Notes

Preface

1. The term 'Holocaust' will be used in the present argument because of its cultural currency. The use of the term is not meant to contribute to the homogenisation of the myriad experiences of those subject to the unfolding mass violence between 1933 and 1945 or to the homogenisation of the memories of those experiences in post-1945 cultures. Much of the following is in fact taken up with how experiences witnessed and remembered are homogenised (or universalised), which in turn reduces the complexity of the historical events that constitute the 'Holocaust', by the theory and practice of cultural memory. Therefore, my deployment of 'Holocaust' is intended to indicate and gain critical distance on those tendencies. Etymologically, the term is dubious given its reference to a burnt sacrificial offering, which suggests a redemptive framework for thinking through particularly genocide (see Agamben, 1999, pp. 28–33). However, as Dominick LaCapra (2004, p. 169) argues, prohibitions, such as Giorgio Agamben's, on such words simply introduce other fixations, or hypostatisations of the event, in their place.

Chapter 1   Theory after Memory

1. For critiques of Felman along related lines, see Horowitz (1992, pp. 45–68) and Michaels (1996, pp. 1–16).
2. In fact, the perpetrators' testimony on this matter is inadmissible, as testimony, defined here, is bound up with notions of the inhuman. Incapable of being inhuman, the SS have somehow transcended the universal parameters of biopolitics and presumably contain no potential bare life of their own. The logic of their transcendence suggests they embody a version of the sublime (LaCapra, 2004, pp. 182–3, 96–9).
3. Hirsch cites L. MacCann and L. A. Pearlman (1990) 'Vicarious Traumatisation: A Framework for Understanding the Psychological Effects of Working with Victims', *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, 3.1, 131–49.
4. Similarly but without much elaboration, Efraim Sicher states that the concept of postmemory lacks distinction 'between transgenerational transferral of PTSD and a transposition of the survivor's story in an imaginary identification with the Holocaust past' (2000, p. 67). In Marianne Hirsch's terms, this is a failure to distinguish between culturally affiliative and familial postmemory.
5. David Pillemer reaches related conclusions in renaming 'collective memory' 'collective knowledge' (2004, p. 150).
6. For a discussion of the 'recognition' and 'authorisation' of memory texts and objects, see also Feuchtwang (2006, pp. 78–9).
7. I find in Hungerford's attempt to liberate us from the chains of memory (memorisation) echoes of Avishai Margalit's ethics versus morality of memory.

Ethics is the regulation of our thick relations, morality of our thin relations: 'Because it encompasses all humanity, morality is long on geography and short on memory. Ethics is typically short on geography and long on memory. Memory is the cement that holds thick relations together, and communities of memory are the obvious habitat for thick relations and thus for ethics. By playing such a crucial role in cementing thick relations, memory becomes an obvious concern for ethics, which is the enterprise that tells us how we should conduct our thick relations'. The difference between ethics and morality is the degree to which empathy should extend. In the name of a general morality, memory should not be universalised (Margalit, 2002, pp. 8, 106).

Chapter 2   On Reading Sebald: *The Rings of Saturn* and *Austerlitz*

1. The centrality of the Holocaust in this and other of Sebald's texts is of some debate and consternation among the author's critics. Fritzsche (2006, pp. 292, 297–9) argues that the specificity of the Holocaust is subsumed by Sebald's conception of a long history of modern catastrophe. Long, Eshel (2003, p. 88), Anderson (2003, pp. 117–21) and Sheppard (2005, p. 422) argue that modernity's structural violence can be traced back to the eighteenth, nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, which is not to cancel out the specificity or uniqueness of the Holocaust, but rather to say that Sebald's catastrophic worlds are not solely those of the Holocaust and post-Holocaust era.
2. For a discussion of the concept of remediation, see Bolter and Grusin (2000).
3. The notion of a studious reader 'unburdened', as Benjamin would say, by practice and its teleologies is different from Deane Blackler's concept of the 'disobedient' reader. The disobedient reader is a more generalised and postmodern notion that derives in part from the idea of the death of the author and birth of the reader and a non-specific conceptualisation of Sebald's work as metafiction (see especially Blackler, 2007, pp. 136–7).
4. It is certainly not my intention here to engender a trauma paradigm the meanings of which are hypostatised. As this book demonstrates, the conceptualisation of trauma is manifold. In this chapter I will argue trauma has been defined in literary-theoretical discourses along formulaic lines – as an effect of certain structures of representation and discernible by certain theoretical approaches – but, in doing so, I also argue for a more productive conception of trauma. In other words, the following will not seek somehow a purer sense of trauma, which would smack of the unmediated, but rather to identify where trauma is structural and where it is generated by historical loss. It is Sebald's separation of the structural and the historical that interests me here.
5. Radstone has introduced the idea that Sebald's text is reparative in the Kleinian sense but has not developed that idea further (2006). The mastery of the past, or rather a fantasy of mastery, that pertains under some critical regimes might be deemed a form of 'manic reparation'. For a discussion of manic reparation, see Klein (1988a, pp. 248–57; 1988b, pp. 262–89); for a discussion of the ethics of reparation in historical representation (the historian's reparative posturing), see Figlio (2006, pp. 154–61).

6. See Sheppard (2005, p. 437) for one of the intertextual inspirations of this image, drawn from Sebald's work on Kafka.

7. Another useful intertextual reference that establishes the way that *Austerlitz*'s images have to be reanimated, that they are effectively screens onto which subjective memory is projected, is Georges Perec's *W or The Memory of Childhood* – another narrative of the 1.5 generation. A full exploration of the intertextual reference is beyond the scope of the present argument, but Austerlitz recalls a departure from his mother very similar to that of Perec's recalled departure (Sebald, 2001, p. 308; Perec, 1996, pp. 26, 32, 54; see also Spiro, 2001). Perec's reconstruction of his own life, via autobiographical narrative, alongside an allegorical fantasy of the Holocaust, is punctuated by descriptions of a few familial photographs (see, especially, Perec, 1996, p. 49) which, like Austerlitz's, have been drained of affective charge and meaning and which have to be reanimated.

8. Brad Prager makes the interesting observation that the deceleration of the Theresienstadt film allows the 'time stamp' of the film to be seen more clearly. The numbers imposed on the image of what is thought to be his mother are an ironic reminder of the conditions in which she was filmed, as they resemble the tattoo worn by a concentration camp inmate (2008, p. 33).

9. For Lilian Furst, Sebald's inclusion of faked reconstructions of the past such as this one means that all photographic images are tainted, rendered ambiguous (2006, p. 299). Furst has in mind the faked image of the Nazi book burning at Würzburg, which is reproduced in *The Emigrants*. While Anderson (2003, p. 109) suggests that, although this image comprises the genre and the materials by which we access the past, we should not not lose sight of the particular political and ideological uses to which photograph is put in ascribing universal properties to photography. On the subject of that image he quotes Sebald (in interview): 'I had that picture [and] thought very consciously that this is the place to make a declaration. It acts as a paradigm for the whole enterprise. The process of making a photographic image, which purports to be the real thing and isn't anything like, has transformed our self-perception, our perception of each other, our notion of what is beautiful, our notion of what will last and what won't' (2003, p. 110).

10. As Zilcosky has argued in relation to *The Rings of Saturn*, 'reading Sebald is like Sebald reading' (2004, p. 118). Zilcosky has argued that Sebald's narrator in that text rehearses something like the 'fort/da' game discussed by Freud in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* in an attempt to gain mastery over the experience of loss. The narrator's repeated patterns of dislocation and relocation, losing and finding himself are reiterated in his textual wanderings or literary departures and returns. That which is lost, including the self, is substituted in a literary return. The narrator cannot truly lose himself always finding himself in a text. In this sense, Zilcosky posits an intertextual subject, but one whose interior is structured inter-textually (2004, pp. 104, 105–6, 109–11, 118). In the case of Austerlitz, intertextuality exteriorises the subject.

11. As many critics have pointed out, Benjamin's *Arcades Project* is the inspiration for this project; see, for example, Schmitz (2004, p. 299).

12. Long has further argued that Austerlitz's might be considered a postmemorial subjectivity – in the terms of postmemory as theorised by Marianne Hirsch – because his memories, if you can call them that, have to be

reconstituted prosthetically. In other words, his only access to the past is via an assemblage of textual traces (Long, 2007, p. 162). However, as Hirsch argues, and as discussed at various points in this book, postmemory is an affective form of remembrance. Long's argument seems at odds with this definition of postmemory in flattening out or externalisation of Austerlitz's subjectivity. For a different consideration of how postmemory might work in *Austerlitz*, see Crownshaw (2004).

13. Although, as Noam Elcott puts it, 'Barthes' dictum that every photograph contains an anterior future of which death is the stake' is upheld in particular, historical circumstances (2004, p. 218). Sebald confirms this contingent convergence of historical particularity and general theory 'in the case of a [Roman Vishniak] image depicting a brother of Mendel Singer and made shortly before the Germans marched into the region …. Barthes' conjecture is doubly true … for we do not know what became of this general store owner – only that he almost certainly met an untimely and violent death' (quoted in Elcott, 2004, p. 218).

14. As Anne Fuchs argues, in Sebald's work, photographs are used to explore the relationship between 'history and trauma', whereas fine art offers a 'haven of contemplation'. Generally speaking, lacking photography's realism (or realistic surface) painting transports the reader to the moment and context of its production, which makes consuming the contents of the image more difficult than in photography, in which realism serves momentarily to collapse past and present, to flatten out history. Affording a contemplative proximity and distance, painting allegorises a melancholy (that is, non-appropriative and un-redeeming) cultural memory in which the reader can participate (2006, pp. 168, 175–6, 178, 185).

15. Indeed, LaCapra has argued elsewhere that in conceptions of trauma there is a great temptation to trope away from specificity and to generalise hyperbolically, for example through an extremely abstract mode of discourse that may at times serve as a surrogate for a certain form of deconstruction, elaborate an undifferentiated notion of all history (or at least of all modernity) as trauma, and over-extend the concept of victim or survivor (1998, p. 23).

16. Of course there are critiques of LaCapra's emphasis on transference that date from his earlier work: 'The generalisation is more than bold, and in *History and Memory After Auschwitz*, transference emerges as a foundational principle: everyone has a transferential relation to everything – or more to the point, selves and society are abstractions from transference' (Klein, 2000, p. 140).

Laplanche (1999, pp. 222, 217) also expresses concern over the generalisation of transference, as if it is the same thing as a pre-existent and universal psychological process, and argues that we need to find a 'kinship with what is most specific to the clinical situation, and what is produced, not everywhere, but in some privileged places existing outside it'. Nevertheless it is possible that in clinical practice, the beginning and end of transference between analyst and analysand becomes blurred – often because the milieu of transference has become naturalised. Transference may exceed the analytical scenario in terms of a 'lateral transference, an acting out, an infidelity to the analytical relation', which when folded back into the analytical relation may be described as transference of transference'. Laplanche remarks that in analysis since Freud, the dissolution or resolution of transference has

become secondary and that the process of analysis has become conflated with transference itself. How then can the analytical session be brought to an end without removing the basis of analysis per se, without shattering the illusions of transference?

17. In much more general terms, Christina Szentivanyi suggests something similar in that Sebald's use of photography places the 'reader in a textual situation where he – like the narrator – is challenged to question his point of view, modes and conventions of perception in relation to the photograph's fundamental inaccessibility … the photograph places its viewer in relation to the Shoah', provoking 'self-aware commemoration' on the part of the viewer (2006, p. 355).

