

**Reconfiguring Absence: Daniel Libeskind's Jewish Museum in Berlin and the Rhetorical
Negotiation of Cultural Display**

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Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Kenneth P. Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

University of Pittsburgh

2015

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

Kenneth P. Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences

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Negotiation of Cultural Display

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University of Pittsburgh, 2015

This study traces the development of the Jewish Museum Berlin from its inception as the winning entry in a competition for an extension to the Berlin Museum in the summer of 1989 to 2005. Tracking Daniel Libeskind's design inspirations, public arguments over continuation of the building and its eventual use, I argue that a consistent argumentative trope, characterized by Ernst Bloch's concept of anticipatory illumination, shows up in these various conversations and influences the building's eventual use as the Jewish Museum Berlin. The rhetoric of anticipatory illumination, in this case, shifts over time, first emphasizing Jewish cultural absence in Berlin and the need to make that absence visible, but later pushing cultural absence to the background in favor of expressing the need for multicultural tolerance in Germany and beyond. The resulting museum, the Jewish Museum Berlin, combined the specificity of the history of the former in its curatorial design with injunctions for wider concern about intolerance in contemporary societies around the world. The author argues that the shift produces a "doubled heterotopia" in the arrangement of the museum that ultimately is effective for addressing the diverse audiences for the Jewish Museum Berlin. The case study emphasizes that public art and architecture projects can be rich sites of rhetorical invention worthy of close study over the time of their development.

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PREFACE

A project like this cannot happen without significant economic support from various outlets. The Getty Research Library gave a generous grant that allowed me to visit their archives in California. Much of the first few chapters were only possible because of the access I was permitted to Libeskind's design materials. The Cultural Studies Program at the University of Pittsburgh provided a research fellowship for the 2009-2010 academic year that allowed me to travel for extensive periods of time to Berlin. While there, the Research Library at the Jewish Museum Berlin and the newspaper archive at the Berliner Stadtbibliothek made most of the materials for the later chapters available and easy to find. The Communication Department at the University of Pittsburgh supported my work as a student for several years. And last, but certainly not least, Davis & Elkins College, my employer for the past four academic years, has been patient with the development of this manuscript and has given some material support for my work.

This work has also benefitted from the insights of many thoughtful committee members that have helped to discipline my thinking. Dr. Lester C. Olson has been a source of support and motivation throughout the entire process, and has helped to guide much of the content in each chapter. He has sacrificed much, including an enormous amount of time devoted to editorial work and idea provocation, to make this study a reality. Dr. Ronald Zboray and Mary Saracino Zboray have also provided positive reinforcement and have shaped some of my thinking

regarding research methods. Dr. William Fusfield introduced me to the ideas of Ernst Bloch, a thinker I might have otherwise overlooked. Dr. Terry Smith has been a great source of information regarding architectural resources and has been helpful in pushing for an overarching theme for the dissertation. Dr. Malin has been very gracious in helping to see the project to completion, but also offered feedback on early drafts of materials while working on the Jewish Museum Berlin. Finally, Dr. Randall Halle, in addition to being an invaluable advocate for my work and a steady resource while researching in Berlin, treated me with the respect often given only to intellectual peers. His kindness will not be soon forgotten.

I want to also acknowledge many of the other academic colleagues, friends and loved ones that have offered guidance over the last decade. The anonymous editors of the *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, *Northwest Journal of Communication*, and *InterCulture* have been helpful, as have the editors of those publications. Carole Blair and Bradford Vivian workshopped an early version of one of the chapters. My friends and colleagues at the University of North Texas, especially Dr. Brian Lain and Dr. Jay Allison, have often offered words of encouragement. The faculty and graduate students at the University of Pittsburgh, too numerous to name, have listened to so many job talks, summaries, and presentations of my work, and have done so with a generous spirit of academic engagement. My parents have continued to push me through the process, even when it seemed the manuscript would never be completed. And my partner, Christina Saindon, has endured all of the struggles, doubts, and frustrations of this process with little complaint. She has been an emotional rock of stability for me.

Finally, I do want to thank two people that have had nothing to do with this particular project, but are nonetheless a part of it: Dr. Douglas Drabkin and Dr. William E. Shanahan III. Both were important influences in my personal growth as a scholar. Without either of them, I do

not believe I would have seen the educational paths open to me; I would not have come anywhere near reaching my potential. I think of a conversation I have had with one or the other of them on a daily basis. Their personae are with me in everything I do.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In the April 2004 issue of *Metropolis*, Karrie Jacobs offered the last in a series of articles on the redevelopment of Lower Manhattan, this one centered on the World Trade Center rebuilding project. Jacobs, speaking on behalf of street-level New Yorkers, related visible absence to the collective memory of the September 11th tragedy:

I have a ritual, something I do at the end of almost every press conference celebrating some milestone in the redevelopment of the World Trade Center site. I escape from the press scrum and walk up the marble steps at the back of the World Financial Center's Winter Garden, the glass-enclosed atrium directly west of Ground Zero. They lead to a wall of windows that offer a panoramic view of the site. Standing at the top of the steps looking east at the hole where the towers once stood, I try to imagine how each addition to the master plan will look once it is built...

I could stand there all day and come away with no real sense of how this new World Trade Center will look. Sadly, I can no longer visualize the old WTC there either. How crazy was it that such a place existed—two gargantuan towers surrounded by a naked plaza? At this point their existence feels almost as unbelievable as their demise. All I can see now is the hole, and it isn't even much of a hole anymore. It's rapidly filling with infrastructure.¹

For Jacobs, the personal memory of the old World Trade Center faded while the presence of the hole also inhibited a clear vision of the site's future. For her, it was difficult to imagine a reconfiguration of that currently absent space, which metaphorically evokes the human absence created by this immense tragedy.

¹ Karrie Jacobs, "The Libeskind and Childs Tango," *Metropolis* (April 2004): 72-4.

Viewed as a form of situational constraint, the street-level behavior and vision of New Yorkers, as given voice through Jacobs' writing, must be effectively confronted by proponents of the new World Trade Center design.² In an interview with architect Daniel Libeskind, Jacobs alludes indirectly to her difficulties accepting the project, allowing Libeskind (the winner of the competition for the site's reconstruction) to incorporate her anxieties into the project's narrative:

I ask the architect the same question I asked [David] Childs [a collaborating architect on the project] ["So what's this place going to look like?"]. He too gives me the long answer—symbolic meaning, three-dimensional spaces, intimacy, grandeur. So I ask him a somewhat different question: "In ten year's time will the site look like New York?"

He gives me the short answer: "When the famous portrait of Gertrude Stein was painted by Picasso, she said to him, 'It's a beautiful portrait, but it doesn't look like me.' And he said, 'But it will.'"³

Libeskind, a Polish Jew born in the immediate aftermath of World War II who emigrated to the United States during the mid-1950s, seems to be suggesting that Jacobs has the wrong vision of New York. His "Gardens of the World" proposal, a glass spire for the top 30 stories of his 1776 foot tall "Freedom Tower," was justified from his biographical experience of coming to Ellis Island in the 1950s. "For Libeskind, the tower rises triumphant from the terror of Ground Zero as the New York skyline rose before his 13-year-old eyes when he arrived by ship after his childhood in war-embittered Poland. The spire would be, he says, 'an affirmation of the sky of New York, an affirmation of vitality in the face of danger, an affirmation of life in the aftermath of tragedy.'"⁴ His vision for the reconstruction of the World Trade Center complex, an abstract view of New York from the outside, is unfamiliar to the traditional city dweller. In an almost prophetic fashion, he declares it – a vision that connects the national values of freedom and

² For a discussion of audience expectation as a form of situational constraint, see Lloyd Bitzer, "The Rhetorical Situation," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 1 (1968): 7-8.

³ Jacobs, "Libeskind and Childs Tango," 76. Bracketed quotation inserted from a different section of page 76.

⁴ Stanley Meisler, "Architect at Ground Zero," *Smithsonian* 33, no. 12 (March 2003): 84.

cultural tolerance to a historical narrative that highlights the city's symbolic importance for migrant populations – as the appropriate future for the city's public image. Not the gritty vision of its urban streets, but instead the hope inspired by his architectural vision for its imposing skyline is the most useful measure.⁵

In the concluding moments of her essay, Jacobs testifies to the persuasive power of artistic vision, a power to make something (whether Gertrude Stein or New York City) visibly present and yet different in the eyes of the viewer:

I take the tourist boat to Liberty Island, something no self-respecting New Yorker ever does. And I see what Libeskind keeps telling us he saw as a teenager coming to America. The Statue of Liberty *is* beautiful, and she *does* have dynamism—she is clearly striding forward rather than waiting for the huddled masses to come to her. My enthusiasm for Libeskind's vision is momentarily renewed. So my new theory is that the way to visualize how the site will look is not to stare at Ground Zero but to triangulate the distance between architects. Somewhere between Child's clarity and Libeskind's dazzle lies the future.⁶

Artistic vision does have influence, but in a way that is unpredictable, indirect, and often mediated by other factors. Childs, hired by the corporate developers of the World Trade Center site, collaborated with Libeskind to design extra office buildings and to perform feasibility studies. His vision was driven by the on-the-ground look of present Manhattan, whereas Libeskind connected the memory of an iconic past to articulate an image of New York's future. Jacobs, the lifetime New Yorker writing for an urban design magazine, functions as an informant of local public opinion, a public apprehensive about the reconfiguration of Ground Zero but open to viewing the city's skyline as a symbol of opportunity and hope.

⁵ Though it is certainly beyond the scope of this essay, one could read the abstraction of New York's skyline as similar to a "postcard effect," which creates an easily consumable image of the city from the perspective of the tourist outsider. For an explanation of this effect in the development of city backgrounds on television shows set in New York, see William J. Sadler and Ekaterina V. Haskins, "Metonymy and the Metropolis: Television Show Settings and the Image of New York City," *Journal of Communication Inquiry* 29 (2005): 195-216.

⁶ Jacobs, "Libeskind and Childs Tango," 78.

The above anecdote provides a way to concretize a difficult set of themes that are central to this study. First, interested groups in the construction of public art and architecture projects are given voice through the circulation of texts. Jacobs, figured as an average and a life-long New Yorker, becomes an informant for the beliefs and attitudes of the local population. As spokesperson for the perspective of “the people,” those dwelling between the skyscrapers in Lower Manhattan, she endeavors to give voice to an ambivalent feeling among New Yorkers regarding the reconstruction of the World Trade Center site.⁷ Second, the piece is clearly directed to a particular audience, or idealized “persona,” that would be interested in the design of the site. *Metropolis* is not *The New York Times*; it is a hybrid popular/trade publication catering to young professionals in urban design.⁸ Third, architectural design acts as a persuasive discourse negotiating different sets of public concerns, “a type of environmental language which sends out meaningful messages.”⁹ As a meaningful and desirable architectural response, everyday New Yorkers are encouraged to see their city differently, as an image of enduring hope, freedom, and perseverance in the face of adversity.¹⁰ Finally, absence plays an important

⁷ In other parts of the text, she professes to know the real New York and be able to distinguish it from the computer generated models of the site, taking place “in some unfortunate city where they allow skyscrapers with blank walls, where the landscaping is generic, where there is no specificity.” Jacobs, “Libeskind and Childs Tango,” 74. For a theoretical discussion of “the people” as being constituted through representation by speakers and authors, see Michael Calvin McGee, “In Search of ‘The People’: A Rhetorical Alternative,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 61 (1975): 235-49.

⁸ Jacobs builds this idealized audience through an assumption, alluded to indirectly, that others are interested in the specifics of this urban design. She begins the essay noting her attendance at every major press event about the World Trade Center site, and she clearly displays command over basic design concepts in her descriptions. In addition, the article is dominated by the visions of each major architect involved at the site, not the political and social dimensions of the project. In conjunction with the marketing strategies of a narrow-cast magazine, the article articulates the rough “persona” of a desired audience member. That persona is asked to consider an unfamiliar perspective, that of the average New Yorker, but the importance of their profession is ultimately confirmed in the final moment, since Jacobs admits to feeling some persuasion from Libeskind’s designs. For a theoretical discussion of persona, or idealized audience, construction in texts, see Edwin Black, “The Second Persona,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 56 (1970): 109-19.

⁹ Charles Jencks, “Rhetoric and Architecture,” *Architectural Association Quarterly* 4 (1972): 6.

¹⁰ The fusion of an absent past (the Ellis Island narrative) with an invocation of a hopeful future is one of the paradigmatic strategies of rhetorical figuration in architectural design. “In the resulting rhetorically, as opposed to aesthetically, structurally, or historically determined figuration, there is the revelation in the site of the repressed

role in producing both an exigence for rebuilding the site and a thematic center for Libeskind's memorial architecture. In his design, absence is reconfigured toward rejuvenation of social bonds in the city – what Ernst Bloch would call a form of “anticipatory illumination” in the work of art that points toward future hope, however vague or obscure.¹¹ The new World Trade Center plaza, a gathering place in the center of the complex is simultaneously a place of mourning and of recreation in an otherwise cloistered cityscape.¹²

This short commentary on the rhetorical dynamics of the World Trade Center reconstruction project also provides a fitting epigram to the current study, the Jewish Museum Berlin project, given that it was the first major commissioned architectural work by Daniel Libeskind. His credibility in building a memorial architectural form for the World Trade Center site is derived, at least in part, from his work on what is now the Jewish Museum Berlin. Widely considered to be one of the finest architectural designs of the last twenty years, Libeskind catapulted from relative obscurity to design fame by the time the building was completed in 1999.¹³ Scholars from archaeology, the history of architecture, cultural studies, philosophy, religious studies, and urban culture have all commented on the significance of Libeskind's Jewish Museum Berlin design to the advancement of ideas, the memory of tragedy, and the

text. This text suggests that there are other meanings which are site-specific by virtue of their pre-existence, however latent, within the context.” Peter Eisenman, “Architecture and the Problem of the Rhetorical Figure,” in *Theorizing a New Agenda for Architecture: An Anthology of Architectural Theory, 1965-1995*, ed. Kate Nesbitt (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1996), 179.

¹¹ Ernst Bloch, “Art and Society,” in *The Utopian Function of Art and Literature: Selected Essays*, trans. Jack Zipes and Frank Mecklenburg (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1988), 73.

¹² As Eisenman argues, “any site contains not only presences, but the memory of previous presences and the immanences of a possible presence...The introduction of this trace, or condition of absence acknowledges the dynamic reality of the living city.” Eisenman, “Rhetorical Figure,” 180. Libeskind's architectural response does not eliminate the absence of the previous World Trade Center and the life lost in their demolition, but instead reconfigures it in order to make a meaningful memorial structure. He makes the center of Ground Zero an open space brightened by focusing light refracted from the surrounding towers. In essence, part of the rhetorical appeal in Libeskind's design is that it synthesizes fragments of the narratives of New York's past (Ellis Island and the attack on the World Trade Center) into a vision of New York that ought to endure into the indefinite future.

¹³ Meisler, “Architect,” 76-7.

affirmation of cultural interconnectedness in the contemporary world.¹⁴ For a city attempting to make itself into an attractive venue for capital investment and a destination for lovers of the arts, the presence of Libeskind's museum works, in conjunction with the reconstruction of the Reichstag and Potsdamer Platz, to raise the cultural and aesthetic profile of Berlin.¹⁵

However, the Jewish Museum Berlin did not begin as a high profile project, nor did the project's originators have pretenses of it becoming an autonomous museum. The Jewish Museum Berlin emerged from a more humble set of aspirations in divided, Cold War-era Germany. By 1988, the West Berlin Senate had discussed a building extension to house the museum's Jewish Collections Department for over fifteen years. Due to both continued pressure from West Berlin's Jewish community to make visible the influence of Jews upon the city and increasing space constraints on the museum's burgeoning Jewish history collection, the Senate agreed to fund an international architectural competition for an "Extension of the Berlin Museum

¹⁴ In Archaeology, see Kay F. Edge and Frank H. Weiner, "Collective Memory and the Museum: Towards a Reconciliation of Philosophy, History and Memory in Daniel Libeskind's Jewish Museum," in *Images, Representations and Heritage: Moving Beyond Modern Approaches to Archaeology*, ed. Ian Russell (New York: Springer, 2006), 221-45. In History of Architecture, see Charles Jencks, *The New Paradigm in Architecture: The Language of Post-modernism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002), 240-8; Terry Smith, *The Architecture of Aftermath* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 67-94; and Anthony Vidler, *Warped Spaces: Art, Architecture and Anxiety in Modern Culture* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2000), 235-42. In Cultural Studies, see Noah Isenberg, "Reading 'Between the Lines': Daniel Libeskind's Berlin Jewish Museum and the Shattered Symbiosis," in *Unlikely History: The Changing German-Jewish Symbiosis, 1945-2000*, ed. Leslie Morris and Jack Zipes (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 155-79; Eric Kligerman, "Ghostly Demarcations: Translating Paul Celan's Poetics into Daniel Libeskind's Jewish Museum Berlin," *Germanic Review* 80, no. 1 (2005): 28-49; and Caroline A. Wiedmer, *The Claims of Memory: Representations of the Holocaust in Contemporary Germany and France* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999), 120-40. In Philosophy, see Jacques Derrida, "Response to Daniel Libeskind," *Research in Phenomenology* 22 (1992): 88-94; and Mark C. Taylor, *Nots* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 122-65. In Religious Studies, see Michael Steinberg, *Judaism Musical and Unmusical* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 177-220; and James E. Young, "Daniel Libeskind's Jewish Museum in Berlin: The Uncanny Arts of Memorial Architecture," *Jewish Social Studies* 6, no. 2 (2000): 1-23. In Urban Culture, see Julia Ng, "The Museum, the Street, and the Virtual Landscape of Berlin," in *Urban Space and Cityscapes: Perspectives from Modern and Contemporary Culture*, ed. Christoph Lindner (New York: Routledge, 2006), 137-54.

¹⁵ Carl Abbott, "Washington and Berlin: National Capitals in a Networked World," in *Berlin—Washington, 1800-2000: Capital Cities, Cultural Representation, and National Identity*, ed. Andreas W. Daum and Kristof Mauch (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 101-24; and Andreas Huyssen, *Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003), 72-84.

with the Jewish Museum Department.”¹⁶ Announced in December 1988, the competition brief instructed architects to design an addition that would fit with the existing museum and the surrounding neighborhood, while also addressing the expulsion and murder of Berlin Jews during the Third Reich through the architecture’s symbolism.¹⁷

On June 23, 1989, the Berlin Museum announced the winning design: Daniel Libeskind’s *Between the Lines*. The extension would stand apart from the main museum with the two buildings only connected by a subterranean passage. To be covered in a shiny, composite metal, the extension would contrast sharply with the stone façade of the Collegienhaus next door, a nineteenth century courthouse destroyed during World War II but later restored and subsequently used to house the Berlin Museum’s main collection. The proposed above-ground portion of the extension would consist of two lines: the meandering main exhibition space, and the void line, a straight line of empty space fragmented into six parts, that would intersect with the main exhibition at several points, representing the “inexpressible ‘absence’ of Jewish lives lost in the Holocaust.”¹⁸ The basement would have a different floor plan, consisting of several hallways arranged like falling books, symbolizing both the difficulty of connecting the past to the future and the loss of untold intellectual contributions to civilization. In addition, two axes in the basement were to intersect these hallways, one leading to a concrete tower with small exhibitions and an independent exit, and the other leading to the “Olympia Mechanical Garden,” an outdoor plaza designed as an interactive learning environment for visitors.¹⁹ Responding to the challenge

¹⁶ Young, “Daniel Libeskind,” 8.

¹⁷ Rolf Bothe and Vera Bendt, “4.1: Autonomous Jewish Museum as a Department of the Berlin Museum,” in *Competition for an Extension to the Berlin Museum to Include the Jewish Museum (Project to be Built) – Invitation to Compete*, 1988, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 1968-1992, Accession No. 920061, Box 1, Folder 2, p. 88, Getty Research Institute Library.

