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Transnational Memories, National Memory Regimes: Commemorating the Armenian Genocide in Germany

Benjamin Nienass

ABSTRACT

Studies of initiatives related to the recognition of the Armenian genocide across Europe have stressed the importance of the idiosyncratic environments in which these efforts take place. This paper follows debates about two projects dedicated to the commemoration of the Armenian genocide in Germany: The Lepsiushaus in Potsdam and the Gedenkstätte für Genozidopfer im Osmanischen Reich in Berlin. I propose that these concrete expressions of the recognition struggle show the importance of local conditions for the reception of transnational memories as they depend on practices supported by a “memory regime” often perceived in national terms.

On June 2, 2016, in a plenary debate on the merits of a resolution that explicitly described the Ottoman mass killings of Armenians of 1915 as genocide, several German parliamentarians took the floor to underline the importance of fully reckoning with the past to foster reconciliation between Turkey and the Armenian diaspora. However, while highlighting the goal of Turkish-Armenian reconciliation, the speakers did not simply describe their role as one of interested and morally conscious bystanders in a distant memory struggle. The president of the Bundestag, Norbert Lammert, opened the debate by referring to Germany’s special position in this discussion, given the complicity of the Kaiserreich, but also because, as a German, Lammert could understand “how painful the exposure to events [in one’s own history] can be.”¹ Subsequent speeches included similar references to the role of Germany as an ally of the Ottoman Empire, and in particular to Germany’s own experience with the “burden of genocide on one’s nation” (Hans-Peter Uhl, Christian Democrat).²

After the plenary session, the parliament voted overwhelmingly for the resolution, ending a long legislative journey toward recognition. Turkey's reaction was swift. It immediately withdrew its ambassadors from Berlin, while Erdogan's spokesperson responded caustically to the result: "Having committed the largest genocide in modern history, Germany resorts to lies about Ottoman Armenians to relieve itself of guilt."³

It may come as no surprise that a debate in Germany's legislature on the recognition and proper commemoration of the genocide of 1915 summons the memory of the Holocaust, as well as the memory of this memory. Drawing the "elsewhere" close means filtering and thus relocating it. While the legislators indicate a direct relationship between their socialization in Germany's political culture and their motivation to weigh in on recognition struggles, Erdogan's response proposes that Germany is displacing its own burden by broadening the scope of its historical focus. This exchange peeled back the layers behind a decision that seemed, to a certain extent, unambiguous. Did the German lawmakers simply follow the example of their European neighbors? How exactly did they perceive their rationale and the source of their authority in the decision to publicly recognize the Armenian genocide?

In the European context, Leggewie once described the Armenian genocide as part of the "concentric circles"⁴ of a European memory, implying that it has a force across borders. It is transnational in the sense that it traverses the borders of nation-states, often as a part of diaspora politics.⁵ These struggles for recognition fought by the Armenian diaspora have frequently been read as identity politics, reflecting what Moses once called the "'groupness' of traumatic injury and its memory."⁶ But in some contexts, the history of recognition struggles can also be viewed as an extension of what Levy and Sznajder call "rooted cosmopolitanism," where universal adherence to human rights is sustained through the memory of specific and dramatic examples of their violation.⁷ In this sense, the memory is also transcultural, since it is not upheld and addressed by Armenian communities alone.⁸

Leggewie's metaphor of a "concentric circle" also leaves room for a more differentiated analysis according to which the memory of the Armenian genocide radiates outward with various intensities, entrenched locally in different historical entanglements, political opportunity structures, and "memory regimes."⁹ This reading invites a comparative lens. Staudt, for instance, considered the French and German legislative efforts in a comparative study of "memory lobbying," claiming that a numerically strong and well-connected Armenian minority in France may partially explain some of the legislative successes, while the German case points mostly to discourses about its own struggles over the past.¹⁰ Fleck's case study comes to a similar conclusion, showing a relatively weak influence of Armenian or diasporic organizations and ascribing achievements in the legislature and beyond mostly to a sympathetic "armenophile" group of German scholars driven by concerns beyond the Armenian diaspora and traditional identity politics.¹¹ Consequently, Staudt refers to the necessity, at least

in the German context, to understand “moral arguments and their embeddedness in national narratives” to make sense of recognition and commemoration efforts.¹²

The following reflections are driven by related concerns. They are based on two recent projects dedicated to the recognition and commemoration of the Armenian genocide in Germany, both of which are outside of the legislative realm and explicitly driven by motivations beyond traditional identity politics: the Lepsiushaus in Potsdam and the Gedenkstätte für Genozidopfer im Osmanischen Reich (Memorial for the Victims of Genocide in the Ottoman Empire) in Berlin. I propose that these concrete expressions of the recognition struggle allow us to take the question of local conditions for the reception of transnational memories seriously, a question that is central to memory studies ever since a prevalent “methodological nationalism” has been forcefully challenged.¹³

In what Erll calls the “third phase” of memory studies,¹⁴ a new generation of scholars has productively reacted against the conceptual limitations and perils of earlier accounts of memory. Erll depicts the problematic assumptions behind approaches that treated cultural and social memory as the property of cultures in a Herderian tradition, including the tendencies to link memory to the stability of place and to link shared pasts to ethnically homogenous communities. To address these flaws, Erll suggests a focus on the importance of *movement* for memory: our emphasis should be put on the “routes,” the “paths which certain stories, rituals and images have taken,” rather than on the “roots” of memory.¹⁵ Even for Erll, however, the nation-state frame is not to be dismissed as obsolete when examining these trajectories.¹⁶ Rather, the challenge lies in taking the “locatedness”¹⁷ of the conditions of memory seriously, and “in analyzing and theorizing how . . . the local . . . molds the global,”¹⁸ without, however, necessarily assuming or reifying the very thing that needs to be explained—namely, that and how local (and national) discourses and self-images often remain relevant in discussions about the past.

By following the origins of two commemorative sites closely, my aim is to show the “routes” traveled by specific recognition struggles in Germany. In particular, I present how a broad contextualization in the “culture of contrition”¹⁹ shapes the justification of both critics and proponents of the commemorative efforts and how the historical role of the Kaiserreich²⁰ during the genocide marks the Armenian genocide potentially as a German *lieu de memoire* in its own right, albeit one in potential competition with other memories.

Staudt’s insights point us to the relevance of a memory regime, that, to use Olick’s words, transmits something akin to “an accumulating sense of past ways of speaking” and remembering—what he calls the “memory of memory.”²¹ Olick’s work has used the notion of “genres,”²² understood as “mechanisms for preserving the historical accretion of dialogue,” which can form “constitutive principles for the production of speech” across time.²³ From a slightly different conceptual angle, others have evoked

a similar reach of past discourses on collective memory, demonstrating memory patterns that ensure both narrative and aesthetic continuity and shape notions of political legitimacy and the ideal citizen.²⁴ Such memory regimes put constraints on present modes of remembering by foregrounding a set of practices, narratives, and sources of authority related to Germany's own history of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*—one that many political actors primarily understand in national terms.

