Memorials and Memory Politics in Hamburg and Haifa

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ABSTRACT

In this chapter I explore Memorial Art, Monuments and the Politics of Memory in the cities of Hamburg, Germany and Haifa, Israel – two migrant, merchant and multiethnic harbour cities, each with interwoven histories of conflict and war. The chapter will analyse the conceptual and spatial strategies of a range of memorial projects and sites, focusing on the potential of the various projects and monuments to involve the public in a continuous engagement with the past and the present.

The work of leading researchers in the field of Memory Studies and Monuments has been used, such as James E. Young (1993, 2000), Noam Lupu (2003), Angelika Bammer (2001), and Pierre Nora (1992). In addition, historical research on the cities and correspondence with researchers involved in projects around memory and learning are included (Hieronymus, Hamburg and Mansour and others in Haifa).

I denne artikel undersøger jeg hvordan erindring og historie er tematiseret i monumenter og minesprojekter i Hamburg i Tyskland og Haifa i Israel – to større merkantile og multi-etniske havnebyer, der begge har gennemlevet intense debatter om forståelse af og representation af fortiden. Det er desuden byer, der har en sammenvævet og konfliktfyldt historie.

Hovedvægten i artiklen er lagt på en diskussion af en række projekter og monumenters konceptuelle og rumslige strategier – herunder med særligt fokus på hvordan og hvorvidt eksempler på forskellig stimulerer til et folkeligt engagement og er med til at iscenesette processer, hvor fortiden, og nutiden, settes til debat.

I Hamburg studiet er hovedvægten lagt på konkrete eksempler på alternative monumentformer. Haifa studiet har betoning på, hvordan en nutidig konflikt er med til at påvirke debatter og projekter om minde og historie i et samfund.

Ledende forskere i erindringspolitik, erindringsstudier, monumenter og historie i de to områder er anvendt, særligt James E. Young’s arbejde med Holocaust mindesmærker (1993) og minde i kunstneriske former (2000) – men også for eksempel Noam Lupu (2003), An-

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is concerned with examples of memorial art (memorials) in public space, and how these forms may stimulate public engagement with the past and the present. The two cities forming the basis of this study are Hamburg in Germany and Haifa in Israel – two larger merchant, migrant and multiethnic harbour cities, which have both suffered much conflict and with an interwoven past. Both cities (and their respective countries) have had public debates on how and for whom they should engage with and express the more problematic aspects of their past, what I will call the politics of memory – and this is the broader concern in this study.

The politics of memory and its related public art forms are the subject for research in a range of disciplines, such as history, art history, literary studies, sociology, and cultural studies. Coming from the latter cross-disciplinary field of cultural studies my intention has been to address newer contemporary cultural forms, in this case particular memorials, as ‘texts’ with which we engage in the shaping and definition of the past and the present. Memorials help us engage in commemorations and interpretations of the past. Such processes may easily change over time and trigger complicated debates that reveal the political aspect of memory and its memorial forms: What is to be remembered and silenced, where, and how? Who is to remember, and for whom?

I have mainly focused on memorials that have become ‘processes’ themselves. The key research questions addressed in the section dealing with Hamburg are: Can memorials be dynamic and interactive forms that mediate between the past and the present and help us to cope with conflict? How can particular spatial and conceptual strategies underpin or question particular understandings of ‘memory’ and memory work as process?

To address these questions I have used primarily James E. Young’s work on Holocaust memorials and art forms¹, but also the work of a range of other researchers, for example Noam Lupu², Angelika Bammer³ and Pierre Nora⁴. I also interweave historical research on the cities (notably Seikaly’s work on the Arab history of Haifa⁵), as well as observational and ethnographic footage from my own study of the spaces investigated. Finally, points from researchers ‘on location’ in Haifa and Hamburg are included⁶.

The overall key research questions (in italics above) may challenge a traditional view on the monument as a static representation of a past figure in stone placed on a pedestal and available for an audience to view in awe from a distance. In other words, the traditional monument, with its elevated hero, may, however, for a nation or a city, crudely
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speaking, be in danger of becoming just another dust-ridden expression of grief or past
grandeur. This view of the traditional monument and its freezing of history may be
contrasted with the potential of the new social media and the creation of digital spaces
for memory work and appropriation, i.e. with an emphasis on participation and user-
altered ‘content’. Yet, physical spaces of memory are altered too and appropriated in
different ways, or at least re-interpreted over time, as will be shown in this study.

Collective memory is increasingly to be understood in relation to electronic media and
the regional and global connections they can create, but these connections (whether
digital or not) do not necessarily mean that a social consensus about the past exists,
as Andrew Hoskins notices7. The ‘mediated’ memories or media representations of
memory may however hold the potential for stimulating a dialogue and contributing
to a more dynamic public sphere. Memorials are part of our public sphere – and in the
examples from Hamburg I will in particular focus on conceptual strategies and spatial
‘tricks’ that highlight the complexity of the public memory debates. With any memo-
rial the processes of reception are interesting, yet the focus is here on the strategies,
with some comments on the Harburg memorial8. However, bearing this in mind, a col-
league and I have initiated work that will focus on the public reception and debates in
the aftermath of various public art initiatives. The conceptual strategies are one thing
– another is how various communities respond. A few examples in this chapter may be
revisited, along with other new cases (Björgvinsson and Hög Hansen)9.

I will begin by discussing a few monuments in Hamburg, in north-western Germany,
and then return to more contextual comments on the city and its history. The last third
of the chapter is dedicated to Haifa and a conclusion.