¹⁸ James S. Russell, “Project Diary: Daniel Libeskind’s *Jewish Museum* in Berlin Speaks to a History that is Both Rich and Tragic,” *Architectural Record*, January 1999, 76.

¹⁹ Daniel Libeskind, “Untergeschoss,” architectural print, 1 August 1989, Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Roll 52.

of designing an extension both to house artifacts of Jewish culture and to acknowledge the attempted eradication of Berlin's Jewish citizens, Libeskind argued that "the Museum form itself must be rethought in order to transcend the passive involvement of the viewer."²⁰ As the competition committee noted, the design clarified the significance of the project, while providing a profound physical symbol of the historical relationship between overlapping German and Jewish cultures, resonating again with Bloch's description of anticipatory illumination.²¹

Several developments concerning the culture of Germany, the politics of Berlin, the economics of reconstructing Berlin's infrastructure, the desires of local residents, the opinions of the international community, the manifold forces of globalization, and the professional landscape of architecture placed pressure on Libeskind's design at different points in the production process and created opportunities for a reconsideration of its symbolism. Between its beginnings as an extension for the West Berlin city museum in 1988 and its first few years of operation at the start of the 21st century as an autonomous Jewish Museum funded in part by the national government, one can get a glimpse into the history of Berlin's rapid transformation from a central front of the Cold War to a city attempting to find its place in a globalized world. Daniel Libeskind and other interested members of the public interpreted the design of the Jewish Museum Berlin, themed upon making present a cultural absence, in order to fit the concerns of its contemporary audiences. Yet, at the same time, these reinventions of the museum rely upon a consistent rhetorical appeal based upon hope for a coming community sensibility – Bloch's formulation basic formulation of anticipatory illumination. These audiences, many of whom are not patrons of the museum, express their interest by constituting themselves as discrete "publics"

²⁰ Daniel Libeskind, *Gedenkbuch: Berlin*, competition entry book, 1989, Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 1, Folder 5.

²¹ The commentary of the competition committee is documented in Young, "Daniel Libeskind," 8-9.

in mediated exchanges concerning the museum project and its relationship to the future of the city and the country.²²

In essence, the four factors featured in the epigram about the reconstruction of World Trade Center in New York are also relevant to a discussion of Daniel Libeskind's Jewish Museum Berlin project. The interests of particular groups are voiced through a discrete medium, whether personal correspondence, official document, or print media. Each of these articulated interests are designed to suit a specific audience, which is not necessarily an empirical entity, but instead an idealized persona. Cultural context provides a set of situational constraints, but also the grounds for an inventive, persuasive negotiation of those constraints. Finally, the process of producing public art and architecture projects, as well as components of cultural institutions, is enveloped in the making present something that seems otherwise absent in the culture.

With the above as background, the main research question driving this study seems natural and appropriate to ask. How has the symbolism of Daniel Libeskind's Jewish Museum Extension to the Berlin Museum and its subsequent instantiation as the Jewish Museum Berlin been rearticulated over its planning and construction process in response to changing publics, interests, and cultural contexts? While this specific case study responds most directly to the above research question, the answers provided contribute to answering a larger question of interest to architectural historians, cultural studies scholars, and rhetoricians alike: how are the professed values of a culture symbolically negotiated through public art and architecture projects, and what conclusions about the significance of those projects can be drawn, especially for societies in transition? These questions are linked to a more general theoretical concern that animates my broader research trajectory as a scholar: what is the relationship between the

²² For a theoretical exploration of multiple "publics" with discrete interests, see Gerard A. Hauser, *Vernacular Voices: The Rhetoric of Publics and Public Spheres* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1999).

rhetoric of public art and architecture projects, the interests of diverse groups who supposedly have a stake in those projects, and the interpretation of the proper beliefs, values, and policies of a culture? I hope that answers to the particular questions posed by this dissertation project provide insights into this more general theoretical concern, though it most certainly cannot definitively answer such questions.

In order to clarify some of the main concepts at work in this project, I situate these questions within an already existing field of scholarship. Then I offer some reflections on the methodological assumptions of my proposed research, which is heavily influenced by a combination of rhetorical history and close textual analysis. Finally, I outline each of the chapters within the larger research project.

1.1 THE SCHOLARLY LANDSCAPE

Kenneth Burke, in an oft-cited passage, relates the difficulty that one experiences entering an ongoing conversation:

Imagine that you enter a parlor. You come late. When you arrive, other have long preceded you, and they are engaged in a heated discussion, a discussion too heated for them to pause and tell you exactly what it is about. In fact, the discussion had already begun long before any of them got there, so that no one present is qualified to retrace for you all the steps that had gone before. You listen for a while, until you decide that you have caught the tenor of the argument; then you put in your oar. Someone answers; you answer him; another comes to your defense; another aligns himself against you, to either the embarrassment of the argument or gratification of your opponent, depending upon the quality of your ally's assistance. However, the discussion is interminable. The hour grows late, you must depart. And you do depart, with the discussion still vigorously in progress.²³

²³ Kenneth Burke, *The Philosophy of Literary Form: Studies in Symbolic Action*, 3rd ed. (Berkeley, Calif: University of California Press, 1973), 110-11.

Though incomplete, any decision to enter the conversation builds upon the work of previous interlocutors and is responsive to their, albeit partial, accounts of the conversation. “And if we keep this in mind, we are reminded that every document bequeathed us by history must be treated as a *strategy for encompassing a situation*.”²⁴ Not only is this observation integral to the methodological predispositions of rhetorical history (discussed in the next section), but also applies to any gesture toward the advancement of scholarly knowledge. I document some of the intellectual influence for my intervention into the scholarly conversation. Such an account of myself, as constituted through this work, is performed in order to receive “recognition” as an interlocutor in part of a larger, ongoing conversation.²⁵

²⁴ Burke, *Philosophy of Literary Form*, 109.

²⁵ Providing an account of oneself is a means to be recognized as part of a human, or in this case scholarly, community. In so doing, one acknowledges a pre-existing set of conditions that constrain, in advance, the possibilities of emerging as a scholarly subject. As Judith Butler argues, “These terms are outside the subject to some degree, but they are also presented as the available norms through which self-recognition can take place, so that what I can ‘be,’ quite literally, is constrained in advance by a regime of truth that decides what will and will not be a recognizable form of being. Although the regime of truth decides in advance what form recognition can take, it does not fully constrain this form. Indeed, *decide* may be too strong a word, since the regime of truth offers a framework for the scene of recognition, delineating who will qualify as a subject of recognition and offering available norms for the act of recognition. In Foucault’s view, there is always a relation to this regime, a mode of self-crafting that takes place in the context of the norms at issue and, specifically, negotiates an answer to the question of who the ‘I’ will be in relation to these norms.” In the context of scholarly argument, the form of the account of oneself, referred to as a “review of literature,” places fairly strict procedural guidelines for being recognized as a scholarly “persona” constituted through this text. However, within those limits, the particular account that one provides often is creative in its rendering of a conversation’s lineage, such that it presents a unique sense of one’s scholarly self.

This sense of self, fashioned from within the limits proscribed by a set of pre-existing social conditions governing the recognition of that self as part of a community, is often thrown into crisis by an encounter with an other. “It is also true that certain practices of recognition or, indeed, certain breakdowns in the practice of recognition mark a site of rupture within the horizon of normativity and implicitly call for the institution of new norms, putting into question the givenness of the prevailing normative horizon. The normative horizon within which I see the other or, indeed, within which the other sees and listens and knows and recognizes is also subject to a critical opening... Sometimes the very unrecognizability of the other brings about a crisis in the norms that govern recognition. If and when, in an effort to confer or to receive a recognition that fails again and again, I call into question the normative horizon within which recognition takes place, this questioning is part of the desire for recognition, a desire that can find no satisfaction, and whose unsatisfiability establishes a critical point of departure for the interrogation of available norms.” Judith Butler, *Giving An Account of Oneself* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2005), 22; 24.

If one considers the object of scholarly study the other of the researcher, then the inability of that object to be fully recognized within an existing body of scholarly knowledge opens up a possibility for the interrogation of those knowledges, and as such, the exemplary object, as properly accounted for by the researcher, can advance a set of scholarly conversations. To work by an analogy with W. J. T. Mitchell’s account of pictures, “the question to ask

1.1.1 Museum Studies

The Jewish Museum Berlin participates in a particular genre of visual display, the “museum,” with a long history of scholarly treatment. Museums arrange space; “bringing artifacts together in one space provide[s] them with a singular rather than dispersed context of interpretation.”²⁶ Similar to the rhetorical work of disposition (or arrangement), they organize previously existing material in the world for a particular effect.²⁷ Museums educate, and, as such, they differ from cabinets of curiosities in the houses of the rich or at public festivals.²⁸ They also differ from the epideictic function of commemorative monuments; though commemoration can be included in museums, their function is not exhausted by the desire to praise (or blame).²⁹ To

of pictures...is not just what they mean or do but what they *want*—what claim they make upon us, and how we are to respond. Obviously, this question also requires us to ask what it is that we want from pictures.” W. J. T. Mitchell, *What Do Pictures Want?* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), xv. By virtue of its presence in a complex urban environment, the Jewish Museum Berlin project wants to be recognized as an important work in the city of Berlin and to a global audience, and it is its inability to be precisely explained in the current configuration of scholarly knowledge that makes a claim on this researcher.

²⁶ Kevin Hetherington, “Museum,” *Theory, Culture and Society* 23 (2006): 598.

²⁷ The return to rhetorical arrangement, displaced from the interior of a work to the relationship between a work and its various contextual associations (or conditions of possibility), seems to be the underlying motivation in the recent move to theorize a “logic of articulation” in rhetoric and cultural studies. Such a methodological gesture allows the critic to read a work into a network of associations that constitute a discursive or cultural formation. I would like merely to suggest that the form of the museum attempts to manipulate elements in space (architecture, artifacts, writing, and people) in order to communicate a symbolic message, and that as such, it mirrors discussions in rhetoric and cultural studies concerning the logic of articulation. For theoretical work in this area, see Barbara Biesecker, “Rethinking the Rhetorical Situation from Within the Thematic of *Différance*,” *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 22 (1989): 110-30; Kevin DeLuca, “Articulation Theory: A Discursive Grounding for Rhetorical Practice,” *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 32 (1999): 334-48; Ronald Walter Greene, “Another Materialist Rhetoric,” *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 15 (1998): 21-41; Stuart Hall, “Signification, Representation, Ideology: Althusser and the Post-Structuralist Debates,” *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 2 (1985): 91-114; Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics* (London: Verso, 1985); and Nathan Stormer, “Articulation: A Working Paper on Rhetoric and *Taxis*,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 90 (2004): 257-84.

²⁸ This function of the museum is largely a historical transformation, at least among the American and European countries, in the late 18th and early 19th century. For a lengthy discussion of this transformation, see Tony Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics* (London: Routledge, 1995), 17-58. For theoretical rationales for the educative function of the museum, see Lars Aargaard-Mogensen, “The Museum World,” in *Idea of the Museum* (note 27), 201-19; and Nelson Goodman, “The End of the Museum?,” in *The Idea of the Museum: Philosophical, Artistic and Political Questions*, ed. Lars Aargaard-Mogensen (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1988), 139-55.

²⁹ James E. Young, *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1993), 3-4.

combine these functions into a broader definition, “The museum seeks to provide modern society with a fabricated *Erfahrung* [experience]. It seeks through its display regimes, their narrative and ordering logics to provide people with a sense that they are living in a world where our uncertain and complex set of experiences make sense.”³⁰

However, within this general definition, museums vary widely in both form and function. While some museums, particularly those sponsored by a local government, national government, or civil society organization are placed based upon attracting audiences already interested in those localities, nationalities or organizations, others are site-specific, sometimes without any clear division between the site’s previous use and its current museological function.³¹ As such, one must assess the significance of museum placement on a case-by-case basis.³² Collections are tailored to the different educational roles for certain types of museums (the history museum and the art museum comprise two basic types), but all have been linked to various ideological

³⁰ Hetherington, “Museum,” 600.

³¹ For examples of site-specific museums, see Michael Halloran and Gregory Clark, “National Park Landscapes and the Rhetorical Display of Civic Religion,” in *Rhetorics of Display*, ed. Lawrence J. Prelli (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2006), 141-56; Kevin Hetherington, “The Utopics of Social Ordering: Stonehenge as a Museum Without Walls,” in *Theorizing Museums: Representing Identity and Diversity in a Changing World*, ed. Sharon Macdonald and Gordon Fyfe (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1996), 153-76; Chris Prentice, “Trafficking in History: Roadside Museums and Post-Colonial Displacement,” *Continuum: Journal of Media and Cultural Studies* 12 (1998): 295-308; and Deborah R. Staines, “Museum Auschwitz,” *Space and Culture* 1, no. 10 (2001): 63-90.

³² This difficulty is particularly apparent with regard to museums devoted to recounting the Holocaust. Marouf Hasain argues that the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, located in Washington D.C., simultaneously situates Americans as complicit with genocide and as liberators of the camps in order to instruct the audience on good moral conduct in international affairs, whereas Theodore Prosisie argues that the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles focuses on personal actions and responsibilities not directly connected to foreign policy or national identity. For examinations of dynamics of placement in various Holocaust museum exhibits, see Marouf Hasain, Jr., “Remembering and Forgetting the ‘Final Solution’: A Rhetorical Pilgrimage through the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum,” *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 21 (2004): 64-92; Andrew Hoskins, “Signs of the Holocaust: Exhibiting Memory in a Mediated Age,” *Media, Culture and Society* 25 (2003): 7-22; Theodore O. Prosisie, “Prejudiced, Historical Witness, and Responsible: Collective Memory and Liminality in the Beit Hashoah Museum of Tolerance,” *Communication Quarterly* 51 (2003): 351-66; and Staines, “Museum Auschwitz.”

agendas varying from the promotion of nationalism,³³ localism,³⁴ or globalism,³⁵ to the exposition of national embarrassments³⁶ and the respectful encounter with cultural difference.³⁷

Traditionally museums built their credibility by enabling the viewer to have an experience with a set of “authentic” artifacts.³⁸ However, as media technologies have evolved, museums have

³³ For studies linking the art museum to the consolidation of a national image, see Eric Davis, “The Museum and the Politics of Social Control in Modern Iraq,” in *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity*, ed. John R. Gillis (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), 90-104; John Fisher, “mUSEums,” in *The Idea of the Museum* (note 28), 45-59; and Detlef Hoffman, “The German Art Museum and the History of the Nation,” in *Museum Culture: Histories, Discourses, Spectacles*, ed. Daniel J. Sherman and Irit Rogoff (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 3-21. For a discussion of comparative history institutions as a justification for nationalist pride, see Annie E. Coombes, *Reinventing Africa: Museums, Material Culture and Popular Imagination* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994); Greg Dickenson, Brian L. Ott and Eric Aoki, “Spaces of Remembering and Forgetting: The Reverent Eye/I at the Plains Indian Museum,” *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies* 3 (2006): 27-47; and Patricia Penn Hilden, “Race for Sale: Narratives of Possession in Two ‘Ethnic’ Museums,” *TDR: The Drama Review* 44, no. 3 (2000): 11-36. For a discussion of heritage museums and the promotion of national identity, see Greg Dickenson, Brian L. Ott, and Eric Aoki, “Memory and Myth at the Buffalo Bill Museum,” *Western Journal of Communication* 69 (2005): 85-108; Tamar Katriel, “‘Our Future is Where Our Past Is’: Studying Heritage Museums as Ideological and Performative Arenas,” *Communication Monographs* 60 (1993): 69-75; and Katriel, “Sites of Memory: Discourses of the Past in Israeli Pioneering Settlement Museums,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 80 (1994): 1-20.

³⁴ Bella Dicks, “Encoding and Decoding the People: Circuits of Communication at a Local Heritage Museum,” *European Journal of Communication* 15, no. 1 (2000): 61-78; and Naohiro Nakamura, “Managing the Cultural Promotion of Indigenous People in a Community-Based Museum: The Ainu Culture Cluster Project at the Nibutani Ainu Culture Museum, Japan,” *Museum and Society* 5 (2007): 148-67.

³⁵ Sharon J. Macdonald, “Museums, National, Postnational and Transcultural Identities,” *Museum and Society* 1 (2003): 1-16; Jan Nederveen Pieterse, “Multiculturalism and Museums: Discourse about Others in the Age of Globalization,” *Theory, Culture and Society* 14, no. 4 (1997): 123-46; and Martin Prosler, “Museums and Globalization,” in Macdonald and Fyfe, *Theorizing Museums*, 21-44.

³⁶ Erika Molloseau, “Exhibiting Racism: The Cultural Politics of Lynching Photography Re-presentations” (PhD diss., University of Pittsburgh, 2008); Darren Newberry, “‘Lest We Forget’: Photography and the Presentation of History at the Apartheid Museum, Gold Reef City, and the Hector Pieterse Museum, Soweto,” *Visual Communication* 4 (2005): 259-95; and Irit Rogoff, “From Ruins to Debris: The Feminization of Fascism in German-History Museums,” in Sherman and Rogoff, *Museum Culture*, 223-49.

³⁷ The theme of cultural sensitivity in museum display has been a subject of contemporary debates. For a range of perspectives on this issue, see Ivan Karp and Steven D. Lavine, eds., *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian, 1991). For examples of successful, tolerant displays of other cultures, see Alice E. Feldman, “Dances with Diversity: American Indian Self-Presentation within the Re-Presentative Contexts of a Non-Indian Museum,” *Text and Performance Quarterly* 14 (1994): 210-21; and Ronald J. Zboray and Mary Saracino Zboray, “Between ‘Crockery-dom’ and Barnum: Boston’s Chinese Museum, 1845-47,” *American Quarterly* 56 (2004): 271-307.

³⁸ The nature of the museum’s traditional strategies of representation are quite complicated. Museum curators strive to have displays perceived as authentic, “for the seeming concreteness of the museum artefact derives from its *verisimilitude*.” Yet, insofar as the museum places the artifact into a different context of encounter, “it becomes a facsimile of what it once was by virtue of the frame – which may be as simple as a notice or as elaborate as a piece of legislation – which encloses it and separates it off from the present.” Bennett, *Birth of the Museum*, 147; 129.

expanded beyond the display of objects;³⁹ films, television, and electronic equipment now can tell a complex history in minutes, entire experiences are re-created for the viewer in order to “get a feel” for the past, and digitally interactive technologies allow the educational experience to continue off-site.⁴⁰ A history of the Jewish Museum Berlin project touches upon most of these variations in form and function. Its placement is tied to its sponsorship, yet the design incorporates site-specific concerns. Beginning as an extension to a local history museum, it now puts the cultural difference of the German-Jewish diaspora on display for a global audience. Finally, it holds artifacts collected concerning Jewish life and culture, while supplementing that information with several different mediated education strategies, including art, installations, photography, sound, and video games, in order to activate the different senses of the visitor.⁴¹

1.1.2 Public Controversy

Within communication scholarship, specific museum displays have been analyzed as sites of public controversy. In probably the most well-known case study, the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum’s “Enola Gay Exhibit” became a major subject of public debate. From the accounts of scholars, a tension existed between the desire of some to not glorify

³⁹ Collectively, these techniques are a part of the “new museum” movement that mixes architecture, artifact, technology, and public promotion to enhance visitor experience and to increase the institution’s market profile. Kylie Message, “The New Museum,” *Theory, Culture and Society* 23 (2006): 603-06.