Chapter 3   Holocaust Memory and the Air War: W. G. Sebald's *Luftkrieg und Literatur* ('Air War and Literature: Zürich Lectures')

1. Published in English as J. Friedrich (2006), *The Fire: The Bombing of Germany: 1940–1945* (New York: Columbia University Press).
2. See also Vees-Gulani (2006, p. 339).
3. See also Santner (1990, p. 47).
4. This chapter will refer to the following version of Sebald's essay: W. G. Sebald (2003), 'Air War and Literature: Zürich Lectures' in *On the Natural History of Destruction*, trans. A. Bell (London: Hamish Hamilton), pp. 1–106.
5. Sebald's selection of German literature, as well as the brevity with which he treats some writers, is a matter of some contention, leading critics to charge his argument with generalisation based on an unrepresentative sample of literature. On this see Vees-Gulani (2006, pp. 342–3), Fuchs (2006a, p. 289) and Cosgrove (2009, pp. 170–1) for further discussion.
6. See Vees-Gulani (2003, p. 121). Vees-Gulani delineates a number of cultural, social, psychological and psychoanalytical conditions that limited the writing of catastrophe. Many writers or would-be writers did not experience the bombings first-hand because they were either living in cities less affected or because they were in exile or serving in the military. Externally imposed definitions of collective guilt, as well as the experience of personal guilt, made it difficult to claim the status of a victim-witness. That many texts about the bombings were published well after the war, that they display textual symptoms of the past's uncontrollable intrusion, that they deploy aesthetic devices to contain an unruly past that might ostensibly appear to be redemptive, and that they describe emotional numbing of quotidian near-death experiences all suggest literary symptoms and literary descriptions of what would be defined in today's psychiatric literature as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (Vees-Gulani, 2006, pp. 340–1).
7. Sebald's familiarity with the work of the Mitscherlichs can also be found in Sebald (2005a, pp. 102–29).
8. Adorno's diagnosis of (West) German society anticipates the Mitscherlichs' and is just as pertinent to Sebald's thesis.

   Theodor Adorno's essay of 1959, 'What does Coming to Terms with the Past Mean' is an illuminating pathologisation of the nation. During the Adenauer

government, 1949–63, the economic miracle (*Wirtschafterswunder*) had sublimated popular political energies that might have been turned towards the *Aufarbeitung der Vergangenheit* ('coming to terms with the past') (Wolin, 1989, p. x). This sublimation was accompanied by a neurosis regarding matters of the past: 'defensive gestures when one isn't attacked; massive affect in situations that do not fully warrant it; lack of affect in the most serious matters; and often simply a repression of what was known and half-known' (Adorno, 1986, p. 116). Adorno counts the language in which the past is recalled among the symptoms of this neurosis. For example, the 'euphemistic circumlocution … *Kristallnacht*' (1986, p. 116). Symptoms could also be found in the comparative approach to violence: Dresden was weighed against Auschwitz, enabling Germans to claim victim status and alleviate their guilt (Adorno, 1986, p. 116). The FDR's international position is appropriated as a retroactive justification for genocide: the war against the Soviet Union in the East during World War II, which subsumed and rationalised genocidal acts, was in effect still being fought in the Cold War (Adorno, 1986, p. 119). Germany had been on the right side all along.

However, if this discourse of displacement can be identified as neurotic, Adorno is careful to balance his identification of the workings of the unconscious with more conscious appropriations of the past: 'The effacement of memory is more the achievement of an all too wakeful consciousness than it is the result of its weakness in the face of the superiority of unconscious processes' (1986, p. 117). Lest the pathologisation of (West) German society suggest an interiority unmoored from historical context and cause, collective narcissism is not seen as a universal, collective psychological condition; instead it is traced to the defeat of 1918, following which the collective ego was restored by the narcissistic projection onto the Hitler regime, and the subsequent repair of that ego ideal via post-war economic prosperity (Adorno, 1986, pp. 117, 122, 127). So, the psychic economy that made fascism possible persisted in postwar Germany. Under fascism the economic order and social organisation built upon held subjects in a state of political immaturity given their dependence on and conformity to this society that promises the gratification modern civilisation did not deliver elsewhere. Autonomy under this system is only experienced through its necessary renunciation. Collective psychology has not adapted to the post-war condition, thanks to the practice of forgetting, or rather the social and economic conditions have not made the adaptation necessary (Adorno, 1986, p. 124). A fascist mentality, then, still lingers, against which Adorno pits a necessary psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis can achieve a 'coming to terms with the past' by a turn towards the subject: reinforcement of a person's self-consciousness and, with that, of a sense of self (Adorno, 1986, p. 128). As Wolin points out, the 'neurotic symptoms that result [from such defence mechanisms] can be readily transmitted to the character-structures of future generations, which only compounds the difficulty of confronting the historical trauma that wounded the collective ego' (1989, p. xi).

9. For an overview of Habermas's contributions to debates on German memory, see Wood (1999).
10. See also Santner (1990, p. 4).
11. Moeller concurs with Wilfried Wilms, who offers an alternative context in which the silence surrounding the Allied bombing of German cities can

be explained. Wilms argues that the British influence and control over the German media, in the British zone, which has been overlooked in most discussions of Sebald, directed attention away from British bombing of German cities. In a post-war and Cold War climate of political re-education and anticommunism, it was the task of the media to persuade Germans to become more like the British, a task that would have been more difficult if Britain were continually represented as the perpetrator of German suffering (Wilms, 2004, pp. 183–8).

12. For example, Wilms argues that in Sebald's 1982 essay 'Between History and Natural History: On the Literary Description of Natural Destruction', on which the Zürich Lectures are based, it was trauma and the unspeakable that impeded the adequate representation of 'area bombing' and its aftermath. However, in the 1997 lectures (published in 1999), the idea of taboo gained prominence. For Wilms, taboo suggests something 'willingly embraced, [a] self-imposed censor of undesirable German memories'. For Wilms, the shift from unconscious to conscious action in Sebald's 'rather straightforward attribution of agency' is something that 'must be scrutinised'. According to this reading, trauma precludes agency and the more conscious acts of remembrance attributed to the Germans in the later version of the essay contradicts earlier diagnoses (Wilms, 2004, pp. 181, 187).

13. As Sebald writes (quoting the Mitscherlichs), 'Alexander and Margarete Mitscherlichs' theory of "the inability to mourn", first formulated in 1967, has since proved – although statistically this can hardly be verified – to be one of the clearest explanations given for the mental disposition of post-war society in West Germany. The absence of "reactions of mourning after a national catastrophe of vast extent", the "striking paralysis of feeling which was the response to the mountains of corpses in the concentration camps, the disappearance of the German armies into imprisonment, the news of the murder of millions of Jews, Poles and Russians and political opponents from the ranks of the German people themselves" left negative impressions on the internal life of the new society …. [T]he Germans had managed to avoid a phase of collective melancholy (whose objective correlate would have wrecked the Morgenthau Plan), instead bringing their psychological energies to bear "on resisting the experience of a melancholy impoverishment of the self." … In the circumstances the emotional collapse that psychologists might have expected had been displaced by mechanisms and strategies "very close to the protective biological strategy for survival, if not actually analogous to it." … Mourning and melancholy were suppressed'.

    Germany's dissociation from all that the Nazi regime entailed was so complete that even melancholia was avoided – the internal psychic preservation of the lost object and the inability to work through its loss – let alone mourning. For Sebald, the Mitscherlichs do not accuse Germany of an inadequate psychological reaction in the immediate aftermath of the war but of the continuation of such a reaction 10 or 12 years later (Sebald, 2005a, pp. 102–4).

14. Annette Seidel Arpaci interprets this scene differently. The mention of Treblinka SS Troops suggests that Nazis did not 'differentiate between dead Jews and dead Germans', turning both into victims of the Nazis (2007, p. 168). Seidel Arpaci therefore argues that Sebald constructs a cultural

memory of an equivalence between the suffering of non-Jewish and Jewish Germans in that they were both victims of the Nazis and generally of the war (of which Allied bombing is one aspect). My argument obviously differs: Sebald demonstrates the entanglement (but not equivalence) of the Holocaust and non-Jewish German wartime suffering as they are remembered and repressed in German cultural memory. In fact, Seidel Arpaci's argument suggests that Sebald not only inscribes such an equivalence in cultural memory but also the establishment of this relation between Jews and non-Jews leads to the latter's eclipse of the former when it comes to suffering. As she argues, Sebald's use of the phrase 'German catastrophe' is too all encompassing and does not differentiate between types of catastrophe and their victims and so subsumes the Holocaust. The Holocaust is subsumed using the very terms of its representation – the term 'suffering' often connotes, in the context of World War II, Jewish suffering and the Holocaust (Seidel Arpaci, 2007, pp. 161, 168). Ultimately, this subsumption takes place in the frame of a universalised, non-differential sense of trauma. Seidel Arpaci argues that the personal trauma of those who experienced Allied bombings becomes the category through which history is understood. Traumatised, Germans are removed from collective responsibility for genocide: 'We are left on an individualised psychological plane that does not – despite being embedded in historical developments – refer back to subjective decisions and responsibilities' (2007, p. 166). In other words, Sebald takes Germans out of history – his discussion of a traumatised German culture locates that culture forever in the 1950s, before the shifts in historical and memorative consciousness, post-1968 and post-1989 that might facilitate the questioning of an overly individualised experience of history – and it is American and British critics who insert his text back into cultural history by falsely attributing it with breaking the silence on German suffering (Seidel Arpaci, 2007, pp. 172–3).

15. For further explications of postmemory and variations of this theoretical paradigm, see Hirsch (1997, 1999 and 2003).

16. Caroline Duttlinger points out that Sebald's exhibition of photographic images of destruction in 'Air War' is, in light of his claim that the destruction over-shadows him as an originary scene of identification, a substitute for the family photograph album. It is the album of destruction, then, not the familial album via which Sebald traces his lineage. The function of this alternative album reminds Duttlinger of Hirsch's concept of postmemory and affectiveness of photographic images that are central to it, but the concept is not actually applied to her reading of 'Air War' (Duttlinger, 2007, p. 164).

17. Richard Sheppard makes a similar point, pointing out that no volumes of what could be described as postmodern or poststructuralist theory were found in Sebald's library after his death (2005, p. 420).

18. The following discussion of photographic images disagrees, then, with Fuchs's interpretation of their function in 'Air wars'. Whereas Fuchs argues that the rest of Sebald's work is marked by the 'otherness' of the past, the 'epistemological gap between what happened in the past and how we reconstruct it', *Luftkrieg und Literatur* is marked by graphic representation over 'approximation' and 'indirection' (2006a, p. 292). The images' 'largely illustrative purpose, which runs counter to Sebald's poetics of indirection' (Fuchs, 2006a, p. 290), is, for Fuchs, due to the fact that they depict the

ruination of *Heimat* and its ethical transformation in becoming a site of an encounter with otherness or what has been made other (the uncanny). (Their purpose, then, contrary to Fuchs is figurative not illustrative.)

19. With this phrase, Hell has in mind the dangers inherent to the literary situation in which a German writer narrates Jewish suffering, and to Sebald's resistance to an over-identification that would be expressed by appropriating the trauma of the victim. As Hell puts it, Sebald's texts 'should not be read as expressions of personal trauma, but as part of a cultural discourse that writes postwar history from the vantage point of 1989 as a melo-traumatic story of German non-Jewish authorship' (2003, p. 35). Post-1989 is an epochal point of departure for the rethinking of German memory, supposedly free from the politics of memory that shaped West and East German memorialisation. 'Melo-traumatic' therefore suggests a performative distance on trauma and is apt for my purposes above.