MEMORIALS AS PROCESS AND PROTEST? HAMBURG, GERMANY

The Harburg memorial

In 1986, the German-Israeli artists Jochen and Esther Shalev-Gerz constructed a me-
memorial in the suburb of Harburg, a few metro stops from the centre of Hamburg. The
memorial was designed so that it would slowly disappear into the ground, but how long
it would take to disappear would depend on the public. The memorial has been called
a “counter-memorial” by several writers10 and Andrew Causey says the following, quite
appropriately, about counter-memorials in a chapter where he discusses the particular
Harburg monument: “Against the permanence of the monument, the counter-monu-
ment is about absence, disappearance, and trace”11.

The two artists, Jochen and Esther Shalev-Gerz, invited the public to write on the 4
sides of the monument’s long grey pillar, which was plated with a layer of lead, precisely
to allow for ‘inscription’. The two artists had an information board erected, with an
invitation, in several languages, to the participating public to “add their names here to

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ours ....In doing so we commit ourselves to remain vigilant”\textsuperscript{12}. When the space available for inscription was more or less fully covered, the memorial was then lowered further into the ground to make a fresh area free for people to add their names. Like the human body, the monument became itself an ageing and deteriorating physical object and the inscriptions on it, after being lowered into the earth, gradually disappeared from public view. The \textit{Mahnmal gegen Faschismus} [Monument against Fascism, War and Violence] was a 60 foot tall rectangular metal pillar, placed right in the shopping area, where people conducted their every day business, getting groceries, shopping and so on. This was part of the two artists’ deliberate spatial strategy (as summarized by Young and Lupu)\textsuperscript{13}. The memorial site was thereby not separated at all from the town roads and was linked to a place of ordinary living. There was a strong interest to write on the monument. “Nazis raus” was noted – and the stone sculpture even had to suffer a bullet.

The crater it left stayed on as ‘comment’. Noam Lupu, from his reading of local newspapers at the time, has highlighted the engagement around its inauguration and in the process of the lowering of the pillar deeper into the ground\textsuperscript{14}. “Lower me at last”, he
quotes a humorous citizen, a line that quickly appeared in the local Harburger Rundschau. From the largely anecdotal extracts from newspaper quotations and framings (rather than from systematic audience studies) Lupu however comments that the public gave the memorial a clearly negative reception. The monument “had become a nuisance to the Harburg public”, he writes, and the monument was seen as a “Schandsäule”. He concludes that the monument is an example of a failure of the counter-memorial project. Lupu does not dwell on the fact that many citizens just added their names and contributed in silence. The Gerz couple for example, were not just interested in names or in cherishing their column, they wanted to set the process alive, through a diversity of contributions, and to see how this very process could reflect questions of memory: “What people engraved on the metal – whether signature, tribute, insult, graffiti – was also printed in their own memory.”

A process was certainly set in motion, not just around what this was about – but also against the monument as something that would stand for an infinite period of time. All this was part of the concept of what a memorial was. The memorial had to be altered and destroyed by active participation by the citizen. And so it was lowered gradually into the earth when marked with ‘life’. The annotations in the form of names added, which the Gerz couple invited, but even more importantly, the alternative additions, from bullets to satirical slogans, came to reflect a troubling but necessary public debate or agonism and Denkmal Arbeit over the past and the present. A consensus on the importance of debating the memorial appeared to be in the air. This memorial was not to stand there unnoticed. Yet the dissent about its interpretation, its forms and so on, and therefore the agony that Lupu detected is rather to be cherished, as is the general underpinning idea of the memorial and the counter-memorial project. So my conclusion is the opposite of Lupu’s. The counter-memorial worked!

The engaging public outcry or agony in Harburg had a broader academic equivalent in Germany at the time. I here use Mouffe’s term again to highlight that a focus or shared language may be established, as can also a forum (a public sphere, urban space) for discussion and pluralism and passion, but this does not necessarily mean that agreement is reached. Particular German academic debates in the 1980s around memory and history were labelled the historikerstreit. These debates were part of the broader phenomenon of Vergangenheitsbewältigung. The historikerstreit, however, was a debate which was as much about the present and contemporary politics, as the ‘working through’ of the past.

The heated debate and the unexpected appropriations of the Harburg memorial furthermore prove that the public did not just act as pawns in the game of the artists, but de-territorialized or subverted the act further. An appropriation can be said to incorporate a resistance or a countering act – a play with what its visitors are ‘meant to do’ with an interactive art work. Otherwise the counter-memorial idea would have been struggling. One could instead question why the Gerz couple gave instructions that could in-
dicate a rather uncreative way of involvement. Yet Shalev-Gerz’s comment in her article quoted earlier indicates they wanted much more than names: they wanted a process completely out of their control. The engagement was not “banal”, as Lupu argues. In fact, the Gerz couple may have given instructions that implied a banal involvement – and of course they got a lot more, and a more interesting involvement than just 60 feet of monotonous signatures on an erect awfulness in the centre of town. They got the inevitable debate: what do we need this thing for? The column which initially looked like a chimney provoked the citizens to produce all the smoke.