⁴⁰ Teresa Bergman, “A Critical Analysis of the California State Museum’s Railroad Films,” *Western Journal of Communication* 67 (2003): 427-48; Hoskins, “Signs of the Holocaust”; Mike Legett, “Electronic Space and Public Space: Museums, Galleries, and Digital Media,” *Continuum: Journal of Media and Cultural Studies* 13 (1999): 175-86; Lucy Noakes, “Making Histories: Experiencing the Blitz in London’s Museums in the 1990s,” in *War and Memory in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Marvin Evans and Ken Lunn (Oxford, UK: Berg, 1997), 89-104; Andrew J. Perrin, “Making ‘Silicon Valley’: Culture, Representation, and Technology at the Tech Museum,” *Communication Review* 5 (2002): 91-108; and Anna Reading, “Digital Interactivity in Public Memory Institutions: The Uses of New Technology in Holocaust Museums,” *Media, Culture and Society* 25 (2003): 67-85.

⁴¹ I have previously written about the Jewish Museum Berlin as a site employing diverse forms of mediation. Brent Saindon, “Visual Display, Media Convergence, and a Reconsideration of Media Ecology: The Jewish Museum Berlin as a Site of Interactive Technological Integration,” *InterCulture* 6, no. 1 (February 2009): 22-37.

nuclear violence against the Japanese people and the desire of others to commemorate the end of World War II in a positive way. In order to quell the public controversy, the exhibition designers decided to display the Enola Gay with minimal descriptions of the social context and the political impact of the bomb dropping.⁴² Such work is heavily indebted to a recent resurgence in the notion of controversy as an important avenue for analyzing public argument. Linked to the decay of the public sphere, controversies proliferate in contemporary global culture; “as countries and peoples try to negotiate the uncertainties of late capitalism and post-modernity within the opacities of a ‘new world order,’ controversies arise in culturally constitutive moments.”⁴³ Against the view that the eruption of controversy creates a blockage in public deliberation,⁴⁴ the study of controversy “works to expand the shared interests of all affected by common action—the traditional work of the public sphere.”⁴⁵

Habermas’ historical exposition of the bourgeois public sphere, emerging in the social spaces (the market, the salon, and the café, among others) of Enlightenment-era Europe and declining with the onset of scientific public opinion polling, not only supplies the narrative of social fragmentation to make controversy significant, but also proscribes norms of behavior for

⁴² A range of scholarly commentary has occurred in this particular case study. See Bryan Hubbard and Marouf A. Hasian, Jr., “The Generic Roots of the *Enola Gay* Controversy,” *Political Communication* 15 (1998): 497-513; Theodore O. Prosise, “The Collective Memory of the Atomic Bombings Misrecognized as Objective History: The Case of the Public Opposition to the National Air and Space Museum’s Atom Bomb Exhibit,” *Western Journal of Communication* 62 (1998): 316-47; Bryan C. Taylor, “The Bodies of August: Photographic Realism and Controversy at the National Air and Space Museum,” *Rhetoric and Public Affairs* 1 (1998): 331-61; and Vera L. Zolberg, “Museums as Contested Sites of Remembrance: The Enola Gay Affair,” in *Theorizing Museums* (note 31), 69-82.

⁴³ G. Thomas Goodnight, “Controversy,” in *Argument in Controversy: Proceedings of the Seventh SCA/AFA Conference on Argumentation*, ed. Donn W. Parson (Annandale, VA: Speech Communication Association, 1991), 8.

⁴⁴ For representative work on this subject, see Eric W. Doxtader, “The Entwinement of Argument and Rhetoric: A Dialectical Reading of Habermas’ Theory of Communicative Action,” *Argumentation and Advocacy* 28 (1991): 51-63; and Richard McKeon, “Dialogue and Controversy in Philosophy,” in *The Interpretation of Dialogue*, ed. Tullio Maranhão (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 25-46.

⁴⁵ Kathryn M. Olson and G. Thomas Goodnight, “Entanglements of Consumption, Cruelty, Privacy, and Fashion: The Social Controversy Over Fur,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 80 (1994): 272.

resurrecting shared social goals.⁴⁶ However, both the communicative norms underlying his theory of public deliberation and his concept of the public sphere have been the subject of much debate. With the former, scholars suggest that the strict limits of rational dialogue seem to exclude different genres of rhetorical appeal, from the speech designed to advance particular interests to the poetic insinuation of insights not verifiable by reason.⁴⁷ In the case of the latter, the formulation of a singular bourgeois public sphere has been heavily criticized for being itself only a partial map of public activity, often excluding various “counterpublics” from having access to the means of expression in a dominant culture.⁴⁸ Finally, public spheres tend to be tied

⁴⁶ On the history of the bourgeois public sphere in Europe, see Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1991). For an explanation of the decline of shared public interests in the American context, see John Dewey, *The Public and its Problems* (Denver, CO: Swallow, 1954). For a discussion of communicative norms associated with the championing of shared goals, see James Bohman, “Political Communication and the Epistemic Value of Diversity: Deliberation and Legitimation in Media Societies,” *Communication Theory* 17 (2007): 348-55; and Jürgen Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis*, trans. Thomas McCarthy (Boston, Mass: Beacon Press, 1975).

⁴⁷ James Arnt Aune, “‘Only Connect’: Between Morality and Ethics in Habermas’ Communication Theory,” *Communication Theory* 17 (2007): 340-47; and William Fusfield, “Communication without Constellation? Habermas’s Argumentative Turn in (and Away from) Critical Theory,” *Communication Theory* 7 (1997): 301-20.

⁴⁸ The term “counterpublic” seems to originate from Oskar Negt and Alexander Kluge’s examination of the proletarian public sphere. Reviling Habermas’s seemingly reactionary stance to the student protest movements of the 1960s based on the perceived advancement of “special” or “partial” interests, Negt and Kluge expose the extent to which Habermas’ desired recuperation of the bourgeois public sphere is dictated by class interests. Jürgen Habermas, “The Movement in Germany: A Critical Analysis,” in *Toward a Rational Society: Student Protest, Science and Politics*, trans. Jeremy Shapiro (Boston: Beacon, 1970), 31-49; and Oskar Negt and Alexander Kluge, *Public Sphere and Experience: Towards an Analysis of the Bourgeois and Proletarian Public Sphere*, trans. Peter Labanyi, Jamie Owen Daniel, and Assenka Oksiloff (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993). The variations on this theme are quite impressive, with scholars theorizing the existence of different “counterpublics” for the subaltern, the proletariat, women, black people, LGBTQ communities, and prisoners. For representative work in this area, see Robert Asen and Daniel C. Brouwer, eds., *Counterpublics and the State* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001); Black Public Sphere Collective, ed., *The Black Public Sphere: A Public Culture Book* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995); Nancy Fraser, “Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy,” in *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, ed. Craig Calhoun (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1992), 109-42; G. Thomas Goodnight and David B. Hingstman, “Studies in the Public Sphere,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 83 (1997): 351-70; Phaedra Pezzullo, “Resisting ‘National Breast Cancer Awareness Month’: The Rhetoric of Counterpublics and their Cultural Performances,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 89 (2003): 345-65; and Michael Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics* (New York: Zone Books, 2002).

to nationalist politics, but local and transnational forces, present even during the formation of the bourgeois public sphere, militate against the presumption of shared interests.⁴⁹

All of these criticisms of the public sphere bear upon the study of controversy. As Kendall Phillips argues, “framing discussions of controversy in terms of a public sphere... provides an avenue by which the disruptiveness of controversies might be re-connected to a stable forum for dispute.”⁵⁰ Given these different problems with Habermas’ notion of the public sphere and its communicative assumptions, how can one reframe the public sphere and the concept of controversy in a way that is positive, productive, and attentive to the plurality of perspectives circulating in societies? Gerald Hauser offers an answer, suggesting that, instead of a public sphere with supposedly universal interests, scholars ought to consider multiple publics that represent contingent, partial interests of particular constituencies. “And rather than anticipating publics as already existing, we should seek them through the actual discursive engagements on the issues raised in civil society as *emergences of society’s active members*.”⁵¹ Mapped onto a theory of controversy, one would no longer try to suture the differences between different factions of the public sphere together under the moniker of disagreement over a shared issue, but instead examine “their unique intersections in the unfolding moments of the construction (and deconstruction) of social meaning.”⁵² To concretize this issue in the context of the epigram, Karrie Jacobs announces herself as the representative of a people (New Yorkers),

⁴⁹ An excellent example of these pressures against the public can be found in Crystal Bartolovich, “Inventing London,” in *Masses, Classes, and the Public Sphere*, ed. Mike Hill and Warren Montag (London: Verso, 2000), 13-40.

⁵⁰ Kendall R. Phillips, “A Rhetoric of Controversy,” *Western Journal of Communication* 63 (1999): 490.

⁵¹ Hauser, *Vernacular Voices*, 35.

⁵² Phillips, “Rhetoric of Controversy,” 506. Although Phillips retains some degree of skepticism with regard to the theoretical commitment to multiple publics, he does not treat the issue in-depth. In response to an earlier essay by Phillips, Gerard Hauser has fairly convincingly argued that his version of multiple publics is not driven toward finding building consensus, but instead enables an empirical rhetorical criticism examining the multiple layers of dissensus. Gerard A. Hauser, “On Publics and Public Spheres: A Response to Phillips,” *Communication Monographs* 64 (1997): 275-79.

constituting a public with particular interests, for which she becomes an active spokesperson. Presumably, if one were to analyze other texts about the World Trade Center site, we would find similar patterns of behavior, with the texts defending a different public (architectural theorists, New York commerce, etc.) with other types of interests.

A history of the Jewish Museum Berlin project provides a strong case study in controversy using the model of multiple publics. I have been able to identify five types of publics, each containing some degree of heterogeneity within them, which have interests in the project: local citizens of Berlin, international actors interested in Libeskind's project, the professional public of architects and theorists, the institutional public of governmental agents, and the interests of museum officials. Each offers a unique perspective on Libeskind's architecture and the overall purpose of the museum. The nature of those publics, interests, and their relative influence changes, providing a dynamic cognitive map of the meaning of the project during the ongoing process of reunification.

1.1.3 Culture

Though I have some reservation regarding the original formulation of controversy, I would like to emphasize an important element of its definition: "controversies arise in culturally constitutive moments."⁵³ In one sense, this can mean the rather banal observation that moments of cultural crisis tend to create an outbreak of controversy. But in another sense, the definition suggests that controversies occur over the formulations of culture; "culture" is what is at stake in the conversation, even if seemingly absent from its literal content. In essence, culture is

⁵³ For a primer on the constitutive function of rhetorical discourse, see Maurice Charland, "Constitutive Rhetoric: The Case of the *Peuple Québécois*," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 73 (1987): 133-50.

expressed through rhetorical negotiation, with different parties in the controversy shaping its content. As Thomas Rosteck argues, “analysts ought to work with case studies that express culture rather than to talk in the abstract about cultural ideas—that is, to privilege the *practice* of public culture above all else.”⁵⁴ Such a perspective affords the opportunity to reconfigure some of the standard debates within cultural studies.

From a very traditional frame of reference, the normative and the anthropological senses of culture provide two opposite poles in the dispute over what ought to be considered “culture.”⁵⁵ The former treats culture as a form of self or social cultivation, a high-minded education set in opposition to folk life, while the latter treats culture as a factual condition, often in its most undeveloped, pristine, or primitive states.⁵⁶ The Jewish Museum Berlin, as architectural product of high cultural taste dedicated to the history of Jewish culture in Berlin (and later in Germany), straddles the normative and the anthropological senses of culture. As Tony Bennett’s landmark study on early museums demonstrated, historical museums proscribe proper, civil behavior of audiences while providing knowledge of a culture’s (even one’s own) traditions, rituals, and ways of life; the Jewish Museum Berlin is just one contemporary example among many.⁵⁷ The degree to which the project ought to create space for the celebration of Jewish identity, confront the invisibility of the Jewish diaspora in modern Germany, provide a forum for the education of

⁵⁴ Thomas Rosteck, “Form and Cultural Context in Rhetorical Criticism: Re-Reading Wrage,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 84 (1998): 476. For some representative selections dedicated to the rhetorical study of culture, see Thomas Rosteck, ed., *At the Intersection: Cultural Studies and Rhetorical Studies* (New York: Guilford, 1999).

⁵⁵ For overviews of the tension between the normative and anthropological senses of culture, see Terry Eagleton, *The Idea of Culture* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 2000), 1-31; and Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1977), 11-20.

⁵⁶ For various perspective on the normative and anthropological senses of culture, see Matthew Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy*, ed. Samuel Lipman (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994); F. R. Leavis, “Luddites? Or There Is Only One Culture,” *Nor Shall My Sword: Discourses on Pluralism, Compassion and Social Hope* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1972), 75-100; John Fiske, “Cultural Studies and the Culture of Everyday Life,” in *Cultural Studies*, ed. Lawrence Grossberg, Cary Nelson, and Paula A. Treichler (New York: Routledge, 1992), 154-65; and Dick Hebdige, *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* (London: Routledge, 1979).

⁵⁷ Bennett, *Birth of the Museum*.

citizens, or ought to be intertwined with the display of German history, are all constituted through controversy about the definition and proper role of “culture.” In advancing certain interests to targeted audiences and discussing the significance of the Jewish Museum Berlin project, these different publics work to constitute a particular version of German and/or Jewish culture.

1.1.4 Absence

A number of these discussions about the display of Jewish and German culture comment upon the interplay of absence and presence. In a seldom mentioned, yet essential, component of *The New Rhetoric* by Chaim Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca, a psychological account of presence is provided:

Presence acts directly on our sensibility. As Piaget shows, it is a psychological datum operative already at the level of perception: when two things are set side by side, say a fixed standard and things of variable dimensions with which it is compared, the thing on which the eye dwells, that which is best or most often seen, is, by that very circumstance, overestimated. The thing that is present to the consciousness assumes thus an importance that the theory and practice of argumentation must take into consideration. It is not enough indeed that a thing should exist for a person to feel its presence...Accordingly, one of the preoccupations of a speaker is to make present, by verbal magic alone, what is actually absent but what he considers important to his argument or, by making them more present, to enhance the value of some of the elements of which one has actually been made conscious.⁵⁸

Consistent with Heidegger’s account of presencing in language, presence becomes an essential part of linguistic production, a process of showing that allows us to share an intersubjective consensus, the only “means for transforming subjective certainty to objective certainty.”⁵⁹ The

⁵⁸ Chaim Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation*, trans. John Wilkinson and Purcell Weaver (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969), 116-17.

⁵⁹ Louise A. Karon, “Presence in *The New Rhetoric*,” *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 9 (1976): 101. Traditionally, rhetoric’s ability to conceal the true, to veil that which ought to be present-at-hand to the audience, earns it the

interplay between the presence of the object, announced through language, and its covered-ness, hiddenness, or absence, is essential in the play of rhetorical world making. “To speak with one another means that together we say something about something, showing one another the sorts of things that are suggested by what is addressed in our discussion...The unspoken is not merely what is deprived of sound; rather, it is the unsaid, what is not yet shown, what has not yet appeared on the scene.”⁶⁰

Though both Heidegger and Perelman/Olbrechts-Tyteca think about presence as a form of linguistic or verbal magic, their visual metaphors in the description of the concept makes it easily applicable to forms of visual display and symbolism. Examining a display in the Museum of the City of Vienna that covered the Anschluss of 1938 (the annexation of Austria by the Third Reich), Alan Gross argues that “an effect is created by the manipulation of figure and ground,

reputation of being concerned with base pleasures, associated with the flattery of the audience rather than their proper conduct in the world. It is with this concern in mind that Socrates, in Plato’s *Gorgias*, associated rhetoric with cooking, an art which activates bodily pleasures without regard for the proper care of the healthful body. Plato, *Gorgias*, in *Lysis, Symposium Gorgias*, trans W. R. M. Lamb (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1925), 317-21. However, rhetoric is also a necessary vehicle to make present the proper conduct of the individual, the just, the right, and the true, and, as such, must be used by the enlightened as a means of showing, of making present, those principles that ought be followed by members of the human community. “For him whose sight comprehends things dispersed in many places to lead them into one *idea*, so that by defining each thing, he makes clear what, on each occasion, he wishes to teach about.” Plato, *Phaedrus*, trans. James H. Nichols Jr. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1988), 74 (265d).

Martin Heidegger, a key thinker in the philosophical tradition concerning language, the being of things-in-the-world, and presence, has recently upended this particular state of affairs. Rather than a separation of the linguistic and presence, which would make rhetoric a tool for veiling the true and the beautiful, Heidegger considers them to be intimately intertwined. “Ever since the age of the Greeks, beings have been experienced as what comes to presence. Inasmuch as language *is*, coming as speech again and again on the scene, it pertains to what comes to presence.” Martin Heidegger, “The Way to Language,” in *Basic Writings*, rev. ed., ed. and trans. David Farrell Krell (San Francisco, Calif: Harper, 1993), 402. Language provides the grounds, the very conditions for the presenting of objects. And as a result, this condition of showing, of presenting, is the condition of its existence. “‘Behind’ the phenomena of phenomenology there is essentially nothing else; on the other hand, what is to become a phenomenon can be hidden. And just because the phenomena are proximally and for the most part *not* given, there is a need for phenomenology. Covered-up-ness is the counter-concept to ‘phenomenon’.” Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1962), 60.

⁶⁰ Heidegger, “Way to Language,” 409. For a discussion of the relationship between the Greek concept of truth and the interplay of presence and absence, see Martin Heidegger, *Parmenides*, trans. André Schuwer and Richard Roycewicz (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992). For another confirmation of the consistency between phenomenology and the Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca take on the concept of presence, see Robert E. Tucker, “Figure, Ground and Presence: A Phenomenology of Meaning in Rhetoric,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 87 (2001): 396-414.

space, and time—all supportive of a single argumentative purpose: the freeing of Austrian consciousness and conscience from the moral and fiscal responsibility for the Holocaust.”⁶¹ By displaying images of invading Germans prominently, while de-emphasizing images of the welcoming Austrians, and by showing images of Austrian resistance, not everyday acquiescence, what is made visible and present to the audience is the power projection of the Germans, not the lack of action by the Austrian public. Consistent with Gross’ observation, nearly all displays work rhetorically to make present certain important aspects of their objects. “What can be seen on display is viewed as valuable and meaningful because of the access it offers to a realm of significance which cannot itself be seen. The visible is significant not for its own sake but because it affords a glimpse of something beyond itself: the order of nature, say, in the case of eighteenth-century natural history collections.”⁶² Again, presence is not opposed to absence, but instead the two terms exist in a complex interplay between what is said, what is implied, and what is unsaid.

If, as Peter Eisenman suggests, the rhetoric of architecture is centrally about the interplay between presence and absence, then one must ask what the study of the Jewish Museum Berlin project brings to the discussion. “This requires the introduction of an absence in the is of architecture, an absence in its presence.”⁶³ I suggest that Daniel Libeskind’s design and its subsequent curation is not about making a thing present, as most of the previously documented theorists have argued, but about making *absence itself* present in the architecture and in the displays. To tell the history of Jewish life in Berlin, one must not only make present a particular narrative of culture, but bring its attempted annihilation into the display rhetorically. Such a

⁶¹ Alan G. Gross, “Presence as Argument in the Public Sphere,” *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 35 (2005): 7.

⁶² Bennett, *Birth of the Museum*, 35.

⁶³ Eisenman, “Architecture,” 178.

gesture pushes architecture to its limits, according to some, but has the chance to advance our scholarly understanding of the operative dynamic between presence and absence in rhetorical production.