20. Zuckermann had agreed to write a report for the journal *Horizon*, to be entitled 'On the Natural History of Destruction', on what he had seen in Germany. The report was never written. In his biography Zuckermann wrote that what he had seen in Cologne required more eloquence than he possessed (Sebald, 2003, p. 32).

21. There is actually a critical consensus surrounding this argument. For example, Stephen Brockmann argues that, as in his reading of *The Rings of Saturn*, historical events can be explained by natural and environmental causes, subsuming the agency and responsibility of specific historical actors, blurring categories of perpetrators and victims: 'The concept of world history as an ongoing process of destruction and suffering places Germany's own past – the history of both German suffering and German perpetration – into a vast context of suffering and perpetration that ultimately relativizes any national specificity' (2009, p. 19). German perpetration and suffering therefore becomes exemplary, of a general pattern of human or rather natural history. Fuchs suggests but does not develop the idea that 'natural' history is intimately related to social history. What is implied here is that bombing reveals the biopolitics of modernity. Natural history is a history of how citizens are reduced to a state of bare life, their bodies lethally and rationally instrumentalised by the process of air war (Fuchs, 2006, p. 299).

22. Duttlinger reads these images of post-war recovery in a very different way. In relation to the images of destruction (of the aftermath of bombing), images of recovery position those of destruction not as the 'endpoint' of Nazi history but rather as the 'the beginning of a new era disconnected from preceding events' (2007, p. 166). In other words, this visual ordering contributes to a cultural amnesia. Furthermore, images of recovery present, because of their transcendent perspective, an 'abstract geometrical survey', uncannily echoing an aerial perspective on the bombing. It is this transcendence that suggests 'mastery in the face of chaos' (Duttlinger, 2007, p. 166). My contention above is that Sebald critically represents but does not partake in cultural amnesia.

23. 'Whoever has emerged victorious participates to this day in the triumphal procession in which the present rulers step over those who are lying prostrate. According to traditional practice, the spoils are carried along in the procession. They are called cultural treasures, and a historical materialist

views them with cautious detachment. For without exception the cultural treasures he surveys have an origin which he cannot contemplate without horror. They owe their existence not only to the efforts of the great minds and talents who have created them, but also to the anonymous toil of their contemporaries. There is not a document of civilisation which is not at the same time a document of barbarism. And just as such a document is not free of barbarism, barbarism taints also the manner in which it was transmitted from one owner to another. A historical materialist therefore dissociates himself from it as far as possible. He regards it as his task to brush history against the grain.'

(Benjamin, 1992c, p. 248).

24. For the following discussion, see Baer (2002, pp. 61–85).
25. Fuchs's argument about inhabiting ruins (discussed above) is useful in that it provides a bridge between the Holocaust and suffering caused by the air war. To reiterate Fuchs, 'ruined buildings are hybrid places where the interior and exterior meet; they perforate the strict demarcation between inside and outside, the familiar and the alien that characterised the National Socialist discourse on *Heimat*'. Where I argue that ruins can only be inhabited through the act of brooding, or dwelling on (in) the past, Fuchs argues that inhabiting the ruins risks too facile an encounter with National Socialism's others – a homely intimacy with the uncanny – that figuratively dwell therein. (Although Fuchs published her argument in 2006, the original article on which this chapter is based was in press in 2005.)
26. Baer's conception of the spatial and temporal distance between viewer and referent staged by the image is clearly influenced by Barthes, even though he differs from Barthes's melancholy logic. As the last chapter discussed Sebald's critique of the universalising use of Barthes, this chapter is not going to uncritically deploy the very object of that critique. With this in mind, Baer's version of Barthes is useful and is reflected in the use of Baer above. Against a 'Barthesian, melancholic understanding of photography', Baer argues that 'photography retains its referent to *any* future – a future that might include us, as viewers, in the present'. Baer has in mind Nazi ghetto photography, and the 'surrendering' of its referents, which were still alive when the picture was taken, to a structural melancholy is akin to surrendering them to the 'ideological perspective that would end their lives'. Baer sees the 'split time dwelling in every photograph – between an immobile past moment and its possibilities for redemption –' as open to future appropriation (2002, p. 23). Sebald's use of photographic images in 'Air War' is futural in a related sense in his resistance to historicism, abstraction and objectification.

Chapter 4   Grey Zones of Memory?

1. Hirsch cites the following texts that reproduce the image from the Stroop Report: David Levinthal, *Mein Kampf*, Nancy Spero, *The Torture of Women*, Judy Chicago, *Holocaust Project*, Jaroslaw Rymkiewicz's *The Final Station: Umschlagplatz*.
2. Of course, the feminisation of the victim through the iconisation of certain images does not just generate an air of innocence, but also of sexuality, making the fantasy of rescue more voyeuristic or pornographic than naïve.

3. Omer Bartov is initially attracted to the film for the potential it might have for producing just such a crisis of identification: 'Spielberg … complicates the popularly accepted tale of the Holocaust as neatly divided into victims, perpetrators, and bystanders. Schindler belongs to none of these categories, yet potentially he could fit into any one of them. Initially a bystander hoping to profit from other people's misfortune, he can at any time choose to join the perpetrators; and since he elects to help the victims, he stands a good chance of becoming one himself. Because he chooses to act, and because he thereby assumes a new identity, Schindler belies the assertion that his (bystander) world had denied one the freedom of choice and the choice of identity' (1996, p. 167).

   However, Bartov goes on to argue that this character who resists categorisation, and is able to stand the extremes of his position – verging on victimhood, profiteering from victims, colluding with perpetrators, tricking perpetrators, helping victims – would not have broken down like he did. His sentimental breakdown at the film's end collapses and banalises his complex identity (1996, p. 168).

4. As Rose says, 'The limits of representation are not solely quantitative at: how much violence, or even, what kind of violence, can I, and should I, tolerate? More profoundly, the limits of representation are configurative: they concern the relation between configuration and meaning …. This is not the question of the limit of veracity, or of decency or of obscenity in the representation of the past. It concerns the positioning of all categories of participants' (1996, p. 48).

5. For examples of a disorientating perspective, which blurs the dividing line between perpetrator and victim, Kapo and guard, see in particular the narrator's description of his participation in the unloading of trains at the ramps at Auschwitz-Birkenau (Borowski, 1976, pp. 36–40, 40–2).

6. At this point in the argument it is worth, for the sake of clarification, referring Goldhagen's methodology back to Friedländer's use of memorative, testimonial 'commentary' on historical narrative. Through a dialectic of history and memory, Friedländer, among other things, framed memory with historical specificity, making that memory less easily available to acts of readerly identification but nonetheless foregrounding the role of affective memory in the construction of history. In my argument, Goldhagen does something very different. Here, I am not initially measuring Goldhagen according to Friedländer's model. Rather, I will be measuring Goldhagen's use of affect by Rose's conception of the representation of fascism/the fascism of representation. Goldhagen, I will be arguing, does not so much humanise the perpetrators, affording an identification with them, an ensuing crisis of identification, and scrutiny over where the representation of fascism might slip into the fascism of representation. Instead, that ventriloquism circumnavigates the productive difficulties of a critical identification. Goldhagen's perpetrators, the following will argue, are more monstrous rather than human, and are in effect seen from the victim's perspective and less available for identification. Once again, the victim is available, albeit by a convoluted route, the subject of over-identification, against which a specific historical frame offers (as it would in Friedländer's methodology) no protection.

7. For example, Dominick LaCapra's main objections to Goldhagen's thesis can be summarised as follows. The deep-seated anti-Semitism of German society does not explain the role played in genocidal (face-to-face) acts by non-German auxiliary agents, for example in Lithuania (2001, p. 128). Goldhagen

downplays the role of modernity in terms of bureaucracy and industrial technology and the way they feature in genocide. Although Goldhagen's thesis relies on the face-to-face perpetration of mass murder, driven by the deep-seated anti-Semitism of those who perpetrated such crimes, genocide is not wholly explainable in these terms. The organisation of death camps could not have taken place without certain features of modernity. While Goldhagen's version of anti-Semitism may explain some mass murder, it does not necessarily account for all of its practices (2001, p. 128). As Nancy Wood points out, it is the modern, technological and industrial nature of the Holocaust that makes it distinctive (1999, p. 81). Or as Omer Bartov puts it:

> What was – and remains – unprecedented about the Holocaust … which Goldhagen avoids treating: the industrial killing of millions of human beings in factories of death, ordered by a modern state, organised by a conscientious bureaucracy, and supported by a law-abiding, patriotic, 'civilised' society'.
>
> Never before, or after, has a state decided to devote so many of its technological, organisational and intellectual resources to the sole purpose of murdering every single member of a certain category of people in a process that combines the knowledge acquired in mass industrial production with the experience of waging total war. This was a novel phenomenon: striving to produce corpses with the same methods employed to produce goods.
>
> In circumstances of mass murder, sadism flourishes; but sadism is not unique to the Holocaust. Antisemitism is a pernicious phenomenon with long historical roots, but the question remains as to how was it employed in creating and legitimating death camps rather than expressed in savage pogroms (2003, p. 135).

What is more, Goldhagen's focus on ordinary men and women ignores the spectrum of relations between 'political culture and personality'. His simplistic questioning of whwether perpetrators were willing or unwilling eclipses degrees of ideological commitment and interpolation, ambivalence and equivocation, in relation to the task at hand, as well as psychic dynamics such as the compulsive repetition and dissociation of traumatic acts (LaCapra, 2001, p. 129). Although political ideology might convert prior held anti-Semitic beliefs into genocidal actions, resistance to ideological indoctrination by some meant that brutalisation and acclimitisation might also be significant motivating factors (Bartov, 2003, pp. 131–4).

8. For a further discussion of voyeurism, see Wood (1999, p. 91).
9. Interestingly, Gillian Rose points out that killing of children in the ghetto clearance in Thomas Keneally's *Schindler's Ark* is excluded from the Spielberg's film, which is based upon the book:

> During the liquidation of the ghetto, he [Schindler] watches the killing of a mother and son within the sight of the tiny, otherwise girl in the red coat, who has also been rounded up. Schindler understands the indecency of exposing her to the shootings as the seal of her fate, too. He becomes acutely aware of the indecency of his own status as he stares down from a safe position. In the film Schindler, a ludicrous saviour on a charger, dominates

the liquidation from a promontory overlooking it. The audience is thereby spared the encounter with the indecency of their position.

(G. Rose, 1996, p. 45)

In the book, Schindler is a self-conscious voyeur; in the film, we see what he sees and more, but we can displace our potential voyeurism on to his perception of the mediating presence of the girl in red.

10. Although a full comparison of their interpretive and historiographical methodologies and related narrative styles is beyond the scope of this chapter, Christopher Browning's reconstruction of the Jozéfow action narrated by Goldhagen demonstrates, relatively speaking, objectivity. Although, he does attribute a post-event psychological reaction to the perpetrators that is speculative (see Browning, 1992, pp. 22–4). For Browning's theorisation of his own methods, see (1992, pp. 29–33). For a comparison of the two historians' approaches, see Wood (1999, p. 89).

