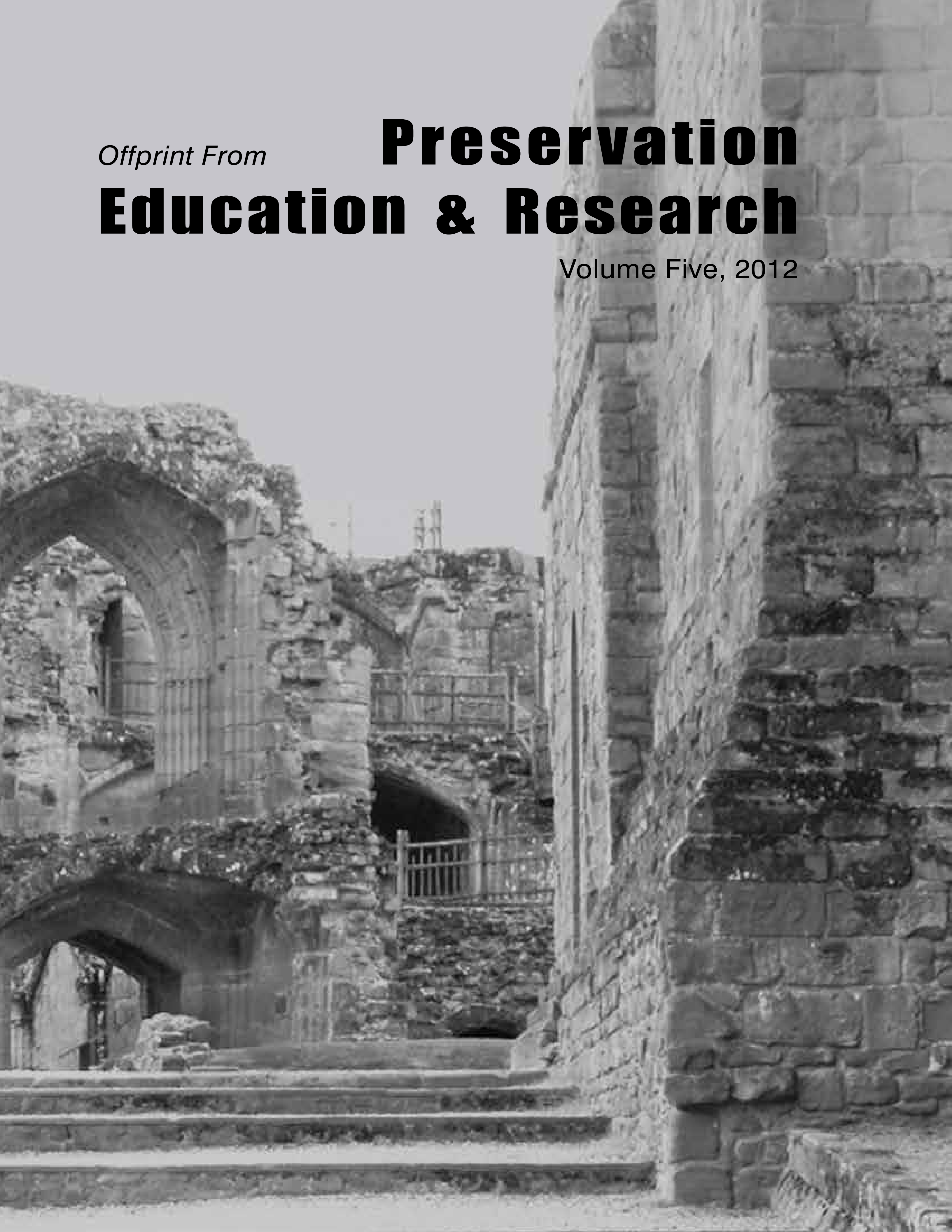
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Contents

Articles

1 The Challenge of Preserving Public Memory: Commemorating Tomochichi in Savannah
ROBIN B. WILLIAMS

17 Domesticating the "National Optic" after the Third Reich: Preservation and Morale Building in Postwar West Germany
KAREN L. MULDER

29 Sir Walter Scott and Kenilworth Castle: Ruins Restored by Historical Imagination
RUMIKO HANDA

45 Bernd Foerster: Architect, Educator, and Preservation Activist
HUGH C. MILLER

59 Sustainability in the Adaptive Reuse Studio: A Case Study in Cincinnati's Over-the-Rhine Historic District
JEFFREY T. TILMAN

75 Learning Among Friends: Using Heritage-Based Educational Practices to Improve Preservation Law Pedagogy
BARRY STIEFEL and GILBERT STIEFEL

87 The Young Preservationist: Findings from the First Undergraduate Historic Preservation Education Symposium
ANDRÉA LIVI SMITH

Special Report

97 Lessons in the Woods: Examining the Landscape Legacy of the Civilian Conservation Corps in the Allegheny National Forest
ANN KOMARA

Book and Film Reviews

105 Chad Freidrichs (director). *The Pruitt-Igoe Myth* (Film Review)
AMY D. FINSTEIN

106 Jeffrey M. Chusid. *Saving Wright: The Freeman House and the Preservation of Meaning, Materials and Modernity*
JANE KING HESSION

108 Dan Austin and Sean Doerr. *Lost Detroit: Stories Behind the Motor City's Majestic Ruins*
John Gallagher. *Reimagining Detroit: Opportunities for Redefining an American City*
Andrew Moore. *Detroit Disassembled*
MICHAEL MCCULLOCH