The appropriating acts of citizens via debates and bullets could however not change the intended life course of the memorial. The continuous inscriptions caused the planned and gradual castration of the monument. The citizen who wrote “Lower me at last”, had his wish fulfilled in 1993, eight years after the monument’s inauguration. After the monument had been lowered further into the earth, it was then up to the citizens to continue debating or “remain vigilant”, as the artists had instructed. A memorial and dynamic agency, “memory is life”, as Nora has been quoted by many was to replace the dead monument itself. The top of the pillar is on a level with the end part of the upper sidewalk where the monument is now buried. Below, on a second lower pedestrian level, a small window in a door gives us a glimpse of two of the graffiti-covered sides of the pillar, if the light falls right. The monument is not on display, yet it is not completely erased either. The information board is there too – now functioning as a historical text. In Young’s phrasing, a monument can be seen as a “symbolic tombstone”, a form by which we can set off processes of thinking and commemoration. With the Harburg memorial, however, we also see a more literal burial. The monument is present as well as absent, and plays with its appearance as a ‘trace’ (apropos Causey’s definition mentioned earlier). This quasi-existence can also be expressed in a more figurative manner: it is a corpse in a coffin with a peeping hole – or an object in its own modest mausoleum.

In summary, it was intentionally designed to mirror a classic concept of monuments, and do tricks with that concept: i.e the notion of elevation through the pedestal, a format that is recognizable in many monuments commemorating poets, politicians and war heroes. It was however also taking the issue of public space – and the possible dynamics of the public sphere – very seriously, by invoking notions of participation, plurality and citizenship. The process of lowering into the ground could work as a symbol of memory. We gradually forget, and we also occasionally repress memory – and we attempt to take a new start and ‘inscribe’ our lives once more (to repeat the old mistakes?).

Another conceptual trick was to broaden the thematic focus of the memorial. It is a “Monument against Fascism, War and Violence”, as it is titled in English, and by this the ‘who’ and the ‘what’ were blurred – or just opened – and were to be explored by the viewer and the participant. The concept behind the monument was therefore not
just to engage with the topic of fascism, war and violence, but also with “memory” and “history” as concepts in themselves, and furthermore, with the very notion of the monument and the monumental.

Hamburg. A merchant city, multiethnic and marked by war

Hamburg is the second largest city of present day Germany. In history it has been a Central Northern European harbour city and node of industry, trade, migration and immigration. Hamburg was seen as an outward looking city, keen to adapt to new circumstances and closer to the British than the rest of Germany. The city was also (as a central harbour) a strategic place in regional wars. During the 1930s the Western parts of the city, Altona, formerly an independent port in competition with Hamburg, was a location of several Danish-German troubles, as well as the home of one of the largest Jewish communities in Europe. It then became a centre for deportation during the Nazi era. As the merchant centre for Germany, the city became an important component in, and contributor to, the industrial and military apparatus of the Nazi dictatorship, providing materials and manpower to boost the German war machine. A major concentration camp close to the city, Neuengamme, was established in 1938. Naturally, the city became a major target for the allies. The Royal Air Force’s bombing strategy of 1943 led to the killing of 50,000, and half of the city was left in ruins. Not surprisingly, war commemorative forms in relation to the differing parties and the victims are much in evidence in the public space today. But it took a while before these forms appeared. I will say more on this in the final section of this chapter.

Pots, Plants and People

_Hier + Jetzt_ [Here and Now] – _The Victims of National Socialist Justice_, by Gloria Friedman, erected in 1997, is a solid grey, granite fence or wall plate, a bit taller than a human being and about 30 feet wide. It is bulky and solid. On one side of the wall, which can be viewed from the entrance to the High Court close to the memorial, is a four-figured number placed in the centre, and visible from afar: It is “1933”. This side of the wall plate represents Germany’s past. 1933 was the year that brought the Nazis to power. On the other side of the wall are numerous plants in pots! The information board nearby notes that a variety of plants grow side by side – potato, cactus, and lavender – some even poisonous. When I visited the site in April 2007, on a memorial walk with a German researcher, the plants looked, however, more or less the same. A few different species were notable and the ground looked grey and ashy – a more fertile-looking ground would have created a better appearance for this half of the memorial, which aimed to represent Germany today and not during the war era. Another connotation of interest, and as well being a problematic one, could be the notion of _blumen_, in relation to _blut und blumen_ [blood and flowers], in German cultural history.
According to the information board the plants were meant to mirror the variety of social strata and ethnicities coming from the various countries which make up the population of Hamburg. Plants and people need to be nourished, meaning remembered. On the side of the plants is the park *Planten und Blumen* [Plants and Flowers].

I somehow found this approach naive and not as thought provoking as the Gerz’ Hamburg memorial. A contrast between a dark past and a blooming and organic present? We are reminded about are the differing ‘flavours’ of the city and the ideal of each citizen standing equal before the law, not as in 1933 on the other side of the wall. We have a responsibility to keep memory vibrant. But how is the public involved in the vibrancy? The memorial contrasts concrete monumental stone with the organic *modus operandi* of the life of flowers, but it does not seem to involve the public in the ‘life’ part of the memorial, that part of being dependent on some sort of maintenance by a gardener. I have not been able to find out if or how citizens have appropriated the memorial, bringing for example, a watering jug along – or stealing a flower to take home to a loved one?

The memorial is located in an area signifying justice and accountability through the presence of the huge court complex, as well as an area of colour, in the park, an oasis in the middle of a pulsating Hamburg.

Marching soldiers and a burnt corpse

On a small lawn at the edge of a park area is a huge concrete block, twice the size of an adult person. Silhouettes engraved on the top half of the monument, elevated from the
ground, portray soldiers marching side by side. The memorial is for the 76th Infantry regiment serving during the First World War. The *Kriegersmahnmal*, or Warrior Memorial, by Richard Kuöhl, was erected in 1936. A text in relief on the memorial beyond the soldiers quotes a poem “Germany must live, even if we must die”. The memorial is powerful and pompous. We honour these heroes and the country Germany. This style of memorial can seem to be a stereotype of a memorial. A figure, group or event is selected, elevated and monumentally represented.