11. Niven argues that while ordinary Germans welcomed Goldhagen's book, German historians did not, on the grounds of Goldhagen's mythologisation of the Holocaust, particularly its characterisation of the evil of the perpetrators. The public perception of the critical historians was that they had adopted positions similar to those of the conservatives in the Historians' Debate in their attempt to complicate representations of the Holocaust rather than take the intellectually and ideologically easier course of caricaturing the perpetrator generation (Niven, 2002, pp. 132–3; see also Bartov, 2003, p. 153).

12. LaCapra considers such a conversion of anti-Semitism into philo-Semitism to be part of a 'quasi-sacrificial scapegoat mechanism whereby victim of the past becomes redeeming figure of the present with whom one identifies' (2001, p. 123). Jewish identity is still defined by the logic of anti-Semitism. As Niven puts it, Goldhagen was offering a form of 'secularised redemption, acting more like a priest than a judge' (2002, p. 131).

Chapter 5   Reading the Perpetrator: Bernhard Schlink's *Der Vorleser* (*The Reader*) and *Die Heimkehr (Homecoming)*

1. The edition used in this chapter is B. Schlink (1997), *The Reader*, trans. C. B. Janeway (London: Pheonix).

2. See, for example, Schlant (1999), Bartov (2000a), Donahue (2001), LaCapra (2001) and Taberner (2003).

3. 'German Government Approves Expellees Museum', available at http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/0,1518,542503,00.html, accessed 23 April 2008.

4. On this family loyalty and the 'cumulative heroisation' of the wartime generation, see Fuchs and Cosgrove (2006, p. 7) and Wittlinger (2006, p. 75).

5. Interestingly and relatedly, Harold Marcuse has argued, albeit in brief, that the national memorial might be thought of in terms of a paradigm of 'mythic resistance'. Arguing that the culture of German memory took a self-reflexive turn in the 1980s and 1990s, Marcuse tracks the persistence of concepts of resistance that still posited the figure of the 'good German', defiant of the

Nazi regime, that should have been exposed as untenable by that cultural memory work. Resistance was the exception that proved the rule of collaboration. Nonetheless the spectacular, symbolic display of national guilt could be read as belated act of democratic resistance to the regime, when in fact it diverts funding from the preservation and memorial activities of Germany's network of former concentration camp sites – activities designed of course to represent perpetration (Marcuse, 2008, pp. 377–8).

6. Lest the present argument compound the binary opposition it seeks to critique, Harold Marcuse's comments on the German cultural memory of the 1990s are worth noting by way of a complication of the binarism that I have mapped out. In other words, the institutionalisation of Holocaust memory has not always led to the conceptualisation of perpetrators as victims. As I will demonstrate in the following argument, the fiction of Schlink problematises that conceptualisation, but Marcuse also points out an enthusiasm for claiming perpetrator status that is not necessarily ameliorated by the simultaneous claim of victim status. For example, the Wehrmacht Exhibition and Goldhagen effect prepared the cultural grounds on which present institutions and organisations, such as the German Protestant Church and the German Society of Pediatrics, could claim past complicity with Nazism and in fact vie for perpetrator status (Marcuse, 2008, p. 382). The question remains – unanswered by Marcuse – as to how ethically rigorous such a claim is, even in the context of a culture of remembrance that is progressively moving away from a problematic inhabitation of victim status.

7. The following will argue against LaCapra's argument that identification in Schlink's work produces not 'varying modes of empathy and critical distance' on various types of perpetrators (as opposed to simply replicating those subject positions in a 'fatalistic grid') but instead 'objectionable (or at best deeply equivocal) kind of discomfort or unease in the reader … furthering fascination and a confused sense of identification with or involvement in certain figures and their beliefs or actions in a manner that they may well subvert judgment and critical response' (2001, pp. 198, 203). Katharina Hall also argues that the identification provoked by *The Reader* does not lead to a critical engagement with the subject matter but rather a passive mode of interpretation and literary consumption of what is a 'closed text' (2006, p. 449).

8. Helmut Schmitz argues that *The Reader* usefully complicates binary oppositions between perpetrator and victim and briefly cites the work of Gillian Rose – her critique of 'Holocaust piety' – as doing something similar, but he does not actually apply her work to the novel. Rose, then, very generally frames Schmitz's general questions about how we might explain and, more to the point, represent how a perpetrator moves from a pre-Holocaust normality to committing atrocities (redefining the normative) (Schmitz, 2004, p. 70).

9. If the ventriloquism of Goldhagen is such that empathic bonds, if made, do not generally result in a crisis of identification, it is also worth placing Schlink's work alongside, and in contradistinction to, other cultural producers that similarly engender empathy but no crisis. According to Wulf Kansteiner's critque, the television documentaries of Guido Knopp make an interesting comparison. For Kansteiner, Knopp radically changed the direction and focus of public television's (or ZDF's at least) Holocaust documentaries. During the Federal Republic, public television's historical

documentaries tended to focus on victims, evoking in audiences an empathy that was certainly not displayed when some of them actually saw victims deported. Ironically, after the fact of the Holocaust, empathy was safely available. The perpetrators, if displayed, were isolated as an elite or small group, motivated by abstract ideologies and, if not infamous, often anonymised. In other words, the audience did not have to confront their own possible implication in perpetration (Kansteiner, 2003, pp. 157, 159, 160–1). In his earlier career, Knopp certainly contributed to this trend.

However, his work in the 1990s changed all of that. Knopp's *Der verdammte Krieg* and its sequels (1991) used unseen, stunning archival footage but also historical re-enactment, accompanied by a dramatic musical score and commentary, an engaging eye-witness testimony, all to evoke empathy with the Wehrmacht on the Eastern Front (failing to highlight its implication in genocidal activity). In other words, this was Nazi kitsch (Kansteiner, 2003, p. 136), or as Kansteiner argues elsewhere, 'Holocaust pornography' (2006, pp. 155–77). The problem lies in the visual dimension of Knopp's narratives that exceed the narrator's verbal, politically correct commentary and its interpretive framework (Kansteiner, 2006, pp. 155, 156). The effect was to usher in, surreptitiously and at least temporarily, a collective 'we' including both audience and perpetrators that was officially prohibited in the politically correct Federal Republic-era productions (Kansteiner, 2006, p. 163). (What Knopp did for ordinary soldiers in *Der verdammte Krieg*, he did for the elite and leadership in *Hitler's Helfer*, *Hitler's Krieger,* and *Hitler: Eine Bilanz* in the mid-1990s (Kansteiner, 2006, pp. 156, 171).)

To be precise, Knopp was not reinforcing the 'visual and discursive codes of Nazi propaganda', but was rather, Kansteiner argues, translating the codes of Nazism into the political and visual languages of the late twentieth century, and in doing so, decontextualising them. Formally, Knopp's documentaries do two things at once: on the one hand, the contradictions between the visual and the verbal, the 'aesthetic revisionism' and the 'explicit political message', meant that the 'programs were not direct reflections of Nazism but fragmented and fractured revisions of the past that offered viewers the exceptional pleasure of remaining within the political consensus of the German democratic mainstream while playfully exploring the perspectives of the former perpetrators in a collective setting.' (Kansteiner, 2006, pp. 165–6). Those internal contradictions create textual space enough for the viewer's inhabitation and realisation of perhaps pre-existing identifications with the perpetrators (Kansteiner, 2006, p. 167). On the other hand, the visual stream overrides the internal contradictions of the documentary, offering a 'slick projective surface that allows the audience to become Nazi, while that pleasure is, at the same time, rendered illegal and even more interesting through the superficial yet efficient commentary that directly contradicts the visual language' (Kansteiner, 2006, p. 176). In other words, the documentary style allows the audience to identify with the perpetrator but controls that identification so as not to engender a genuine crisis of identification. The identification is textually contained and encourages not so much a thinking through of what it means to identify with a perpetrator but rather a thrilling transgression. Where such transgressions had once to be found in subcultural environs, now the same media package, Kansteiner quips, delivers

both the taboo and the transgression. In that sense the documentary style is pornographic rather than fascist. It certainly will not generate fascism among its audience, let alone a critical and crisis-ridden thinking through of that political and ideological position (Kansteiner, 2006, pp. 176–7). If the flirtation with Nazism is politically inert, Kansteiner is concerned that more recent generations of viewers will not have experienced the self-critical phases of German cultural memory during which the encouraged empathy with the victims offered identificatory ballast to counterbalance the new identification with the perpetrator. In other words, young Germans have not consumed enough media to critically frame the productions of Guido Knopp (Kansteiner, 2006, p. 179).

Knopp's *Die grosse Flucht* (The Great Escape) of 2001 about the experiences of expellees and refugees was consonant with the evolution of German memory in the early twenty-first century, which was marked by a public and emphatic exploration of notions of Germans as victims, but the earlier work that generated empathy for perpetrators, high and low, certainly laid some ground work for the predominance of this concept: Germans as victims (Kansteiner, 2006, p. 174).

10. On gendered, cultural stereotypes of Nazi perpetrators, in which sexuality and gender become barometers of 'good' and 'evil', see Horowitz (2005, pp. 175–6).

11. Stuart Taberner suggests a different reading of these pre-war clues. Taberner argues that the narrator's mention of Hanna's illiteracy would have explained her violence towards the teenage narrator, and it would relate her wartime and post-war worlds. The narrator's failure to mention illiteracy with hindsight is therefore deemed an attempt to reconstruct in memory an enclave of childhood innocence unburdened by cultural responsibilities to remember the Holocaust (Taberner, 2003, pp. 24–5). As Taberner would argue, these clues are among the 'loose threads' at which we are supposed to pull to 'unravel' Michael's narrative and its rationalisation of his past (as well as her past actions). On the one hand, Michael's failure to spot her illiteracy undermines his narrative authority, but, on the other, 'posterior knowledge' undermines the 'authenticity of the moment' and the model of historicisation followed by Schlink (Taberner, 2005, pp. 147–8). The idea of remembering a pre-cultural era, which might be supported by the descriptions of Hanna's body as the incorporation of oblivion and indeed by the emphasis on the physicality of their relationship, suggests something akin to Walser's isolation of private memory. However, this essay argues that the construction of childhood memory is rather a symptom of a crisis of identification.

12. Bartov (2000a, p. 218) dates the trial as 1966, whereas Taberner (2003) dates it as 1965.

13. It is important to note here that Schlink is attempting to install the grey zone as a differential terrain, on which the positions of perpetrator and victim are not conflated and on which the implication of the victim cannot be universalised and homogenised. Put differently, Schlink is, in my reading at least, not guilty of the 'aesthetic affectation' about which Levi warns: 'to confuse them (the murderers) with their victims is a moral disease or an aesthetic affectation or a sinister sign of complicity; above all, it is precious service rendered (intentionally or not) to the negators of truth […] that

confusing the two roles means wanting to becloud our need for justice at its foundations' (1995, p. 33). For an emphatic exploration of this differential terrain, see Leys (2007, pp. 157–60).