111 Abstracts, *Preservation Education & Research*, Volume Five 2012

115 *Preservation Education & Research*, Information for Contributors & Readers

Abstracts

DOMESTICATING THE “NATIONAL OPTIC” AFTER THE THIRD REICH: PRESERVATION AND MORALE BUILDING IN POSTWAR WEST GERMANY

This article describes three of the most recurrent preservation responses that emerged directly after World War II in West Germany, each providing a physical parallel to the nation’s impetus to restore morale and order after the Holocaust. What distinguishes this exercise is its attempt to apply a multidisciplinary methodology to a preservation record that is distorted and irrecoverable, particularly because the inherent motivations of reconstruction involved returning the “national optic” to relative “normalcy” as efficiently as possible. American, German, and British tallies for war damages in Germany after 1945 adopted different platforms, advancing varying estimates in a context of monumental devastation; while statistical or hermeneutical revisions continue into the twenty-first century, all must rely on the 1940s-era sources, unless new facts come to light. Perspectives that relate to postwar German reconstruction and parallel preservation concerns have emerged out of late twentieth-century scholarship in anthropology, leisure/tourism studies, monuments theory, religious history, collective memory, and national identity discourses—arenas of thought that are not necessarily, and not typically, in conversation with each other or with preservation.

Strategies under discussion include replacing destroyed heritage sites with stylistically “sanitized” replicas, cultivating ruins with modern additions, or allowing ruins to remain *in situ*—the least popular option during the immediate postwar period. Each preservation rationale correlates with regional or national morale and identity-building strategies in West Germany after Auschwitz.

KAREN L. MULDER
Corcoran College of Art and Design
Washington, DC

Domesticating the "National Optic" after the Third Reich: Preservation and Morale Building in Postwar West Germany

KAREN L. MULDER

> In domesticating the past we enlist it for present causes…. We yearn for rooted legacies that enrich the paltry here and now with ancestral echoes, yet also encumber us with outworn relics and obsolete customs (Lowenthal 1996, xi).

Although innumerable analyses of Germany's socio-cultural flux after the Holocaust have surfaced since the 1960s, one extension of this discourse that still defies coherence is the rationale that informed preservation approaches in West Germany's war-shattered cities. Rebuilding extended far beyond pragmatic considerations to the restoration of what some have called the "national optic," a construct that correlates ideations of national identity and collective memory to the physical environment. In his sequel to *The Past is a Foreign Country* (1985), geographer David Lowenthal suggested that those who actively "domesticate" the past graft the values of the present into historical narratives, driven by various agendas to create a presumably clearer picture of the past (Lowenthal 1985, x). West Germany's postwar reconstruction during the decades immediately following 1945 exemplifies this domesticating motivation more than almost any other twentieth-century event, even though reliable or detailed accounts of the process remain disparate and scattered.

This article describes preservation responses in postwar Germany that paralleled a national initiative to restore "rooted legacies" and positive "ancestral echoes" during a monumental reconstruction campaign. Strategies under discussion include the total replacement of destroyed heritage sites with stylistically "sanitized" replicas that masquerade as "authentic" historical fabric; the cultivation or blending of ruins with modern additions; and, as the least popular solution immediately following the war, the decision to allow ruins to remain *in situ* as memorials. This review, which correlates German preservation rationales with morale and identity-building campaigns in the period after Auschwitz, expands the topic with a multidisciplinary methodology, applying perspectives from late twentieth-century discourses on leisure/tourism studies, collective memory, national identity, religious history, and monuments theory to a subject informed by an imprecise record—skewed by the chaos on the ground as well as a moral catastrophe of incalculable proportions. This recombination of observations from arenas of thought that are not necessarily in conversation with each other attempts to compensate for the absence of consistent postwar assessments that can never be fully recounted or compared against the actual physical vestiges of World War II. After all, the *Wiederaufbau* aimed to mitigate Germany's physical devastation as efficiently as possible.

RELOCATING THE "NATIONAL OPTIC" IN THE RUBBLE

American, German, and British evaluators after 1945 utilized different platforms to define the physical dimensions of Germany's defeat in a context of monumental devastation. While the particulars vary, statistical approximations underscore the fact that Germany's infrastructure sustained an unprecedented amount of munitions during the war, with estimates that range from 1.9 to 2.7 million tons of ordnance between 1940 and 1945. One MIT sociologist calculated that the debris on the ground, adding up to about

three hundred million cubic yards of rubble by some estimates, could have encircled West Germany's newly drawn boundaries with a wall six-feet thick and twenty-feet high—delineating an area roughly equivalent to the borders of New England (Burchard 1966, 3). Inaccuracy compounded the ferocity of the Allied attack: up to 1944, only one in twenty bombs dropped by the Royal Air Force and subsequently, the American Army Air Force, reportedly hit their intended targets; Norden bombsights and daylight attacks during the war's final year (1945) improved this probability to one out of four (Guptil and Mendelsohn 1975, 5).

The initial British air raids concentrated on strategic targets, such as cities in proximity to industrial centers, borders, or transportation hubs (e.g., Dortmund, Düsseldorf, Karlsruhe, Pforzheim). Subsequently, United States Strategic Bombing Survey (USSBS) and British Bomber Command accounts confess a marked shift after the bombing of Coventry to wage war by demoralizing the German spirit, intensifying attacks that selectively targeted important heritage sites (e.g., Aachen, Cologne, Frankfurt, Worms) or cities that had hosted Nazi party politics (e.g., Nüremberg, Münich, Berlin) (Figs. 1, 2). For example, in Aachen, Charlemagne's ninth-century Palatine dome—one of the most prized German heritage properties—came within a few feet of total devastation in 1945. Fortunately, a well-educated twenty-three-year-old civil engineer with the 238th Engineer Combat Battalion issued strict orders to Army officers not to fire on the visually prominent *Aachener Dom*, a typical practice that established artillery ranges during ground combat.[1] The fourteenth-century *Glashaus* addition appended to Charlemagne's octagon with nineteenth-century metal trusses, however, barely escaped destruction when a stray bomb flew through one 77-foot-high Gothic window and rather miraculously exited out the opposite window, exploding somewhat harmlessly in

Fig. 1. On the back of his personal snapshots, American Lutheran vicar Enno Lohrmann recorded surprisingly detailed statistics from local and military newspapers. "April 1948. A street scene in Pforzheim…a town of 90,000 in 1944—now 45,000… 80% of the residential dwellings were destroyed. [Almost] 30,000 people killed in a twenty-five minute air raid in Feb. 1945" (Courtesy Martha [Lohrmann] Failinger).

an empty plaza.[2] Both narratives, which are not widely known or published, suggest how tenuously one of Germany's most significant monuments survived the war experience.