Von Bieberstein has shown that Germany's memory regime produces serious limits to how efforts to recognize the Armenian genocide are received and negotiated.²⁵ She illustrates, for example, how genealogical descent remains an important aspect of Germany's seemingly postnational memory practices.²⁶ In the case of recognition debates about the Armenian genocide, this logic gains salience when the behavior of German citizens of Turkish descent seems to be under specific observation, tying the transmission of memory and responsibility not to legal citizenship or political socialization, but to notions of quasi-biological inheritance or ideas remarkably similar to the container cultures presented in Erll's critique of "second phase" memory discourses. We can speak, in this case, of an "ethnicization" of memory and historical responsibility.

Moreover, German citizen-subjects, von Bieberstein claims, are constructed in part by "dimensions of affect and aesthetics that are intimately tied to the regime of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*."²⁷ Specific projects of recognition thus face obstacles emerging from "genres of genocide commemoration," for example when stories of Armenian suffering seem too "nationalistic" or not sufficiently in tune with the "affective dispositions" stemming from a memory regime closely tied to a perpetrator identity.²⁸ In the two cases presented below, we can observe this inflection of history with affect. I will argue that the commemorative efforts discussed here rely at times on perceived "commonalities formed *by* memory transmission . . . but also required for its transmission,"²⁹ and that legitimacy is often bestowed on practices that fit in and benefit from "the circulation of redemptive practices that anchors Berlin's desired reputation for dealing responsibly with past injustice."³⁰

In the effort to extract the specific repertoires that can play a role in pushing oneself and others to spend time on the recognition of a crime that occurred presumably "elsewhere," it is revealed how the "elsewhere" becomes increasingly linked to the "here" in ethical and political terms. However, whereas von Bieberstein observed a logic by which the Armenian genocide "is written out of that German past so exemplarily confronted,"³¹ the cases discussed here paint a more complex picture. The actors described below are not only faced with a distant crime, but with negotiating different degrees of implication. This negotiation has the potential to reveal multidirectional memories in Rothberg's sense of creating "differentiated solidarities,"³² but can often also bring forth a more competitive reflex ingrained in Germany's memory regime.

Moreover, in this process, the architects, curators, and activists are forced to

reflect not only on their understanding of historical responsibility, but also to relate to ongoing discussions of how certain performances of memory befit Germany's present multicultural reality, thereby raising larger questions about the relationship between memory and political belonging, but also about the relationship between memory regimes and change.

The Lepsiushaus in Potsdam

At the heart of most domestic and international attention to the struggles of genocide recognition is, first and foremost, the behavior and discourse of elected officials. Germany is no exception. Pressures on the Bundestag to follow the example of some its European neighbors by officially recognizing the Armenian genocide heightened in 2015, in conjunction with the one hundredth anniversary of the genocide, among organizations in the larger diaspora as well as among local organizations. The first petition to recognize the Armenian genocide had been submitted to the German parliament to no avail in April 2000 by the human rights organization Arbeitsgruppe Anerkennung (Working Group Recognition) and the Verein der Völkermordgegner (Union against Genocide). Based on a second petition five years later, the Bundestag passed a motion "commemorating the expulsion and massacre of Armenians in 1915" in June 2005. The motion received attention mostly for its major omission: the term "genocide" was nowhere to be found. However, hopes were high ten years later for a new resolution.

Partly encouraged by international developments in early 2015—Pope Francis used the phrase "Armenian genocide" publicly and the coalition of conservative parties in the European Parliament adopted a position in favor of full recognition—the government consisting of the CDU and SPD drafted a new formulation in April of the same year. The Foreign Ministry effectively enforced a watered-down compromise in which the massacres were placed in a larger context "of a century of expulsions, ethnic cleansing, and genocides," given the concerns about Turkish reactions at a time when Turkey amounted to a key player in the "management" of the refugee crisis. *Der Spiegel* consequently reported: "The coalition fakes a genocide formulation."³³

At the time of my research visits in early 2016, many activists expected little improvement on this language, given the geopolitical constraints, which, in part, explained their redirected efforts to other means, in particular the memorial as elaborated below. In June 2016, however, the initiative of several members of parliament from four political parties to introduce a more ambitious version surprisingly paid off when the Bundestag almost unanimously accepted a resolution officially recognizing the organized mass killings as genocide.

Beyond parliamentary efforts, Germany and specifically Berlin saw numerous commemorative projects taking shape outside the legislative arena, especially leading up to the one hundredth anniversary. On April 23, a day before the globally observed

Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day, a mass was held at the Berliner Dom during which German president Gauck used the term genocide. On April 24, commemorative events across the country took place that were often directly or indirectly linked to the Genozid 1915—Initiative Deutschland (Genocide 1915—Initiative Germany), a coordinating body for organizations working toward the goal of recognition. The Gorki Theater launched a week-long program, including related plays, panels, and film screenings. Numerous events explicitly aimed to address “political didactics in the immigration society,”³⁴ many of which could be described as “memory activism,”³⁵ even if some of them were located in the intermediary space between the state and civil society.

Next, I turn to one of these hybrid spaces dedicated to didactic commemoration, namely the Lepsiushaus in Potsdam, to illustrate how a site geared to commemorate the Armenian genocide is bound by constraints that have much to do with a specifically German memoryscape. Johannes Lepsius (1858–1926), theologian, orientalist, and cofounder of the Deutsch-Armenische Gesellschaft (German-Armenian Society), played an increasingly central and symbolic role in German debates about the Armenian genocide. Having served a Christian mission in Jerusalem in his earlier years, Lepsius opened a carpet factory in Friesdorf in the late nineteenth century, which he eventually moved to the Ottoman Empire in order to provide a livelihood for the survivors of the Hamidian massacres.³⁶ In 1896, he published the report *Armenien und Europa (Armenia and Europe)*, which was later translated into French and English. In the report, Lepsius describes the massacres as more than a set of isolated incidents, linking them to a “centrally governed” Ottoman Empire. In 1915, Lepsius once again gathered information on the crimes perpetrated by Germany’s ally, which he self-published in 1916 as the *Bericht über die Lage des Armenischen Volkes in der Türkei* (Report on the situation of the Armenian people in Turkey) and which was immediately censored in Germany. Lepsius circulated more than 20,000 copies privately among editors of the German press and members of the Protestant church, an act the Lepsiushaus exhibit calls “an act of extraordinary civil disobedience.”