14. Conversely William Donahue argues that it is the 'numbness doctrine' that elides the details of atrocity (2001, p. 71). In a more interesting reading, Helmut Schmitz suggests that this numbness can be read as part of Schlink's 'intellectual honesty' about the memorative capacity of his narrative-protagonist. The numbness is part of the paralysis of the second generation when faced with the crimes of the first and can be explained by the Mitscherlichs' thesis on the general derealisation of the past. That paradigm of memory explains why it will prove so difficult to attribute guilt to Hanna (at least for Michael) because the guilt of the perpetrators cannot be measured by bourgeois concepts of guilt and justice and because the perpetrator generation have been silent about their crimes to the subsequent generation (hence the figure of Hanna will always remain opaque). Schmitz argues that Michael figures both the first and second generation in his numbness. In thrall to Hanna before and after her trial and during her prison sentence, he is in effect playing out 'a symbiotic fantasy' in which Hanna represents a more powerful ego ideal to which he submits, splitting off the outer stimuli (pre- and post-trial) concerning the reality of Hanna that he finds hard to countenance. In sum, this is a narcissistic surrender to a more powerful personality – a projection on to an ego ideal as in the collective configuration of Hitler identified by the Mitscherlichs. Just as the first generation was trapped in a kind of melancholic immaturity unable to accept its losses, so too is Michael. Given the state of German memory, it would be unrealistic to expect Michael to be able to transcend these memorative conditions (Schmitz, 2004, pp. 58, 63–8).

15. To argue that Schlink stages a fantasy that by its very definition is an acknowledgement of that which is socially impermissible necessitates a larger definition of fantasy. It is a topic that warrants more comprehensive treatment beyond the scope of this book, chapter, and, indeed, note, but the following sketch may be of use in relating cultural memory, national identity and fantasy to each other, as well as in drawing attention to problems in how fantasy is modeled. Radstone above has described fantasy in terms of associations (as opposed to dissociation) that have to be repressed on an individual level. Caveats notwithstanding about the mediation of memory and the problems of conflating the individual and the collective that have been made throughout this book, the following looks at national fantasies, their repression and return.

Alon Confino's suggestions for future historiographical research on the Holocaust centre on questions of Nazi belief and fantasy. Confino argues that historiography needs to account for what the Nazis thought was happening throughout the National Socialist regime, which means an account for how Nazi culture made the Holocaust 'conceivable' via a 'cultural making of Nazi beliefs and values' about Jews (2005, p. 300). Current trends in historiography tend to emphasise context and ideology as the frames by which genocidal acts can be understood. In terms of those frames, the brutalisation of soldiers and their habituation to killing is used to explain their actions. What is under-emphasised, Confino argues, is how belief and values about Jews, articulated within professional, private and social realms

generally, which existed prior to and after 1939, might have informed the killing. It is not a case that the wartime context 'weakened moral values' but rather that moral values held prior to war brought about the war context. (War) context in this historiographical trend is reduced to situation, but actions are not solely reducible to situation and circumstance. Indeed prior to the war, fantasies of a Germany without Jews were disseminated from a variety of professional, disciplinary, bureaucratic and governmental sources (Confino, 2005, pp. 300–1). The second explanatory framework, that of ideology, is central to understanding how the Holocaust happened, but it is not a complete explanation, because it does not, for Confino, represent modes of thought and belief outside state-sponsored and disseminated ideas, nor those preceding the regime but which persisted during it. Confino suggests the concept of 'culture' rather than ideology or context as a frame by which the meeting of old and new and their modifications and appropriations of each other can be understood (2005, pp. 302–3). The cultural focus of the extirpation of Jews, from German space and then life, illuminates the way in which German fantasies about a Germany free from Jews were 'malleable and contingent', suggesting not an orderly progress towards the realisation of genocide (made possible by the necessary, successive ideological or contextual conditions). In particular, 'culture' in this sense frames an understanding of the combination exercised in 'fantasies' of racial civilisation of racial pseudo-science and a ritualised sense of the redemptive murder of Jews that allowed Germany to return to an idea of its originary self – a Germany built on mythical and biological assumptions (both impossible to prove, both a matter of fantasy) (Confino, 2005, pp. 307, 311). 'Culture', then, is different from ideology, in Confino's understanding of that term, in that 'culture' allows us to ask not whether Germans really believed in Nazi ideology but to ask what was symbolically available to them and the regime that allowed them to make a particular reality that informed mass murder – a changing fantasy of what was racially and therefore nationally possible (2005, pp. 315–7).

Confino characterises cultural fantasy in terms of cultural memory (2005, p. 15). In other words, fantasies about Germany and what it could be during the Third Reich are informed by memories of German ideas and beliefs remembered in the course of National Socialism. This is a particularly useful characterisation for our purposes. Confino (2006) develops the relationship between nation, fantasy and memory elsewhere by drawing on Freud's *Moses and Monotheism* as a model. Although it may seem problematic to use a narrative of Jewish history, myth and identity to model German national identity, Confino explains the applicability of Freud in this context. Despite Freud's arguments for a phylo-genetic Jewish memory that informs individual and collective psychology, dismissable by the standards of today's memory studies, it might be better in the first place, argues Confino, to think of Freud's theory as representative of (or at least correspondent with) of ideas of national belonging articulated during his lifetime (2006, p. 160). Confino finds examples of correspondent thinking in Italian, French and German discourse, but the German example is perhaps most pertinent. Following unification in 1871, an idea of nation was established, or grounded, through the exhibition in Heimat museums of relics from the everyday of ancient

Germanic tribes or Middle Age settlements. The search for lineage con-
structed a myth of origins given a positivistic, scientific gloss. Similarly,
Freud could not prove the murder of Moses but compensated for this by
the scientism of his psychology of Jewish belonging. Fantasy describes this
meeting of science, myth and cultural memory in the establishment of col-
lective origins (Confino, 2006, pp. 161–2).

Confino maps the narrative of *Moses and Monotheism* onto modern nation-
hood in terms of Zionism. The return to monotheism is a return of the
repressed murder of the monotheistic Moses. The return to a national homeland
was a return to origins and national character forgotten through diaspora. In the
relation of past to present over the gulf of centuries, 'overcoming the repression
of Moses was functionally equivalent to overcoming exile', converging in a
national awakening (Confino, 2006, p. 163). Despite the religious specificity
of this narrative of national awakening, for Confino the remembrance of
repressed origins, projected by fantasy, is a common component of fantasies
about what nations could and should be, as described above in post-1871
discourse, during the Third-Reich and in other totalitarian regimes of the
twentieth century. In fact, memory is common to post-1945 national char-
acter, as nations have in recent years, through official ceremonies, declara-
tions and memorial projects, mourned their once-repressed complicity in
totalitarianism. Memorialisation and memorative apology or contrition
underpins the current democratic self-characterisation and identification
of nations (Confino, 2006, pp. 166–7). What makes Freud's model particu-
larly useful in Confino's diagnosis of nationhood is the Freudian dynamic
of repression and forgetfulness, a resultant neurosis and its symptoms, the
belated return of the past and its mourning. In other words, before and dur-
ing totalitarianism, the fantasy of nation (what it supposedly was and what
it could be) was a matter of remembrance of repressed origins; after totali-
tarianism, the fantasy of what a nation could and should be (a democratic
ideal) is bound to the remembrance of what is was and did – also often a
matter of overcoming repression (Confino, 2006, p. 165). The fantasy life
of the Third Reich, by contrast, attempted to solidify its myths of origin
by shoring up, if not disguising, its acts of cultural memory by resorting to
so-called scientific and biological grounds. It is this critical relation between
memory and nationhood that is useful in scrutinising post-1945 patterns of
national memorialisation that might slip into myths of origin, which would
also be a return of the repressed.

The recognition of cultural fantasy can explain what is done in the name
of nation, and it can also illuminate the contingencies of nationhood based
on acts of memory. Put differently, the recognition of fantasy is a way of
recognising the politics of memory. This is essentially Jacqueline Rose's
point. Rose argues that fantasy is not 'asocial', merely creating a world of
pleasure without regard to what is socially 'permissible or possible'. 'Never
completely losing its grip, fantasy is always heading for the world it appears
to have left behind'. It always con*tains a historical referent because its
arrest of the present moment entails a 'journey through the past'. Given its
social and historical characteristic, Rose sees it playing a 'constitutive' role
in modern statehood (2004, pp. 2–3, 4–5). Fantasy is not just a protective
fiction that bars certain memories, but rather re-elaborates those memories,

as in the example of transgenerational haunting – the unconscious acting out of the secret by the one of the next generation who carries it – a reliving in fantasy of the acts of others (2004, p. 5). Fantasy, then, undoes the ego in a kind of abdication of self-authorship, constituting a state within a state (2004, p. 7). Or, we could argue in Confino's terms that the nation can be described in terms of a symptom, a return of the repressed. Constituted by an act of remembrance or return, the state is in a constant state of reconstitution – of forgetting and remembering itself. The 'modern state enacts its authority as ghostly, fantasmatic authority', but it is 'no less real for that' (Rose, 2004, p. 9).

Just as the state is in a constant state of remaking itself, so too the individual seeks an ideal embodiment by repeated participation in statehood. As in Freud's relation between individual and mass psychology, the desires or fantasies of the individual are projected out on the collective stage, constituting the state's authority. Even if the state cannot imagine, permit or realise those fantasies – 'Fantasy's supreme characteristic is that of running ahead of itself'– it is still dependent on this source of the authority, just as the individual is dependent on the collective for the possibility of a fantasy life, and so the individual ego is bound to the state's superego (Rose, 2004, pp. 9–10). Just as, for Confino, fantasy is always a matter of memory and therefore of reconstructing the past, so for Rose, the state's source of authority is a fantasy, or fantasies, not quite its own, that is both constitutive *and* excessive. As Rose puts it, 'If the modern state is a fantasy if it relies on fantasy or an authority it can ultimately neither secure not justify – then fantasy will always be there to one side of it … calling its bluff, knowing better, wanting something more, something else' (2004, p. 10). Not then the 'total psychic redemption' of its people, statehood is a form of fantasy that 'takes hold and binds its subjects, and then, unequal to its own injunctions, lets slip just a little'. So although 'coerced and coercive', fantasy is also unpredictable, and in its unpredictability, the 'worst of modern statehood loses its conviction, falters, starts to let go' (Rose, 2004, pp. 12, 14–15). This chapter argues that, on these unstable, constitutive grounds of national identity formation, Schlink attempts to stage fantasies of identification with Nazism.

16. In arguing the strategies by which Michael deals with the predicament of the 1968-generation, I differ from Taberner for whom Michael's critique of that generation's stance is paradoxical. The second generation's critique of the first is undermined by Michael (and presumably Schlink), but that critique offers one of the few perspectives in the novel by which Hanna's crimes, in terms of their specificity and for what they metonymically stand, can be illuminated. What is more, this rational approach to the past, as opposed to the realm of affect in which Michael is caught, suggests a way of penetrating German melancholy. Yet, if this perspective is the subject of criticism for its moral simplicity, how are we to see through Michael's psychic haze? The novel's equivocation, in which the narrative structure is divided into two sections (a narrative of adolescent emotion that might undermine the supposedly more mature and knowing reflection on excavating the past that follows), where the means of excavating the past are offered and then undermined, suggests, for Taberner, a postmodern ambiguity resistant to narrative resolution (2005, pp. 148–50).

17. For Holocaust iconicity and its dynamics, see Brink (2000, pp. 135–50).

18. For a different use of Adorno and Horkheimer's essay on *The Odyssey* in relation to Schlink's work, see Niven (2003, pp. 381–96).

19. For a discussion of Milgram's experiments, their relationship to the Holocaust and their Holocaust-related structures of bureaucracy, technology and authority, see Bauman (2007, pp. 151–68).

20. LaCapra (1996) describes this conflation of witness and perpetrator as Bitburg-like in its implications and points out that Felman does not mention the warning that accompanies Levi's articulation of the grey zone that states the confusion of perpetrator and victim is an aesthetic affectation (p. 120).