By war's end, every major German city stifled under detritus that purportedly averaged almost a billion cubic feet per locale (Diefendorf 1993, 15). Historian Jeffry Diefendorf provided an unusually detailed assessment of the effects of war detritus in his book, *In the Wake of War: The Reconstruction of German Cities after World War II* (1993), a compilation of fiscal statistics linked to the socio-political repercussions of devastation on such a comprehensive scale. In fact, contemporary commentators invariably characterize Germany's first true postwar identity as one primarily related to the *Trümmerleben* — "life in the rubble." By 1951, many cities had managed to clear only half the wreckage. Cologne, employing as many as 20,000 former soldiers six days a week, purportedly dispensed with only 13 percent of its debris by 1949, and possibly as little as a third of it by 1953. Another estimate calculated that the accumulation of rubble in Cologne amounted to 2,000 cubic feet per person, constituting a 28-foot-wide cube for each citizen (Diefendorf 1993, 28). Salvage companies eventually used unrecoverable brick and stone as fill to renovate runways, railway beds, highways, canals, riverbanks, and unsanitary marshlands or to construct landscaping for new parks in areas too decimated for reclamation (Diefendorf 1993, 26-27). Above ground, recycled bricks occasionally supplied the building material for hidden repairs in older structures, as well as replacement churches. For example, Rudolf Schwarz (1897–1961) constructed the three-lobed *Andreaskirche* in Essen (1954) from reclaimed bricks

Fig. 2. Street scene from Worms, a city with one of the oldest founding dates in Germany's Rhineland area, showing a cleared but unrepaired street in 1948 with the twelfth-century imperial-style (Salian) cathedral in the background (Photograph by Enno Karl Lohrmann, 1948, courtesy Martha [Lohrmann] Failinger).

salvaged from the immediate neighborhood. Although this structure gained national landmark status in 1994, the Catholic diocese is currently considering whether to deconsecrate and close the structure, given its shrinking congregation and high maintenance costs.

Buried concentrations of war debris became valorized as memorials by local citizens from the war generation, but like that generation, knowledge of their existence may soon pass completely out of memory (Young 1993, 28, 47; Lowenthal 1996, 159). James E. Young, a professor of English and Judaica Studies, emphasizes these and other unusually nuanced memorial practices in an insightful 1993 publication, *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning,* also introducing a noticeable 1980s tendency towards anti- or "counter"-monuments that eroded and disappeared by design (*Gegendenkmalen*). Young offers compelling arguments that link the late twentieth-century anti-monument movement to lingering conflicts in the nation's collective memory regarding monuments about the Holocaust.

Just as thousands of planners began tackling the massive challenge of rebuilding Germany, Germans collaborating with the Occupation government issued directives to remount the nation's tourist industry. This promoted a strangely schizophrenic tangent to life on the streets for many German citizens, still struggling to secure basic living conditions, as anthropologist Rudy Koshar's analyses about German tourism and collective memory explain. Koshar presents an unusual review of postwar travel literature, such as a surprisingly ingenuous brochure from Berlin–Charlottenburg's official tourism bureau in 1947, promising that even though "'Berlin's rubble piles are gray…Berlin life is colorful!'" (Koshar 2000, 169). Other blurbs aimed at the international tourist trade blithely presented the ruins as destinations of choice, appealing to young couples stationed at Occupation military bases— virtually totemized by an Aryan-looking couple standing in front of Heidelberg's iconic castle ruins, confidently bedecked in *lederhosen* and saddle shoes, on a 1947 *Life* magazine cover headlined "Americans in Heidelberg" (*Life* 1947). The irony of this ruse notwithstanding, statistics from 1953 indicated that almost a million Americans visited Germany long before most of the nation's cities had fully recovered (Koshar 2000, 168, 171-172).

Regarding preservation, Koshar's commentaries focus intently on the concept of restoring the national optic not only as a physical process but as a heavily charged symbolic undertaking weighted down by complicated iterations of "homeland" (*Heimat*), regional notions of patrimonial value, and carefully reframed expressions of German patriotism in the face of international outrage against the Holocaust (Koshar 1998, 17, 22–23, 32–35). Cases concerning the reconstruction of churches reveal an interesting disconnect between Allied, particularly American, assessments and German attitudes. Churches of secondary patrimonial significance, in various states of disarray, appeared so ubiquitously on the German horizon that they disappear in British and American statistics about war reparations during the Occupation. The *Records of the United States Strategic Bombing Survey* (Guptil and Mendelsohn 1975), the English *Bomber Command Diaries* (Middlebrook and Everitt 1985), and one of the most authoritative German compendiums, *Das Deutsche Reich und der Zweite Weltkrieg* series (Boog, Krebs, and Vogel 2001), did not segregate or distinguish all but the most significant church complexes in their damage assessments.