1.1.5 Time and Public Memory

Given the historical nature of this particular project and the rapid contextual transformations that occur, it is prudent to account for the different inflections that the concept of time has upon an object of study. First, the objects emerge at a particular time in response to certain circumstances. For rhetoricians, this property corresponds to the *timeliness* of discourse, often referred to as *kairos*.⁶⁴ Second, an object of study can manipulate an audience's experience of time; it becomes part of the *disposition* of the content or object.⁶⁵ Finally, the passage of time pushes back upon the object of study, requiring it to change to remain relevant to contemporary audiences.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ For representative examples of work in this area, see Mark Montesano, "Kairos and Kerygma: The Rhetoric of Christian Proclamation," *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 25 (1995): 164-78; Garth E. Pauley, "Rhetoric and Timeliness: An Analysis of Lyndon B. Johnson's Voting Rights Address," *Western Journal of Communication* 62 (1998): 26-53; John Poulakos, "Toward a Sophistic Definition of Rhetoric," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 16 (1983): 35-48; J. Blake Scott, "Kairos as Indeterminate Risk Management: The Pharmaceutical Industry's Response to Bioterrorism," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 92 (2006): 115-43; and Phillip Sipiora and James S. Baumlin, eds., *Rhetoric and Kairos: Essays in History, Theory, and Praxis* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2002).

⁶⁵ The rhetorical configuration of time in public address has also received a substantial amount of attention. See J. Robert Cox, "The Fulfillment of Time: King's 'I Have a Dream' Speech (August 28, 1963)," in *Texts in Context: Critical Dialogues on Significant Episodes in American Political Rhetoric*, ed. Leff and Kauffeld (Davis, CA: Hermagoras Press, 1989), 181-204; Randall A. Lake, "Between Myth and History: Enacting Time in Native American Protest Rhetoric," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 77 (1991): 123-51; Michael Leff, "Dimensions of Temporality in Lincoln's Second Inaugural," *Communication Reports* 1, no. 1 (1988): 26-31; and Margaret D. Zulick and Michael Leff, "Time and the 'True Light' in Lucretia Coffin Mott's 'Discourse on Woman'," *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 25 (1995): 20-31.

⁶⁶ The scholarship on the development of museums has been very sensitive to this particular issue, though with varying emphasis on cultural context. Detailing the development of the early New York Art world, Winifred Howe's *A History of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* is a landmark work in the social and institutional forces shaping the accumulation of fine art for public consumption. Winifred Howe, *A History of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1913). Other scholars, using institutional documentation and the lives of important museum professionals as guides, have also been able to construct histories of particular museums. For a few significant examples, see Philip Rowland Harris, *A History of the British Museum Library, 1753-1973* (London: British Library, 1998); Ian Jenkins, *Archaeologists and Aesthetes: In the Sculpture Galleries of the British Museum*,

This final sense of time, time's passage, provides an integral link to discussions of public memory.⁶⁷ Following Pierre Nora's shift from "collective memory" to "realms of memory," scholars have occupied themselves with studying the appropriations of important events or objects in subsequent generations of people.⁶⁸ The former concerned itself with a form of social remembering designed to build the cohesiveness of a group through recourse to shared myths, beliefs, or stories of origins.⁶⁹ With the latter, the memory of the past, rather than being driven by the fidelity to the historical record, is often appropriated for to serve particular interests in the present.⁷⁰ Scholars can trace the movement of these appropriations over time in order to provide insight into the process of historical change.⁷¹ A history of the Jewish Museum Berlin project supplements current studies on the development, deployment, and negotiation of public memory

1800-1939 (London: British Museum Press, 1992); and Russell Lynes, *Good Old Modern: An Intimate Portrait of the Museum of Modern Art* (New York: Atheneum, 1973). In addition to the institutional history of museums, the relationship between practices of display and the values of culture have been of increasing interest as the study of museums as persuasive form has developed. For some representative works in this area, see James Moore, "The Art of Philanthropy? The Formation and Development of the Walker Art Gallery in Liverpool," *Museum and Society* 2 (2004): 68-83; Thomas Patin, *Discipline and Varnish: Rhetoric, Subjectivity, and Counter-Memory in the Museum* (New York: Peter Lang, 1999); and Nick Prior, "The Art of Space and the Space of Art: Edinburgh and its Gallery, 1780-1860," *Museum and Society* 1 (2003): 63-74.

⁶⁷ For a representative example of contemporary work in this area, see Kendall R. Phillips, ed., *Framing Public Memory* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2004).

⁶⁸ Pierre Nora, "Between Memory and History," in *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past*, vol. 1, *Conflicts and Divisions*, ed. Pierre Nora, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 1-20.

⁶⁹ For the seminal work in this area, see Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, trans. Lewis A. Coser (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992). For variations on this theme, see Stephen H. Browne, "Reading, Rhetoric, and the Texture of Public Memory," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 81 (1995): 237-65; John R. Gillis, "Memory and Identity: The History of a Relationship," in *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity*, ed. John R. Gillis (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), 3-24; and Isocrates, "Helen," *Isocrates*, vol. 3, trans. Larue Van Hook (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1929), 61-97.

⁷⁰ Barbara A. Biesecker, "Remembering World War II: The Rhetoric and Politics of National Commemoration at the Turn of the 21st Century," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 88 (2002): 393-409; Beverly James, "Envisioning Postcommunism: Budapest's Stalin Monument," in *Rhetorics of Display* (note 31), 157-76; Gerd Knischewski and Ulla Spittler, "Memories of the Second World War and National Identity in Germany," in *War and Memory in the Twentieth Century* (note 40), 239-54; and Marita Sturken, *Tangled Memories: The Vietnam War, the AIDS Epidemic, and the Politics of Remembering* (Berkeley, Calif: University of California Press, 1997).

⁷¹ For good examples of scholarship that trace the changes in public memory over time, see Robert Hariman and John Louis Lucaites, "Performing Civic Identity: The Iconic Photograph of the Flag Raising on Iwo Jima," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 88 (2002): 363-92; Marouf Hasain, Jr., "Anne Frank, Bergen-Belsen, and the Polysemic Nature of Holocaust Memories," *Rhetoric and Public Affairs* 4 (2001): 349-74; and Barbie Zelizer, *Remembering to Forget: Holocaust Memory through the Camera's Eye* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

over time. The design of the museum changes to accommodate the needs of the culture, the function of the museum shifts from an extension to the city museum to an independent structure, and several different discussions occur over the organization of the museum's collections. In each case, in negotiating the meaning of cultural displays, interested publics attempt to appropriate the public memory of the Jewish diaspora in Germany to serve particular ends.

1.2 TEXTUAL ANALYSIS AND RHETORICAL HISTORY: REFLECTIONS ON METHOD

Returning to Burke's words in the opening of the previous section, it is important to think about the Jewish Museum Berlin not only as an object produced primarily from the genius of the individual designer, but as a symbolic participant in an ongoing conversation about the absence of Jewish culture in Berlin and the obligation by public institutions to make that missing memory present.⁷² Although the Jewish Museum Berlin is a material object, and as such, structures, to

⁷² This methodological difference between this work and other studies on the *Jewish Museum Berlin* can be clearly seen by contrast with one of the metaphors employed in Terry Smith's discussion of Libeskind's design process. Smith, in an important discussion of Libeskind's sketches, describes the process of interpreting them. "One page of felt-tipped pen drawings stands out for the intensity of its exploration of the possibilities of this one motif. We can follow Libeskind's mind-eye-hand as he works over the basic shape: emphasizing some parts, fading others out, subtracting sections, turning them different ways, adding others of the same type, turning the figure in space, rotating it, separating its parts, reconfiguring them within a frame or in space...He is searching the shape [the Star of David] for its expressive potential, for the kinds of connotative power it might retain, or surprise, when put to work channeling human movement through space." Smith, *Architecture of Aftermath*, 78-79. The metaphor of the "mind-eye-hand" linkage is designed to justify Smith's methodological predisposition: to work from physical product back to the ideas in the mind of the artist in order to document the process of invention. Similar methodological dispositions can be found in Andrew Benjamin, *Present Hope: Philosophy, Architecture, Judaism* (London: Routledge, 1997), 103-18; Isenberg, "Reading;" and Young, "Daniel Libeskind."

While I am interested in invention as an aspect of the process of rhetorical negotiation, it must be balanced with the inventive practices of audience reception and the constraints of context. The desire to use the authorial intent of Libeskind as the deciding factor in the meaning of the architecture is a mechanism to short-circuit the different signifying possibilities of the text. As Michel Foucault argues, "The author explains the presence of certain events within the text, as well as their transformations, distortions, and their various modifications." On the other

some extent, the relationship between city-dwellers and the built environment, I take the most significant aspects of the museum to be primarily symbolic. This is particularly true with regard to the earlier phases of the project's development, since, outside models, the museum does not have a final material form.⁷³ As a result, I am primarily interested in offering a rhetorical history of the development of the Jewish Museum Berlin project, a history that includes the architectural design as a form of rhetoric that responds to the exigency of the situation, but also is influenced and interpreted by the rhetoric of others that have an interest in the project.

hand, it would be irresponsible to entirely ignore authorship, but to instead think about the emergence of the text in a relay with a series of other relevant elements circulating within a culture, and which bear upon the possibilities of signification of the text. Foucault continues: "We should suspend the typical questions: how does a free subject penetrate the density of things and endow them with meaning; how does it accomplish its design by animating the rules of discourse within? Rather, we should ask: under what conditions and through what forms can an entity like the subject appear in the order of discourse; what positions does it occupy; what functions does it exhibit; and what rules does it follow in each type of discourse?" In essence, the celebration of Libeskind as creator of the *Jewish Museum Berlin*, his visibility in public texts, speaks to a particular configuration of discourse in which the author-function is a convenient way to delimit the museum's signification, or perhaps to enhance the project's profile. It is the specific conditions that make the extreme visibility of Libeskind desirable in the discourses of a number of different publics that will receive more attention in this dissertation project. Michel Foucault, "What is an Author?," *Language, Counter-memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews by Michel Foucault*, ed. Donald F. Bouchard (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1977), 128; 137-38.

⁷³ While I have been influenced by studies emerging from the "material culture" tradition, and in places draw upon the insights of this line of inquiry, I do not see this work as primarily associated with material culture studies. For strong examples of museum studies from this tradition, see Susan M. Pearce, ed., *Museum Studies in Material Culture* (London: Leicester University Press, 1989). Within communication studies, the status of rhetoric in relation to material culture has been the source of some debate. Perspectives range from Michael Calvin McGee's insistence that rhetoric operates as a social force in history (effects and shapes the material world), to Raymie McKerrow's insistence that all material reality is only known through rhetorical exchange, Dana Cloud's insistence that rhetoric distracts, hides, or masks material realities, and Ronald Greene's claim that rhetoric is a part of the material world (i.e., it is the product of a physical/mechanical process), and as such, the proper distinction ought to be drawn between types of material elements in a culture. My personal theoretical proclivities emerge from the last of these perspectives. As a consequence, I am skeptical of the desire to separate the study of material culture from other aspects of culture. Greene's claims that "rhetoric is not epiphenomenal to a governing apparatus but absolutely crucial to its organization since the ability to make visible a population in order that it might calibrate its own behavior is dependent on how rhetoric contributes to panopticism as a technology of power." Greene, "Another Materialist Rhetoric," 31. While I am suspicious of the broad description of governing power provided by Greene, one in which the reader associates a negative connotation to social control, his perspective is helpful insofar as it identifies one of the primary functions of rhetoric as making what seems to be absent visible, and as such, it becomes an object of public deliberation. This interplay of presence and absence, as discussed in the previous section, is a central component of the *Jewish Museum Berlin* project. For resources on this debate, see Dana L. Cloud, "The Materiality of Discourse as Oxymoron: A Challenge to Critical Rhetoric," *Western Journal of Communication* 58, no. 3 (1994): 141-63; Michael Calvin McGee, "A Materialist's Conception of Rhetoric," in *Explorations in Rhetoric: Studies in Honor of Douglas Ehninger*, ed. Ray E. McKerrow (Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman and Co, 1982), 23-48; and Raymie E. McKerrow, "Critical Rhetoric: Theory and Praxis," *Communication Monographs* 56 (1989): 91-111.

The concern for documenting the dynamism of symbols in society is central to any form of rhetorical history. But within this broad rubric, David Zarefsky has suggested four distinct inflections of the phrase “rhetorical history” worth considering. First, a *history of rhetoric* approach documents “the development, from classical times to the present, of principles of effective discourse.”⁷⁴ Second, the *rhetoric of history* investigates that ways in which historical discourse is a form of rhetorical address to a scholarly or human community, an issue toward which we will turn later in this section.⁷⁵ Third, the *historical study of rhetorical events* studies the extent to which rhetoric is either a force in history or a mirror of history, insofar as rendering a history of a speech or speaker provides a supplement and/or rationale for the historical record.⁷⁶ Finally, *the study of historical events from a rhetorical perspective* details the ways in

⁷⁴ David Zarefsky, “Four Senses of Rhetorical History,” in *Doing Rhetorical History: Concepts and Cases*, ed. Kathleen J. Turner (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1998), 26. For a representative sample of recent work in this area, see Takis Poulakos, ed., *Rethinking the History of Rhetoric* (Boulder: Westview, 1993); and Victor J. Vitanza, ed., *Writing Histories of Rhetoric* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1994).

⁷⁵ Although this type of rhetorical history has been conducted by a few scholars in rhetoric, particularly those influenced by the “rhetoric of inquiry” movement of the 1970s and 1980s, intellectual historians documenting the “historical consciousness” of a particular age and its argumentative styles have also contributed much to knowledge of rhetorical style in historical writing. For work within communication see Ronald H. Carpenter, *History as Rhetoric: Style, Narrative, and Persuasion* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1995); E. Culpepper Clark, “Argument and Historical Analysis,” in *Advances in Argumentation Theory and Research*, ed. J. Robert Cox and Charles Arthur Willard (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1982), 298-317; and Allan Megill and Donald N. McCloskey, “The Rhetoric of History,” in *The Rhetoric of the Human Sciences: Language and Argument in Scholarship and Public Affairs*, ed. John S. Nelson, Allan Megill, and Donald N. McCloskey (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987), 221-38. For studies within history, see J. H. Hexter, *Doing History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1971), esp. 15-76; Anthony Pagden, “Rethinking the Linguistic Turn: Current Anxieties in Intellectual History,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 49 (1988): 519-29; and Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), esp. 1-42.

⁷⁶ Both of these possibilities account for a great majority of historical studies of speakers and speeches in rhetoric. For different theoretical accounts of the former (rhetoric as historical force), see Donald C. Bryant, “Some Problems of Scope and Method in Rhetorical Scholarship,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 23 (1937): 182-89; Robert G. Gunderson, “Reflections on History and Rhetorical Criticism,” *Speech Teacher* 35 (October 1986): 408-10; and McGee, “Materialist’s Conception.” The latter is a part of a long lineage of the “history of ideas” tradition in rhetoric, beginning with Ernst Wraga, “Public Address: A Study in Social and Intellectual History,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 33 (1947): 451-57. Wraga’s theoretical exposition is wedded to a strong tradition within intellectual history to document the relationship between historical changes and the ideational capacities of human beings, such as Carl Becker, *The Heavenly City of the Eighteenth-Century Philosophers*, 2nd ed. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003), esp. 1-31; and Johan Huizinga, *Men and Ideas*, trans. James S. Holmes and Hans van

which certain historical phenomenon are always already pregnant with rhetorical content. “In this sense of rhetorical history, the historian views history as a series of rhetorical problems, situations that call for public persuasion to advance a cause or overcome an impasse.”⁷⁷ I identify strongly with this final sense of rhetorical history, understanding how the design of the Jewish Museum Berlin is a rhetorical problem, with its subsequent revisions in form and function as necessary to cope with situational changes and/or new rhetorical challenges.⁷⁸

Rhetorical negotiation, absent from, or at least implicit in, the previous section’s account of the scholarly terrain, performs two functions with regard to this work. First, it confirms the nature of the phenomenon studied herein as an ongoing, mutually influencing process. Negotiation is an activity; it points to attempts to accommodate disparate concerns, values, and propositions through either agonistic posturing or cooperative behavior. As such, the object of study is unstable; it is perhaps not even an “object” in the common use of the term. Insofar as it has some degree of agency with regard to the context of its production, it likely maintains some agency within new contexts of reception as well (including the scholarly context). As Stuart Hall argues with regard to televisual messages:

Marle (New York: Meridian, 1959), esp. 17-76. For another study largely conforming to Wragge’s sense of rhetorical history, see Thomas R. Nilsen, “Interpretive Function of the Critic,” *Western Speech* 21 (Spring 1957): 70-76.

⁷⁷ Zarefsky, “Four Senses of Rhetorical History,” 30.

⁷⁸ One of the distinguishing features of this last version of rhetorical history is the unwillingness to decide between rhetoric as a reflection of historical periods or as constitutive of situations. Instead, one sees in the historical record a series of situations which demand a symbolic negotiation of interests. In the field of intellectual history, Dominick LaCapra has been one of the more important voices for seeing history as a series of rhetorical negotiations. “Language is a signifying practice that is connected, from its emphatic use to its studied avoidance, with other signifying practices in human life. It undercuts the dichotomy between text and context and underscores their sometimes ambivalent interaction. If intellectual history is anything, it is a history of the situated uses of language constitutive of significant texts.” LaCapra, *Rethinking Intellectual History: Texts, Contexts, Language* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1983), 18-19. Within communication, many studies could stand out as histories concerned with the rhetorical aspects of historical events. As such, they bring a lens of interpretation to bear on close historical analysis in order to glean important insights about the theory and practice of rhetoric. For some exemplary book-length studies within visual rhetoric, see Cara A. Finnegan, *Picturing Poverty: Print Culture and FSA Photographs* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian, 2003); Lester C. Olson, *Emblems of American Community in the Revolutionary Era: A Study in Rhetorical Iconology* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian, 1991); and Olson, *Benjamin Franklin’s Vision of American Community: A Study in Rhetorical Iconology* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2004).

The degrees of symmetry – that is, the degrees of ‘understanding’ and ‘misunderstanding’ in the communicative exchange – depend on the degrees of symmetry/asymmetry (relations of equivalence) established between the positions of the ‘personifications’, encoder-producer and decoder-receiver...Once again, this defines the ‘relative autonomy’ but ‘determinateness’ of the entry and exit of the message in its discursive moments.⁷⁹

The encoded message, whether televisual, verbal, or embodied in built form, has an important social force, yet only ultimately succeeds if it can be decoded (exchanged for an ideational equivalent) by the receiver. As such, each encoded message cannot be studied only from the context of production, but must also be accounted for within the context of reception.⁸⁰

Negotiation recognizes that production and reception “are differentiated moments within the totality formed by the social relations of the communicative process as a whole.”⁸¹ In the history of public address studies, there seems to be a strong tendency to fixate on the internal dynamics of the text at the expense of both context and reception.⁸² On the flip side, the field of

⁷⁹ Stuart Hall, “Encoding/decoding,” in *Culture, Media, Language*, ed. Stuart Hall, Dorothy Hobson, Andrew Lowe, and Paul Willis (London: Hutchinson, 1980), 131.

⁸⁰ This concern of joining the study of message production with message reception was raised, in the context of communication, by Samuel L. Becker. “When we focus almost exclusively on major speakers and writers, we tend to overlook the *processes* by which public discourse affects and is affected by the society in which it occurs. We can only get at these processes if we examine more systematically and intensively all of the links (or lines or branches) through which information passes, up to and through the point at which it affects the behaviors of or is used by a meaningful set of the critical audience or society. We must examine these communication processes as they extend over periods of time so that we can understand precisely the long-range effects—the cumulative impact—on the public’s views of the world and their behaviors which are related to those views.” Becker, “Rhetorical Studies for the Contemporary World,” in *The Prospect of Rhetoric: Report of the National Developmental Project*, ed. Lloyd F. Bitzer and Edwin Black (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1971), 25. Although Becker’s conception of effects research seems to be driven by the desire to fuse traditional rhetorical study to empirical research, a goal that is impractical for the scale of historical study conducted here, one ought to heed the call to develop a method of research that treats text, context, audience, and time as all important variables within a larger process of rhetorical negotiation.