21. As LaCapra (1996) complains, Felman has applied a universal condition to explain a specific historical situation and the logic of doing so reeks of the very evasiveness for which she seeks de Man's acquittal (p. 117). Furthermore, and this is consonant with the critiques of testimonial language with which this book began, Felman's insistence on the failures of language implies an ahistorical, impersonal and mechanical working of language. In other words, the structural failures of language that lend themselves to silence as the true form of witnessing here, once again, suggest that it is language, rather than people, which witnesses history. Language/silence therefore subsumes and assumes historical agency and responsibility for past actions and present remembrance. If history happens, and is witnessed, on such an impersonal rather than social terrain, then the implications are that the Holocaust is a quasi-divine, or transcendent, event, sacralised and beyond the human. These may be the hallmarks of a sacred uniqueness, yet the confusion of this (non)language for witnessing, of a universalised condition of language for historical specificity, turning all silence into a form of witnessing suggests the infinte experience of the Holocaust in (non)lanaguge – its infinite linguistic replication (LaCapra, 1996, pp. 123–5). If silence is the only appropriate response to history, then speech, along with silence, is equally universalised, as if all utterance were mendaciously apologetic. In the binary opposition between appropriate and inappropriate responses, silence and speech, the act of mourning – a working through the past that will inevitably return language to the social realm and that will need to engage in the problems of language use in relation to the Holocaust – seems to have been paralysed. As LaCapra (1996) asks, when can history begin again (pp. 124–5)?

Chapter 6   Countermonumental Memory

1. The innovative scholarship of Jordan's research, which moves beyond a two-dimensional understanding of memorial topography as the materialisation of the politics of memory or of national identity, which are obviously important factors (2006, p.131), merits a fuller explanation. It is difficult to summarise the myriad intersections traced by Jordan's study, but the national and international resonances of memorial projects, sites and forms are dependent on, begin with and are repeatedly subject to the entrepreneurial activities of an agent or agents generating political advocacy at local, regional and state level, and consequently a local and then larger public resonance of the historical significance of particular sites and their need of memorialisation of some kind. (The public significance of the site grows as

entrepreneurial activity deploys an array of interpretative materials by which to secure public resonance and political advocacy.) Sites, then, do not speak for themselves, no matter how auratic they are deemed to be (in terms of the perception that the material remnants share an organic relation with the events of the past). (2006, pp. 11–12, 95, 14). This is not to suggest Jordan argues that 'collective memory' becomes increasingly homogenised through these intersections. Her model of collective memory is conflictual and processual: there are discrepancies between (and within) the popular under-standing of the past and acts of state-sponsored representation that are the culmination of the memorial project; memorial processes and forms do not begin and end neatly with the life-span of a political and ideological regime (pre- and post-1989, in the Federal and Democratic Republics) but rather lead to a palimpsestic memorial topography; just as sites of memory do not speak for themselves, the continuing significance and public resonance of memorials – active memory work done at and around them – depends not on the provocative forms or physical permanence, but on their institu-tional, political, financial, generational and ideological frameworks, which can collapse (2006, pp. 25–6, 52–3, 57, 60). The processes of activism that Jordan describes, the interface of agents, organisations and institutions of memorialisation, political and entrepreneurial, have to negotiate one more social factor, that of land-use. As Jordan argues, memorial projects have to fit into the existing grid of land-use: private- and state-owned property, civic-, state- and commercially-planned urban development. Reunification has obvi-ously changed the predominant patterns of land ownership and use in East and West Berlin, and, generally speaking, while property and values have not dominated the planning memorial projects after 1989, those projects are more easily realised on state-owned and public land (Jordan, 2006, pp. 131–2, 13, 16, 20).

2. This section of the chapter will not provide a history of the memorial's evo-lution. That has been done with thoroughness and precision elsewhere; see Niven (2002, pp. 211–32), Till (2005), Carrier (2005) and Wiedmer (1999, pp. 140–64).

3. Indeed, James Young, whose theories of memory are correspondent with countermonumentality, was a member of the Finding Commission (1997), set up to define revised memorial parameters and competition guidelines. In those guidelines and parameters he placed emphasis on the 'loss and empti-ness left behind'. The subsequent design registered Young's influence and insistence that 'in the heart of the German memorial there will have to be an emptiness that must somehow be represented by the artist as his or her inspiration or concept (quoted in Niven, 2002, p. 227).

4. On the labyrinthine, see Derrida and Eisenman (2000, p. 46).

5. Godfrey argues the Eisenman memorial to be an example of Holocaust-related abstract art. Such art can be defined by but is not reducible to the fol-lowing characteristics: the abstract nature of art creates space for meanings defined by the viewer/visitor, which will be contingent and transient; the 'mnemonic environment' created by abstract art does not marshal memory 'towards a specific image or symbol' but rather creates a space in which visitors can apprehend and negotiate the symbols and images before them; abstraction registers the 'bankruptcy of former modes of communication',

whose untenability arises from the necessity for post-war thought to think against itself lest it rationalise violence; and abstraction's resistance to the 'spectacularization' of the art object (including Eisenman's), because of its resistance to fixing the spectator's perspectival position (Godfrey, 2007, pp. 249–54).

6. Where Godfrey argues for the disarticulation of what I would term monumentality and countermonumentality, his treatment of referentiality should not be dismissed. Godfrey argues against conceptions of the memorial that find it illegible as opposed to the legible, informational and documentary visitor centre below the memorial field. Nor does he see its alleged illegibility as a sign of the impossibility of representation and mourning and the maintenance of the purity of form. For example, the stelae resemble the amassed gravestones of the Jewish cemetery in Prague and therefore the idea of Jewish community. Their blank surfaces figure not the un-representability of what happened to Jewish communities but rather the erasure of those communities (Godfrey, 2007, pp. 147–9).

7. Criticism of the postmodernist abstractions and lack of historical specificity – lack of narration of the victims – was partially assuaged by the toning down of the original design and by the addition of the subterranean documentation centre, although the taint of aesthetic pollution remained (Kaplan, 2007, p. 158). For a more general discussion of the German architectural debate between the modernist and postmodernist camp, over the ability of architectural modernism and postmodernism to represent the past, see Rosenfeld (1997, pp. 189–225).

8. Conversely, in Jordan's comprehensive sociological exploration of sites of memorialisation and forgetting across the landscape of Berlin, context subsumes form. Concerned as her work is with the relationship between land use and memorial processes, her consideration of form is limited to a brief comment on proposals deemed unsuitable because of their disruption to city life, such as Horst Hoheisel's deliberately unrealisable suggestion to blow up the Brandenburg Gate (2006, p. 124).

9. Arguably Dekel's focus on the scopic nature of the memorialisation participates in the logic of the capitalist spectacle and visual consumption. Andreas Huyssen argues that the very redevelopment of Berlin in the 1990s itself become a spectacle, facilitated by the various *Schaustellen* (viewing sites), which the city mounted in the summer of 1996 at its major *Baustellen* (construction sites). Berlin's urban spectacles, which could be said to include the memorial, transform the city into a series of depthless images: 'Berlin becomes image' (Huyssen, 2003, p. 64). Jordan usefully complicates Huyssen's vision of memorial spectacle and visual consumption by placing the site in the context of urban development plans. The site was actually designated for diplomatic use and would only have been commercially valuable with a significant change in the city's land-use plan. Its proximity to Potsdamer Platz and other places of commercial redevelopment proves Jordan's argument that commercial land value after 1989 does not always delimit memorial topography (2006, p. 127).

10. As Niven argues, after 1989, national 'History' is not defined as 'triumphalist', something to emulate, but as something not to repeat. Negative events become points of orientation for national 'History', and the difference

between past and present the measure of progress (Niven, 2002, p. 215). Niven argues a more positive interpretation of the memorial's European coordinates, in terms of a reminder of the European dimensions of Germany's responsibility and German-inflicted loss, which will in turn prevent German remembrance from looking inwards – using memory in instrumental and nationalist ways (2002, pp. 215, 228).

11. Writing during the planning stages of the memorial in the late 1990s (after the second design competition was announced in August 1997), Caroline Wiedmer comments on the problems of an excessive national memorial: 'a public act beyond the call of duty, an act in excess as it were, giving Germany a positive image instead of merely cancelling out a negative one. Living victims, of course, can't be memorialised, and the loss of their cultural contribution can't be regretted. All they can do is serve as reminders of a German debt still outstanding, inherited as a responsibility and not as guilt, from previous generations. Such reminders of present-day responsibilities are difficult to reconcile with the simultaneously self-effacing and self-aggrandising of gesture of public memorialisation' (1999, p. 141).

12. Cracks have recently appeared in 400 of the steles, which because filled with rain have caused 'a hard lime deposit to appear to ooze' from those steles. Cracking is possibly caused by subsidence generated by surrounding construction work (Connolly). Albeit it is glib, this is too irresistible a metaphor for the failure of the memorial to contain what it has suppressed and repressed.

13. For a discussion of debates over the inclusiveness of the memorial, when it was proposed in 1989, and how those debates fed into arguments about the Holocaust's singularity, see Wiedmer (1999, pp. 142–8).

14. This essay will focus on the architecture of the museum's extension rather than the specifics of its exhibitionary contents.

15. Despite its city context, the museum from its early planning stages – the Berlin Senate resolved in 1988 to build an addition to the Berlin museum and commissioned Libeskind's design, which was conceived and submitted before the fall of the Wall – the idea of an extension has national resonance. Reunification, at least symbolically, had National Socialist connotations, which meant for the Jews of West Germany a symbolic renegotiation of their citizenship status and of a Jewish identity in relation to the German state made all the more conspicuous by the influx of Jewish immigrants from a disintegrating Soviet Union and the combination of former East and West German Jews (Wiedmer, 1999, pp. 124–5).

16. Derrida asks of Libeskind:

> There are two kinds of void in your work. One is the general spacing of the structure in discontinuity. The other is this very determinedly sealed space which nobody can experience or enter into. These two voids are not of the same quality. One needs the other to be determined, in order to relate to history, to memory, to what is kept as a nameable or nameless secret. There is some sealed memory, kept as a crypt or as an unconscious, which is encrypted here. The sealed memory is not exactly the general void and the emptiness of structure.
>
> (1997, p. 115)

Put another way, one void is 'totally invested with history, meaningfulness and experience, and place itself'; another is 'place as a nonanthropological, nontheological possibility for this void to take place' (Derrida, 1997, p. 111).

17. In a related argument Rudy Koshar (2000) suggests the Gerzes' monument, rather than constituting a break with past forms, is part of a longer tradition of Germanness that stretches back to Romanticism, characterised by a tormented 'inwardness' over the question of dentity (p. 367).

18. The work of Rachel Whiteread, as theorised by Lisa Saltzman, provides an interesting counterexample of self-absenting memorial structures that are not predicated on presence (see Saltzman, 2006, pp. 80–9).

19. Lupu argued that the emergence of neo-Nazi graffiti contributed to feelings that the monument was a disgrace rather than to a self-consciousness of identity in relation to the past and so fed into victim discourse and meant that the monument's disappearance did not necessarily mark a transfer of the burden of memory to the monument's constituency but rather a salve to a sense of victimhood (2003, p. 146).