By the 1990s, a handful of authors tentatively advanced the observation that German church spires in particular constituted one of the few positive visual elements in a national optic scrambled by devastation. Some contended that the spire on the skyline provided a comforting point of visual orientation for citizens on the ground, while others gave the spire a role as the metonym for a saner, untarnished, more exemplary German past. Others intimated that intact spires symbolized survival and perspicacity, having shared the same depredations as the humans surrounding them. Nevertheless, preservationists at the time could never have initiated restorations on church edifices that enhanced a local sense of identity to countless urban neighborhoods, suburbs, or villages, since some late twentieth-century commentators dared to calculate that damaged, unusable churches in West Germany alone may have amounted to as many as 70,000 (Bark and Gress 1993, 30-46). The architectural guidebook publisher Hugo Schnell came to a far more modest tally, concluding after sifting through the records

available to him in the 1970s that West Germany saw "more than 8,000 old and new churches and chapels… reconstructed, converted, extended and built by the two Christian confessions" in the decade following World War II (Schnell 1974, 75). Schnell also published non-comprehensive lists of the nation's destroyed church properties from 1947 to 1951 in his liturgical arts journal, *Das Münster,* but admitted that the information came from disjointed diocesan, parish, or eyewitness reports (Schnell 1974, 75). In his survey of twentieth-century German church architecture, Schnell listed the complete loss of 142 church buildings in the relatively small bishopric of Aachen, with only 43 of 498 Catholic churches left undamaged; 141 Aachener sanctuaries were reported as temporarily or "permanently" restored by 1960. The Rhineland Palatinate, a traditionally Protestant state, lost approximately 400 churches with monument status. Freiburg, in the southwest, reported 786 damaged churches, with all 65 Lutheran churches decimated. Regardless of the portrait of abject devastation such numbers convey, how urgently could church reconstructions matter in cities that lacked urban housing, sanitation, basic infrastructure, and sustenance?

Cologne, an ecclesial landscape studded by thirty-two medieval religious foundations and several hundred pre-twentieth-century sanctuaries, lost an estimated 91 percent of its urban fabric. Between 1945 and 1948, Cologne's *Städtbaukonferenz* (rebuilding committee) considered 2,995 petitions for reconstruction funds, handling an average of twenty-one petitions per meeting (Diefendorf 1993, 96). Ninety-two percent of Cologne's reconstruction allotment in 1950 reportedly funded church restorations, targeting in particular 230 sanctuary spaces identified as noteworthy historical monuments in need of immediate repair. The 1950 expenditures to meet these requests amounted to almost 284,000 *Deutschmarks*—approximately 1.6 million U.S. dollars (Diefendorf 1993, 96).[3] At this point, *Stadtbaukonferenz* minutes register the realization in print that Germans struggling to live with the urban rubble might be encouraged if "highly visible" sanctuaries could be stabilized and reopened for services, implying concern for morale as much as architectural interventions (Diefendorf 1993, 96).

Beyond the physical dimensions of a restored national optic, Koshar implies that the profile of the pre-modern church arguably constituted a reminder of true "German*ness*" or "Germanicity," untainted by the twisted objectives of the Third Reich. An elusive concept that provoked German cultural debates for centuries, it became formalized in preservation discourses by the phrase a "sense of nation" as early as 1899 in the journal *Die Denkmalpflege* (*Monuments Preservation*) (Koshar 1998, 48). One aspect of Germanness, for example, entailed an independently-minded, rigorously argued religious identity as a positive national trait modeled by Reformationists like Luther and Melanchthon—a point emphasized by historian Peter Fritzsche in "How Nostalgia Narrates Modernity" in *The Work of Memory: New Directions in the Study of German Society and Culture* (Fritzsche 2002).

By the end of the century, preservation initiatives pushed for a national *Heimatschutz* (heritage protection) movement driven by patriotic rhetoric to promote and protect local and regional cultures, as historian Alon Confino argues in *The Nation as Local Metaphor: Württemberg, Imperial German, and National Memory 1871–1918* (1997). *Heimatschutz* advocates, such as the Prussian architect Oskar Hoßfeld (1848–1915), proselytized vigorously in publications like *Die Denkmalflege* to combat a spreading indifference to German heritage and its artifacts (Koshar 1998, 48-49, 76). After the humiliating defeat of World War I, the Germanness discourse devolved into a tense standoff between conservatives advocating for traditional community values and progressives who aggrandized Germany's technological prowess and strength—dialogues parsed insightfully by visual culture theorist Frederic Schwartz in *The Werkbund: Design Theory and Mass Culture Before the First World War* (1996) and historian Jeffery Herf in *Reactionary Modernism: Technology, Culture, and Politics in the Weimar and the Third Reich* (1984). Decisions about the most appropriate architectural style for reconstructing or renovating historical sites had always migrated contentiously between historicizing tradition and progressive modernization in Germany, but at the peak of the International Style modernism heralded by German architects, and in the aftermath of the modern

German Reich's complicity in large-scale genocide, the argument about German identity melded into perennially unresolved arguments about the moral implications of historic architectural styles.

After World War I, most churches had already begun to function mostly as visual references or nodes of neighborhood identity, rather than active centers of liturgical ritual. Koshar and others characterize the renewed drive to restore historic churches as projections that implied a tangible return to normalcy and order. For German clergy and their international counterparts, however, church renovations of any measure engendered a moralistic agenda, anticipated to gift the citizens of a morally bankrupt nation with spaces for meditation, expiation, and restitution. Funding for such idealistic fixes, competing with urgent restorations in the context of widespread devastation, came from foreign denominations with affiliations to Germany, such as the World Council of Churches or the American Lutheran Synod (Schnell 1974, 40-44). These monetary contributions, however, seem largely absent from official accounts of the cost of Germany's reconstruction. By the 1970s, suspicions that the church-at-large, and particularly the Vatican, had failed to intervene in Hitler's brutal extermination policies tended to obviate any lingering expectations that charitable building campaigns might bring redemption to Germany from abroad. Despite such mounting cynicism about the efficacy of conventional religion, the overwhelming extent of destruction and the prominence of the spire within the national optic ensured widespread opportunities to consolidate and "domesticate" the past.