⁸¹ Hall, “Encoding/decoding,” 130.

⁸² This concern with the text, usually formulated as a work of art, does not deny situational factors, but tries to see, as Marie Hochmuth Nichols explains, “the free man in his moment of decision, in those moments when he is faced with many alternatives.” She continues: “Great speeches reveal man at the intellectual crossroads of his public life. They are responses to situations that man has had to confront rather than to flee.” Nichols, *Rhetoric and Criticism* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1963), 64. Insofar as such textual analysis discusses context, it becomes an “occasion” that invites the existence of the text, but the text, as art, often overcomes or transforms the surrounding context. As such, a close analysis of the inner workings of that text ought to be the focal point of concern. For discussions and strong examples of close textual interpretation, see Forbes Hill, “Conventional Wisdom—Traditional Form—The President’s Message of November 3, 1969,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 58

intellectual history has, to a large extent, fixated on the agency of the context, arguing that particular texts are “products” or “reflections” of their moment of production.⁸³ Reception studies, recognizing that both textual criticism and intellectual history fixate on the context of production, argues instead for “the reader’s constructive activity, which grasps both the author’s historical context or ‘other’ and the reader’s own models, paradigms, beliefs, and values.”⁸⁴ However, in focusing solely upon practices of interpretation, reception study risks treating rhetorical production of texts as only an enabling moment for subsequent meaning making activities of audiences, ignoring the activity of the text itself.⁸⁵ Instead, understanding the development of the Jewish Museum Berlin project as a form of negotiation distinguishes the concept of work (the museum) from text (the “network of relations interwoven” through a

(1972): 373-86; Michael Leff, “Textual Criticism: The Legacy of G. P. Mohrmann,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 72 (1986): 377-89; and Michael C. Leff and Gerald P. Mohrmann, “Lincoln at Cooper Union: A Rhetorical Analysis of the Text,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 60 (1974): 346-58.

⁸³ This concern is clearly stated by Dominick LaCapra: “The attempt to return a thinker to his own time or to place his texts squarely in the past has often served as a mode of abstract categorization that drastically oversimplifies the problem of historical understanding. Indeed, the rhetoric of contextualization has often encouraged narrowly documentary readings in which the text becomes little more than a sign of the times or a straightforward expression of one larger phenomenon or another. At the limit, this indiscriminate approach to reading and interpretation becomes a detour around texts and an excuse for not really reading them at all.” LaCapra, *Rethinking Intellectual History*, 14. In the context of studies in visual culture, Erwin Panofsky provides one of the most famous examples of this methodological issue. Rather than closely inspecting a series of paintings, Panofsky makes a broad argument about intellectual changes in mathematics and the arts that guide explorations on perspective, with visual materials taking the status of examples confirming this intellectual shift. Erwin Panofsky, *Perspective as Symbolic Form*, trans. Christopher S. Wood (New York: Zone Books, 1997). In recent studies of visual rhetoric, those concerned with the onset of “postmodernity” often treat visual artifacts as a reflection of this cultural condition. See Carole Blair, Marsha S. Jeppeson, and Enrico Pucci, Jr., “Public Memorializing in Postmodernity: The Vietnam Veterans Memorial as Prototype,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 77 (1991): 263-88; and Ekaterina V. Haskins, “‘Put Your Stamp on History’: The USPS Commemorative Program *Celebrate the Century* and Postmodern Collective Memory,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 89 (2003): 1-18.

⁸⁴ James L. Machor and Philip Goldstein, eds., *Reception Study: From Literary Theory to Cultural Studies* (New York: Routledge, 2001), xi.

⁸⁵ This risk seems particularly acute in recent studies on public memory. Taking a cue from Pierre Nora, scholars have occupied themselves with studying the appropriations of an important event or object in subsequent generations of people. In so doing, they have largely treated those materials as static vessels for cultural use. Pierre Nora, “Between Memory and History.” For examples of scholarship with this bias, see Gordon Fyfe and Max Ross, “Decoding the Visitor’s Gaze: Rethinking Museum Visiting,” in Macdonald and Fyfe, *Theorizing Museums*, 127-50; Hasain “Anne Frank”; and Knischewski and Spittler, “Memories of the Second World War.”

controversy, event, question, or project).⁸⁶ It sees the challenge of close historical work as understanding the ever-changing and mutually-influential relationships between the work, audience(s), and their varied surroundings.⁸⁷

Second, rhetorical negotiation points toward a body of literature concerned with two specific types of activity produced through symbols: persuasion and identification. In the former, the “available means of persuasion” are invoked in a particular situation so that receivers are strongly encouraged, insofar as possible, to accept a message.⁸⁸ In the latter, the symbols promote a “consubstantiality” between the receiver and either a single person or a group identification.⁸⁹ These two functions are interdependent. As Edwin Black’s discussion of the “second persona” confirms, the ultimate purpose of the persuasive motive is to move the receiver to become a different type of person, to identify with an idealized self posited through a text. By the same token, the motive of identification is actualized by making a case for it, for providing a

⁸⁶ LaCapra, *Rethinking Intellectual History*, 19. The formative work to push the definition of text in this direction is often recognized as Roland Barthes, “From Work to Text,” in *The Rustle of Language*, trans. Richard Howard (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 56-64.

⁸⁷ As such, I see this methodological move as an attempt to meet the challenge that Dilip Parameshwar Gaonkar gives to rhetorical critics at the end of *Texts in Context*: “The pressing task, for which ‘textual studies’ is ideally suited, is to offer an understanding of ‘contexts’ (non-discursive formations) through a reading of texts (discursive formations) while allowing the text to maintain its integrity as a field of action. The fate of textual studies... will clearly depend on how well we succeed in deciphering what is outside the text by charting what is inside the text without altogether reifying the outside/inside dichotomy.” Gaonkar, “Epilogue: The Oratorical Text: The Enigma of Arrival,” in Leff and Kauffeld, *Texts in Context*, 275. Tony Bennett makes a similar methodological intervention when arguing for the study of “reading formations”: “By a reading formation, I mean a set of discursive and intertextual determinations that organize and animate the practice of reading, connecting texts and readers in specific relations to one another by constituting readers as reading subjects of particular types and texts as objects-to-be-read in particular ways... Texts exist only as always-already organized, or as activated to be read in certain ways, just as readers exist as always-already activated to read in certain ways; neither can be granted a virtual identity that is separable from the determinate ways in which they are gridded onto one another within different reading formations.” Bennett, “Texts in History: The Determinations of Readings and Their Texts,” in Machor and Goldstein, *Reception Theory*, 66-67.

⁸⁸ Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, trans. W. Rhys Roberts, in *The Rhetoric and Poetics of Aristotle* (New York: Modern Library, 1954), 24. Though the number of works influenced by Aristotle is too numerous to mention, an eloquent defense of a traditional view of rhetoric as persuasion occurs in Donald C. Bryant, “Rhetoric: Its Functions and Its Scope,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 39 (1953): 401-24.

⁸⁹ Kenneth Burke, *A Rhetoric of Motives* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), esp. 19-23.

convincing account of an idealized persona.⁹⁰ To fuse both of these characteristics (the agency of the symbol and its motive to promote both persuasion and identification), a method of investigation must track the relationship between a work (the Jewish Museum Berlin project) and its context (Berlin and or German culture) over a certain period of time (the development from model to functional museum).

Stephen Greenblatt's version of "New Historicism," an attempt to resurrect the literary study of texts in relation to their historical context of production, makes a parallel methodological gesture to incorporate the principle of negotiation:

Michael Baxandall has argued recently that "art and society are analytical concepts from two different kinds of categorization of human experience...unhomologous systematic constructions put upon interpenetrating subject matters." In consequence, he suggests, any attempt to relate the two must first "modify one of the terms until it matches the other, but keeping note of what modification has been necessary since this is a necessary part of one's information." It is imperative that we acknowledge the modification and find a way to measure its degree, for it is only in such measurements that we can hope to chart the relationship between art and society. Such an admonition is important—methodological self-consciousness is one of the distinguishing marks of the new historicism in cultural studies as opposed to a historicism based upon faith in the transparency of signs and interpretive procedures—but it must be supplemented by an understanding that the work of art is not itself a pure flame that lies at the source of our speculations. Rather the work of art is itself the product of a set of manipulations, some of them our own..., many others undertaken in the construction of the original work. That is, the work of art is the product of a negotiation between a creator or a class of creators, equipped with a complex, communally shared repertoire of conventions, and the institutions and practices of society. In order to achieve the negotiation, artists need to create a currency that is valid for a meaningful, mutually profitable exchange. It is important to emphasize that the process involves not simply appropriation but exchange, since the existence of art always implies at return, a return normally measured in pleasure and interest.⁹¹

Just like the literary work, the design, function, and display of a museum are never pure; they are a product of mixed public interests and generative insights. The museum's perceived ability to

⁹⁰ Edwin Black, "The Second Persona."

⁹¹ Stephen Greenblatt, "Towards a Poetics of Culture," in *The New Historicism*, ed. H. Aram Veeseer (New York: Routledge, 1989), 11-12.

generate interest and pleasure in relation to a set of exerted contextual pressures determines its symbolic exchange value, a culturally specific judgment made about the relative utility of the object. The reception and interpretation of these texts, in relation to shifting cultural values and audiences, change over time. However, Greenblatt's description ought to be supplemented with an account of the object's dynamism as a rhetorical force of persuasion and identification. "Thus, to speak of the social production of 'literature' or of any particular text is to signify not only that it is socially produced but also that it is socially productive—that it is the product of work and that it performs work in the process of being written, enacted, or read."⁹²

Of course, such an investigation must, to maintain coherence, take the form a narrative telling, a history of the formation of the object of scholarly knowledge, in this case the Jewish Museum Berlin. In the telling of that history, a recount of the object's emergence in relation to other culturally bound objects, desires, and peoples, certain "lessons" concerning public interests, cultural images, and the process of development itself can be passed to other scholars with which to be argued and of which to be made use in subsequent works. "The historian's aim is hermeneutical; that is, to re-enact past thought in terms compatible with present understanding. It is this hermeneutical act that transforms the historian into a rhetorical agent, obligated to argue the past record in a way that makes sense, to forge, as it were, a usable past."⁹³ In other words, in the selection of facts disclosed, the interpretation of those facts, their order of presentation, and claims made about their significance, one is not only recovering a past, but also making that past understandable and important to the present. Even in the recounting of one's disciplinary history, the selection and organization of material is not "empirical" or value neutral; it serves the interest

⁹² Louis A. Montrose, "The Poetics and Politics of Culture," in Veenser, *The New Historicism*, 23.

⁹³ Clark, "Argument and Historical Analysis," 301.

of a particular trajectory of the field's development.⁹⁴ However, such a position is not necessarily cause for concern, as if the only appropriate method of historical work were the recovery of original "climates of opinion."⁹⁵ Instead, "historians are involved in the effort to understand both what something meant in its own time and what it may mean for us today."⁹⁶ In the selection of the principle work, in demarcating a period of history telling, and in making judgment about the proper audience, the rhetorical historian makes judgments designed to draw out "the fullest rhetorical potentialities" of the text as it relates to contemporary scholarship and, on that basis, determine its relative value.⁹⁷

A brief recapitulation of the main methodological presumptions, up to this point, seems to be appropriate. A rhetorical history of the Jewish Museum Berlin would focus primarily on how the museum, its use, and its display, functions symbolically within the various contexts of its development, though attention to specific material qualities will inevitably occur. Given the four different types of rhetorical history offered by Zarefsky, the most desirable choice is the study of historical events from a rhetorical perspective. The specific term used in this study, rhetorical negotiation, makes two key methodological commitments that parallel the concerns of "New Historicism" in literary circles. First, "negotiation" signifies a process of mutual influence between a work, its audiences, and their varied embedded contexts over a period of time, and as

⁹⁴ Carole Blair, "Contested Histories of Rhetoric: The Politics of Preservation, Progress, and Change," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 78 (1992): 403-28; and Carole Blair and Mary Kahl, "Introduction: Revising the History of Rhetorical Theory," *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 54 (1990): 148-59.

⁹⁵ For a strong argument for the impossibility of historical recovery, see Carl Becker, *Heavenly City*, 1-31.

⁹⁶ LaCapra, *Rethinking Intellectual History*, 18.

⁹⁷ Edwin Black, *Rhetorical Criticism: A Study in Method* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1978), 89. Though often touted as a champion of rhetorical criticism against rhetorical history, Stephen Lucas argues that Black did not suggest an a-historical account of speeches, but instead, a broader view of historical context instead of a fixation on the immediate situation. Stephen E. Lucas, "The Schism in Rhetorical Scholarship," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 67 (1981): 6n13. A similar view concerning the relationship between history and criticism in the field of intellectual history is expressed by Dominick LaCapra, *History and Criticism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985), esp. 135-42.

such, the study must balance the study of production with the process of reception. Second, as “rhetorical,” one focuses on the different ways in which persuasion and identification are fostered in the process of negotiation. In writing a rhetorical history of this historical event, I not only document history, but also make that history speak to the present, particularly for scholarly audiences. Such a perspective merges the historical with the critical, the documentary with a judgment of a text’s “value” for contemporary audiences.

In practical terms, performing a rhetorical history of the Jewish Museum Berlin project required the consultation of several types of resources, synthesizing them into a developmental narrative consistent with the significant developments of previous scholarship. In the process of conducting research, I have privileged four main types of sources. General secondary sources helped to provide a context for understanding the scholarly reception of the museum, particularly in the architectural community and within cultural studies. I have tried to compile every significant scholarly source in English on the Jewish Museum Berlin, along with a select set of secondary sources in professional magazines in both English and German. While not all material compiled or consulted is cited in this study, the most important works that I wish to engage are noted.

I spent six weeks examining Daniel Libeskind’s architectural design materials at the Getty Research Institute in order to trace the context of production for the proposed extension building to the Berlin Museum. For architectural drawings, I took photographs of the material for later use. Notebooks were not photographed, but extensive notes were taken, including transcription of significant quotations found in them. Daniel Libeskind’s unpublished and informally published architectural writings archived by the Getty Research Library were also read, and if relevant, passages were transcribed into a word document for later reference.

While at the Getty Center, I also had the opportunity to read correspondence to and from Daniel and Nina Libeskind concerning the museum from 1989 to 1992, which provided significant insight into the political climate during the immediate post-reunification period. The entire collection of correspondence was read and notes were taken on the general contents of every unique letter. For significant letters written in German, either transcriptions or photographs were created for later reference.

Finally, I compiled a significant amount of print media about the Jewish Museum Berlin project. Early commentary (1988-1994) I collected by searching Berlin newspaper collections on microfilm at the Berliner Stadtbibliothek during known periods of public conversation based upon the secondary source research. Later articles (1995 and after) were drawn from the Jewish Museum Berlin's extensive archive of press materials about the museum. For these articles, copies or scans were made of the microfilm or originals that seemed to include important editorial content about the museum, or were documenting specific events in the museum's development. The articles were sorted by period (chapter), then by theme. On occasion, articles were moved to a different chapter's materials if they seemed to comment directly upon a core issue for that chapter (integration, genre, etc.). For international coverage, I conducted Lexis-Nexis news searches using the search term "Jewish Museum Berlin." International articles were sorted in chronological order as well, but were not integrated into the thematic German language materials – they were instead added after many of the chapter outlines had been established in order to keep the English language materials from dominating the thematic progression of conversation about the project.

While my German language capability is adequate for reading and interpreting news coverage, great care has been taken to insure the accuracy of all quoted or cited information. In

all cases, articles were read for theme, then I translated key passages in order to verify that the information cited was correct. In cases where German language is directly quoted in the dissertation, I place my translation in the text, but the footnotes contain the original German language. While I recognize that such precautions may not have precluded all errors of translation and interpretation, nor could they have prevented significant omissions from the study, I have tried to be respectful and responsible in my use of German language materials, and have documented extensively my work for interested researchers to verify.

1.3 PREVIEW OF CHAPTERS

Consistent with the methodological orientation outlined in the previous section, the chapters of the dissertation follow the historical development of the Jewish Museum Berlin project. Although a set of global research questions justify the overall project, individual chapters address questions particularly salient to the material treated. Each chapter focuses on specific period of the museum's development from a model proposal for a building in 1988 to its completion, curation, and first years of public use. Though a careful effort is made to offer a strong chronological narrative of particular issues, the reader ought to be aware of two exceptions. First, in order to orient the reader with some of the broader transformations occurring in Berlin during this period and some of the long-lasting contextual issues, it is on occasion necessary to reference events, objects, and persons outside of each timeframe. Second, though transformations occur within these particular time periods, each chapter treats the period thematically, that is, as a synchronic "slice of time" within the larger narrative of the museum's development. Of course, consistent with the desire to meld historical study with an examination

of internal tensions characteristic of the study of controversy, I try to remain sensitive to some of the inconsistencies, tensions, and slippages within each themed period. Taken overall, such a perspective provides a textured, multi-layered history of the Jewish Museum Berlin project, as well as its relationship to various audiences, the city, and the broader German cultural context in which it resides.

Chapter Two, “Before the Fall,” details the design competition for the “Jewish Department Extension to the Berlin Museum.” The post-war period was a tumultuous time for telling the history of Jewish persecution, particularly the Holocaust, in West Germany. A number of German academics were interested in recovering the memories of wartime atrocities committed against the German people, an experience shared amongst families but not prominent in the official history of World War II. These tensions in West German public memory played an explicit role in the directive for the museum extension to acknowledge symbolically the absence of a strong Jewish community in the city and the causes of that situation. The competition, which began in 1988, was the result of a several different economic, social, and political factors. Due to the increasing collections of the Berlin Museum, the Collegienhaus was too confined to display any of it comprehensively, requiring a rotation of materials and the use of other museums (like the Martin Gropius Bau) in order to satisfy the need for display space.

How could one make such a profound absence in the city present in the architecture without alienating the various publics represented by the competition committee members? Daniel Libeskind’s winning proposal, “Between the Lines,” responded to the specific issues raised by the need for the extension, while also transforming the competition committee’s vision for an extension to the city museum. In Libeskind’s interpretation, the fate of both Germans and Jews were inevitably intertwined in the construction of the city community. “In the end, even

city architect Franziska Eichstadt-Böhlig agreed that perhaps it was time to ‘face up to the interpenetration of German and Jewish history after having repressed it for 40 years.’”⁹⁸ Through the use of the rhetoric of anticipatory illumination, Libeskind was able to successfully navigate the interests of different publics involved in the process and to articulate a “hope for a common vision,” according to the words of the competition committee.

Chapter Three, “Designing a Symbol Open to the Future,” performs a close reading of Daniel Libeskind’s Hannover Address in December of 1989, which has been subsequently reprinted in several sources. I compare Libeskind’s professed design inspirations from the speech to the evidence available through print sources and other unpublished archives to figure out in what ways those inspirations were directly transposed into the lineaments of the museum. After close examination, I conclude that Libeskind’s use of a matrix of addresses from prominent Jews that lived in Berlin, his references to Arnold Schönberg’s *Moses und Aron*, his interest in the gedenkbuch, and his passion for Walter Benjamin’s *Einbahnstrasse* should be more properly characterized as preparatory exercises rather than direct influences on the specific lineaments of the architectural design (as they are often mistaken to be). By reframing his design process in this way, I conclude that it is much easier to understand the architecture as an open-ended symbol of the coming Berlin, harkening back to Bloch’s description of anticipatory illumination.