Historic accounts of Lepsius show a complicated figure. Concern for the Armenian plight faced a hostile discourse in Wilhemine Germany, informed by anti-Russian and anti-British sentiments. It found a home almost exclusively in the Protestant community, and mostly in that part of Protestantism that displayed both a strong evangelizing impulse³⁷ and a form of “cultural Protestantism,” which “[mixed] pertinent historical observations with a culturalist and racial Zeitgeist.”³⁸ Lepsius’s own view of Islam wavered between hostility, anxiety, and honest curiosity.³⁹

A similarly complex picture emerges with regard to his position vis-à-vis the Kaiserreich, with which he was clearly at odds at the moment of publishing the two influential reports (Hosfeld claims that ultimately ethics trumped nationalism for Lepsius⁴⁰), but whose war effort he repeatedly defended and justified⁴¹ and whose “Mitschuld”

in the genocide he arguably helped to dispel in the publication of *Deutschland und Armenien 1914–1918* (*Germany and Armenia, 1914–1918*), a compilation of German Foreign Office documents published in 1919.⁴² Lepsius's political judgments were thus undoubtedly subject to changes.⁴³

A 2005 Bundestag resolution launched the idea to create a space commemorating Lepsius in his former residence, a now beautifully renovated villa in a residential part of Potsdam, outside of Berlin. The Lepsiushaus is supported, in part, by federal, state, and municipal funding, and is run by the Förderverein Lepsiushaus Potsdam (Supporting Association of the Potsdam Lepsiushaus) under the direction of Dr. Rolf Hosfeld, a cultural historian of Armenia. The Förderverein, founded in 1999, conceived of the Lepsiushaus as a meeting point for scholars (for this purpose, the Lepsius Archive, previously located at the Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg and curated by the association's founder Dr. Hermann Goltz, was transferred to the new site as well), a contribution to the reconciliation efforts between Turks and Armenians, and as a permanent exhibit about Lepsius. Beyond these initial goals, the current leadership also envisions the site as providing political and human rights education.⁴⁴

Based on these goals, the Lepsiushaus sought, first and foremost, to portray the life of Lepsius as a "pioneering human rights activist,"⁴⁵ rather than focus on his missionary work, even if these two tendencies were not necessarily in conflict historically, as Kieser has shown. Kieser speaks of a brand of "Protestant internationalism" emerging around Lepsius and others, which combined religiously informed liberal principles with a conviction that these principles had to be enforced domestically as well as abroad.⁴⁶ However, the exhibit in the Lepsiushaus stresses the political battle and civic courage of Lepsius over the theological belief system that informed him. For the curators, this also allows Lepsius to be placed in a specific German context, which is clarified through explanations regarding the special role of Germany in the genocide and contemporary expectations about "proper" historical memory—i.e., "First, you have to look at yourself." This also offers the opportunity to present a specific "German human rights history,"⁴⁷ which emerges, in particular, in the aspects of the presentation placing Lepsius's interventions in a hostile home environment, characterized by censorship and the chancellor's decision to maintain an alliance with the Ottoman Empire, "whether Armenians perish because of it or not."⁴⁸ The exhibition highlights Lepsius's courage in mentioning Germany's "unintended complicity," which transforms Lepsius into a "German exception" (the name of a conference organized by the Lepsiushaus in 2012). From the perspective of the Lepsiushaus, it also marks him as an anachronistic pioneer of a German memory paradigm to come.⁴⁹

The exhibit closes with a wall panel suggesting some parallels between the silence of the German Kaiserreich and present-day Turkey that places the Turkish historian Halil Berktaş, who has openly criticized Turkey's "politics of denial," within a larger

Turkish context that has been increasingly closed off to arguments for recognition. Little in this part of the exhibit, however, points to a self-congratulatory pride in repentance with regard to these early German critical voices related to Lepsius's circle. In fact, both struggles are placed next to each other to show the costs of resistance to government-sanctioned interpretations of history, in line with the more general civic education paradigm of the museum.

But even before its opening in 2011, the Lepsiushaus drew a level of attention that seemed, at first, disproportional to its size, mandate, and, most of all, to its location at the periphery of Berlin in a residential area of Potsdam/Brandenburg. At first, much of the debate focused on a 2009 letter written by the Türkische Gemeinde in Deutschland (Turkish Community in Germany), a federal umbrella organization for Turks in Germany and Germans of Turkish descent, which called the project “an impediment to any conversation between Turkey and Armenia” and which addressed the letter symbolically to the chancellor rather than to the funding source, i.e., the German parliament.⁵⁰

This positioned the aim to create “political didactics in the immigration society” (see above) in a specific German context. In an interview, Kenan Kolat from the Türkische Gemeinde demanded that the same openness called for in Turkish debates needed to be safeguarded in Germany, implying that openness cannot translate into a federally funded museum that recognizes the crimes as genocide. “Inner peace” was arguably at stake, and German citizens of Turkish descent would be put under “psychological pressure” by efforts to include the term “genocide” in public education.⁵¹ Hermann Goltz, foundational member of the association that made the Lepsiushaus possible, responded: “We are not an anti-Turkish institute.”⁵² In the first public response of the Lepsiushaus, Goltz refers specifically to the language in the initial resolution that established the Lepsiushaus, which requested an examination of the history “of Germans *and* Turks.”⁵³

Goltz's distinction in his response to Kolat's intervention on behalf of Turks in Germany and Germans of Turkish descent deserves a closer look: Goltz retorts by pointing out that the resolution and the Lepsiushaus demand a thorough examination of both German and Turkish responsibilities. Goltz picks up the assumptions already prevalent in Kolat's critique, but the ethnification of history and responsibility is striking, because Kolat and other Germans of Turkish descent are not addressed as subjects working through the German aspect of the genocide—a mandate the Lepsiushaus takes seriously, as suggested by recent events held at the museum. Instead, both Goltz and Kolat seem to be caught in a logic of descent that has arguably been part and parcel of a much broader German memory regime, as discussed above.

Soon thereafter, however, another discussion about the project displaced concerns of and about Germany's Turkish minority. In an official question to the German

government, members of Die Linke (The Left) alerted the government and their colleagues in the legislature to the recent scholarly assertions that Lepsius was, in fact, a “right-wing antidemocrat” and “follower of antisemitic racial ideologies,” with close ties to nationalist circles.⁵⁴ According to the parliamentarians, it was not humanism that had motivated Lepsius, but a full endorsement of German expansionism in the territories of the Ottoman Empire. In fact, according to the statement authored by Ulla Jepke and Lukrezia Jochimsen, Lepsius was not engaged in civil disobedience, but, on the contrary, had followed orders by the German Foreign Ministry to help prepare a report that undermined any claims of German involvement. The Berlin-based German newspaper *Der Tagesspiegel* stipulated that the so-called “Lepsius Question” (in reference to the “Armenien-Frage”) had officially been opened.⁵⁵ The query by the Die Linke was largely based on the publications of journalist and historian Wolfgang Gust.⁵⁶ Gust and Goltz soon engaged in a debate that revealed several fault lines that can only be understood in the larger framework of German memory norms.