SANITIZING AND PURIFYING: HARMONIZING THE NATION'S ARCHITECTURAL OPTIC

Although initial forecasts for Germany's reconstruction anticipated a sixty- to eighty-year process, Ludwig Erhard, the so-called "engineer of Germany's 'Economic Miracle,'" cheerfully proclaimed that the most urgent reparations had been accomplished as early as 1965, decades before presumptions about the healing of the nation's psyche began emerging (Koshar 1998, 246, 395). Seventy years beyond the event, the renovation of haphazard postwar fixes or sites of secondary or tertiary patrimonial significance continues today, financed by government taxation, lotteries, limited diocesan resources, and donations from congregations that are inexorably dwindling to a handful of members.

In retrospect, three preservation strategies dominated efforts to address Germany's ruptured heritage directly after the war. One school of preservationists sought to harmonize urban fabrics or historic nodes, opportunistically aiming to consolidate Germany's patrimony by imposing historicized, sanitized replicas over bombed-out foundations. What had been an aggregation of jumbled, stylistically motivated renovations received a purified makeover in imperial, Romanesque architecture that denoted a more valiant, noble iteration of German identity. Another approach combined remnants of the historic structure with modernist additions to create cultivated ruins that blended several historical phases of the original structure. Understandably, the least popular solution immediately after the war involved leaving the ruins in place, which seemed like a default option to Germans who struggled to survive in a broken infrastructure, and furthermore, had no desire to see the nation's defeat endlessly memorialized. This trend, however, which initially succeeded only because it entailed less expense and effort, dominates contemporary renovations that valorize remnants of the past. For instance, in 2007, after a decade of harried apologias, Swiss architect Peter Zumthor encased Cologne's St. Kolumba in a pierced, customized brick shell. Zumthor respected St. Kolumba's status as an important neighborhood anchor identified by Schwarz in the 1950s, inserting his addition around the archaeological remains of Roman, medieval, and baroque fragments and generously incorporating Gottfried Böhm's "Madonna in the Rubble" chapel from 1950 into what has served as an archdiocesan art museum since 1997.

The finesse of contemporary solutions like St. Kolumba, however, was not attainable directly after the war. Imperatives to rejuvenate German morale often pushed postwar preservationists into immediate refabrications of significant patrimonial sites that

were considered vital to the nation's sense of self-repossession. The total replacement of regionally significant heritage sites frequently reached completion long before the surrounding neighborhood had been cleared and made habitable and often entailed hasty decisionmaking and inferior construction or materials that had to be redressed several decades later.

By the early 1950s, for example, officials bent on domesticating a "better" past in the remains of Nüremberg, punished by Allied ordnance for its role as host to Nazi rallies from 1923 to 1938, simply reconstructed Albrecht Dürer's house. Similarly, Frankfurters virtually reassembled Goethe's entire rowhouse after its virtual destruction in 1944, and, by 1951, Lübeckers recreated the baroque facades that had inspired Thomas Mann's novels. Within a few decades, these picturesquely seamless replicas of Germany's cultural icons had acquired a fictional patina of antiquity, though they barely predated Disneyland. However, the literature available on these sites as recently as a decade ago often lacked any mention of such postwar reconstructions.

Intense debates about "honest" or "authentic" stylistic renovations have fueled protracted arguments about national identity since the mid-nineteenth century. Precise German terms championed and subsequently discredited the historicizing restorations that typified eighteenth and nineteenth-century preservation approaches. *Reinigungen* (purifications) sought to harmonize or purify the architectural style of aging buildings in zealous Gothic, Byzantine or baroque reiterations. By the twentieth century, *Sanierungen* (sanitization campaigns) intently removed the purifications by purging or cleansing past revisions in scientific pursuit of more fundamentally authentic fabrics. When architect, design reformer, and preservationist Otto Bartning (1883–1959) published *Vom neuen Kirchbau* (*Toward a New Church Architecture*) in 1919, he implored architects to strip the "dishonest" and "insincere" expression of re–appropriated forms in their modern reiterations of the church idiom. "Evangelical Lutheran churches in neo–Gothic or neo–Romanesque trappings concealed… the profane faces of the preaching hall behind a lying façade of sacred symbolism," Bartning inveighed, "where mighty ashlar towers aped an ecstasy long dead, where dim interiors…feign atmosphere." He called architects to "attack" artistic falsity and false ambience (Schnell 1974, 39).

Owing to his predilection for liturgical architecture, Bartning became relegated to the margins in late twentieth-century assessments of the *Neues Bauen* movement—despite his collaborations with Walter Gropius on Siemensstadt and other modernist housing projects and his succession of Gropius at Weimar as director of architecture after the Bauhauslers were exiled to Dessau. In 1951, Bartning accepted a nomination as president of Germany's association of architects and took on authoritative positions for governmentally sponsored reconstruction projects throughout West Germany. Bartning also co-founded the Ecumenical Movement, a reportedly vigorous network of architects and artists collaborating on modernist ecclesiastic commissions with reputedly unparalleled talent and productivity for its time (Schnell 1974, 33-39). After the war, Bartning devised a series of standardized worship halls, called "emergency churches," or *Notkirchen*, which used pre-fabricated Swiss trusses, local stones or recycled bricks, and fewer than a dozen strong men in response to calls for places of redress and restitution. The forty-eight that survive hardly figure in contemporary surveys.