Chapter Four, “Cancellation,” details the period between the fall of the Berlin Wall on November 12, 1989 and the groundbreaking for the museum on November 9, 1992. Nearly all of the original rationales for the museum extension project no longer apply. The reunification of Berlin has eliminated the redundancy of two city museums, making more display room readily available. The economic cost of re-linking the city’s infrastructure makes the idea of building a

⁹⁸ Young, “Daniel Libeskind,” 13-14.

very expensive extension to the museum undesirable. The end of the Cold War destabilizes the political identity of both East and West Berlin; it no longer provides a stage for the ideological struggle between communism and its other. And the political climate of the early reunification period is defined by an increasingly outward nationalist contingent that is not interested in projects that dwell too heavily upon the traumatic past. The combination of these pressures makes the project expendable; it is threatened with cancellation.

How can the museum extension project continue to be viable and relevant to these diverse publics given changing political and social conditions? The Jewish Museum Berlin project provides a strong case study to account for the multiplicity of publics and the peculiarities of Hauser's formulation of the vernacular public sphere. Libeskind and his wife Nina enlist the support of the international media and powerful diplomatic leaders to pressure the city against cancellation. A few high profile architecture events and book publications help to circulate the designs and build public support for the project. The local public in West Berlin becomes engaged over the proper way to display Jewish history, though East Berlin remains largely absent from the conversation. These different strategies, targeted to different audiences with interest in the project, work to make the museum extension necessary, desirable, and relevant to Berliners' vision of their reunited city.

Chapter Five, "Dilemmas and Distrust" covers the period between early 1993 and the beginning of 1998. With the building underway, most of the architectural design issues have been settled. But the project was approved without a clear sense of the interior's design and purpose. Berlin Museum officials and Amon Barzel, the director of the Jewish Museum Extension to the Berlin Museum, clash over the degree of either autonomy or integration the displays ought to give to Jewish culture in relation to dominant German culture. Each

participating party in the conversation, German officials and Jewish Berliners, find themselves stuck in double binds. The first, experienced by the Jewish community, is a concern that the museum seeks to assimilate their history and that they cannot preserve their diasporic distinctness. The second, experienced by both, is a double bind related to the perceived behavior of majority and minority groups in a multicultural society. With the conflict between Berlin Museum officials and Barzel seeming to become irresolvable, the Berlin museum administration decides to relieve Barzel of his duties as director toward the end of 1997. However, a few months later, the hiring of W. Michael Blumenthal provides an opportunity to resolve the double binds faced by the parties in this controversy. Blumenthal proposes an autonomous museum that features 2000 years of German-Jewish history, making proponents of the integration model happy, while dispelling the fears of the Jewish community.

Chapter Six, “Museum or Memorial,” covers the period between 1998 and the museum’s opening in 2001. The museum project is overshadowed by the 1997 competition for a Holocaust memorial in Berlin. The winning design, Peter Eisenman’s *Memorial for the Murdered Jews of Europe*, creates an enormous amount of public controversy concerning both the design (several city blocks of tomb-like concrete pillars) and the motivation by the national government to fund the project. As the government makes its move from Bonn to Berlin, the city again takes the form of a cultural symbol of Germany to both the national public and the rest of the world. In this context, public calls to use the Libeskind building as a memorial rather than a museum make their way into the press. Given Libeskind’s own description of the architecture as a memorial/museum hybrid, the cultural context makes dismissal of these proposals difficult. The opening of the finished Libeskind building to the public for architectural tours prior to curation only magnify the sentiment that his building would be best served used as a Holocaust memorial.

In the face of this new challenge, W. Michael Blumenthal, curators of the museum, and Libeskind himself design a strategy to sell the Jewish Museum Berlin to the public and re-establish the architecture as a proper generic hybrid. The museum will tell a 2000 year history of Jewish life in Germany and surrounding countries with visitors walking a timeline from the distant past to the contemporary era. Conveniently, such a move also distances Libeskind's architectural design for the museum, heavily inspired by a confrontation with the Holocaust, from the concurrent design controversies facing Eisenman's memorial, by downplaying the extent to which the Holocaust is part of the central design concern of Libeskind's building. The chapter helps supplement current scholarship on genre by seeing genre definition as subject to public controversy, rather than described by the critic or the intent of an author.

Chapter Seven, "A Doubled Heterotopia," tries to think retrospectively about the nature of the changes from Libeskind's proposal to the eventual finished product, and in so doing, lends insights into rhetorics of space and vision in a rapidly transforming culture. Using Michel Foucault's concept of "heterotopias" to understand the rhetorical power of a building's disposition, it is argued that the finished Jewish Museum Berlin contains two heterotopias, one within the other. The first is Daniel Libeskind's original building design in relation to the surrounding city, but the second is the placement of an art installation, Menashe Kadishman's "Shalechet," in a central location within the museum. The doubling of heterotopian space uses dialectical-rhetorical transcendence to build identification with the museum's message for an increasingly international audience, and is consistent with W. Michael Blumenthal's decision to create an autonomous museum that can speak to broader issues concerning multicultural tolerance.

The final chapter draws some preliminary conclusions from the Jewish Museum Berlin project as they might inform some of the theoretical and methodological predispositions when thinking through rhetorical histories. It also speaks to the power of the rhetoric of anticipatory illumination as a way to arbitrate between competing courses of action in public art and architectural projects. The instability of the object, exemplified in the radical transformation of Libeskind's design from an extension of the Berlin Museum to an autonomous Jewish Museum Berlin, ought to alert scholars to the difficulty of historical study. Between the appeal to the immediate situation and the assertion of a timeless artistic object, it behooves scholars to think closely about the long-term influences of rhetorical production and its continued relevance (or re-configured symbolism) to a dynamic and constantly transforming culture. The meaning of a symbolic artifact is constantly undergoing revision and negotiation with its embedded context, and it would serve scholars well to become *more* historical, certainly *more* time sensitive, and perhaps *more* tentative in the conclusions of their work. Yet, underneath these instabilities, we found in this project a consistent trope of persuasive appeal that seemed to be effective. Thus, even while the specific vision changes, the appeal for a more hopeful, common vision of the future, embodied in a work of art, can be a powerful argument to advance the interests of a particular project.

This study tries to think about the particulars of the Jewish Museum Berlin's development as an opportunity to test the validity of previous theoretical and methodological developments. But more than that, any good, careful case study ought to be theoretically additive and potentially generative in a variety of ways. Thus, each chapter takes up a theoretical concern and explores it using a segment of the case. At the same time, there is a constant narrative thread running through the background about the rhetoric of hope and the practical articulation of

anticipatory illumination as a form of argument in particular circumstances. I by no means believe that the perspectives identified in this work are exhaustive of other potential insights of the case; the complexities of lived experience often exceed our ability to analyse and describe them. However, I do hope that the narrative has fidelity to the facts “on the ground,” so to speak, while trying to put those facts in dialogue with important concepts in communication and cultural studies. Of course, one of the most difficult decisions one must make when telling a story is choosing where to begin, but it is to my chosen beginning that we must now turn.

2.0 BEFORE THE FALL

On June 22 and 23 of 1989, a committee of architects, scholars, and city workers met to judge 161 different competition entries from all over the world for an extension to be built to the Berlin Museum that would house, among other things, the Jewish Museum department. Announced in December 1988, the architectural competition was the culmination of over fifteen years of advocacy by successive Directors of the Berlin Museum and the Society for a Jewish Museum in Berlin to house a permanent collection on Jewish life and culture in the city museum.⁹⁹ Although the spatial requirements and contents of display had been laid out through careful deliberations among politicians, curators, and Berlin's Jewish community, the committee chose an entry that did not closely adhere to the competition guidelines for the Berlin Museum extension. According to the meeting minutes, entry 1021, submitted by Daniel Libeskind, provided both "a chance and a provocation for Berlin" regarding the memory of its Jewish community. Libeskind's conceptual approach did not define the uses of the interior as specified by the competition guidelines, yet the committee found this decision to be both beneficial to the curation of the

⁹⁹ Irmgard Wirth, Berlin Museum, letter to Werner Stein, Senator for Science and Art, January 6, 1972, and "Charter of the 'Society for a Jewish Museum in Berlin e.V.,'" February 1976, reprinted in *Das Jüdische Museum im Stadtmuseum Berlin: Eine Dokumentation*, ed. Martina Weinland and Kurt Winkler (Berlin: Nicolai, 1997), 88-9; 106.

museum and relatively unimportant compared to the design's "aggressive dialog with its heterogeneous surroundings."¹⁰⁰

How could the competition committee seemingly disregard the specific functions of the museum articulated in the competition guidelines in favor of Libeskind's theoretical approach, especially given the extensive time and intellectual energy previously devoted to defining those museum extension functions? Another passage from the committee's meeting notes is instructive:

The work persuades through its conceptual approach. Berlin should again be united with its past "that it should never be allowed to forget." Invisibility should again become visible in order to allow the emergence of a new hope for a common vision. The substantial connection of Berlin and Jewish history is transmitted by [the design's] room arrangement and range of room motion. The building form is an analogical copy of the interior design.¹⁰¹

The use of "persuade" [überzeugt] indicates that Libeskind's design somehow convinced the committee to have a different perspective on the significance of the museum extension than the members held previous to their deliberations. They became convinced that Berlin should be reconnected with its past, particularly the history of its Jewish community, and that his built form could be a spatial enactment of the reconnection process. While the purpose of the extension was, in part, to put the history of Jewish culture in Berlin on permanent display, it was downplayed in the competition brief for the Berlin Museum extension. Libeskind's design seems to go farther in the eyes of the competition committee – it makes the contemporary "invisibility" of Jewish culture visible in Berlin by physically embodying absence, and that such an absence

¹⁰⁰ Dariusz Cierpiatkowski and Carina Keil, "Ergebnisprotokoll der Sitzung des Preisgerichts am 22. Juni und 23. Juni 1989," p. 7, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 26, Folder 4.

¹⁰¹ Ibid. [Die Arbeit überzeugt durch ihren konzeptionellen Ansatz. Berlin soll wieder mit seiner Vergangenheit verbunden werden, 'die niemals vergessen werden darf'. Die Unsichtbarkeit soll wieder sichtbar gemacht werden, um neue Hoffnung auf eine gemeinsame Vision entstehen zu lassen. Berliner und jüdische Geschichte werden in ihrer inhaltlichen Verknüpfung in Raumfolgen und -bewegungen übersetzt. Die Gebäudegestalt ist analoger Ausdruck der inneren Konzeption.]

ought the *central concern* of the extension project, not just one issue among many. This concern was also expressed in the conception of an integrative historical model for the interior displays (thus, the suggestion that the exterior modeled the agreed upon concept for the interior). Finally, the committee believed that entry 1021 addresses the overarching reason *why* Berlin needs to both connect with its Jewish past and acknowledge its consignment to invisibility in post-War Berlin: such a gesture, enacted through the architectural design and its subsequent curation, offers “new hope for a *common* vision.”

Insofar as one can trust the minutes of the competition committee to provide an accurate reason for decision, I argue that Libeskind’s design taps into a set of latent sensitivities by West Germans regarding cultural fragmentation in order to advance an open-ended vision of post-War German identity. Given the division of the city (and the German nation) at that time and the Federal Republic of Germany’s policy on a united nation, building a “common” vision, which the above passage identifies as the *raison d’être* in the committee’s decision, would be an easily tapped commonplace value for persuasive purposes.¹⁰² However, in deploying this particular commonplace, the committee suggests that Libeskind’s “Between the Lines” design did not constitute another example of the presumption that West Germans were “yearning to roll back history” regarding the post-war division of Germany into two nations.¹⁰³ They were instead focused on a hope for a common vision, suggesting an as-yet-undefined concept of unity enabled by the inventive dialogue of museum extension proposal with its surroundings. What was known

¹⁰² Richard McKeon, “Creativity and the Commonplace,” *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 6 (1973): 199-210.

¹⁰³ Serge Schmemmann, “Despite New Stirrings, Dream of ‘One Germany’ Fades,” *New York Times*, May 14, 1989. The *New York Times* article tries to debunk the international (read: American) perception that West Germans want political unification, suggesting that the population had largely accepted division. Instead, Schmemmann argues that West Germans wanted to build “a peaceful Europe in which borders fall naturally, and in which people of the two Germanies live and mingle.” In essence, political fragmentation had been accepted by West Germans, regardless of official positions, as a political reality, and the task would be to build some sort of European unity within fragmentation. Given that the article was printed just a few months before the fall of the Berlin Wall, the last line seems to foretell coming events: “the wall may only come down when the West Germans finally recognize it.”

as “deconstructive” architectural design in the mid-to-late 1980s, a school of thought with which Daniel Libeskind was associated at that time, paralleled the physical, political, and spiritual existence of Berlin.¹⁰⁴ Rather than lament or struggle against division, Libeskind conceptualized Jewish and Berlin history as both “fractures and congruencies” that must be embraced and worked through in the process of building a new “common vision.”¹⁰⁵

This distinction between a future-oriented hope for a coming unity and the past-looking lamentation of a lost cultural identity in Germany not only formed the conceptual backbone of Libeskind’s “Between the Lines” design and the committee’s decision, it also will become instrumental resource for subsequent decisions about the continued funding and use of what will become the “Jewish Museum Berlin.” According to Ernst Bloch, the principle of hope is necessarily directed toward the future, “it grasps the New as something that is mediated in what exists and is in motion, although to be revealed the New demands the most extreme effort of will.”¹⁰⁶ While the committee accepted the broad outlines of Libeskind’s rationale to embrace hope, their desire for a future common vision (something “New” in the language of Bloch), the contents of that vision are not fully defined. I argue that the controversies covered in subsequent chapters of this study are attempts to wrestle with and eventually clarify the future vision of which Libeskind’s design is an anticipatory illumination. The committee invoked the disposition that “art drives its materials in actions, situations, or forms to an end,” and the documents that Libeskind submitted to the competition for the Berlin Museum extension argued that absence

¹⁰⁴ For a broad range of writings associated with deconstruction as an architectural moment, including examples of Libeskind’s work immediately preceding his involvement in the design of the Berlin Museum extension, see Andreas Papadakis, Catherine Cooke and Andrew Benjamin, eds., *Deconstruction: Omnibus Volume* (London: Academy Editions, 1989).

¹⁰⁵ Cierpiatowski and Keil, “Ergebnisprotokoll,” 7.

¹⁰⁶ Ernst Bloch, *The Principle of Hope*, Vol. 1, trans. Neville Plaice, Stephen Plaice and Paul Knight (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1986), 4.

and fragmentation, which formed part of the cultural condition of a divided Berlin, could be rearranged through visual-spatial form into a hopeful vision of a coming, unified community.¹⁰⁷

In order to understand both how Libeskind's design and written proposal for the Berlin museum extension deployed the rhetorical commonplace of unity (conceptualized here as a kinship of history and of the human condition between Jews and Germans) and why this perspective would have persuaded the competition committee, the chapter will provide a thick description of the cultural context in which the museum extension project was embedded. That context will be supplemented with a history of the development of the Jewish Museum Department within the Berlin Museum and some significant protocols for the building competition. Finally, the chapter will address Libeskind's design proposal materials as a proposed illumination of a common vision for Berlin performed by the spatial and conceptual reconnection of the city with the history of its estranged Jewish diaspora. The conclusion will reflect upon the argumentative power of "hope," as embodied in Libeskind's architecture. By outlining the commitments and argumentative patterns that led members of the competition committee to accept Libeskind's building proposal, the argumentative commitments laid out in this chapter become both sites of invention and constraint as various stakeholders attempted to shape the development of what eventually becomes the Jewish Museum Berlin.

¹⁰⁷ Bloch, "Art and Society," 73.

2.1 MAKING WEST GERMANY

A headline on the top of the city section of the Berlin *Volksblatt*, a publication closely aligned with the “Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands” (SPD), reads for the 30th of June, 1989 that “CDU [Christlich Demokratische Union] fears ‘the disintegration of national identity’.”¹⁰⁸ The article outlined objections that the CDU had to a law implemented nine days prior, with the strong support of the SPD, to grant permanent residence status to classes of asylum-seekers that have lived in West Germany over five years. While the CDU certainly did not oppose all forms of immigration, the party was worried about the national and religious origins of the asylum seekers (non-European and non-Christian) as being a threat to the cohesion of social unity based on the shared values of the Christian tradition. The CDU may have had control of the national legislature, but its partner party in the ruling coalition, the Freie Demokratische Partei (FDP), parted with the CDU on this issue.

The political outcry, which occurred only days after the competition committee for the Berlin Museum extension had made its decision, reveals much about the contentious politics of national identity in West Germany, and consequently, forms a backdrop for the difficulties in discussing the notions of unity and integration that became so important to the Berlin Museum extension project. Rather than just an outbreak of thinly-veiled bigotry, it is possible to relate this political position in 1989 to foundational political narratives of the CDU. To be fair, a publication such as the *Volksblatt*, associated closely with party politics of the SPD, would be expected to exaggerate the claims of the CDU, but it should not be entirely discounted. If the

¹⁰⁸ “CDU fürchtet ‘Auflösung der nationalen Identität’,” *Volksblatt* (Berlin), June 30, 1989. The SPD and the CDU constitute what might be best considered the center-left and the center-right of the West German political spectrum during the summer of 1989. The CDU had control of the national government, though the SPD was temporarily the majority party in West Berlin.

characterization of the CDU can be trusted to some extent, then one can say that they advanced a vision of national identity based on the religious commonality, a vision that seems to be an essential part of the history of the party and its platform. In much the same way that immigration politics in the United States has also been a debate over national identity and the fear of losing social cohesion, the CDU platform seems to have feared the loss of common values that have supposedly sustained the West German nation since its inception in 1949.¹⁰⁹

While such a vision certainly would not be shared by all Germans, the national narrative supplied by the CDU, especially as operationalized in the governance of Konrad Adenauer, had a strong influence in the formation and policies of the early West German state. The final days of World War II absolutely devastated Germany's economic and social infrastructure. The Battle of Berlin, the decisive blow to the National Socialist regime, ended in early May 1945. For the German population, the end of the war did not bring the end of hardship. The country dealt with massive food shortages, along with the plundering and violence of the occupying forces.¹¹⁰ Within a few months, the lines of occupation had stabilized with a four part division of both the city of Berlin and the German nation.¹¹¹ The CDU was founded in the British zone in early 1946 and was intimately connected to the crafting of the German Federal Constitution, which consolidated the West German state out of the French, British, and American zones of

¹⁰⁹ The *Grundgesetz*, or West German Constitution, was adopted in May 1949, with the first elections taking place in September of the same year. Keith Bullivant and C. Jane Rice, "Reconstruction and Integration: The Culture of West German Stabilization 1945 to 1968," in *German Cultural Studies: An Introduction*, ed. Rob Burns (New York: Oxford, 1995), 212.

¹¹⁰ With many of the men killed during the war, forced rape and prostitution of German women were commonplace occurrences. Anthony Beevor, "They Raped Every German Female from 8 to 80," *The Guardian* (UK), (May 1, 2002): G6; and Norman M. Naimark, *The Russians in Germany: A History of the Soviet Zone of Occupation, 1945-1949* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 1990).

¹¹¹ "In legal terms, sovereignty passed to the United Nations (the name for the wartime coalition from January 1942): in practice to four occupying powers, the USA, the USSR, Britain and France, operating through the military commanders in the Allied Control Council." Harold James, *A German Identity, 1770-1990* (London: Wiedenfeld and Nicolson, 1989), 161.

occupation.¹¹² Building its image on a presumed political break with the politics of materialism (embodied in both left-socialist and Nazi doctrine), the CDU gained both the trust of the Western Allies and won control of the West German government in the 1949 federal elections.