This interpretation did not however remain unquestioned when a new monument was established about 20 steps away in 1985 (just one year before the Harburg memorial). The frequent protests against the Infantry Monument’s view on war, was now countered and maybe also silenced(?) by Alfred Hrdlicka’s *Gegendenkmal* [counter monument] making space for various groups of victims within the same memorial (for a view of the memorials together, see Fig. 3). Here, we do not see stiff soldiers. Among the various figures on this memorial we see a burned corpse after the firestorm of 1943 as well as holocaust victims. It provided Germany and Hamburg with a needed comment and contrast to the *Warriors Memorial* – as German research Andreas Hieronymus also noted on our memorial walk. The bare space between the two memorials inevitably opens up an area for dialogue inside the visitor, or between visitors, one could say.

By engaging with this past and continuously processing it – not just seeing memory as an archive or storage – we inevitably invite infinite forms of representation. And we
may lay open a dynamic and living relation between past and present. Lastly, but not least, we also honour those who had to suffer, not just once, but by an enduring and creative engagement.

While these cases from Hamburg deal with artistic works of a ‘monumental’ quality – yet bearing in mind the shrinking ‘behaviour’ of the Harburg monument and questioning ‘monumentality’ – I will now comment on two other and very different examples, with another approach to memorial art.

Contemporary urban life on the top of past deportations

I visited most of these memorials on Good Friday, Easter 2007 (the Harburg memorial in 2006). The shops were closed and only a few pedestrians in the streets made the city and the sidewalk appear like open spaces – and this made the memorials I was about to discover more easily seen. The sidewalk was empty and I noticed the discrete *Stolpersteine*, or Stumbling Stones: brass plates engraved into the sidewalk, on a level with the concrete square, measuring about four inches on each side and with an inscription on top. You will ‘stumble’ – apropos the English name of the memorial – into them near apartment entrances here and there. I had a list and a map dotted with memorials before I took off from Copenhagen, yet I had missed this one. *Stolpersteine* is a project initiated by the artist Gunter Demnig. *Hier wohnte*, ‘Here lived’, it says, and a name is printed. The date of the deportation to a concentration camp is also printed. While this format of a monument in the form of a replacement tombstone for the missing burial

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Fig. 4
Stolpersteine, by Gunter Demnig (Photo by author, 2007).
site of a corpse or ashes is well known, the proliferation of the numbers and its nationwide presence are unusual. The number of plates is growing, as research can reveal new details about deported persons’ former addresses. We walk on top of history – and we are reminded of that while walking. You may not intend to visit the memorial, yet this one will visit you! This is an important spatial strategy. You are not likely to take a long walk around Hamburg without visiting a *Stolpersteine* at some point. Susanne Street in the St. Pauli area is full of trendy bars, cool clothing and Turkish diners. In a leisure quarter a tension between usual mundane activities, like entering a shop or a bar, and the past is created when you literally walk onto one of these stones. You suddenly stand in front of the place where a man, woman or family was dragged out and taken to a camp – formerly a real environment or space of memory, but today turned into something different: a *lieu de memoire* or site of memory. I noticed these sites on my own in the quiet streets. Later, when I was in the company of the researcher Andreas Hieronymus, he pointed one out in busy St Pauli. In March 2007, 1700 stones had been planted in Hamburg. 10,000 Jews of Hamburg were deported during the war years. There are 9000 of these stones in the country so far, and the growth of the project and the financing of stones is dependent on citizen research and funding.

A hidden past outside Hamburg: Neuengamme memorial and museum

From a train station in central Hamburg, I boarded a local bus and was driven through a cozy suburban village to the edge of metropolitan Hamburg and then through a 10 minutes of a ‘no man’s land’ of fields, before arriving at a huge complex, the former Neuengamme concentration camp, the central North German Workers camp and prison, throughout the war. Over 100,000 people were taken to work at Neuengamme – and over half of them died in the camp. Half of the former 30-40,000 Jews of the city managed to escape before 1940 – most of the rest ended their lives at Neuengamme. A crematorium was established too. What surprised me most was not the incredible industrial and ‘modern’ organization of the place, but its vast size. Models in books do not capture several kilometers of buildings, yards and land space for *Häftlings/prisoners* and personnel set up to provide a key city of the Third Reich like Hamburg with labour and materials to run the war and build the civil defence.

It is today turned into a memorial and museum site, where art and pedagogy have altered the camp severely. Yet, the memorial and the exhibitions have been built on the soil where the concentration camp existed. They were thus placed in a formerly real environment of memory, the actual site of the experiences. In other cases (mentioned earlier in the chapter) we see a more diffuse relationship between the form, the monument, and the spaces and experiences it relates to. The *Stolpersteine* also mark real environments of memory, where the memorial marks the location itself. In such cases, an interplay between the artistic artifact is connected with an ‘aura’ of a site, or an organic, yet altered, ‘real’ presence of a past. A ‘this is where it actually happened’ feeling.
1950s it could be viewed as remains or a ruin, a trace of history, rather than a palimpsest\textsuperscript{39}. My father was visiting Neuengamme in the 1950s. He said it looked as if “they had left it as it was after the war”, so somehow it had a smell of the past. Only later on were the exhibitions established and various art works and information centres created at the site. The gradual museumization of Neuengamme into a complex of detailed memorization may mirror Germany’s public engagement with World War II. We see a recent proliferation of representational forms and renewed debate\textsuperscript{40}. Decades of silence have been replaced by a few decades of debate and expression in various forms. I shall return to this argument in the conclusion.