The narrators of modernist architecture also tended to marginalize Rudolf Schwarz, a rigorous minimalist, who published an influential theoretical treatise on liturgical architecture, *Vom Bau der Kirche,* in 1938 and designed the first of a series of ultra-modern churches (Aachen's *Fronleichnamskirche* in 1930). Mies van der Rohe openly emulated Schwarz's approach and considered Schwarz's treatise relevant enough to provide a preface for its 1958 English translation, *The Church Incarnate*. Besides overseeing Cologne's reconstruction, Schwarz rehabilitated several highly significant heritage complexes, such as the *Pauluskirche* in Frankfurt—the site of imperial coronations, and later, Germany's first democratic government. Lecturing at a seminal restoration conference, "Churches in Ruins," which ran from 1946 to 1947, Schwarz lobbied passionately for the reconstitution of medieval styles and challenged

his colleagues to support urban renovations that maintained medieval scale and medieval street widths whenever possible. Unfortunately, he left his position as Cologne's preservation director to return to architectural commissions before his agenda was fully implemented (Diefendorf 1993, 314).

In many historically significant churches, intense firebombing in historic districts had the unexpected benefit of exposing medieval frescoes and foundations that Schwarz respected, scouring off imperial aggrandizements, Reformation whitewashing, and historicizing restorations. Lübeck's thirteenth-century *Marienkirche*, the crown jewel for the *Backsteingotic* (or brick Gothic idiom), lost its vaults, glazing, antique organs, and priceless artworks, along with its florid baroque encrustations. Restorers discovered a restrained palette of stenciled decoration on the walls that included unique, monumental figural murals from the original construction. They also gently memorialized the scars of the 1942 air raid, leaving one jagged arch near the choir and two huge bells that had crashed from the burning bell tower embedded in the flagstones.

Unlike the remnants of St. Kolumba, which Schwarz retained as a partial ruin for its prominence as a visual reference in the neighborhood as much as its monumental significance, the postwar reconstruction of medieval St. Gereon constituted a declaration of Cologne's ecclesiastic pride. Architectural guides typify St. Gereon, an icon of Lower Rhenish medieval architecture, as Cologne's "highest ranking sacred building" in a city of more than thirty competitors (Legner 1975, 15; Kierdorf 1999, 37). During the middle ages, Cologne accrued power both as an archbishopric and a trading nexus, competing for ecclesiastical dominance with Aachen and Trier—cities with similar Roman and imperial foundations. By the eighth century, St. Gereon housed the graves of Franconian kings, and this patrimonial significance was reinforced by an eleventh-century expansion, along with monumental towers that still dominate Cologne's skyline. After 1219, St. Gereon's distinctive decagonal rotunda emphasized the discovery of a fourth-century Roman martyrium beneath its foundations, purportedly consecrated by Constantine's roving mother, Helena.

Despite this venerable heritage, diocesan officials converted St. Gereon from a moribund monastic foundation to a parish church in the nineteenth century, eradicating an ancient cloister. Ultimately, the entire complex required complete reconstruction after the brutal "Thousand Bomber" raid of May 1942—one of 262 reported Allied raids on the city. In the end, restorers reconfigured St. Gereon into a tidy medievalized twentieth-century idealization of the thirteenth-century building, making St. Gereon the quintessential domesticated site.

During the 1930s, many historically significant churches underwent Nazi-sponsored archaeological investigations in the name of patriotic pride, spurred on by the opening salvos of the *Heimatschutz* movement. Churches restored between the wars were often refurbished in a way that reflected a persistent early to mid-twentieth–century bias toward reconstruction in an imperial Romanesque style, which many commentaries characterize as ideations that intentionally reinforced the cachet of Germany's "truer" or "purer" heritage. Early twentieth-century traditionalists inspired by patriotic rhetoric were eventually justified by Hitler's obsession with Germanness and pleased to refabricate the past to support a revitalized, if not overtly chivalrous version of German identity for the Third Reich. After the war, when the prospect of total rebuilding became a fiscal and material impossibility, other strategies emerged.

Cultivated Ruins and Blended Histories—But *Which* Histories?

The blended approach attempted to revise damaged historical fabrics by cladding or encasing their historical fragments in contemporary shells—as in the prominent case of St. Alban and the Gürzenich civic center in Cologne. Rather than restoring or encasing a totally gutted brick parish church, a team including Schwarz's wife and son inserted a new performance center and civic complex between the scarred, empty shell of the sanctuary, which they left open to the weather, and several buildings with ancient patrimonial valences that tied into the independence and success of Germany's medieval trade classes. In 1954, the Schwarz team

commissioned replicas of two larger-than-life figures of grieving parents, originally sculpted in the 1930s by the expressionist Käthe Kollwitz to honor her son's death in World War I, and subsequently placed at the WWI cemetery in Vladso, Flanders. The positioning of the replicas at St. Alban makes them visible from the upper foyer of a newly constructed main hall, where the business of administrating and celebrating local culture occurs. Portions of the ancient buildings intrude into the elegant, minimalist spaces of the public areas, melding civic and memorial nuances in a unique way.

Only four of Cologne's thirty-two medieval churches were deemed beyond recovery after the "Thousand Bomber" raid, although none of the city's major monuments escaped damage. Schwarz, who summarized Cologne as "the biggest heap of rubble in the world" by the war's end, lobbied strongly to make focal points of these medieval structures, which contemporary housing had crowded to near invisibility from the street level (Diefendorf 1993, 314). Schwarz's reconstruction strategy also emphasized the contours of Roman or medieval fortifications that had survived Cologne's 1881 "modernization" campaign and reinstated the ancient "cross–in–a–crown" pattern of medieval pilgrimage churches from Cologne's tenure as the nation's most powerful archbishopric. For the most part, Cologne's postwar planners considered devastation as an opportunity to clear out the visual clutter that hemmed in key churches; they chose unity over veracity by consistently refining reconstructions to imperial medieval formats, inspired by the Salian style at Speyer, Mains, and Worms cathedrals—a style considered *retardataire* by apologists of the French Gothic hegemony (Diefendorf 1993, 90). In fact, this emphasis may have been a subtle remonstration against the High Gothic bias that influenced the Cologne Cathedral, a dominating and magnificent feature of Cologne's skyline completed in 1880 and subsequently derided by some as a nineteenth-century knockoff of Amiens, rather than a truly German expression.