Konrad Adenauer, the West German Chancellor from 1949 until 1963, was one of the founding members of the CDU and its most prominent spokesperson in the early years of the Federal Republic of Germany. In an epilogue to a 1957 book about him, Adenauer outlined the vision of the West German nation from the perspective of the CDU. “Let there be an end to that period in which German intellectual life was based on a materialistic spirit pervading civilization and government. The roots of National Socialism reach deep into this philosophy.”¹¹³ Regardless of the correctness of Adenauer’s diagnosis of the roots of National Socialism, his contrast between the materialists and the new unity for Germany is quite important for understanding his public position for the purpose and goals of the Federal Republic. He continues:

In place of materialism, we must return to the Christian view of life, the views and principles which grow out of the materialistic philosophy must be replaced with the principles of Christian ethics....We consider Christianity’s profound view of human dignity, of the value of the individual, as the basis and guiding criterion of our efforts for the political, economic and cultural rehabilitation of our nation.¹¹⁴

If contemporaneous audiences accepted Adenauer’s distinction between the material and spiritual as significant for a post-war German unity, then the introduction of immigrant groups, especially those not familiar with important tenets of the Christian tradition, might easily be perceived as a serious threat to a guiding national narrative essential for West Germany’s image as a nation no longer susceptible to the swoon of authoritarian materialism, embodied for

¹¹² Terence Prittie, *The Velvet Chancellors: A History of Post-War Germany* (London: Frederick Muller Ltd., 1979), 38.

¹¹³ Konrad Anenauer, “Epilogue: Germany and the Western World,” in Edgar Alexander, *Adenauer and the New Germany: The Chancellor of the Vanquished* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, 1957), 289.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 289-90.

Adenauer in National Socialism. While Adenauer's narrative is technically consistent with the guest worker policies of the 1950s and 1960s in West Germany (the working lifeblood of the economic boom experienced during that period), the proposed changes that upset CDU politicians in 1989 were a product of the failure of those policies. Immigrant populations invited to come as temporary workers or asylum seekers now made the Federal Republic their home, and naturally began to request that they be recognized as citizens of and contributors to West German society.¹¹⁵ In essence, the CDUs economic policies designed to strengthen West Germany ended up creating social anxieties about ethnic difference and the spiritual essence of "Germanness."

Obviously, the SPD (and other leftist parties) disagreed with the CDUs sentiment, but this dispute shows, in microcosm, how the narratives deployed to confront National Socialism (and to convince occupying forces to grant West German independence) had lasting impacts upon German national identity formation. National Socialism casted a long shadow over the Federal Republic. Even before its formation, France, Great Britain, and the United States implemented individual denazification programs – designed around changing the political landscape and intense reeducation for Germans in their sectors. However, they also commonly included the attempted obliteration of the manufacturing base and military capabilities of occupied territories. Due to resistance from the German population and the perceived emerging threat posed by the Soviet control of eastern German territories, harsh economic policies were quickly suspended, and local political formations that opposed socialist groups were supported by the Allies.¹¹⁶ The political narrative of rebirth of Adenauer and the CDU, which used *stunde*

¹¹⁵ Philip L. Martin, "Germany: Reluctant Land of Immigration," in *Controlling Immigration: A Global Perspective*, ed. Wayne A. Cornelius, Philip L. Martin, and James F. Hollifield (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1994), 189-225.

¹¹⁶ For a description of denazification policy in the United States zone, see Frank A. Ninkovich, *Germany and the United States: The Transformation of the German Question Since 1945*, rev. ed. (New York: Twayne, 1995), 26-47.

null (“zero hour” – referring to the moment of surrender by the Third Reich) as the common reference point for a radical break in the development of Germany, repudiated both Nazi and socialist politics as spiritually and morally bankrupt. That position gave Western nations both comfort in West German independence and a front-line ally in the quickly forming Cold War political landscape. The support of the Marshall Plan and currency reform stabilized the West German economy, but the declaration of its full sovereignty in 1955 and its quick inclusion in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) led to the country’s remilitarization.

In becoming NATO members we have assumed...the obligation to share in the defense of the West.... What this means for us is that the need to rebuild our military establishment out of nothing...amounts to the tremendous opportunity of a “zero hour,” a new beginning.¹¹⁷

While reviling the authoritarian character of the eastern countries under the influence of the Soviet Union, West Germany sought to build a European Community with its neighbors to the west, with economic cooperation as the vehicle for realizing that vision.¹¹⁸ By the time Adenauer left office in 1963, West Germany had become an economic powerhouse with a strong standing army – an absolutely indispensable ally to the Western countries in the Cold War.¹¹⁹

Even with the political power of the *stunde null* narrative to recuperate the political trust of the Western allies in the new Federal Republic, the narrative’s relationship to public memory of the Holocaust is not entirely consistent with a “re-born” nation starting from nothing. Other than political retribution, the most obvious goal of the denazification programs undertaken by the allies was to rid German society of the influence of National Socialist political doctrine. The openness of the Nürnberg Trials sought to put war crimes on display for the entire country as

¹¹⁷ Adenauer, “Epilogue,” 294.

¹¹⁸ Adenauer, “Epilogue, 296-7; Mark Blacksell, *Post-War Europe: A Political Geography*, 2nd ed (London: Hutchinson, 1981), 132-77.

¹¹⁹ For an admittedly negative view of the “economic miracle” in Germany and its remilitarization, see Heinz Abosch, *The Menace of the Miracle: Germany from Hitler to Adenauer* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1963).

educational illustration to both the domestic population and the world. In practice, the conduct of the trials had a mixed effect: while touted by some as an affirmation of the global political community's commitment to human rights (a commitment codified by most countries in the United Nation's "International Declaration of Human Rights" in 1948), others saw the trials as the imposition of moral codes by the war's victors – judgments against German civil service workers with little weight given to their obligations under national laws of that time. The ultimate goal of the denazification programs and the Nürnberg trials seemed to be the imposition of the feeling of collective guilt upon the German population for the atrocious crimes of the Nazi state against the rest of humanity.

Those left in Germany after World War II, dealing with the complete devastation of the country's infrastructure and the daily struggle to survive, did not passively accept the imposition of collective guilt by the Allies. Of course, as an occupied country, Germans could do little openly to dispute the moralistic proclamations of occupying forces, nor could they repudiate, explain, or minimize the horrors of the Holocaust. The political narrative of the CDU provided the basis for a positive identification for German's in the wake of such atrocities, and the *stunde null* itself aided in offering a watershed moment for a shift in the German political community. According to a historian of the era interested in Adenauer's political ascendance, "the Nazi claim to totalitarian power made a clean sweep, indeed a *tabula rasa*, of government institutions and all other forms of political life in the Weimar Republic."¹²⁰ Whether such claims were technically true, acceptance of the *stunde null* created a politically expedient opportunity to remake the new Federal Republic of Germany as a nation aligned with Western European economic cooperation and the preservation of democratic capitalism – a bulwark against

¹²⁰ Alexander, *Adenauer*, 43.

communist and authoritarian rule in Eastern Europe. However, in order to gain the trust of the Western Allies, concessions were required regarding the memory of the Holocaust. In late 1951, Adenauer made a speech to the Bundestag acknowledging the German nation's collective responsibility for the event and opened the door for paid reparations to the newly founded state of Israel, which began formally in 1952.

Other ways of dealing with German guilt for the Holocaust also surfaced in the immediate aftermath, the most prominent of which is Karl Jaspers' *The Question of German Guilt* (1947), which was presented originally as a series of lectures in 1946. Beginning with a schematic differentiation of four types of guilt – criminal, political, moral, and metaphysical – that individual Germans must bear to varying degrees depending upon their relative privileges and active participation in the National Socialist state, Jaspers proceeded to repudiate the charges leveled by the allied nations that all Germans are equally and collectively responsible for the destruction of World War II and the concentration camp system.

In the world today the German—whatever the German may be—is regarded as something one would rather not have to do with. German Jews abroad are undesirable as Germans; they are essentially deemed Germans, not Jews. In this collective way of thought political liability is simultaneously justified as punishment of moral guilt. Historically, such collective thought is not infrequent; the barbarism of war has seized whole populations and delivered them to pillage, rape and sale into slavery. And on top of it comes moral annihilation of the unfortunates in the judgment of the victor. They shall not only submit but confess and do penance. Whoever is German, whether Christian or Jew, is evil in spirit.¹²¹

For Jaspers, the Allies were not careful to separate political guilt from moral guilt. In his account, the former justifies occupation and economic reparations while the latter condemns character. The risk of such an enterprise is both the continuation of bigotry and the ruthless treatment of the vanquished at the hands of the victors, symbolized by Jaspers in the precarious

¹²¹ Karl Jaspers, *The Question of German Guilt*, trans. E. B. Ashton (New York: Fordham University Press, 2000), 69-70.

position of the surviving German Jew (among whom his wife was one).¹²² Denied the possibility of political participation and used as a scapegoat for the moral failings of Germany, in his view, German Jews in the post-war context bore the scorn of others for horrendous crimes committed without their help, and quite often against themselves, friends, or loved ones.

Jaspers' condemnation of the conduct of the Allies thoughtfully navigates the real risks of guilt accusations by the countries which were victorious in World War II, but did not argue, as has been suggested, purely for individual guilt. Criminal guilt and moral guilt are individual, judged by whether one's actions transgressed legal convention in the former or human dignity in the latter. But political and metaphysical guilt require collective consideration. One can be politically guilty by virtue of participating in a society that, whether they chose it or not, committed acts of horror in her or his name. Furthermore metaphysical guilt casts a wider shadow: "there exists a solidarity among men as human beings that makes each co-responsible for every wrong and every injustice in the world, especially for crimes committed in his presence or with his knowledge. If I fail to do whatever I can to prevent them, I too am guilty."¹²³ Germans have collective guilt both politically and metaphysically, "National-Socialists and opponents of National-Socialism,"¹²⁴ and many Germans bear moral and/or criminal culpability as well. Yet, embedded in Jaspers' meditation was a rejoinder to those who would accuse the German national character of harboring an inescapable moral defect, as moral failing is not an inevitable component of collective character. "Clarification of guilt is at the same time

¹²² Biographical details of Jaspers' life and family under National Socialism is briefly detailed by Joseph W. Koterski, "Introduction to the 2000 Edition," in Jaspers, *Question*, xv. While Jaspers eventually lost his job as an academic for his resistance to National Socialism, his personal connections guarded him from more serious reprisal and his wife from being sent to a concentration camp for having a Jewish heritage. Jaspers personal biography demonstrates some of the ambiguities of German guilt: though he was not a collaborator with National Socialism and opposed it to some extent, Jaspers (like many others) benefited from a position of privilege in German society and did not risk his life in verbal/physical opposition to the policies of National Socialism.

¹²³ Jaspers, *Question*, 26.

¹²⁴ *Ibid*, 96.

clarification of our new life and its possibilities;” it means taking responsibility for German guilt, while transforming one’s behavior and building a more positive collective identity. In contrast to Adenauer’s political narrative that separated everyday Germans from the guilt of the past, Jaspers called for Germans to willingly bear the burden of various types of guilt as a catalyst for both individual and social transformation.

A third reaction to perceived German guilt can be identified: silence. While Adenauer tried to recuperate the international image of Germans through political narrative, reparations, and public apologia, Jaspers attempted to parse the guilt burdens of individual citizens. Both were interested in recuperating German national identity, and, to a large extent, these public declarations failed to spark much documented public conversation among the initial generation of post-War German citizens. But the public silence in West Germany concerning the Holocaust should not be taken as indifference, but perhaps instead an acute awareness of the responsibility of each citizen in the crimes of the Third Reich.¹²⁵

Beginning in the mid-1960s, the memory of the Holocaust and the aftermath of World War II became part of the public dialogue for a generation of young intellectuals that had no direct memory of the Nazi past. America’s conduct during the Vietnam War, the Federal Republic of Germany’s clear alignment with Western capitalism and its willingness to use police to suppress visible public dissent created a confluence of interests among leftists for an anti-imperial, anti-capitalist, and anti-repressive politics.¹²⁶ For these intellectuals, the cultural

¹²⁵ Gerd Knischewski and Ulla Spittler, “Memories of the Second World War and National Identity in Germany,” in *War and Memory in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Martin Evans and Ken Lunn (Oxford, UK: Berg, 1997), 240-43.

¹²⁶ For a more in-depth assessment of the causes of the 1960s student protest movements in Germany, see Jürgen Habermas, “Student Protest in the Federal Republic of Germany,” in *Toward a Rational Society*, 13-30. Parallel to the student protest movements in France and the United States, the 1968 student protests in Berlin were sparked by a conference on Vietnam being held in West Berlin, but because of early successes, spilled over to other issues. Eventually, as in other countries, the expansion of police powers to handle emergencies resulted in the brutal repression of many of the protests. Bullivant and Rice, “Reconstruction,” 250-53.

politics of memory control was linked to the political and economic “Americanization” of West Germany. The inability to publically recover the memory of the fire bombings of German cities, the inability to mourn the war’s aftermath in public, and the inability to find a peaceful existence outside of capitalist exploitation and Western imperialism were part of the same underlying problem: the inability for West Germany to tell its own past and determine its own future.¹²⁷

Although the student protest generation had a strong commitment to the denazification of Germany (noted particularly in protests against the advancement of former National Socialist officials in the University and government), they were also interested in confronting the remnants of Allied re-education campaigns of the late 1940s.¹²⁸

The controversy among historians, or *Historikerstreit*, during the early-to-mid 1980s is probably the most familiar tension in West German memory politics to the English speaking world. “The central issue has been whether Nazi crimes were unique, a legacy of evil in a class by themselves, irreparably burdening any concept of German nationhood, or whether they are

¹²⁷ Coinciding with the growth of “New German Cinema,” this attack on the telling of history was particularly acute in German film. Two examples stand out: Rainer Werner Fassbinder’s 1979 film *Die Ehe der Maria Braun* (The Marriage of Maria Braun) and Alexander Kluge’s *Die Patriotin* (The Patriot) of the same year. In the former, a marriage set in the immediate aftermath of World War II and the destruction of the country slowly destroys Maria Braun, who sacrifices emotional and psychological well-being for economic prosperity, culminating in her suicide via gas explosion. In the latter, a history teacher attempts to try to find the “real” German history beneath the artifice of tales that she tells to the class. In both, the memory of the suffering of the German population both during and after the war is very prominent. For a commentary on the contributions of “New German Cinema” to the West German discourse on victimization, see Paul Cooke, “The Continually Suffering Nation? Cinematic Representations of German Victimhood,” in *Germans as Victims: Remembering the Past in Contemporary Germany*, ed. Bill Niven (New York: Palgrave, 2006), 76-92.

¹²⁸ Bullivant and Rice, “Reconstruction,” 210; 235. The differences between the generation of people born and living during National Socialism (the “forty-fivers”) and the generation born and raised in the aftermath of World War II (the “sixty-eighters”) is a significant heuristic for 20th century German historians. For an overview of this conflict in history and literature, see A. D. Moses, “The Forty-Fivers: A Generation between Fascism and Democracy,” *German Politics and Society* 17, no. 1 (1999): 94-126. The difference in their formulations of the political sphere can be seen in the contrast between Habermas’ (a forty-fiver) recuperation of the ethos of the bourgeois public sphere (along with his willingness to attack the tactics of the 1960s left), and the attempt by Oskar Negt and Alexander Kluge (both sixty-eighters) to develop a proletarian counterpublic whose interests are not served by Habermas’ version of the public. Habermas, “The Movement in Germany: A Critical Analysis,” in *Toward a Rational Society*, 31-49; and Negt and Kluge, *Public Sphere and Experience*.

comparable to other national atrocities, especially Stalinist terror.”¹²⁹ Almost forty years of silent acceptance of Holocaust interpretations produced from external sources was finally starting to give way to public dialogue (though perhaps in an unsavory form). The relative strength of the West German economy, the return of a strong intellectual class dedicated to theoretical advancement, and the political need to establish a national narrative for West Germany that fit its emerging global power in the 1980s provided the stimuli for an internal debate on the status of the Holocaust in the German national past.¹³⁰ In addition, Reagan’s visit to the German Military Cemetery at Bitburg, widely regarded as a distasteful attempt by Helmut Kohl to advance a conservative argument for “German collective non-guilt,” only added fuel to a conversation in German society about the centrality of the Holocaust narrative in German collective memory.¹³¹ At a time when West Germany was beginning to fumble through an internal dialogue its own history – even entertaining a series of conservative positions that many within Germany would find distasteful – Reagan’s visit seemed like an American intervention on the side of revisionist history. In exchange for cold war cooperation from West Germany, Reagan seemed willing to absolve the collective conscience of Germans for the Holocaust and instead treated German soldiers as victims on similar footing to those of the concentration camps.

In contrast to the rest of West Germany, the politics of memory in West Berlin were more subtle, developed, and sensitive to the victims of the Holocaust. Some of this might be attributed to the political and geographical isolation of West Berlin. It was an island that, while subsidized heavily by the Federal Republic of Germany, was still technically run by France, Great Britain,

¹²⁹ Charles S. Maier, *The Unmasterable Past: History, Holocaust, and German National Identity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988), 1.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 8; 35; 121.

¹³¹ James, *German Identity*, 204. For other perspectives on this issue, see M. Lane Bruner, *Strategies of Remembrance: The Rhetorical Dimensions of National Identity Construction* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2002), 12-31; and Björn Krondorfer, *Remembrance and Reconciliation: Encounters between Young Jews and Germans* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995), 23-46.

and the United States under the Four Powers agreement struck with the Soviet Union immediately following World War II. As a result, up until German reunification, West Berlin had the peculiar status of being technically an independent city with a separate government, even though, as a practical matter, West Berlin modeled most of the West German legislative policy with very few variations. That also meant the various community initiatives and cultural policies in West Berlin had their own unique character, with little intervention or assistance by national entities.¹³²

Consider one example that helps to illustrate the difference: a 1988 community memory project in Bayerischer Platz, only a few miles from the Berlin city center, which helped stimulate public conversation over the participation of everyday Berliners in the deportation and extermination of the local Jewish community. The community collected oral histories of people living in the area and displayed cardboard posters with the names of Jewish people expelled from their residences.¹³³ This project compensated for, and was emblematic of, a historical amnesia enabled by forty years of urban planning and cultural policy. At the end of World War II, Berliners returned to a city marred by urban warfare. The erasure of Berlin's historic Jewish districts was part of the larger erasure of cultural connection produced by both physical destruction of the environment and ideological polarization of the city. With the division between East and West Berlin codified in 1949, contrasting architectural visions of the city were designed to mirror governmental differences.¹³⁴ The Berlin Wall's partitioning of urban space, erected in 1961 to stem the tide of East Germans fleeing into West Germany through Berlin,

¹³² The peculiarity of Berlin's legal status, and the willingness of France, Great Britain, and the United States to defend their legal rights to parts of the city, were likely what saved it from being entirely absorbed by East Germany in the first two decades after World War II. For a history of the political battles and legal status of Berlin, see Ann Tusa, *The Last Division: A History of Berlin 1945-1989* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1997).

¹³³ Wiedmar, *Claims of Memory*, 106-07.

¹³⁴ Alan Balfour, *Berlin: The Politics of Order* (New York: Rizzoli, 1990), 154-190.

concretized the city's contrasting ideologies and symbolic forms, with West Berlin authorizing architecture and planning projects that flaunted the abundance of the free market.¹³⁵ In essence, Berliners lived in a city disconnected from its past and dominated by a Cold War politics not of its making. This seeming erasure of the past and fixation on the Cold War created a local response, inspiring Berliners to think about the memory of Jewish citizens as a way to uncover and reconnect with part of the city's rich cultural tradition.

Any extension to the Berlin Museum that would house the Jewish department had to navigate contradictory sentiments regarding German political narratives of ethnic difference, the many layers of guilt and their reasonable expression, and the uniqueness of the local political situation. Not all parties could be satisfied, but the building's proposal would have to thread a needle through the maze of these collective memories. Not only that, but it would also need to confront a very precarious history regarding Berlin's Jewish community and previous attempts at displaying the Jewish past. The next section discusses these issues and explains how the Jewish Department of the Berlin Museum, a small department within a marginal city museum, became a site for thinking through much broader issues, such as appropriate ways to represent the Holocaust and how German and Jewish history should be displayed in relation to each other. In Berlin during the 1970s and 1980s, the process of eventually authorizing an extension to the Berlin Museum was saturated with concerns about the rhetorical effect of particular museum displays and institutional arrangements.