First, Gust associated the presentation of Lepsius’s biography under Goltz’s leadership with former memory practices of the GDR that Goltz had arguably not been able to shed since unification. Gust explained the position of Goltz, who was trained as a historian in the former GDR, by referring to a memory socialization incompatible with the norms of the Berlin Republic: “To weaken antisemitic and other strange claims from Lepsius, Goltz once referred to him as ‘a child of his time.’ But, so was Goltz, who, during the GDR, had learned that historiography needs to serve socialist propaganda. The cult around Lepsius reminds us of this Soviet-style heroism.”⁵⁷

The Lepsiushaus, in other words, had violated accepted norms of commemoration. Goltz was clinging to a museal language that no longer fit the German model of public education. Gust implies a widely acknowledged framework for memorialization according to which German public memory projects educate visitors to fashion a critical “memory literacy” that in turn allows them to question the very foundations of public memory,⁵⁸ not to celebrate heroes. Rather than just the lack of a unified culture of heroism in Germany,⁵⁹ Gust reflects here the skepticism of heroes altogether, as the “object of uncritical reverence by a delusional citizenry.”⁶⁰

Potentially aware of this burgeoning dispute and its parameters and in response to the query of Die Linke, the government, on the other hand, replied that it would be the task of the Lepsiushaus “to engage critically with the person of Johannes Lepsius”⁶¹ and to incorporate the new project in Potsdam into the Berlin Republic’s larger expectations for proper reflective commemoration (echoing Lindenberger’s insight that the state “governs” memory mostly in form of a “persuasive authority,” based on “specific rationalities”⁶²). But the display of heroism was not just a formal issue. Elsewhere, Gust expresses particular concern with the attempt of Goltz and others to link Lepsius to the “heroes” of resistance in WWII, like Stauffenberg and

Bonhoeffer, which would not only overstate the resistance of Lepsius in the context of his contemporary regime, but also falsely equate the context of resistance in the Kaiserreich and Nazi Germany.⁶³

Moreover, to defend the person of Lepsius against accusations of antisemitism and his closeness to the nationalistic circle of General Ludendorff during WWI, Goltz had engaged in what Gust called “a manner known to me from the postwar years. When the dark shadow of the Holocaust fell on all Germans, many of them suddenly discovered Jewish friends and therefore couldn’t possibly be anti-Jewish.”⁶⁴ Goltz had presented the circle of Lepsius’s friends and admirers in decidedly ethnoreligious terms to move him behind the line of attack, using a strategy all too familiar to the attempts of “coming to terms with the past” in the early postwar years. Once again, Goltz’s legitimacy, and that of the Lepsiushaus, were called into question in direct relation to the specific German history of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, as Goltz displayed anachronistic tendencies of normalization that, by definition, delegitimized the commemorative goals of the new museum.

Lastly, Gust highlighted the peculiar choice of Lepsius as a symbolic figure for a museum that is, in part, meant to be a starting point for a political dialogue on the Armenian genocide.⁶⁵ Lepsius was, first and foremost, says Gust, a “missionary,” who insisted “on the conversion of the Islamic world.”⁶⁶ As Gust suggests, this, in turn, allows the new site of memory to move away from a site of human rights education toward a “thick” European *lieu de memoire*: not an expression of commitment to human rights, nor a performance of reflective history practices arguably related to the self-image of the Berlin Republic, but a manifestation of solidarity with specifically Christian victims, which indicates a choice vastly at odds with the overall claim for a pluralistic conception of political education in a multicultural society.

Making Lepsius and the Lepsiushaus into a German or cosmopolitan *lieu de memoire* accordingly faces choices between depictions of Lepsius as a “child of his time,” which includes ties to culturally narrow views of religion and patriotic war fervor, and portrayals of heroism, in which Lepsius becomes a human rights champion and a precursor to an ethics of memory that emerged at a much later stage. Critical distance and commemorative complexity, as embedded in German memory practices, was the proposed approach to this multifaceted biography on both sides of the debate. In my interview, Hosfeld, who took over the leadership at the Lepsiushaus when Goltz passed away in 2010, mentioned the “zealots” of Germany’s “negative nationalism”⁶⁷ that apparently had taken things too far with regard to Lepsius. In contrast to the critical disobedience that Hosfeld wanted to see celebrated in the museum, the critics had engaged in the ritualistic self-flagellation that the term “negative nationalism” has come to symbolize. They had enforced norms related to the performance of German repentance without allowing for the complexity of the figure of Lepsius. Both sides thus claimed the legacy of a German history of reflective memory practices for

themselves, either in the battle against simplistic “Soviet-style” heroism or in the defense of a figure that could be *both* a hero and a “child of his time.”

Accordingly, these commemorative choices were filtered heavily through a lens informed by the memory practices and discourses associated with the paradigm of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*. In addition, the discussions about this site of memory worked through the implications for a politics of belonging produced by stipulating a specific collective relationship to the past. This either took the form of reproducing the logic of descent mentioned above (even in decidedly self-aware voices about inclusion), in which German Turks are perceived to be working through “their past,” rather than the past of their country of citizenship, or it manifested in a conscious rejection of Lepsius as a symbol of genocide recognition in contemporary Germany, due to his seemingly narrow religious solidarity with the victims.

The Lepsiushaus is thus bound up in specific German memory registers and within a subtle clash of different interpretations of Germany’s own lessons from a postnational politics of memory, even as the debate about Lepsius’s past ebbed after Goltz’s death—in part, because the heroic interpretation of Lepsius’s biography was replaced by a much more nuanced view under Hosfeld’s leadership. In the next section, I shift the attention to a second commemorative effort, focused on creating a site of recognition for the victims of the genocide. The discursive resources derived from Germany’s own history of coming to terms with the past emerge again as a decisive resource and motivational factor, as do some of the specific material constraints embedded in Berlin’s commemorative landscape.

The Memorial for Victims of the Genocide in the Ottoman Empire

The Armenische Gemeinde zu Berlin (Armenian Community of Berlin) in Germany has long urged members of the German parliament to initiate the creation of a central memorial in Berlin to commemorate the Armenian genocide. Most recently, the demand from the Zentralrat der Armenier in Deutschland (Central Council of Armenians in Germany) for a memorial that would remember the German complicity and that would be symbolically placed near the Reichstag sparked a reaction that disclosed the complex forces at play in the recognition debates in Germany. If Germany’s memory paradigm demands a full and reflective “working through the past,” then why deny this important German *lieu de memoire* its central location?