Postwar reconstruction authorities in Münich took a different tack, vociferously rejecting "old town" values or evocations of the *Heimatschutz* movement so as to distance themselves from Nazi party agendas. Ultimately, however, traditionalist Müncheners harmonized the city's optic with concertedly neo-baroque replacements. In Hanover, to the north, where an estimated 91 percent of the urban fabric lay in ruins, preservationists intentionally avoided restoring the grand baroque city. The overwhelming extent of the damage left few options but to embrace a cityscape ornamented by architectural fragments. Ostensibly clumsy Hanoverian treatments from the 1950s include the August Kestner Museum, founded in 1889, but subsequently encased in a fenestrated concrete box that protects several baroque-era wall remnants, or Werner Dierschke's use of one comparatively clunky baroque portal on the severely modern, glazed façade of the Department of Public Works.

The medieval mercantile hub of Hanseatic Lübeck, to the far north, required significant reparations after the Palm Sunday raid of 1942, the Royal Air Force's retaliation for the bombing of a strategically insignificant town in England called Coventry. Lübeck's architectural treasures constitute the textbook for the *Backsteingotic*, or brick Gothic idiom, and had attracted a lively tourist trade for centuries. The first German city founded on the Baltic Sea (in 1143) and a proud contributor to the Hanseatic League, Lübeck received Germany's first UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Site status in 1987. RAF squadrons shattered one–fifth to one–sixth of the city's old town, destroying approximately 16 percent of all street fronts and obliterating 1,750 to 2,000 buildings that included its picturesque merchant rows (Diefendorf 1993, 100). Lübeck's preservation officials eventually decided to harmonize the town's picturesque optic by imposing *Backsteingotic* in place of many destroyed baroque facades—except, of course, for structures that related to the Buddenbrooks fictions by Lübeck's celebrity author Thomas Mann (1875-1955). Director Hans Pieper, who had maintained Lübeck's profile since 1927, vigorously protested the stylistic gloss that his postwar competitors hoped to assert, insisting that the "true" Lübecker style had never actually been medieval brick, apart from the iconic brick cathedrals. His prewar inventory indicated with scientific precision that only 39 percent of the buildings in the old city yielded pre–1870 construction dates, with an additional 11 percent leveled by Allied bombs. Pieper's inventory also showed that only 5.2 percent of Lübeck's historic

townhouses featured exposed brick Dutch gable-styled façades. Moreover, even UNESCO files from the 1980s omitted mention of the fact that Nazi troops demolished a significant chunk of Lübeck's authentic medieval fabric to clear the streets after the 1942 raid—carelessly bulldozing and dynamiting partially destroyed structures to prevent their collapse.

After the war, Pieper's detractors dismissed his penchant for authenticity, reconfiguring the original historic street grids that border the historic districts into better traffic arteries that now pin the "old town" district between frantically active city avenues. Civic groups hired competitors, such as the "modernized" traditionalist Heinrich Tessenow, to provide alternative reconstruction plans (Diefendorf 1993, 100-101). Eventually, editorials in the local *Lübeckische Nachtrichten* attacked Pieper's authority as head of the conservator's office, at a time when most Germans suspected the motives of anyone who asserted individual authority. Local architects in the *Bund Deutscher Architekten* acrimoniously parted ways, with a majority advocating reconstructions in *Backsteingotic*. Areas beyond historically significant nodes were left to the whims of contractors rather than being given coordinated or regulated treatments, resulting in visually disparate, dismal fringes of bland modernist blocks. Ultimately, the historic district began to resemble the isolated island that planner Georg Münter dismally forecast as a "*Häufung romantischer Winkel*"—"a heap of romantic nooks" (Diefendorf 1993, 102).

The Collective Memory that Wanted to Forget: "Undomesticated Ruins"

In the decades immediately following the war, city officials rarely approved the strategy of leaving ruins in place, with one prominent exception—Berlin's Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church (*Gedächtniskirche*), a Romanesque revival pile completed in the 1890s to honor a royal dynasty far removed from the public favor. In *The Ghosts of Berlin,* historian Brian Ladd recounts a surprisingly out-of-character protest by citizens in 1956 that actually swayed local authorities not to dismantle the towering ruin, even though its existence would obstruct plans for major traffic arteries that would have vastly improved the area's commercial viability (Koshar 2004, 66; Ladd 1997, 177, 181). This populist reaction surprised so many that news of it reached international denominational agencies, inspiring funding for a major competition to incorporate the ruins within a new chapel complex. In 1962, the functionalist Egon Eiermann, whose industrious career included only one other liturgical project, devised an octagonal *betonglas* chapel and belltower glazed in Gabriel Loire's swirling abstractions. Vernacularly dubbed "the-lipstick-and-compact," Eiermann's window treatment effectively screens off views of the nineteenth-century ruin that guidebooks herald as a monument to peace, to reconcilation, to healing. In retrospect, the *Gedachtniskirche* complex may memorialize the power of the *vox populi* more than anything else, though its status as a popular tourist destination remains intact.