Most of the monuments I was able to find about the World War II in Hamburg were, interestingly, established during the 1980s and 1990s\textsuperscript{41}. Do we need an interim of space to be able to represent conflict, to see more clearly and acknowledge the debt, and thereby also recognizing ourselves as democratic and humane? The monuments I have seen, and many others, are as much for present and future citizens – and for particular present political flag-waving – as it is for those victims they honour or the event it supposedly engages with, one could argue. The enduring Israel-Palestine conflict may help us to put this argument into perspective.

\textbf{A TIME OF CONFLICT — AND ANOTHER TIME FOR ITS COMMEMORATION: HAIFA, ISRAEL-PALESTINE}

Turning my mind towards Israel-Palestine my aim or question here is broader and not, at least at the beginning, concerned with specific memorials: \textit{With no interim or recovery phase to reflect upon the conflict, which politics of memory affect an enduring conflict and whose past is represented in memorial form}\textsuperscript{42}?

When I visited Haifa several times years ago I was not looking for memorials, but for an alternative educational project and cultural exchange between Jewish and Arab young people in various NGOs\textsuperscript{43}. Young people crossing the lines, various groups arranging summer camps, meetings at the cultural centre \textit{Beit Hagefen} or crossing each others’ paths on the lower part of town, the Arab Wadi Nisnas, which is also, interestingly, the physically lower part of the city, \textit{downtown} in the literal sense.

I would not have been likely to find many memorials commemorating the city’s Arab history even if I had searched more thoroughly. “There are none”, says a key researcher on the history of Haifa, Johnny Mansour, a Christian Arab with Israeli citizenship. A Jewish Israeli researcher, Yossi Ben-Artzi\textsuperscript{44}, lists a series of other monuments that do however capture some of the city’s past. Although he lists ornamental sculptures in Jewish-Arab battlefields, the list is dominated by Turkish and British heritage monuments, and commemoration of Jewish migration (see Appendix). The fact that the questions to the researchers were similar and that they did not present me with the same list is
interesting, yet not surprising. It reveals how the mediation of a past in memorial form, is selective as any other historical take on the past.

Haifa, on the Mediterranean coast of Northern Israel, was one of several central ports of Palestine before the First World War, when, as it had been for many centuries, the region was a province of the Ottoman Empire. Already at that time, the British saw it as a strategically useful point for communication and transport. Ironically – when looking at events of today in the Middle East – a connection to Iraqi oil could be established and exported through the harbour, and direct communication with Egypt could also be established\textsuperscript{45}. After the Turks were defeated and the French and the English divided the region into mandated territories, Jewish immigration grew for the next decades, also increased by the Nazi policies in Germany during the mid 1930s. Haifa was a major port. Tel Aviv had already been established before the First World War. A heavy influx of Jewish immigrants settled in or travelled through the largely Muslim and Christian Arab city. It then became a boundary for Jewish-Arab confrontation, and in 1948, 70,000 Arabs were forced to or chose to flee as a consequence of the Israeli-Arab war after the establishment of the state of Israel\textsuperscript{46}. Only 3000 Arabs were left behind. Very few Arabs in Haifa actually remember the time before 1948 or were there to pass on the stories. From being a clear 90% majority in 1920, only 10% of the city’s population today is Arab, and then mostly Christian. The remaining majority now is mostly made up of Ashkenazi Jews\textsuperscript{47}. When I spoke to the Arab researcher Johnny Mansour in April 2007, he noted that this lack of memory material is one of the reasons why one will not find anything on 1948. Yet to raise a memorial does not imply that all parties agree about the history, or are clear about what story to tell. But to build public memorials may indicate that we place ourselves in a collective memory perspective, based on a social consensus and a common master narrative and yet, we may need an approach that allows for antagonism, appropriation and the ‘collected’ and fragmented character of memory. (I will return to these terms). One factor is also the attitude of the powerful Jewish Israeli – although he or she belong of many sub-groupings\textsuperscript{48}, who may not question his or her own presence as he or she is not threatened anymore (Some groups in the post-Zionism debates nevertheless attempted to incorporate Arab history on Israel-Palestine\textsuperscript{49}).

While the Arab population has risen to over 20% of the population of Israel (not including the West Bank) and 10 percent of Haifa’s population is Arab (and 20% of the students at the university are Arab), they have not succeeded in marking their history and their forefathers’ memories of their lives there. Johnny Mansour is beginning to create an oral history and memorial project with other Israeli researchers, Arab and Jewish. It should mark the 60th anniversary of the 1948 war. Yet the project is developing slowly for various reasons: one person in the project group fell ill, another left the country for a while.
In general, a range of organizations organize human exchanges and peace education for the present time. This type of activity has, since the 1980s, found a stable and institutionalized ground (Givat Haviva and Neve Shalom/Wahat al-salam, to mention a few\textsuperscript{50}), while a public and ‘monumental’ engagement with the past is still too difficult. Some monuments may tend to give the public a singular interpretation of a past era or figure – while the Hamburg memorials, in particular, teach us that this process of giving meaning depends on the public, and that it is a never-ending story. Commemorative sites do not need to take on a closure of meaning. However, the politics of memory are influencing which aspects of collective memory are to be promoted and which are to be excluded\textsuperscript{51}.