Concerned about these dangers stemming from a competitive-comparative angle and its inflationary effects, the historian Götz Aly commented bitingly in an op-ed for the *Berliner Zeitung*: “How about a central memorial for the murdered Native Americans, the Girondists killed by French revolutionaries, the Kulaks liquidated by the communists, and the Congolese who died in the hundreds of thousands at the hands of Belgians?”⁶⁸ Aly evokes an imaginary “National Committee for the Biggest Commemoration of Murder of All Time” and “Horrorhopping” in Berlin, not least

to tease out the tension between national and transnational memory, implicitly placing the Armenian genocide in a category that does not qualify as a subject of German responsibility, or, one that may even undermine the strong performance of responsibility embedded in its other central memorials. Henryk Broder thereupon commented that Aly acted like a German “who doesn’t want a garbage dump built in front of his lot,” and, worse, like a historian “who differentiates between first- and second-class victims.”⁶⁹

The suggestion of a central memorial has remained wishful thinking, in part because of concerns like Aly’s, and has consequently repeatedly met the less than lukewarm reception of members of the Bundestag.⁷⁰ However, since fall 2015, Berlin does have a memorial commemorating the victims—albeit more or less hidden from the immediate public eye. Following a 2002 conference in Berlin organized by German scholars researching the Armenian genocide, several contributors founded a committee with the specific goal of creating an ecumenical place of mourning in Germany’s capital. The committee later cooperated with members from the Armenian, Greek, and Syrian-Orthodox communities to establish a *Fördergemeinschaft* (supporting association). From its inception, the project’s mission was to commemorate Armenian as well as Greek and Assyrian victims. Especially the Arbeitsgruppe Anerkennung, the essential force in the committee and in the *Fördergemeinschaft*, repeatedly affirmed that they were not an “Armenian organization” and that this struggle was therefore not a “form of identity politics.”⁷¹ In a perceived context of an official “ignorant politics of history,” the committee saw its primary role as not “leaving the field to the Turkish position.”⁷²

Whether the proposed site would be a representation of an emerging consensus in society or a provocation was a subject of debate among the different groups and individuals advocating for the memorial, as was its particular social and political function: Would it serve as a place of mourning for the Armenian, Greek, and Syrian-Orthodox communities of Berlin, given its placement on a Christian cemetery and its location in the Berlin borough of Charlottenburg, traditionally associated with the Armenian community? Would it be a sign of solidarity with Christians by Berlin’s other Christian communities? Or would it be public recognition through the backdoor, at a time when the hopes for a new Bundestag resolution were still fragile?

The committee based its approach in Berlin explicitly on experiences with other local efforts across Germany. The municipalities of Braunschweig and Osnabrück had rejected projects for memorials, arguably due to pressure from local Turkish organizations. The Khatchkar (Armenian cross-stone) placed in Bremen in 2005, on the other hand, was regarded as an inspiring precedent, but also as an instance with serious shortcomings that were not to be repeated. While publicly endorsed by the mayor, it remained an isolated effort by the local Armenian community. Aesthetically, it had little potential to serve as both a commemorative and educational site, or

to invite other communities to mourn. And, according to the organizers of the new memorial in Charlottenburg, its exposure in a public park made it as much a place for genocide deniers as for mourners.

The committee in Berlin quickly focused on Charlottenburg for several reasons: the borough in western Berlin has an Armenian and Syrian-Orthodox/Assyrian presence, it was the site of another important German event related to the Armenian genocide, namely the assassination of Talaat Pasha,⁷³ and members of the committee saw in the borough mayor a receptive ally for the project. The initial suggestions for a location were all dismissed, as the mayor voiced concerns about the reaction of Charlottenburg's Turkish community if the memorial were to be placed in a prominent public place, or even any public place.⁷⁴

Soon, however, the mayoral office connected the committee to the local cemetery at the Luisenkirchhof. The response of the committee was enthusiastic despite the memorial's seeming relegation to a semipublic location. The cemetery made available a set of *Erbbegrabnisstätten* (burial places tied to families across generations) that were no longer used by the original families; architecturally, the existing structures lent the match an almost serendipitous quality: the gravestones exhibited classic and neo-Roman features, which allowed for a symbolic and aesthetic home for all three victim groups. The committee founded an association for the management of the site and received control over the site for the symbolic sum of one euro.

Additionally, the semipublic character of the space was increasingly seen as an asset rather than a shortcoming. First of all, those who had envisioned the memorial as a space for individual mourning, as well as a public statement, welcomed the setting. Those focusing on the ecumenical aspect of the project valued the potential to craft a specifically Christian meeting point. More importantly, however, not only did the organizing committee want to see their concerns about vandalism addressed, it also saw in the new location the possibility of highlighting the very necessity for protection. In other words, the hiddenness was not just a matter of a second-best choice, but a statement about parts of the Turkish community in Germany in its own right.⁷⁵ While public memorials are protected mostly by the logic of *Sachbeschädigung* (damage to property), the semipublic character of the cemetery makes the act of vandalism a different breach of the law altogether: *Hausfriedensbruch*, the invasion of a private space. The memory, in other words, does not fall under the direct protection of the state, but is instead sustained and sheltered by Berlin's Christian communities. This gains a potential additional symbolic significance in the light of different interpretations of the Armenian genocide, where either religious or nationalistic motivations are evoked to paint two different, even if not mutually exclusive, pictures of the genocidal regime of the Young Turks.⁷⁶ The Arbeitsgruppe leadership remained, however, highly aware of the dangers of ethnicizing the fronts in this memory struggle—Hofmann herself repeatedly stressed the notion of broad “historical responsibility, i.e. a strong

ethical positioning vis-à-vis historical events” as a necessary corrective to notions of ethnicized guilt or memory.⁷⁷

Moreover, the German state eventually did play an important role in the efforts, not just through the coordination of the mayoral office. As a cemetery, the Luisenkirchhof was protected under Berlin’s historical registry. This opened the way for funding from the Berlin’s Department for Memorials, and the official inclusion in the Tag des offenen Denkmals (Day of the Open Memorial), which amounted to a de facto alternative form of state recognition of the genocide, especially given the explicit language of the memorial at a time when the Bundestag was still far removed from drafting a new resolution. The committee had achieved quasi-recognition, while also offering a critique of the official discourse in the choice of the location, in an example of memory activism as an openly contentious practice in search of “alternative memory solutions.”⁷⁸ In the new environment of the 2016 resolution, the context has, of course, drastically changed, and the memorial is now due to become a permanent item in the budget of the city-state Berlin.

The organizers were also keen on using the existing ideational and material resources in Berlin to the memorial’s benefit, more generally by linking the project to the “exemplary model of the Germany memory landscape”⁷⁹ and more specifically by reappropriating existing structures on the cemetery. Architect Martin Hoffmann joined the memorial project without any experience in designing memorials, but felt compelled by the proposal, having grown up in a “perpetrator culture,” and seeking to fulfill a “sense of duty to employ this self-reflection in a new context.”⁸⁰ While he envisioned his role as aiding in the artistic implementation, not as engaging in an individual artistic “act of creation,”⁸¹ Hoffmann also clearly had his own conceptions about the proper approach to memorials, informed in large measure by previous debates on the Holocaust memorial. One of the few axioms he shared with the committee early on was that the site “should not be merely enjoyable”—paraphrasing and explicitly opposing former chancellor’s Gerhard Schröder’s infamous dictum about the Holocaust memorial.⁸² Hoffmann’s conception, however, intended to support the public relevance of the memorial and rejected conceptions of the memorial as solely a place for private mourning; eventually, the committee was persuaded that the new memorial site could be both.

