve back into the history of the Berlin Wall was transformed into a commitment to the importance of that history and its lessons, especially for young Germans, as will be discussed below in the concluding section.

#### *The Fiftieth Anniversary of the Erection of the Wall in 2011*

Drawing from the experience of the twentieth anniversary celebration of the fall of the Wall, much political and public attention will also be devoted to commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the building of the Wall on 13 August 2011. Berlin officials are organizing the commemo-

ration, and one of their main goals, as in 2009, is to increase young Germans' interest in the subject of the Wall. Plans call for a variety of events at the Gedenkstätte Berliner Mauer and throughout the city, with information about the events available in German, English, French and Russian at <http://www.50jahremauerbau.de/>. Historic photos of the erection of the Wall will be displayed at Bernauer Strasse, the Brandenburg Gate, Checkpoint Charlie, and elsewhere. Throughout the summer, there will be walking, boating, and bike tours along the former border, as well as exhibits and films related to the Wall. There will also be many public lectures, seminars, conferences, books, and articles on the building of the Wall in the months leading up to 13 August.

The Gedenkstätte Berliner Mauer will be the focal point of the commemorations. From 11-14 August, films on the subject "Divided City–Divided World" will be screened outside there. On 13 August, at 1:00 a.m., historical radio announcements from East and West Berlin about the border closing will be played in S-Bahn stations and on trains, as they were fifty years before. The central memorial ceremony will take place at 10 a.m. at the Gedenkstätte in the presence of the German President Christian Wulff and Wowerit and will include a church service in the Chapel of Reconciliation, the laying of wreaths at the memorial, and the unveiling of the second phase of the expansion of the Gedenkstätte. At 12:00 p.m., there will be a moment of silence throughout the city. Biographies of people killed at the Wall will be read in the Chapel of Reconciliation. In the afternoon, the Gedenkstätte will host discussions with people who experienced the border closing in Berlin on 13 August 1961 and whose lives were changed with the building of the Wall. Members of victims' groups, young people, representatives of the former Allies and of public institutions such as the police, the fire department, and hospitals will also participate in the discussions. Finally, in September, at the former checkpoint for Germans at Friedrichstrasse in the Tränenpalast (Palace of Tears), a long-term exhibit will open on "The Division and Border in the Everyday Life of Germans."

## **Conclusions: How to Remember the History of the Berlin Wall and its Lessons**

In the ongoing process of dealing with the history of the Berlin Wall as described in this article, several fundamental fault lines have developed about how to proceed. One revolves around the physical manner of por-

traying the history, and several others revolve around issues of substantive focus. As described above in the debate about whether to reinstall pieces of the Wall removed by the Sophie Church at the Gedenkstätte Berliner Mauer, the question of the extent of the physical remains of the former border is a controversial one. There are still some who argue that as much as possible of the former border, including the forward and rear walls, guard towers, lines for trip wires, anti-tank obstacles, dog tracks, and others elements should be returned or reconstructed at Bernauer Strasse (see Figure 3 in Leo Schmidt's article in this issue). Thus, a gap in the solid line of the Wall filled in only by porous, tall, thin Corten steel rods is insufficient to show how firm and forbidding the Wall was. The Berlin government still has in storage many original pieces of the Wall that were removed all along the former border and installing these at the former border in any empty spaces along the full eight blocks of Bernauer Strasse that now comprise the Gedenkstätte Berliner Mauer would give a more powerful representation of how the border used to be. More complete remains and representations of the former border are indeed in evidence along the former East-West German border at places such as Mödlareuth, Hötensleben, Helmstadt/Marienborn, and Point Alpha, where land is more plentiful than at the former East-West Berlin border in the capital city and where those fighting to preserve parts of the border achieved success earlier than in Berlin.<sup>49</sup>

There are two main arguments used against this approach. The first stresses the importance of authenticity and asserts that the only authentic parts of the former border at the Bernauer Strasse are those that have remained where they were—returning, re-installing, or reconstructing anything would not be authentic and would thus be “dishonest” to history. This is the currently prevailing view of experts in the field of historic preservation. The second line of argument makes the case that no amount of reconstruction could in fact duplicate how the Wall was when it stood with border guards shooting at people who tried to escape and a whole communist regime backing them up.<sup>50</sup> The reality of the Wall is in the past. People can learn about it, but they cannot experience it as it actually was.<sup>51</sup> This view has prevailed at the Gedenkstätte Berliner Mauer.

The other kind of fault line in the debate about how to depict the history of the Berlin Wall has less to do with the physical nature of the representation than with the substantive information that goes into sites of memory concerning the Wall. There are three types of debate about this substance: Should the focus be more on the victims or the perpetrators? Should emphasis be placed more on the joyous, peaceful fall of the Wall

in 1989 or on the brutal nature of the Wall from 1961-1989? Is it more important to know the history for the history itself or for the lessons it can teach future generations? Thus far in public representations of the history of the Berlin Wall, the focus has been more on the victims than the perpetrators, more on the fall of the Wall than the twenty-eight years it stood, and more on lessons for the future.