CONFLICTED PROJECTIONS OF NATIONAL IDENTITY AFTER THE PASSING OF THE WAR GENERATION

During the 1970s and 1980s, as the art of Joseph Beuys, Sigmar Polke, Anselm Kiefer, and others exposed the *angst* of the German psyche after Auschwitz, architectural memorials encapsulated parallel socio-cultural discussions of guilt, silence, denial, or repression. Analyses by Young, Koshar, Diefendorf, Ladd, and others reveal this progression as the expression of a confused national identity and a muddied collective memory.

Addressing how identity conflicts impeded the process of Holocaust-related memorials for decades after the war, Young alludes to a "Sisyphian replay" that arduously pushed memory itself "nearly to the top of consciousness only to clatter back down in arguments and political bickering, whence it starts all over again" (Young 1993, 21). Such fears of misrepresentation or skewed projections on the part of city officials stalled Daniel Libeskind's bold Jewish Museum Annex in Berlin from 1989 to 1999. As Libeskind explained in his 2004 memoir, Berlin politicos resisted the winning concept that they initially championed in the competition because they ultimately felt that it stressed negative connotations, such as void and absence (Libeskind 2004, 55-56; see also Bates 1996, 9-11; Libeskind 1996, 41-45). Libeskind's

rationale, however, hinged on his appreciation of the many abandoned, overgrown "no man's lands" that punctuated Berlin's urban fabric like open wounds for decades—sites that eventually disappeared under new construction after the 1989 reunification. Libeskind took a frank look at the inherent paradoxes in German self-ideations after the Holocaust, wanting his annex to emphasize oppositions still held in unresolved tension. His design sought to valorize the presence of Jews in the nation's narrative by emphasizing their erasure, constructing physical synedoches for absence and void in the architecture (Schneider 1999, 13). He unifies what he calls his "edge" structure, which zigzags like a bolt of lightning, with an invisible broad and straight line that runs through a jagged footprint, shooting through the vectors of an invisible, squashed Star of David that Libeskind extracted from topographical references to Berlin's culturally elite Jews. This line moves the observer past six enclosed, vacant spaces from one to four stories in height. Dramatically canted window slits reinforce intangible cartographical references to the destroyed locales of prominent Jewish intellectuals and citizens in the Friedrichstrasse neighborhood. At the end of an architecturally enforced pilgrimage, the participant ends up in a doorless, windowless void of concrete, accessible solely through an entrance concealed in the basement level. Here, a slit of opaque glass barely lights the names of Berlin's lost Jews, incised in cold, gray *beton brut* walls. The space symbolizes the eradication of life; its muteness and darkness convey disenfranchisement and disempowerment. Libeskind considered such emptiness the only "authentic" way to memorialize this governmentally mandated eradication of artifacts, edifices, and identity. Adjacent to the building, a raised garden represents the ultimate failure of the Final Solution, and the literal "re-blossoming" of Jews—a fact that is physically attested to in the nation's optic by steadily rising Jewish populations in German cities, and consequently, an upswing in new synagogue complexes by Alfred Jacoby and others.

Young summarized the endless contentions that inevitably hindered commissions for Holocaust-related memorials in the 1990s as "a tortured, self–reflective, even paralyzing preoccupation. Every monument, at every turn, is endlessly scrutinized, explicated, and debated. Artistic, ethical, and historical questions occupy design juries to an extent unknown in other countries" (Young 1993, 20). Foster and Partner's winning solution for the renovation of Wallot's nineteenth-century neo-baroque *Reichstag* also wove its way through a contentious ten-year gauntlet of *angst*, levied by those who felt compelled to reshape iterations of national identity in the newly reunified Germany. The *Reichstag's* environmentally progressive ventilation and circulation dome simultaneously reifies a sense of clarified governmental mores, including eco-responsibility; additionally, the structure enlightens the night with beams of light and provides a looking glass for visitors into the highest chamber of German government and out toward Berlin's restored urban landscape. The externalized expressions of governmental transparency, inclusion, and parity in the new Germany shift to an interior that sensitively grafts sleek, uncluttered spaces marked by clarity and transparency onto the many layers of German history in the building, including wall fragments with Russian graffiti from the 1945 Allied occupation of Berlin.

How can the reception of such commemorations seventy years from now, with zinc sheaths or glazed expanses tarnished by urban grime and aging structures demanding new preservation campaigns, be anticipated? How will the next layer of interpretation reframe an astounding, horrific episode in human history? Who will *re*-domesticate past iterations of the past? Which burnished legacy will surface? As always, this remains to be seen.

KAREN L. MULDER
Corcoran College of Art and Design
Washington, D.C

Karen L. Mulder, Ph.D., earned degrees at Yale and the University of Virginia for her research on a unique conceptual trend in replacement stained glass programs on Germany's historic sites, considered for the first time from a multidisciplinary and postwar context. She currently teaches architectural and art history in master's programs at the Corcoran College of Art and Design in Washington, D.C., has contributed to *Material Religions, American Arts Quarterly*, and *Image Journal*, and has written numerous monographs on contemporary Canadian, American, and European artists.

ENDNOTES

1. From a letter written by William Nelson Poe's son, Dr. Harry Lee Poe, to Mr. Christoph Sander, Esq., Deputy Consul General of the Federal Republic of Germany, Chicago, Illinois, 15 July 1993, made available to the author in May 2006.
2. This unofficial bomb story in Aachen came from Ludwig Schaffrath (1924-2011), a *Luftwaffe* pilot and P.O.W., who eventually became a glass designer and helped reglaze the *Glashaus* in 1951; this was relayed during an interview with the author on the site in August 2006.
3. Figures in U.S. dollars are estimates derived from currency conversions and inflation formulas adjusted to 2010 values available at http://www.westegg.com/inflation/infl.cgi.

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