The committee and the architect agreed on a design that included the three original gravestones, each furnished with semitransparent plaques depicting images that Hoffmann calls “icons of destruction”—iconographic pictures from the massacres and death marches in 1912–1922. Sixty-two paving tiles in front of the gravestones name the hometowns of the victims. Between the two gravestones representing the Armenian and the Greek victims, the memorial displays a large, rusty steel plate with the inscription “Gedenkt der Opfer des Osmanischen Genozids” (Commemorate the Victims of the Genocide in the Ottoman Empire). The steel plate contains a



Figure 1. The memorial in May 2018 (photograph taken by author).

horizontal crack, intended to symbolize the “wound that remains open until the crime is recognized.”⁸³ According to the organizers, the crack will be filled in the event of the official recognition by the Turkish state.

The old burial site soon revealed multiple additional and much less controllable layers embedded in its material surroundings. Shortly after the committee agreed on the site, one of its members discovered that Lepsius’s son was buried in the immediate vicinity, so that anyone who wanted to visit the new memorial would have to pass his grave first—bringing back the particular German aspect of the genocide that remained otherwise (even if not intentionally) unaddressed in the memorial.⁸⁴ Moreover, the gravestone that was turned into the “Haus der Armenier” (Figure 1) still displayed the original name: Julius Peiser—a name that seems to have yet another connection to the neighborhood: A description of a stumbling stone memorial dedicated to John Raphael Loewenherz in Charlottenburg’s Kantstrasse in Berlin’s online stumbling stone registry shows that Peiser lost his father-in-law, Loewenherz, during the Third Reich. Peiser and his wife most likely managed to flee.

Material entanglements of this kind reminded the activists and architect of “the involuntary and poetic effects of the material world on our experiences with the past and consequently [of] a sense of agency imbued in materiality itself,”⁸⁵ and they underscore the necessity of placing recognition efforts like this one in their particular

ideational and material contexts. It may be excessively suggestive to refute Aly's warning that memory in Berlin is a zero-sum game because of this material coincidence. But, potentially, an opportunity of materializing multidirectional memory in Berlin's memorial landscape exists in this site of memory (a form of which was called for by Broder in his response to Aly), which reveals itself to visitors in often unexpected ways.

In fact, Lepsius's son's graveyard and Peiser's gravestone were but two remains from the past unexpectedly linking the memorial project to the full spectrum of German memory debates. When the architect acquired the steel plate for the central piece of the memorial, it had two large, discolored spots on the upper right corner. The committee seemed worried at first but quickly grew accustomed to the idiosyncratic appearance of the plate. It turned out that the distinctive exposure to oxidation originated from the plate's function in another, more prominent German memory project: the plate had served as part of the temporary foundation for the reconstructed Berliner Schloss—the former royal and imperial palace.

According to both the committee and the architect, hardly any visitor to the Gedenkstätte für Genozidopfer im Osmanischen Reich fails to notice the colored spots on the steel plate, which, in turn, means that the memorial for the victims of the genocide in the Ottoman Empire uncannily plugs people into a very different kind of German memory: The rebuilding of the castle is not so much another iteration of Germany's politics of regret, but arguably one of the recent projects more closely tied to the implicit rejection of that paradigm. The plan to rebuild the original façade of the former royal and imperial palace has become emblematic for a newly found German enthusiasm for normalization and the yearning for a valorized past existing before the twentieth century.⁸⁶ This provided a forceful reminder to Hoffmann and the activists that the memory duties they associate with a “perpetrator culture” are hardly uncontested. In that sense, it gave the organizers of the memorial a sense of purpose beyond the particular act of recognition, even if they had not initially anticipated it. The serendipitous encounter evoked the architect's response to let “the various possibilities of associated memories linger in the visitor” with the hope that it wouldn't interfere with the recognition of the victims and the original intention behind the memorial,⁸⁷ yet the eventual use of the space by different communities in Berlin remains to be seen.

Concluding Remarks

In her account of public reactions to the Armenian massacres of 1894–1896 and 1915 in Wilhelmine Germany, Anderson claimed: “The closer the distant sufferer is brought to home, the more the discussion . . . gets drawn into older debates and established identities, and the more it becomes a colloquy among people whose own narratives shape and color these conversations.”⁸⁸ A century later, the genocide is debated as a memory, but Anderson's insights ring equally true. Then and now, the “elsewhere”

is filtered by “older debates.” By following the origins of two commemorative efforts closely, my aim was to present the colloquy that shapes current recognition struggles in Germany, while showing reoccurring patterns that attach a transnational memory to a specific political setting and that fuel recognition struggles beyond traditional identity politics related to victims and their descendants.

The cases show that a culture of contrition and reflective memory contours the justification of both critics and proponents of the recognition efforts, where conventions from Germany’s own mode of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* are carried over, ranging from an ethnic logic of historical responsibility to assumptions about the proper depiction of individual or heroic biographies, to the centrality of Holocaust memory for the Federal Republic. While Erll’s critique of methodological nationalism includes the warning that “actors’ ideas about their lifeworlds should not necessarily be turned into analytical, or observers’ categories,”⁸⁹ the case studies presented here show the importance of meaning-making and self-perceptions by actors on the ground to explain the actual force of memory⁹⁰—its ability to constrain and motivate political actors in the present. These constraints are often still perceived in national terms and can thus reproduce the link between memory and nation and between memory and an implicit strive for singularity.

To be sure, the language of a “regime” used here to make sense of local conditions can insinuate an overly tight structure that leaves room for little agency and change. But, in the reflections above, the “regime” emerges not so much as a coherent list of precisely outlined practices and behaviors, but rather as a “repertoire of cultural forms and themes”⁹¹ (including, we may add, material forms), which acts as a source of authority, motivation, and “affective dispositions.”⁹² While it is often claimed that German redemptory practices have become ritualized, what we see in these cases is that they also seek to be attached to new memories. In this movement, established memory practices perceived in national terms act as real constraints; however, as the debates about the ethnic or religious logic of belonging implied in these practices show, they are also reenvisioned and questioned in each iteration, especially in conversation with current political-demographic concerns and sensibilities, ultimately also indicating the inherently multicultural dimension of what we call “memory.”

Notes

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1. Deutscher Bundestag, Plenarprotokoll 18/173.
2. Deutscher Bundestag, Plenarprotokoll 18/173.
3. “Turkey recalls ambassador after German MPs’ Armenian genocide vote,” *The Guardian*, June 2, 2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jun/02/germany-braces-for-turkish-backlash-as-it-votes-to-recognise-armenian-genocide>.