However, Israel and Haifa do not seem ready to open the debate about memorial forms, despite some traces of 1948 here and there. The monument could, nevertheless, easily create space for the unsolved, the unsettled and the disputed. The absence of monuments relating to the Arab history of Israel expresses how far the state has moved in its first 60 years in working with some of the wounds. And in Haifa we see, sadly, the same development as in many other areas of the country – or any other country, especially in Northern Europe. In the case of Haifa, Ori Nir and Lily Gailiy write\textsuperscript{52} that this city is called a ‘mixed city’ during the long interval when a considerable number of Jews moved in and gained majority in the formerly Arab town (a process that began 100 years ago\textsuperscript{53}).

\textbf{End Points}

As Angelika Bammer notes, “memorials give expression to a people’s changing needs in relation to what they want to remember and how, and what they feel they can forget and for how long”\textsuperscript{54}. While Hamburg and Haifa are almost capital cities, harbour cities, merchant cities, and multi-ethnic cities, overwritten with a history of conflict – and in Haifa’s case an enduring history – they are both standing in the shadow of the common template of the memory debate, which is Berlin in Germany, and Jerusalem in Israel-Palestine. They are also at their different points in time existing in relation to the conflict that has been endured, but which is being commemorated differently.

In Hamburg, the experiences of the Holocaust and the bombings of 1943 are simultaneously marked in some memorials (e.g. Hrdlicka’s \textit{Gegendenkmal}). Several of the memorials and the practices around them mirror the ambiguity and unsettled nature of war memory. Perhaps this is an attitude Haifa could adopt to cope with conflict. Esther Shalev-Gerz, one of the artists behind the Harburg memorial, notices that in Germany, the Berlin wall came down and the whole geopolitical picture changed during the 8 years the Harburg memorial existed, and this also produced new views on the column “...perceived by some as an an almost aggressive element, the status of the monument changed, becoming a kind of public forum”\textsuperscript{55}. A memorial of public interest may allow
for the fact that times also can change radically, or otherwise, if not, you can raise a new memorial right next to the old (as with Hrdlicka close to the Kuöhl memorial).

In Haifa, the Arab memories are absent, or at least underexposed, when it comes to monuments. The memory material, Mansour mentioned, or memory as life situating and placing remembrance in what Nora calls a sacred context has disappeared and there has been an absence of ‘History’ or Arab history writing to take over and reconstruct and represent their past. History is not the past, but the representation and reconstruction of the past. Like Germany, Israel has had its Historikerstreits and so-called post-Zionism debates, which, however, have remained largely academic. Yet, there is no longer a uniform picture of Israeli history. Collective memory has been able to affect the notion of history “belonging to everyone and to no one and therefore [it] has a universal vocation”.

However, Haifa has, despite the silencing of Arab history, acquired a reputation for incorporating Arab life and Arab-Jewish coexistence. Cultural projects and encounters at Beit Hagefen, for example, provide the city with a ‘best practices’ brand. In fact, there are both negative and positive elements to this. The status quo may be maintained and Israeli shows it is somehow democratic, by including, yet not really giving, equality. On the positive side, various projects and organizations actually give people something to work with among themselves, such as the Social Development Committee of Haifa, an Arab organization. They have dialogue with those who are in power, and with which they are forced to engage. No group is going to disappear.

One interesting aspect of the living memory resource of Haifa is that 20 percent of the students at its university are Arab. This may affect the future, if the intellectual capital does not leave the country.

Like other nations which are defined by their migrant/settler population, Haifa’s past will not go away, certainly not as long as many Arabs stay and study in the area and even though in the last century many former Arab street names were changed to the names of Zionists, many Arabs still refer to the former Arab names (Haifa “is perceived by the Arabs of the city as a kind of Judaizing slide projected on their historical memory”, as the two Jewish Israelis, Ori Nir and Lily Galili, wrote in Haaretz [2000]).

In Hamburg there seems to be a shift from silence, and ‘victimhood’, to a newer human agency, engagement and appropriation. This is a good sign. The recent decade’s growth of digital art, including memorials on the internet, give rise to forms of engagement and interaction across distance and space, in memorial form (see e.g. “The Living War Memorial”, the student project of Malmö University, or http://www.war-memorial.net/). The era of digital heritage may to some extent democratize memory and recognize its character of recollection, of collected memory – as fragments, actualized on an individual level and not full memory, while the making of collective memory or of cultural memory through official ‘top-down’ memorials tends to conclude, mythologize and exclude. Public history in memorial forms dealing with the selective representation of memories regarded as collective and shared is also about controlling.
which histories are to be History (with a capital H), to whom, and how. To control the past is to control the present and the future, as the phrase goes.

To display public history in the form of an artistic ‘Mahnmal’ is to do two things: to tell or warn (mahn) and to mark or place (mal) something. However, in a recent interview Hans Christian Post had with younger German artists, Jens Schanze points out that Germany does not need more public campaigns and monuments, rather it needs to inspect and work with its own family memories, their private memories. Germans have been told about their history and this has been passed on in public forms, in education, formal and informal, from schools to museums and in public campaigns. However, some artists, the ‘third generation’, ask: what did my parents and grandparents do and think? Schanze here interestingly suggests that what Germans might need is “Fühl-doch-mal”, a look inside for marks and impressions, rather than another “mahn-mal”. Although Schanze does not explore the meaning of ‘mahn’ here, one could translate this, in this context, as the teachings, narration and even guilt-ensuring campaigns that mark public, mediatized German space. The question of guilt was also prominent in citizen responses, which Lupu reported. As mentioned earlier, the Harburg memorial was seen by some as “Schandsäule”.