While this article has demonstrated the increasing and important focus on commemorating the victims of the Wall, victims groups are still unhappy that they have no central memorial or monument to all the victims of the East German regime, and they continue to fight to receive more compensation and pension monies from the government for their suffering. In contrast to the healthy pensions that former East German bureaucrats, including party, military, and Stasi officials have received since unification for their years of service, former political prisoners (including those imprisoned for trying to flee across the Wall), however, only finally persuaded the government to grant them a “victim’s pension” in September 2007. This pension of EURO 250 per month is much smaller than that received by former East German officials and has various strings attached. To qualify, victims need to demonstrate that they do not earn more than a relatively low level of allowed income, and they must have been imprisoned for at least 180 days. They also need to have appealed for rehabilitation and received it in the GDR, and they must prove that they were in prison for political reasons. There are ongoing efforts to have most of these conditions removed.<sup>52</sup>

Together with a debate about whom to focus on—victims or perpetrators—there has been a debate about what to focus on—the fall of the Wall in 1989 or the twenty-eight-year existence of the Wall. In both cases, the more comfortable option has generally been chosen. While focusing on the victims and recognizing how they were made to suffer by other Germans may be psychologically difficult for some, it is still easier than focusing on the perpetrators who were also Germans. It is generally easier to feel sorry and regretful than to take on the responsibility of the actual perpetrators who enforced the deadly Wall regime. Just as it took decades for the Germans to investigate voluntarily the Nazi perpetrators, so Germany seems to be only at the beginning of any sort of comprehensive approach to portraying the East German officials who produced and enforced the Berlin Wall. Similarly, it has been more comfortable and nicer to focus on the joyous, peaceful, and successful fall of the Wall in November 1989 and be inspired by this moment in German history than to delve into the more brutal and depressing history of the twenty-eight years the Wall stood. Of

course, a complete dealing with the history needs to take all of this into account, and there is no question that Germans are starting to do this, but it will take more time.

A more thorough approach to the history will also need to look at the Wall in multiple ways from the perspectives of both the East and the West and demonstrate its place in an all-German history instead of just the history of the GDR. People in the West, particularly those with family members or loved ones in the East, were also very affected by the Wall, although in different, less direct ways than those stuck behind it in the East. On the other hand, people in the West were also involved in accepting the Wall in various ways, such as the West Berlin police who were ordered by their superiors to guard it from the Western side to prevent Westerners from engaging in provocations at the Wall that could result in a military response from the East. The West German politicians who paid for the release of East German political prisoners, and thus in some ways motivated the SED regime to incarcerate people whom the West would then pay with hard currency to release, also accommodated themselves to the Wall in various ways.

The final substantive issue in approaching the history of the Berlin Wall is the question of whether to focus more on the history itself or on the lessons of that history for current and future generations. While scholars have devoted themselves to examining the history and filling in many key details on multiple aspects of the Berlin Wall, politicians have increasingly focused their attention on lessons of the Berlin Wall for current and future generations. In speeches at the Gedenkstätte Berliner Mauer and the Brandenburg Gate on 9 November 2009, the dedication of the Platz des 9. November in 2010, the opening of an exhibit at the Foreign Ministry on the history of the Berlin Wall to mark the fiftieth anniversary year in January 2011, and on many other occasions, Merkel, Wowereit, Neumann, Fischer, the Gedenkstätte director Axel Klausmeier, Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle, and others have emphasized the importance of teaching young Germans lessons of the Berlin Wall.

There are two main lessons politicians are increasingly and publicly drawing from the history of the Berlin Wall. The most important lesson they emphasize is that democracy and freedom cannot be taken for granted and that the history of the Wall shows the difference between democracy and freedom, on the one hand, and dictatorship, on the other. The current united and peaceful Germany is relatively new, and politicians and many others feel that it is essential that young Germans understand that it was not always like this and in particular that only twenty-two

years ago, Germany and Berlin were divided by a deadly border. Germany's leaders have emphasized that it is their responsibility to make sure young Germans learn about the history of the Wall and the GDR regime and understand that people were killed at the Wall, since only by knowing what happened in the past can they act to prevent it from happening again. This is why a focus of the twentieth anniversary events was on the 15,000 school children who painted the *Dominosteine* with scenes from the history of the Berlin Wall and the division of Germany. This also explains why the main invited guests at the foreign ministry's opening ceremony for an exhibit on the Berlin Wall this year were school children<sup>53</sup> and why a special focus of the fiftieth anniversary commemoration in 2011 at the Gedenkstätte Berliner Mauer will also be school children.

As Culture Minister Neumann said on 9 November 2009 at the Gedenkstätte, school children must learn that the history of the Wall "shows where ideological blinders can lead." Similarly, Westerwelle asserted on 11 January 2011 that the "lesson of the Wall for us as convinced democrats is to fight against political extremism having a place in Germany."<sup>54</sup> At the twentieth anniversary celebrations at the Brandenburg Gate, Merkel and Wowerit also emphasized that democracy must be fought for and defended every day and highlighted the courageous role of East German citizens who took to the streets against their oppressors in 1989.