4. Claus Leggewie, "A Tour of the Battleground. The Seven Circle of Pan European memory," *Social Research* 75, no. 1 (2008): 219.
5. Sossie Kasbarian, "The Politics of Memory and Commemoration: Armenian Diasporic Reflections on 2015," *Nationalities Papers* 46, no. 1 (2018): 123–143.
6. A. Dirk Moses, "The Canadian Museum for Human Rights: the 'uniqueness of the Holocaust' and the question of genocide," *Journal of Genocide Research*, 14, no. 2 (2012): 217.
7. Daniel Levy and Natan Sznajder, "The Institutionalization of Cosmopolitan Morality: The Holocaust and Human Rights," *Journal of Human Rights* 3, no. 2 (2004): 145.
8. For this distinction between the transnational and the transcultural, see Michael Rothberg, "Multidirectional Memory in Migratory Settings: The Case of Post-Holocaust Germany," in *Transnational Memory*, ed. Chiara de Cesari and Ann Rigney (Berlin: DeGruyter, 2014): 123–145.
9. See, for example, Duygu Gül Kaya, "Memory and Citizenship in Diaspora: remembering the Armenian Genocide in Canada," *Citizenship Studies* 22, no. 4 (2018): 401–418. Kaya shows how Armenian commemorative struggles in Canada are embedded in a specific Canadian memory and citizenship regime. On the concept of a "memory regime," see Susannah Radstone and Katharine Hodgkin, eds., *Regimes of Memory* (London: Routledge, 2003).
10. Kirsten Staudt, *Strategien des Gehörtwerdens* (Bielefeld: transcript, 2015).
11. Andre Fleck, *Machtfaktor Diaspora?* (Berlin: LIT, 2014).
12. Staudt, *Strategien*, 27.
13. Daniel Levy and Natan Sznajder, *Human Rights and Memory* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006), 7.
14. Astrid Erll, "Travelling Memory," *Parallax* 17, no. 4 (2011): 4.
15. Erll, "Travelling Memory," 11.
16. Erll, "Travelling Memory," 7. See also Jeffrey K. Olick, *The Sins of the Fathers. Germany, Memory, Method* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2016), 28.
17. Susannah Radstone, "What Place Is This? Transcultural Memory and the Locations of Memory Studies," *Parallax* 17, no. 4 (2011): 109–123.
18. Aline Sierp and Jenny Wüstenberg, "Linking the Local and the Transnational: Rethinking Memory Politics in Europe," *Journal of Contemporary European Studies* 23, no. 3 (2015): 324.
19. Karl Wilds, "Identity Creation and the Culture of Contrition: Recasting 'Normality' in the Berlin Republic," *German Politics* 9, no. 1 (2000): 83–102.
20. On the complex role and complicity of the Kaiserreich see Vahakn N. Dadrian, *German Responsibility in the Armenian Genocide: A Review of the Historical Evidence of German Complicity* (Watertown: Blue Crane Books, 1996) and Jürgen Gottschlich, *Beihilfe zum Völkermord. Deutschlands Rolle bei der Vernichtung der Armenier* (Berlin: Links, 2015). While individual members of the German military and other officials voiced concerns, most high-ranking officials remained silent, or shared and spread propaganda about Armenians, or even actively signed deportation orders (in the case of Lieutenant Colonel Boettrich, who oversaw operations at the Baghdad Railway). At the highest levels, efforts to raise the plight of the Armenians were met with strict adherence to the perceived dictates of *Realpolitik*.
21. Olick, *Sins of the Fathers*, 413.
22. Olick, *Sins of the Fathers*, 69.
23. Olick, *Sins of the Fathers*, 67, 69.
24. See Frank Peter, "Nation, narration and Islam: Memory and governmentality in Germany," *Current Sociology* 60, no. 3 (2012): 338–352; and Alice von Bieberstein, "Not a German Past to be Reckoned with: Negotiating Migrant Subjectivities between Vergangenheitsbewältigung and the Nationalization of History," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute (N.S.)* 22 (2016): 902–919.
25. von Bieberstein, "Not a German Past."
26. See also Michael Rothberg and Yasemin Yildiz, "Memory Citizenship: Migrant Archives of Holocaust Remembrance in Contemporary Germany," *Parallax* 17, no. 4 (2011): 32–48.

27. von Bieberstein, "Not a German Past," 909.
28. von Bieberstein, "Not a German Past," 909.
29. Radstone, "What Place Is This," 117.
30. Jonathan Bach, "The Berlin Wall after the Berlin Wall: Site into Sight," *Memory Studies* 9 (2016): 59.
31. von Bieberstein, "Not a German Past," 916.
32. A. Dirk Moses and Michael Rothberg, "A Dialogue on the Ethics and Politics of Transcultural Memory," in *The Transcultural Turn. Interrogating Memory Between and Beyond Borders*, ed. Lucy Bond and Jessica Rapson (Berlin: DeGruyter, 2014): 33.
33. "Koalition spricht von Völkermord an Armeniern—aber nur indirekt," *Der Spiegel*, April 20, 2015, <http://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/armenier-koalition-mogelt-sich-zur-voelkermord-for-mulierung-a-1029510.html>.
34. Flyer, "Lepsiushaus und Literaturfestival Berlin," 2015.
35. Jenny Wüstenberg, *Civil Society and Memory in Postwar Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017): 6.
36. The Hamidian massacres were acts of extreme violence against the Armenian population in the Ottoman Empire from 1894–1897 and during the reign of Sultan Abdülhamid II.
37. Margaret Lavinia Anderson, "'Down in Turkey, Far Away': Human Rights, the Armenian Massacres, and Orientalism in Wilhemine Germany," *The Journal of Modern History* 79 (2007): 80–111.
38. H.-L. Kieser, "Johannes Lepsius: Theologian, Humanitarian Activist and Historian of Völkermord. An Approach to a German Biography (1858–1926)," in *Logos im Dialogos: Auf der Suche nach der Orthodoxie*, ed. Anna Briskina, Armenuhi Drost-Abgarjan, and Axel Meissner (Berlin: LIT, 2011): 211.
39. Kieser, 2011, "Johannes Lepsius." See also Anderson, "Down in Turkey."
40. Rolf Hosfeld, "Johannes Lepsius. Eine deutsche Ausnahme," in *Johannes Lepsius. Eine deutsche Ausnahme*, ed. Rolf Hosfeld (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2013): 16.
41. Stefan Ihrig, *Justifying Genocide: Germany and the Armenians from Bismarck to Hitler* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016).
42. M. Rainer Lepsius, "Johannes Lepsius' politische Ansichten," in *Johannes Lepsius. Eine deutsche Ausnahme*, ed. Rolf Hosfeld (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2013): 50.
43. See Aschot Hayruni and Rolf Hosfeld, "Johannes Lepsius und die armenische Frage im Beziehungsgeflecht des Weltkriegs," in *Das Deutsche Reich und der Völkermord an den Armeniern*, ed. Rolf Hosfeld and Christin Pschichholz (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2017): 217–243.
44. Rolf Hosfeld, interview.
45. Exhibit, Lepsiushaus.
46. Kieser, 2011, "Johannes Lepsius," 209. See also Anderson, "Down in Turkey," 92. Others have claimed that Lepsius ethical principles had a variety of sources beyond theological convictions, see for example Manfred Aschke, "Christliche Ethik und Politik," in *Johannes Lepsius. Eine deutsche Ausnahme*, ed. Rolf Hosfeld (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2013): 69–94.
47. Hosfeld, interview.
48. Infamous statement by Chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg, as, for example, quoted in Ihrig, *Justifying Genocide*, 150.
49. Hosfeld, interview.
50. "Geld und Kritik für das Lepsius-Haus," *Der Tagesspiegel*, August 26, 2009, <http://www.tagesspiegel.de/themen/brandenburg/foerderung-der-bundesregierung-geld-und-kritik-fuer-das-lepsius-haus/1588938.html>.
51. "Türken gegen Ausbau des Lepsius-Gedenkhauses," *Der Tagesspiegel*, August 10, 2009, <http://m.tagesspiegel.de/brandenburg/reizthema-armenier-tuerken-gegen-ausbau-des-lepsius-gedenkhauses/1576872.html>.