Proceeding from Shanze’s thinking on the private and the public, I will here point out that ‘public’ and ‘private’ can meet in forms where the public in various ways could alter or appropriate the content of memorials, digital and/or physical. Perhaps what we need is to bridge the two levels, if they can be seen as such, by bringing the individual actualizations of the so-called collective memory (to use the phrasing from Gedi and Elam) into the public domain. The oral history project in Haifa, if it evolves fully, takes a step in this direction.

‘Memory’ in the forms dealt with here is never conclusive or final, and memorials can be invitations to interpretation and participation. They can be interactive, interesting, democratic, and engaging forms which also, importantly, become tools of conflict that have to be coped with and explored.

Notes
I thank Yossi Ben-Artzi, Johnny Mansour (Haifa) and Andreas Hieronymus (Hamburg) for their comments and help during my research in March and April 2007.


Memorials and Memory Politics in Hamburg and Haifa


6 A. Hieronymus, Correspondence and meeting/‘Hamburg memorial walk’, April 2007; Mansour and others, Haifa, personal correspondence, 2007.


8 Ho Tai uses Alon Confino to point out that a common problem in many memory studies is an emphasis on construction at the expense of reception. Using Confino’s discussion of Pierre Nora’s work *Lieux de memoire*, Ho Tai says that Nora discusses how certain sites came to be constructed and have evolved over time, with the use of archival sources and opinion leaders, but not about present understanding and the use of ordinary localized communities of memory. Ho-Tai H T. [using Alon Confino], *Remembering Realms: Pierre Nora and French National Memory* (Review essay), in “The American Historical Review” 106,3, section 25-26.

9 E. Björgvinsson, A.Høg Hansen, *Memory and Mediation*, a research project and paper being produced for an “Art in Public Space” panel at the American Cultural Studies Annual Meeting Conference, which is to take place in New York, May 2008.


13 As summarized by J.E. Young, *At Memory’s Edge* cit., and N. Lupu, *Memory Vanished* cit.

14 Ibid.

15 Ibid., p. 141.

16 Ibid., p. 137.

17 Ibid., p. 137.

18 Ibid., p. 135.


21 Inspired by Mouffe, *Democracy* cit.


23 Maier, *The Unmasterable Past* cit.


28 Young, *The Texture of Memory* cit., p. xi.


32 Many of the memorial sites were visited while conducting a walking interview with German researcher Andreas Hieronymus, who has been involved in several local research projects on migration and youth culture in Hamburg. Andreas Hieronymus has also taught The Holocaust to Muslims and other groups at the Neuengamme museum (the former concentration camp outside Hamburg).


34 Nora, *Realms of Memory* cit.

35 Andreas Hieronymus made me aware of another pavement stone in St. Pauli marking the old Altona border. The inscription on the pavement stone tells which area of the city that used to be under the Danish Crown 150 years. After the 1864 Danish-German war all Slesvig-Holstein and a southern part of the Danish peninsula Jutland became a part of Germany (my grandfather's grandfather was serving as soldier in the 1864 war). The southern part of Jutland was returned in 1920.


37 Zygmunt Bauman discussed the modern and industrial character of the Nazi genocide in *Modernity and the Holocaust* (1986), debating the careful deployment of modern regimes of knowledge, and a modern society’s dehumanizing of the enemy – i.e. no Holocaust without modern civilization.

38 At other concentration camps where typhus raged, the buildings were burned down, as for example. at Bergen-Belsen, where you do not get the same sense of visiting a former concentration camp. Yet this museum site and *lieu de memoire* is also under reconstruction. In fact, the new palimpsest or overwriting is attempting to restore or create a stronger sense of how it actually looked during the war (from information boards at Bergen-Belsen, visited Summer 2007).


40 Maier, *The Unmasterable Past* cit.; A. Hieronymus, Correspondence and meeting/’Hamburg memorial walk’, April 2007.


42 It is the similarities between merchant and multiethnic harbour cities marked by conflict, past and enduring, and somehow interrelated through the Second World War, which are the focus here. The purpose is certainly not to ‘measure’ the Holocaust and the Second World War in relation to the Israeli-Arab conflict.

Creating Space

44 Y. Ben-Artzi, Email correspondence, April 2007.

45 Seikaly, Haifa cit., p. 5. What is today known as Iraq was until 1932 the British Mandate of Mesopotamia (as part of the various mandated divisions of the former Eastern Ottoman Empire after World War I). In 1932, the area became the Kingdom of Iraq.


47 Seikaly, Haifa cit.

48 The Ashkenazi Jews (Jews of European descent) who escaped the Holocaust or European or Eastern European pogroms came for various reasons. Many were just trying to survive and this was a place they could escape to. There were also several waves of aliyah, a return ‘home’ to the promised land from the late 1800 and 50 years onward. The emigration could hereby be argued and justified further. The Mizrachi Jew on the other hand (Jews from the Orient) were indigenous Jews of Palestine, or came from the Arab states during the 1950s and 1960s, where the new Jewish state and general Arab-Jewish tension in the region provided them with a motif to leave to the new state. In the Ashkenazi and Mizrachi group one sees different degrees of religious affiliation, e.g. secular, traditional, orthodox. In addition, the Russians and the Arabs with Israeli citizenship make up large minority groups. (using Kimmerling, Khalidi, Grossman, and Pappé among others in A. Høg Hansen, Dialogue cit., chapter 3). This point is made here because these groups are all bringing or/and forming diverse collective memories which again will affect the future politics of memory, what the state should remember, and how it should develop.