20. For a critique of the Holocaust sublime in this context, see also Kaplan (2007, p. 9). Wiedmer continues the critique of the sublime: 'Rather than provoking thought and remembrance, after all, sublimity most often produces silence, or at worst a cheap catharsis that mimics the act of remembrance without leaving lasting traces. Holocaust memorials for the second and third generations are not primarily about emotions, anyway. Their foremost importance arises rather in educative representation of events of which their observers have no personal experience' (Wiedmer, 1999, p. 156). Ernst Van Alphen, though, conceives of the sublime in more politically and ethically progressive terms by tracing its continuities and discontinuities with the uncanny. The uncanny is that which defies cognition because the uncanny object has been repressed. If the uncanny, in Freudian terms, is the return of that which was once familiar but made unfamiliar and repressed, repression was an attempt to protect the integrity of the self, now under threat from what has returned. However that which threatens return and the boundaries of the self can be projected onto an external object or spatialised and thus demarcated, in turn preserving those boundaries (Van Alphen, 1997, pp. 198–9). The sublime has a different dynamic, as the threat to the self is not externalised but internalised. 'Instead of safeguarding the self, then, there is in the sublime an inclination to lose the self in the extensions of the ungraspable and unattainable, and thus to engage with it' (Van Alphen, 1997, p. 201). This is 'therapeutic and political' dynamic that allows a 'dialectic between the private and public, personal and collective' (Van Alphen, 1997, p. 202), as the engagement with otherness permeates the boundaries of self and the uncanny spaces delimited to frame that self in relation to what threatens it. In the German context this has an obvious resonance, recalling Young's use of the uncanny. Rendered uncanny, then, German memories of Jews can be contained. Indeed, we have seen, via Wiedmer, how Libeskind's building might have been appropriated for such purposes – its voids used to domesticate the memory of Jews so that Germany can regulate the boundaries of its wounded self bereft of those Jews. Van Alphen suggests that 'Whereas within the realm of the uncanny the memory of the Holocaust is life- (or subject-) threatening, within the realm of the sublime it gives a perspective

outside the self. Precisely because the content of the Holocaust, its meaning, is ungraspable, its sublime ungraspability can become the significance of the moment in which our individualism crumbles away' (1997, p. 204). Again, it is precisely 'our individualism' that we must hold onto in the act of memorialisation, otherwise we lose track of how we mediate the spaces in which we remember and of how we might reconstitute ourselves in that act.

21. See Geyer and Hansen (1995, pp. 175–90) for their warning (from the 1990s) about ubiquitous Holocaust representation constituting a new language of nationhood that could be used to bind national identity rather than remember things done in the name of the nation. Wiedmer would take the converse view of LaCapra in arguing that the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, in its conception, stakes a claim on Germany's murdered Jews. Via the memorial, Germany mourns the loss of its Jews and the consequent impoverishment of its culture. Memorialisation is, then, not for the sake of the victims but for the Germans, which is different from LaCapra's sense of sacrifice. As Wiedmer argues, the memorial articulation an absence that impoverishes contemporary Germany resonates most famously in Libeskind's concept of the void, which, arguably, influenced the second design competition (1999, p. 140). As Niven reminds, 'Emptiness poses the question as to who did the emptying' (2002, p. 211).

Chapter 7   Photography and Memory in the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

1. Placed on a landscape of national memory (Washington's Mall), the Holocaust (via the museum) finds itself represented within the context of American national identity. For example, one-time director of the USHMM Michael Berenbaum wrote: 'In America … we recast the story of the Holocaust to teach fundamental American values. What are the fundamental values? For example – when America is at its best – pluralism, democracy, restraint on government, the inalienable rights of individuals, the inability of government to enter into the freedom of religion, and so forth' (quoted in Crysler and Kusno, 1997, p. 52). Greig Crysler and Abidin Kusno argue the USHMM intends the Holocaust to be remembered in these very American terms. They argue that, despite American pluralist values, the museum represents cultural difference only in the past, embodied by Jewish as well as other religious, racial, ethnic, political and sexual victims of the Holocaust. As represented in the museum's permanent exhibition, religious, racial, ethnic, political and sexual difference is subject to oppression (and annihilation) by the nation state. In the present, it is the nation state that safeguards difference through the nationalisation of Holocaust memory, in the form of the museum itself. However, it is past differences that are represented not present ones. Within the museum difference is literally a thing of the past, 'a museological prosthesis that is maimed, murdered' (Crylser and Kusno, 1997, p. 52). In effect, by progressing through the museum's exhibitionary narrative, difference is left behind (as a damaged thing). Not only is the victim's identity left behind, so is that of the visitor. As the exhibitionary narrative identifies the museum visitor with the Holocaust victim, placing him/her in the position

of 'witness', the cultural and social difference embodied by the visitor is, in the museum's scheme, evacuated by that identification. The reward for leaving behind one's differential identity can be found at the narrative's conclusion. The permanent exhibition concludes by positing redeemed nation states (America and Israel) antithetically to Nazi Germany, as rescuers of those who survived the Holocaust. The visitor can now embrace the nation state that will safeguard his/her differential identity if he/she so wishes, but at the cost of identification with the state in which one's identity is subsumed. As Crysler and Kusno put it, 'The spectator's identification ... reborn demands an attitude of indifference towards the particularities of his or her ethnic/social/sexual/gendered/classed body' (1997, p. 52). So, the USHMM instrumentalises the Holocaust in the construction of a national identity and its projection of an idealised, homogeneous citizenry of the present. In short, the Holocaust is remembered for the wrong reasons; the effect is one of dehistoricisation.

2. See Peter Novick (2001), Hilene Flanzbaum (1999) and Alan Mintz (2001) for cultural histories of this process of Americanisation.

3. Timothy Luke further extends the implications of museal logic by pointing out that Holocaust museums not only echo the dialectic of extermination and preservation, they are also dependent on that dialectic for their very contents, comprising the Nazi's obsessive documentary material concerning their genocidal activities and the artefacts collected as all that remains of the victims of genocide. Furthermore, Luke argues that the USHMM repeats the industrial logic of mass killing in the way it mechanically processes the past and visitors' experience of that past (2002, p. 55)

   Just as a bureaucratic consciousness shielded the participants of modernity from the part they played in a system that produced genocide, the same bureaucratic consciousness shields those who participate in the museum as its designers, curators, sponsors and visitors from their implication in the mechanical reproduction of a social life predicated on routinisation or seriality of death. Luke goes so far as to conflate modern technology and fascism in a way that essentialises its potential, regardless of ideological usage and historical specifity:

   > The fascist qualities of all the automatic means integrated into any ordinary materials-processing technologies, which are always heedless of the ends to which they are put, are rarely identified in modern life, even though this phenomenon is one of the technical bases on which the whole Holocaust museum, as well as the Holocaust itself, rests. In fact, the museum's 'Disneyfication' of the death camps ignores how deeply and easily the death camp can nest inside of the routines of Disnseyfication.
   > (2002, p. 55)

   Luke's rather generalising deployment of a culture industry critique runs counter to the argument developed in this chapter. As this chapter argues in what follows, mass media representations of the Holocaust, such the permanent exhibition of the USHMM, do not simply turn the past into a consumer spectacle that repeats the technological logic that informed the Holocaust in the first place. Mass media representations can be subject to

more complex readings and appropriations rather than just consumption, which are contingent on the context of both display and its spectators – a context elided or simplified in Luke's argument. (For a converse argument as to how the logic of commodification and mass media representation can provoke memory work rather than amnesia, see the discussion, and critique, of Alison Landsberg's concept of 'prosthetic memory' later in this chapter.) Therefore, this chapter follows in the vein of Andreas Huyssen's complication of the binary opposition between modernism and mass culture, unrepresentability and aestheticisation, traumatic and palliative memory that threatened to define a canon of Holocaust (non)representation and its acceptable forms under the influence of a misunderstanding of Adorno's prohibition on poetry after Auschwitz. Via, for example, a reading of Art Spiegelman's *Maus*, Huyssen pits Adorno's *Bilderverbot* against another of Adorno's concepts, that of mimesis, or rather, 'mimetic approximation'. This is not then imitation in terms of the commodity form and 'its powers of reification and deception' but rather mimesis as a nonidentical and as a process of becoming. In the example of *Maus*, Huyssen argues that the (approximate) mimetic principle at work therein demonstrates the temporally complex textual mediation of the past rather than its identical reproduction. This aesthetic process of becoming, then, seems to be driven by Spiegelman's work of secondary memory, which by definition can only approximate the past events and lives that haunt the artist (see Huyssen, 2001, pp. 28–42). As we shall see, secondary memory in the USHMM informs a process of becoming.

4. Wolfgang Ernst comments that the historical value of objects found within museums is predicated on their obsolescence, their status as waste or rubbish, which is then subject to 'transubstantiation' and transvaluation through the processes of retrieval, preservation, storage, curation and exhibition. As Ernst argues, in the case of the Prague museum that process of transubstantiation is short-circuited – a 'fatal perversion of museal transubstantiation, translating previously religious semiophors into pure cultural materiality':

    In an economy of recycling, every piece of rubbish is conceivable as a potential object and vice versa; in the case of the Prague museum, though, the circle of cultural dis/appropriation short-circuited symbolic exchange and death. Objects arriving from closed synagogues in Bohemia and Moravia transubstantiated into museum objects without a time of transition in between – a fatal interlacing of inventory data and death lists. There was a mortal real-time relation between the inventory numbers of dead objects arriving at the museum and the list of living people (their possessors) facing deportation to concentration camps. While the storerooms of the museum abounded with objects, Theresienstadt was emptied in 1943, with the victims being transported to Auschwitz (Ernst, 2000, p. 24.)

    Ernst argues that a process of 'real-time' musealisation continued at the camps themselves, with the removal of remaining possessions from those newly arrived and the plundering of their bodies for gold teeth and hair after their death. The liberators of the camps who encountered storerooms full of these objects also encountered the logic that was to be repeated in the organisation of the Auschwitz museum itself (Ernst, 2000, p. 25).

5. On the international correspondence of racist discourse, see Gilroy (1995, pp. 207, 213), Gilman (1990, p. 7) and Doyle (1994, pp. 14–17). I am

mindful here of Michael Rothberg's very useful conception of the idea of 'screen memory' as not the cultural apparatus for competitive memory but an arena for the consideration of the confluence of asymmetrical memories of modernity's different extremes of genocide, slavery and colonialism (2009, pp. 12–16). I discuss Rothberg's 'multidirectional memory' in my conclusion.

6. For an overview of (some) theories of museal performance, and how they might be applied to Holocaust museums, see Crownshaw (2000).

7. Susan Crane argues that the cultural memory organised by museums through acts of retrieval, preservation, storage and exhibition can only be thought of in terms of a dynamic and reciprocal relationship between individual visitor, the public and the institutional organisation of the past. This is not a top-down relationship in which a version of the past is imposed, but, rather, the museum provides a 'medium' (and 'metaphor') by which individual memory can be formed and organised and so by which cultural memories form that are not contained by the museum. In other words, we must think '*through* the museum, beyond institutional histories of any singular type' (Crane, 2000, p. 5).

8. In Andrea Liss's earlier, similar but less developed concept, '*Postmemories* … refers to … artists' distance from the events [of the Shoah] as well as their relationship to the fallout of the experiences [of those events]. Postmemories thus constitute the imprints that photographic imagery of the Shoah have created within the post-Auschwitz generation. Artists and museum planners have developed ways to respond to these memories, to give new life to the representation of the events, and to provoke respectful remembrance for its victims' (1998, p. 86). Liss's definition seems to predate Hirsch's conception of the term (in its singular form) (1998, p. 134 n2). Although Hirsch's concept is more thoroughly elaborated, Liss, as we shall see, problematises more rigorously the concept of vicarious or secondary memory.