The second, particularly inspiring lesson politicians and others are drawing from the history of the Berlin Wall is that walls can fall, dictatorships can be overcome, and peacefully so. Things that seemed impossible can turn out to be possible, as was emphasized many times at the 9 November 2009 celebrations at the Brandenburg Gate as well as by Fischer in the church service at the Gedenkstätte Berliner Mauer. This is meant to give people, including school children, the confidence to hope for and the courage to act to promote the toppling of other physical and mental walls throughout world. Merkel has said that Germany's good luck with the fall of the Wall and unification gives Germans a responsibility to help solve other difficult problems in the world ranging from climate change to international conflict.

Following on its comprehensive approach to dealing with the Nazi past, Germany is now well on the path of a comprehensive approach to dealing with the history of the Berlin Wall. One can find many books—from scholarly history books to first-hand accounts to comic books<sup>55</sup>—memorials, walking tours, and even three-dimensional reconstructions<sup>56</sup> on the history of the Wall. After years of inattention, ironically, so much has now been done to make the history of the Wall visible in Berlin that it has led to



complaints that “the prominent sites of the history of the city are primarily defined by their connection to the Berlin Wall” and that more should be done to highlight other key parts of German history in Berlin, such as World War I or World War II.<sup>57</sup> Although there are not as many pieces of the Wall left standing as many tourists would like, there are now multiple places to learn about the history of the Wall, particularly at the Gedenkstätte Berliner Mauer.

The portrayal and commemoration of the history of the Berlin Wall is aimed at multiple audiences: former victims, Germans who lived while the Wall stood, young Germans who did not experience the real Wall, foreign tourists, and others. While it is never possible to completely satisfy all groups, public officials in Berlin and the federal government have made a concerted effort to consider the interests and knowledge of all of these groups with regard to the Berlin Wall. They have increasingly felt an obligation to explain and make visible the history of the Wall both to acknowledge the past and to help insure that it and the type of regime that built and defended it will not be repeated in the future. As this article has demonstrated, however, there are ongoing debates about how best to do this and much remains to be done to provide a more all-encompassing approach to the history of the Berlin Wall.

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## Notes

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33. Senatverwaltung (see note 31).
34. Gesamtkonzept (see note 26).
35. Senatverwaltung (see note 31), 93-94.
36. Werner van Bebber, "Berliner Mauer: Lückenhafte Erinnerung," *Der Tagesspiegel*, 1 March 2009.
37. Sven Felix Kellerhoff, "'Alles Burra, oder was?' Das falsche Gedenken der Stiftung Berliner Mauer: Eine Polemik," *Deutschland Archiv* 42, no. 4 (2009): 589-593.
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39. The author was in attendance. Jutta Schütz, "Ein Fenster der Erinnerung für die Maueropfer," *Mitteldeutsche Zeitung*, 20 May 2010; and <http://www.berliner-mauer-dokumentationszentrum.de/de/download/english.pdf>, accessed 15 February 2011.
40. Zentrum für Zeithistorische Forschung Potsdam & Stiftung Berliner Mauer, eds., *Die Todesopfer an der Berliner Mauer 1961-1989: Ein biographisches Handbuch* (Berlin, 2009).
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42. For a more extensive account of developments at the Berlin Wall Memorial, see Harrison (see note 13).
43. For the exhibit catalogue, see Kulturprojekte Berlin GmbH, ed., "*Wir sind das Volk!*" *Magazin zur Ausstellung friedliche Revolution 1989/90* (Berlin, 2009).
44. Kulturprojekte Berlin, ed., *Berliner Zukünfte: Darstellung und Bilanz-Perspektiven und Visionen* (Berlin, 2009).
45. Kulturprojekte Berlin, ed., *Dominobuch: Geschichte(n) mit Dominoeffekt* (Berlin, 2009).
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49. Maren Ullrich, *Geteilte Ansichten: Erinnerungslandschaft deutsch-deutsche Grenze* (Berlin, 2006).
50. Author's interview with Berlin Mayor Klaus Wowereit, 10 February 2010.
51. Author's interview with Gabi Dolff-Bonekämper, expert on historic preservation, 12 January 2010.
52. The author is grateful to Ruth Gleinig, director of the project on sites of memory of the communist dictatorship at the Bundesstiftung zur Aufarbeitung der SED-Diktatur, for explaining this.
53. See <http://www.stiftung-aufarbeitung.de/DieMauer/index.php?PHPSESSID=042fa43b2cd13986f9c8c1f5ef141537>, accessed 28 February 2011.

54. See [http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/DE/Infoservice/Presse/Reden/2011/110111-BM\\_Mauerausstellung.html](http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/DE/Infoservice/Presse/Reden/2011/110111-BM_Mauerausstellung.html), accessed 28 February 2011.
55. Flix, *Da war mal was ... Erinnerungen an hier und drüben* (Hamburg, 2009); and Simon Schwartz, *drüben!* (Berlin, 2009).
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