52. "Wir sind keine anti-türkische Einrichtung," *Der Tagesspiegel*, August 12, 2009, <http://www.tagesspiegel.de/themen/brandenburg/lepsiushaus-potsdam-wir-sind-keine-anti-tuerkische-einrichtung/1578428.html>.
53. "Wir sind keine anti-türkische Einrichtung," *Der Tagesspiegel* (my emphasis).
54. Kleine Anfrage, Deutscher Bundestag, Drucksache 16/9956.
55. "Geld und Kritik für das Lepsius-Haus," *Der Tagesspiegel*.
56. In 2014, Gust published a new extended edition of the documents of the German Foreign Office originally published by Lepsius (see above), with an introduction highly critical of Lepsius. See Wolfgang Gust, ed., *The Armenian Genocide: Evidence from the German Office Archives, 1915–1916* (New York: Berghahn, 2014).
57. Wolfgang Gust, "Irrweg Lepsiushaus," <http://www.wolfgang-gust.net/>
58. Christian Gudehus, "Germany's Meta-Narrative Memory Culture. Skeptical Narratives and Minotaurs," *German Politics and Society* 26, no. 4 (2008): 99–112.
59. Janet Swaffar, "Heroes and Reunification: The Resistance of Cultural Memory from Two Germanies," in *Heroes and Heroism in German Culture*, ed. Stephen Brockmann and James Steakley (Amsterdam: Radopi, 2001): 131–156.
60. von Bieberstein, "Not a German Past," 910. See also Martin Sabrow, "The Post-Heroic Memory Society: Models of Historical Narration in the Present," in *Clashes in European Memory. The Case of Communist Repression and the Holocaust*, ed. Muriel Blaive, Christian Gerbel, and Thomas Lindenberger (Innsbruck: Studienverlag, 2011): 92.
61. Antwort der Bundesregierung, Deutscher Bundestag, Drucksache 16/10074.
62. Thomas Lindenberger, "Governing Conflicted Memories: Some Remarks about the Regulation of History Politics in Unified Germany," in *Clashes in European Memory: The Case of Communist Repression and the Holocaust*, ed. Muriel Blaive, Christian Gerbel, and Thomas Lindenberger (Innsbruck: Studienverlag, 2011): 79–80.
63. "Ein großer Humanist oder Antidemokrat und Antisemit?," *Hagalil*, September, 19, 2008, <http://www.hagalil.com/archiv/2008/09/lepsiushaus.htm>.
64. Gust, "Irrweg Lepsiushaus."
65. Fleck, *Machtfaktor Diaspora*, 301. Fleck describes how the Lepsiushaus's engagement in reconciliation efforts caused consternation in the *Central Council of Armenians in Germany* which saw these efforts in tension with the goal of recognition.
66. Gust, "Irrweg Lepsiushaus."
67. A now widely used term originally coined by H.A. Winkler in "Lesarten der Sühne." *Der Spiegel*, December 24, 1987, 180–181.
68. "Horrorhopping dank NKGmGaz," *Berliner Zeitung*, April 26, 2011, <https://www.berliner-zeitung.de/horrorhopping-dank-nkgmgaz-15056114>.
69. "Mahnmal könnte auch an Armenier erinnern," *Die Welt*, May 2, 2011, <https://www.welt.de/debatte/henryk-m-broder/article13319296/Mahnmal-koennte-auch-an-Armenier-erinnern.html>.
70. *Armenische Gemeinde Berlin*, interview.
71. Tessa Hofmann, Director of AGA, interview.
72. T. Hofmann, interview.
73. Talaat Pasha was part of the triumvirate that ruled the Ottoman Empire during World War I and is considered one of the architects of the Armenian genocide. He left the Ottoman Empire for Germany in 1918 and was sentenced to death *in absentia* by the Turkish courts-martial. Talaat was assassinated by Soghomon Tehlirian in Charlottenburg's Hardenbergstrasse in March 1921.
74. T. Hofmann, interview. See also Tessa Hofmann, "Der osmanische Genozid an Christen in der deutschen Geschichts- und Erinnerungspolitik," in *Jahrbuch Verfolgung und Diskriminierung von Christen 2017*, ed. Thomas Schirmacher and Max Klingberg (Bonn: Verlag für Kultur und Wissenschaft, 2017), 216.

75. Hofmann, however, has stressed that the negative reactions to commemorative efforts are not spontaneous outbursts of Germany's Turkish communities but often coordinated efforts steered by the Turkish state; see Hofmann, "Der osmanische Genozid an Christen," 208.
76. For an overview, see Thomas de Waal, *Great Catastrophe: Armenians and Turks in the Shadow of Genocide* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015).
77. T. Hofmann, interview.
78. Wüstenberg, *Civil Society*, 23. However, at a time when both the federal and the local government had concerns to publicly engage in commemorative efforts with regard to the Armenian genocide, one could also view the support of the activists' efforts by the local government as a form of delegating responsibility. See also Wüstenberg, *Civil Society*, 283.
79. T. Hofmann, interview.
80. Martin Hoffmann, interview.
81. M. Hoffmann, interview.
82. M. Hoffmann, interview.
83. Infosheet Architekturbüro Hoffmann.
84. The architect and the organizers intend to create a stronger connection between the grave and the memorial.
85. Lindsey Freeman, Benjamin Nienass, and Rachel Daniell, "Memory/Materiality/Sensuality," *Memory Studies* 9, no. 1 (2016): 7.
86. Jonathan Bach, *What Remains: Everyday Encounters with the Socialist Past in Germany* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017), 106.
87. M. Hoffmann, interview.
88. Anderson, "Down in Turkey," 109.
89. Erll, "Travelling Memory," 10.
90. See also Benjamin Nienass and Ross Poole, "The Limits of Memory," *International Social Science Journal* 62 (2012): 147–159.
91. Jan Kubik and Michael Bernhard, "A Theory of the Politics of Memory," in *Twenty Years After Communism: The Politics of Memory and Commemoration*, ed. Michael Bernhard and Jan Kubik (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014): 25.
92. von Bieberstein, "Not a German Past," 909.