9. Yaffa Eliach and her family escaped but returned in 1944 and were subject to a local pogrom in which many of the original 29 survivors, including Eliach's mother, were murdered. Eliach and her brother escaped with photographs hidden about their persons. These smuggled photographs, together with those saved by other survivors or collected from relatives of Ejszyszki's population were reproduced to comprise the archive housed in the Tower of Faces (Hirsch, 1997, p. 256). For further details of the survival of these photographs and Eliach's collection of them, see Liss (1998, pp. 26–9, 33–4).

10. Diane Taylor would describe the difference between place and performed or spatialised place as that between the 'archive' of 'enduring materials' and the 'repertoire of embodied practice/knowledge', which, importantly, is not a binary opposition between mediated and inauthentic and unmediated and authentic memory (2003, pp. 19–22).

11. In the 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction', Benjamin describes the 'optical unconscious' thus:

> The enlargement of a snapshot does not simply render more precise what in any case was visible, though unclear: it reveals entirely new structural formations of the subject …. Evidently a different nature opens itself to the camera than opens to the naked eye – if only because an unconsciously penetrated space is substituted for a space consciously explored by man.

> The camera introduces us to unconscious optics as does psychoanalysis to unconscious impulses.
>
> (1992b, pp. 229–30)

12. As Benjamin puts it: 'eternal value and mystery – concepts whose uncontrolled (and at present almost uncontrollable) application would lead to a processing of data in the Fascist sense' (1992b, p. 212).
13. See also Van Alphen (1997, pp. 100–2).
14. Interestingly, and as Liss notes, an exhibit of Vishniac's photographs precedes the Tower of Faces. These images of religious communities on the verge of destruction 'emphasise otherworldiness, as well as the real material world of anti-Semitism in the 1930s' (Liss, 1998, p. 32). The effect of exhibiting them as a precedent to the Tower highlights the relative modernity of the Jewish world of Ejszyszki, while ascribing an antiquitous character to the world depicted by Vishniac (Liss, 1998, p. 32). To a museum audience, Ejszyszki is more recognisably modern and so available for an affiliative gaze. The accoutrements of (Jewish) domesticity that decorate the room in which Vishniac's images are displayed add to the 'otherness' of the photographed subjects. Vishniac's images, by their exhibition, are once again misinterpreted to generate a generalising nostalgia for a lost Jewish world (Liss, 1998, p. 32). The implication of their place in the exhibition is that such a world was only modernised by its encounter with processes and agents of genocide. The antique character of this lost world may generate nostalgia, but that exquisite nostalgia is predicated upon and therefore painfully enjoyed at the expense of the loss of life. The unfamiliar world of Vishniac's Jews is displayed near the exhibition of American popular sentiment and government policy towards the Jewish refugees, both of which were reluctant to afford sanctuary despite knowledge of an unfolding Holocaust. Liss wonders whether logic of putting these two exhibits in proximity to each other might rationalise American reluctance. Vishniac's premodern Jews would never integrate into modern America (Liss, 1998, p. 32).
15. Elizabeth Edwards and Janice Hart have argued for a theorisation of photographic images that considers the materiality of the images without reducing them to the status of commodity or ideological prop (2004, p. 1). Making the image tangible and physically present, photographic theory can map the performances around such objects, as the material presence of the image is 'enmeshed with subjective, embodied and sensuous interactions' (Edwards and Hart, 2004, p. 1). In finding meaning in materiality, photographs are not given a 'positivist character'. In other words, meaning is not identical with physical presence, but determined by a 'fluid relationship between people, images and things' (Edwards and Hart, 2004, p. 3). What is more, a recognition of the different material forms of photographic images means differentiating between the 'embodied experiences' of meaning that are contingent upon different materialities as well as different 'theatres of consumption' (Edwards and Hart, 2004, p. 5). Rendering the images more tangible allows their social biography to be mapped out, for 'an object cannot be fully understood [unless] belonging in a continuing process of production, exchange, usage and meaning' (Edwards and Hart, 2004, p. 4). Social biography can determine the intersection between photographs and the powerful

systems by which they are classified and exhibited in museums and archives. Or, social biography can narrate the way that photographs elude or exceed such classification (see also Edwards, 2001, pp. 19–21). In terms of the Tower of Faces, the social biography of Eliach's photographs – the story of their survival, which is narrated in the exhibit, and the story of their exhibition which takes the form of the exhibit itself – lends an aura to the images that, as we shall see, works with and against the museum's nationalist intentions. Whatever their work, the social biography of those photographs is necessary to understand their function in the museum. As this chapter will argue, it is the biography of the photographs that belie the aura of their reproductions in the USHMM.

This is not to suggest that the biography of Eliach's photographic images should be read in a chronological fashion, as their auratic meanings are determined by an oscillation between their past and their present. The photographic images accrue aura through their survival and the reception of that survival but that aura is equally generated by the moment of their original creation. Although mechanically reproduced, the original is a precious indexical trace of a subject who cannot be re-photographed. As Jean Baudrillard would put it, 'the moment of creation' cannot be reproduced – 'we search for traces of creation: the object has passed through someone's hands' in terms of its genesis (1996, p. 76). Of course this relation between past and present that shapes the visitor's experience of these images is not unmediated but is the effect of the mise-en-scène of the museum. For Baudrillard:

> The deep-rooted power of collected objects stems neither from their uniqueness nor from their historical distinctiveness. It is not because of such considerations that the temporality of collecting is not real time but, rather, *because the organisation of the collection itself replaces real time.* … this is the collection's fundamental function: the resolving of real time into a systematic dimension … [the collection] abolishes time … by reducing time to a fixed set of terms navigable in either direction, the collection represents the continual recommencement of a controlled cycle.
>
> (1996, p. 95)

16. For a general discussion of the relationship between the reproduction of the artefact in museum exhibitions and the original object, see Ernst (2000, pp. 26–33). Ernst identifies a general tendency in which museum display incorporates the storage systems and structures of artefacts, so that the boundaries between museum exhibition and archive become permeable, and the museum itself 'transparent'. Historical narrative and therefore the temporality of the museum and of the memory it shapes are displaced by an act of retrieval that flattens out time (revealing at the same time the mechanics of display that underpinned and naturalised the historical narrative) (Ernst, 2000, pp. 26–7). The USHMM would belong to a category of museums that Ernst describes as 'didactic' and which distracts attention from the basis of display in storage systems. In other words, where the exhibition's interpretation of the past often appears self-evident because the artefacts stand in for the past events represented in the museum, that

exhibition is actually structured by the process of the museum's transub-
stantiation of objects that have become obsolete – their retrieval, preser-
vation, storage, selection for display and arrangement in an exhibition.
In other words, the transubstantiation of dead objects is eclipsed and the
museum is 'catechontic' in its 'stowing away and suspension of death'
(Ernst, 2000, p. 27). However, the presentation of the photographic images
(reproductions) as authentic objects – at least under certain theoretical
regimes – may distract attention away from the mechanics of musealisation
and display, but as Ernst would argue, the authenticity of objects always
needs supplementation by a 'rival textual medium' to document and
interpret the objects, thereby staging at once (the illusion of) an unmedi-
ated encounter with an artefact of a past event and the mediation of that
encounter (2000, p. 33). In fact, and generally speaking, the attempts to
preserve the original artefact in its materiality are dependent on processes
of immaterialisation, that is, interpretation and documentation that make
significant the materials of memory (Ernst, 2000, p. 28).

17. Given Hirsch's slippage, the Tower of Faces begins to resemble the Museum
of Modern Art (MOMA) exhibition the 'Family of Man' (1955), a conflation
against which she had warned but which was made possible by her familial gaze
(Hirsch, 1997, p. 49). 'The Family of Man' was curated by MOMA director of
photography Edward Steichen, who conceived it as 'a mirror of the universal
elements and emotions in the everydayness of life – a mirror of the essential
oneness of mankind through out the world' (quoted in Hirsch, 1997, p.49),
which, through the realist codes of viewing it engendered, transcended (or
rather domesticated) the differences of nationality, race, ethnicity, class and
gender (Hirsch, 1997, pp. 50–5).

   In light of the Holocaust (and Nazi ideologies of difference/sameness),
and differences between communism and capitalism (as violently evident in
the Cold and Korean War) colonised and colonisers, rich and poor, Steichen
sought a liberal humanism that did not recognise difference but sameness
(Hirsch, 1997, p. 50). This kind of liberal humanism is an extension of that
which shaped post-Holocaust memory in Britain and the US in the imme-
diate post-war years. Liberal humanism allowed a rethinking of national
identity in terms very different to those of the Nazis. While the expanding
Nazi state was based on the exclusion of the cultural, religious and ethnic
differences primarily embodied by its Jewish inhabitants, Britain and the US
sought to redeem nationalism by not recognising such differences. To draw
attention officially to the particularity of the indigenous and immigrant Jews
in Britain and the US might, it was feared, invoke the same kind of deadly
resentment of them induced by Nazism (see Kushner, 1994).

18. Dirk Baecker places belatedness in the context of the cult value of an
auratic object and illuminates just how much aura fluctuates or flickers.
Reiterating Benjamin, he points out, it is the cult value and consequent
ritual usage of such an object that weaves it into tradition, religious
and then secular. However, ritual is defined by its repetitiveness, and,
concordantly, to define the auratic object as incomparable suggests its
comparability (Baecker, 2003, p. 12). Baecker sees this tension between
the proximate and the distant as most apparent in ritual or cult use of
religious objects. However, religion and art are deeply imbricated in this

context: 'the loss of aura is the memory of religion in art' (Baecker, 2003, p. 13). The (dis)appearance of the aura of the artistic object recalls the paradoxical nature of the aura of religious artefacts, which in effect recalls and emphasises the cult value of art (Baecker, 2003, p. 13): 'When a beholder of art identifies as "art" something that is not – strictly speaking – a work of art, a "loss of aura" is produced at the moment of identification. To name a cult object a "work of art" entails a simultaneous acknowledgment that it is "no longer a work of cult" …. This self-cancelling operation of naming produces a play of tensions around Benjamin's discussion of the loss of aura' (Baecker, 2003, p. 13).

19. Above this exhibit is the following inscription:

We are the shoes, we are the last witnesses.
We are the shoes from grandchildren and grandfathers,
From Prague, Paris, and Amsterdam,
And because we are only made of fabric and leather
And not of blood and flesh, each one of us avoided the hellfire
Moses Schulstein (1911–1981),
Yiddish Poet

As Huyssen might say, the fact that these objects have survived the events that claimed their owners suggests (to the suggestible) a materialisation or embodiment of those events and identities.

20. As we have already seen, Luke is suspicious of the Disneyfied spectacle of Holocaust representation. Omer Bartov (1996) argues differently: the mass media distribution of images of Holocaust atrocity has meant that their affect has waned, especially when experienced in relation to more recent footage of current atrocity, and consequently their documentary or evidentiary status has been rendered questionable. The current exhibition of Holocaust images, then, is in competition with past displays as well as with the media distribution of images of other atrocities. The unprecedented atrocious image, if it is possible, becomes the sign of authenticity (p. 179).

21. On this, see also Nichols (2003, pp. 258–62).

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