49 See e.g. I. Pappé (ed.), The Israel-Palestine Question cit.

50 Høg Hansen, Dialogue cit.

51 There are many examples of complicated memory debates all over the world: e.g. the Freedom Park National Legacy Project in South Africa and the debate in South Africa during 2006. The question on museums and memorials representing American Indians has also been debated in the US. In Washington D.C. a museum on the Holocaust was established before a museum on the history of the American Indians opened.


53 Seikaly, Haifa cit.

54 Bammer, Hamburg Memories cit.


56 Using Pierre Nora, P. Nora, Realms of Memory cit., p. 3.

57 Maier, The Unmasterable Past cit.; Nora, Realms of Memory cit., p. 3.

58 I. Pappé (ed.), The Israel-Palestine Question cit.

59 P. Nora, Realms of Memory cit., p. 3.

60 Beit Hagafen is a cultural centre in central Haifa bringing Arab and Jewish children and youth together in various projects. The centre also arranges outreach activities, projects and marches. I visited and interviewed personnel at the centre in 1999, yet decided to do the major part of my PhD field work at Givat Haviva and Neve Shalom/Wāḥat al-salam, other cooperating organisations not located in Haifa.


62 A. Hieronymus, Correspondence and meeting/’Hamburg memorial walk’, April 2007.

63 Bammer, Hamburg Memories cit., p. 364.

64 Gedi, Elam, Collective Memory cit., p. 34.

65 Young, The Texture of Memory cit., p. ix.

These terms could be the subject of an article or book in themselves. Let me, however, attempt some brief notes: We can say that human beings nurture material culture and cherish artifacts of the profane, as Raphael Samuel argues (R. Samuel, *Theatres of Memory* Vol. 1 London 1994.). These artifacts – and certain oral accounts as well – may become selected and sacred heritage items over time, and become artifacts of *cultural memory*, a notion Jan Assman uses (Assman, *Collective Memory* cit.), which may become chosen as crucial clues in narratives of museum exhibits or heritage and memorial sites. Assman reworks concepts from Halbwach’s and distinguishes between an everyday, *communicative memory*, mainly distributed orally on a local level, and then the above-mentioned *cultural memory* which can be seen as memories and objects chosen/selected and mediatized on a broader public level. Thereby, in Samuel’s words, a memory has taken the step from the profane to become what may be *official memory*, what we could call a dominating narrative, or the ‘historization’ of memory, in public and cultural forms.


Schanze in Post, *Fantomsmerter* cit.

Lupu, *Memory Vanished* cit., p. 137.

Gedi, Elam, *Collective Memory* cit., p. 34.


As an example of a recent cultural form exploring the relationship and entanglement of public and private memory under authoritarian regimes, one could mention the feature film *Das Leben der Anderen/The Lives of others* (directed by the débutante Florian Donnersmarck), portraying everyday life and Stasi monitoring in East Germany before the break down of the regime in 1989. The mechanisms used by the regime to monitor Stasi officers as well as ‘ordinary Germans’ are here touchingly portrayed.

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_Living War Memorial_, the http://warmemorial.wordpress.com/ (visited April 2007).


_Memorial art in Hamburg, Teachers guide to the Holocaust_  


APPENDICES

WAR MEMORIALS AND HERITAGE SITES IN HAMBURG

Memorials/sites discussed in the chapter:

*Mahnmal gegen Faschismus / Memorial Against Fascism*
Harburg shopping mall, a few metro stops from Hamburg
Jochen Gerz, Esther Shalev-Gerz, 1986.

*Hier und Jetzt / Here and Now. Victims of National Socialist Justice*
Große wall anlage, near the High Court
Gloria Friedman, a granite wall, 1997.

*Kriegerdenkmal / Warrior Memorial*
Dammtor
Richard Kuöhl, 1936.

*Gegenendenkmal/Counter-monument*
Dammtor

*Stolpersteine / Stumbling Stones*
All over Hamburg (and in many other cities throughout Germany)

*KZ-Gedenkstätte Neuengamme / Neuengamme museum and memorials*
Jean Dolidier Weg, A 20 minutes bus ride south-East of Hamburg
Museum, memorial site, memorials, library and archive.

Other Hamburg memorials relating to WWII not discussed in the chapter:

*Schwarze Quadrat / Black Form - Dedicated to the Missing Jews*
Altona City Hall

*Pahtogeste / Gesture of Pathos*
Altona City Hall

*Mahnmal für die bombenopfer / Memorial for the bombing victims*
Intersection Hamburg Uhlenhorst.

*Platz der Jüdische Deportierten / Square of the Deported Jews*
Edmund Sivers Allee
Ulrich Rückriem, 1982.

*Joseph Carlebach Platz Synagoge monument*
Joseph Carlebach Platz

*Mahnmals für die bombenopfer / Monuments for the bombing victims*
Friedhof Ohlsdorf
Various artists, 1952.

*Heine-Denkmal / Heine Statue*
Rathaus
From a model by Hugo Lederer, 1982.

Haifa memorials and heritage sites:
Examples (with help from Yossi Ben Artzi):
Jewish cemetery
Muslim cemetery
German templars cemetery
British army cemetery
Hijaz railway monument
King Faisal monument
German colony
Baha’i shrine and gardens
Ornamental sculptures in former Arab-Jewish battle fields