¹³⁵ Ibid, 205-10; 213-44.

2.2 MAKING THE CASE FOR JEWISH HISTORICAL DISPLAYS

The extension of the Berlin Museum that would house the Jewish Department was not the first building to hold significant Jewish cultural artifacts in Berlin. As anti-Semitic tensions brewed in the late 1920s and early 1930s, the disparate displays of Jewish art and culture strewn out in small shops, storefronts and cultural centers across the city began to be integrated through help from the Jewish society in Berlin. In January of 1933, the first fully-organized display of Jewish art and culture in Berlin was opened as the “Jewish Museum.” Residing at Oranienburger Straße 31, the museum had nearly 13,000 visitors in the first year, even with the difficult cultural climate. Promoted as an opportunity to make a claim about the value of Jewish heritage, the museum was a short-lived venture. As policies regarding Jewish people became increasingly strict and propaganda reinforced stereotypes about Jewish culture, the Jewish Museum came under increasing attack. During the *Kristallnacht* program in November of 1938, the museum was sacked, forced to close, and the Jewish Museum Society that served as a board for it was disbanded.¹³⁶ In the coming months and years, nearly all of Berlin’s Jews were murdered, exiled, or forced to labor under brutal conditions in the concentration camp system.

After the war was over, while Germans in the West struggled both to deal with guilt over the Holocaust and to understand their position in global affairs as the vanquished of World War II, Jewish survivors of the events turned inward in order to rebuild community. By September 1945, over sixty eight thousand individuals of Jewish descent resided within Germany, one half in displacement camps and the other half within the various German cities and towns. Of this group, only a small portion were former German citizens that had survived concentration camps;

¹³⁶ For a comprehensive history of the Jewish Museum in Berlin during the 1930s, see Hermann Simon, *Das Jüdische Museum in der Oranienburger Straße* (Berlin Museum: Berlin, 1983).

most were either displaced Eastern European Jews or German Jews saved from the experience of the camps by virtue of their integration and marriage to non-Jewish Germans.¹³⁷

In Berlin, some survivors and refugees reentered the city just a few weeks after the end of the Allies' European campaign, numbering nearly 6,000 by late 1946. However, nearly all were airlifted out of the city to safer destinations in West Germany during the Soviet blockade of West Berlin in 1948.¹³⁸ In 1952, stabilization of the city allowed the Federal Republic of Germany to initiate a series of policies encouraging Jews to return to the city. According to scholar James E. Young, as a small Jewish community began to form in West Berlin, "Heinz Galinski, then head of West Berlin's Jewish Community, publically declared that the city was also obliged to build a Jewish Museum to replace the one destroyed by the Nazis in 1938."¹³⁹ It would not be long before his call had an appropriate response.

The Berlin Museum itself was founded as a response to the construction of the Berlin Wall, which restricted movement of West Berliners to the east part of the city that contained most of Berlin's city center and most of the substantial collections on the city's history. Founded by a citizen's initiative in 1962, the Berlin Senate took over the Berlin Museum in 1971 after it moved into the restored Collegienhaus in southern Friedrichstadt (present day Kreuzberg) – a district that had housed several government buildings before and during World War II but had been isolated by the building of the Berlin Wall. In the same year, the main Jewish community organization, headed by Heinz Galinski, received official recognition by the city and a commitment made by the Senate to help sustain the community. The first post-war displays of Jewish life and culture in the city were also part of that year, with the Berlin Museum

¹³⁷ Eva Kolinsky, *After the Holocaust: Jewish Survivors in Germany After 1945* (London: Pimlico, 2004), 137-9.

¹³⁸ Atina Grossmann, "Home and Displacement in a City of Bordercrossers: Jews in Berlin 1945-1948," in Morris and Zipes, *Unlikely History*, 63-99.

¹³⁹ Young, "Daniel Libeskind," 6.

coordinating several special exhibitions in conjunction with the Jewish community. Those displays received a positive reception, and talks began about developing a permanent display of Judaica as a component of the Berlin Museum.¹⁴⁰

Through conversations between Heinz Galinski and Irmgard Wirth, head of the Berlin Museum, it was decided that the best course of action would be to propose a Jewish Museum Department as part of a larger extension to the Berlin Museum. Such a configuration had a number of advantages. First, the Berlin Museum, even though recently established, was already short of display space; the Jewish Department would be housed within a full building extension to the Berlin Museum that would also have the Theatre Department, performance hall, and lecture room.¹⁴¹ A stronger argument could be made for expansion, given the limited funds of the Berlin Senate, if the space could be multi-purposed. Second, housing Jewish displays within the purview of the Berlin Museum would guarantee a certain level of institutional and financial stability, since the city (similar to other parts of West Germany) devoted a certain amount of its budget to cultural projects. Third, and perhaps most importantly, the positive reviews of the Berlin Museum's "300 years of the Jewish Community in Berlin" and subsequent public conversations revealed that not only did the public (or at least the museum-going segment of the public) have an interest in displaying this history, but that the destruction of the first Jewish Museum on Oranienburger Strasse during *Kristallnacht* meant that institutional leaders could argue there was an obligation for the city to acknowledge the damage done by previous generations. Though that first museum was a private enterprise, including Jews into the official,

¹⁴⁰ Weinland and Winkler, *Das Jüdische Museum*, 13-16.

¹⁴¹ Irmgard Wirth to Werner Stein, 6 January 1972, in Weinland and Winkler, *Das Jüdische Museum*, 88-89.

sanctioned history was an important symbolic gesture for seeing Jewish Berliners as citizens of the city.¹⁴²

Given that Berlin Museum was housed in a historic building, the Collegienhaus, in the development of German history (it housed the Supreme Court of Prussia under Hohenzollern rule), the Berlin Senate saw the extension that would house the Jewish Museum Department as another opportunity to rebuild an important historic building for Germany – and for Jewish history in Berlin – that had been taken apart in the 1930s and stored in West Berlin: the Ephraim-Palais. Although that building was originally located in an area controlled by East Berlin, a suitable corner existed just a few blocks away from the Collegienhaus at the intersection of Lindenstrasse and Markgrafenstrasse. Under this plan, the extension of the Berlin Museum would be in the same district of the city, but the buildings would be spatially separate, not fully integrated – a decision that would have significant symbolic baggage just a few years later. With preliminary approval of the plan in 1975, Irmgard Wirth began the process of assembling collections for the Jewish Department. Jewish emigrants from the 1930s were quite generous with donations, though other parts of the collections would have to come from purchases made on the art market.¹⁴³

Berlin Museum officials and the Jewish Community in West Berlin pushed hard for reconstruction of the Ephraim-Palais to begin, trying to seize upon the energy of aging Jewish ex-patriots willing to contribute to the project (it was believed that younger generations might not have the same monetary commitment or willingness to donate collections because they would have no direct connection to Berlin). However, spiraling cost estimates for reconstruction

¹⁴² Irmgard Wirth, “Zur Wiedererrichtung des Ephraim-Palais” (working paper), January 1975, in Weinland and Winkler, *Das Jüdische Museum*, 98-101.

¹⁴³ Weinland and Winkler, *Das Jüdische Museum*, 17-18.

tabled the project indefinitely in 1979 due to financial difficulties for the Berlin Senate. In 1980, East Berlin announced a plan for the reconstruction (from new materials) of the Ephraim-Palais proximate to its old location in anticipation of the city's 750th anniversary. Fearing that having two Ephraim-Palais buildings in the city would seem redundant to Berliners and silly to outsiders, plans to reconstruct it in West Berlin were scrapped and the original building materials were made available to East Berlin.¹⁴⁴

The mayor of Berlin, Richard von Weizsäcker, had an alternate proposal for the Berlin Museum's space problems. The Martin Gropius building, which had also been badly damaged during the war, was in the process of reconstruction. The basement of the building could be used to house the Jewish Department collections and to relieve space constraints on the Berlin Museum. His pitch was first made in the spring of 1980, but the distance of the Martin Gropius building from the main exhibition of the Berlin Museum made the Jewish Community particularly uneasy.¹⁴⁵ It would be several blocks away from the Collegienhaus, unlike the proposed reconstruction of the Ephraim-Palais. Moreover, in the mayor's proposal, only the Jewish Department would move to the Martin Gropius, separating it from the rest of the context of Berlin history, whereas the plan for the Ephraim-Palais would have included other displays for the Berlin Museum. Finally, the Martin Gropius was being renovated as a venue for the display of art, not necessarily other parts of local or national history; the Jewish Museum would be fully decontextualized, both spatially and topically, from the Berlin Museum.¹⁴⁶ The mayor's proposal was met with some resistance, though at this time, the concern about spatial separation of

¹⁴⁴ Ibid, 19-21.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid, 23-24.

¹⁴⁶ Comment by the administration of Cultural Affairs, 10 April 1980, in Weinland and Winkler, *Das Jüdische Museum*, 142-43.

museum collections – and what it symbolized about the potential importance of Jewish history – was just beginning to be articulated in a rudimentary form

A further proposal to develop a new extension building to the Berlin Museum would make the untenable spatial arrangements in the previous two proposals more clear to the Berlin public and museum officials. Developed in 1981 by Ernst Gisel, who had previously been enlisted to plan the reconstruction of the Ephraim-Palais, the proposal called for the space behind the Collegienhaus to the east of the building to be used as a landscaped green space with a two-story extension added at the furthest east end of the lot. The extension would be rectangular with an exterior stairway entrance on the left side and an open-access courtyard cutting through most of the center, in essence making the building look like a squared horseshoe. With an outdoor walkway tying the two buildings together, Gisel’s plan was unique in that it conceived of the Berlin Museum and its extension for the first time as spatially integrated. Though two separate buildings, his proposal allowed one to visualize how visitors would be guided through the two buildings of the Berlin Museum as part of a single visit. The juxtaposition between classical and modern architecture still preserved an aesthetic balance between the two buildings, as both took the rough form of a “U” shape facing in opposite directions.¹⁴⁷

It seems obvious that Gisel’s proposed new building extension would be a more aesthetically pleasing and conceptually profound solution to the Berlin Museum’s space problems. However, it had one crucial flaw: the Berlin Museum did not have control of the space on which Gisel had proposed to build. The use of that space had already been granted to the Internationale Bauausstellung (IBA) for an ongoing community renovation project in Southern Friedrichstadt that would complete several city housing developments for the 750th anniversary

¹⁴⁷ For republished prints of the Gisel proposal, see Weinland and Winkler, *Das Jüdische Museum*, 22-23.

celebration of Berlin's founding (much like the reconstruction of the Ephraim-Palais was to be done for the East). The parcel of land behind the Collegienhaus to the east had already been allotted as a park area, and the disruption of green space would have put a damper on the style of residential urban design the IBA wanted most to showcase.¹⁴⁸ As a result, Gisel's preliminary proposal for an extension was also dropped, and debates over land use around the Berlin Museum continued for the next several years.

These developments left the use of the Martin Gropius building as the only viable alternative for relief of the Berlin Museum's space constraints in the short term. On the other hand, once the vision of physical, spatial integration of the exhibits had been presented in the minds of the leaders of the Berlin Museum and the Society for a Jewish Museum in Berlin, it was very difficult to accept some other alternative. They reaffirmed their stance about the need for an extension physically adjacent to the Berlin Museum, but in July of 1983, a compromised was reached with Richard von Weizsäcker to house the Jewish department displays in the Martin Gropius Building temporarily until a new extension could be constructed for the Berlin Museum.¹⁴⁹ This agreement was reaffirmed in the 1986 building guide for the Martin Gropius Building and in the public remarks of new Berlin Mayor Eberhard Diepgen during the opening celebration.¹⁵⁰

This basic agreement on principles was instrumental in the development of a new extension to the Berlin Museum. The city pushed for land to the south of the Collegienhaus, Hollmanstrasse 19-22, to be allotted for a new extension building, and the IBA, due to setbacks in their green space development plans, eventually assented. The agreement was also useful for

¹⁴⁸ Minutes of a working meeting between Berlin Museum officials and the IBA, 10 July 1981, in Weinland and Winkler, *Das Jüdische Museum*, 139-41.

¹⁴⁹ Ernst Cramer to Hans-Peter Herz, 19 July 1983, in Weinland and Winkler, *Das Jüdische Museum*, 175.

¹⁵⁰ Weinland and Winkler, *Das Jüdische Museum*, 33-34.

deflecting other development proposals for the Jewish department being made, such as housing it in the Prinz-Albrecht-Palais, because the “integration model” became a potent ideological weapon against physical separation of the displays and it more generally made the politics of space an important consideration.¹⁵¹ With East Berlin also developing a Jewish Museum and the fiftieth anniversary of *Kristallnacht* approaching, the Society for a Jewish Museum in Berlin pressed for an accelerated timetable to begin construction on an extension.¹⁵² Such overt political jockeying eventually produced a competition for an extension in late 1988.

Needing to clarify its position regarding the museum, the Berlin Senate agreed to host a conference of experts at the Aspen Institute Berlin to agree upon a concept plan for a Jewish Museum in the Berlin Museum. As a working paper to begin discussions at that conference, Rolf Bothe and Vera Bendt wrote a concept plan titled “An Autonomous Jewish Museum as a Department of the Berlin Museum,” calling for a design solution that physically embodied, rather than resolved, the tension between desirable integration and undesirable assimilation of Jewish identity into “Germanness.” In that statement, it becomes clear that the architecture of the extension itself and the room design would have to both integrate the Jewish department into the broader structure of the Berlin Museum while still letting the displays stand apart from the chronological narrative of German history. To do that, not only would the curating need to have heavy cross-citation between the Jewish Museum and the rest of the Berlin Museum displays to create the feel of contextual linkage, but the space of the Jewish displays needed to blend into adjacent ones dealing with German history more generally. Toward that end, a simple diagram was appended to the concept paper. A box was divided into two parts, with the Jewish Museum

¹⁵¹ For an example, see Vera Bendt, “Bracht des jüdische Kulturgut Berlins ein Museum? Palais auf dem Prüfstein,” *Die Welt*, October 23, 1985.

¹⁵² “9. November 1988 geeigneter Tag für Grundsteinlegung des Jüdischen Museums,” *Berliner Allgemeine Jüdische Wochenzeitung*, November 20, 1987.

on the left and the Berlin history displays on the right. Between these two parallel histories, sections on “Jews in Society” and “anti-Semitism” would create both a buffer zone and space of connection (similar to the overlapping space of a Venn diagram).¹⁵³ In March 1988, the Aspen Institute agreed that the Bothe and Bendt concept paper would be the most desirable plan for the extension,¹⁵⁴ and that paper (without the visual diagram) was eventually reprinted as an appendix in the extension competition booklet provided to architects.¹⁵⁵

The history of Jewish cultural displays and the Jewish community called for a very particular response to the extension building, but one that was difficult to design. It was one thing to insist upon cultural integration of the displays with the larger structure, but what would a semi-autonomous Jewish Museum department look like within the broader institutional goals for a competition structure? The Berlin Museum and the Aspen Institut seemed more interested in articulating aspirations rather than concrete designs. And much like the broader tensions regarding Holocaust memory in Germany and the peculiar status of Berlin, the competition brief almost demanded an architect who could represent or symbolize many inchoate concerns and sort through them. Perhaps they did not need merely an architect, but instead a composer who could harmonize the discordant tones of German-Jewish memory.

¹⁵³ Rolf Bothe and Vera Bendt, “Ein eigenständiges Jüdisches Museum als Abteilung des Berlin Museums” (working paper), 14 December 1987, in Weinland and Winkler, *Das Jüdische Museum*, 226-33.

¹⁵⁴ Aspen Institute Berlin, Report on the Roundtable Discussion “Jüdisches Museum im Berlin Museum” held on March 15, 1988, prepared by Yvonne Badel, 17 March 1988, in Weinland and Winkler, *Das Jüdische Museum*, 240-53.

¹⁵⁵ Bothe and Bendt, “Annex 4.1” 88-91.

2.3 LIBESKIND'S COMPETITION PROPOSAL

In a letter to Walter Momper (SPD) on June 24, 1989, the newly elected mayor of Berlin, competition committee chair Josef Paul Kleihues disclosed the committee's decision to choose Daniel Libeskind's design concept. While he acknowledged that Libeskind's entry may not have followed the intention and charge of the design competition precisely, Kleihues suggested that the committee saw an argument in the design about the inseparability of Berlin history and Jewish history that struck them so deeply that they chose to accept it. Kleihues also suggested that Heinz Galinski, head of the Jewish community organization in Berlin, was also moved to accept the design. In the end, he pled with Momper to move with great haste to accept and begin construction on the proposal, lest critics of such an unusual concept begin to emerge.¹⁵⁶

What did the competition committee find so moving and feel so committed to building? Daniel Libeskind's competition proposal book began with an explanatory report titled "Between the Lines" and typed on musical notation paper. At the outset of the report, he declared that "a museum for the city of Berlin must be a place where all citizens, those of the past, of the present and of the future, must find their common heritage and individual hope. To this end the museum form itself must be rethought in order to transcend the passive involvement of the viewer."¹⁵⁷ His declaration would have been unusual in the context of a completion proposal, rather than a treatise on architectural theory, but the declaration was followed by a rationale designed to reorient the very meaning of the Berlin Museum extension project. Instead of simply designing a building, Libeskind argued that he had created a "spiritual site wherein the nexus of Berlin's

¹⁵⁶ Josef Paul Kleihues to Walter Momper, June 24, 1989, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 1, Folder 3.

¹⁵⁷ Libeskind, *Gedenkbuch: Berlin*.

precarious destiny is at once mirrored, fractured and transformed.”¹⁵⁸ For those who lived through the division of Germany, the erection of the Berlin Wall, and the continued marginal existence of the city, such words resonated well beyond the particulars of German Jewish history; many of the competition committee members had lived in a fractured society for most of their lives.

But Libeskind turned from this more abstract declaration to the specific condition of Berlin’s Jewish community. “The past fatality of the German-Jewish cultural relation is enacted now in the realm of the invisible. It is this invisibility that must be brought to visibility in order to give rise to a new hope and to a shared inner vision.”¹⁵⁹ Much like the Bayischer Platz project the year before, Libeskind suggested that his architecture would be a mechanism for making visible the history of Jewish Berlin, a history that was currently invisible. While one might argue that the Martin Gropius Building was being used partially to display Jewish historical collections, the broader appeal of his argument seemed quite salient to the competition committee: the links between the German community and the Jewish community in Berlin had largely been destroyed. Even with a small Jewish community continuing to exist in Berlin, it paled in comparison to its pre-World War II size and influence. The Jewish community was integral to the making of Berlin, yet it was largely no longer visible to current inhabitants of the city. “Thus this project seeks to reconnect Berlin to its own history which must never be forgotten.”¹⁶⁰

How did he propose to make the invisible cultural history of Berlin visible? “The new extension is conceived as an emblem wherein the invisible has made itself apparent as the Void,

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ Libeskind, *Gedenkbuch: Berlin*

as the Invisible.”¹⁶¹ In essence, he argues that the building itself announces the invisibility of Jewish culture. This would be accomplished in two ways. First, the above-ground portion of the building is an interplay of two lines: one that zigzags across the lot and houses collection and the other a straight line of empty space that runs through the museum. Second, he developed a spatial metaphor by connecting the Collegienhaus and the extension via an underground passage, suggesting a deep connection between Berlin and Jewish history while maintaining a superficial sense of autonomy on the surface. “Like Berlin and its Jews, the common burden – this insupportable, immeasurable, unshareable burden – is outlined in the exchanges between two architectures and forms which are not reciprocal: cannot be exchanged for one another.”¹⁶²

But simply to make cultural annihilation visible hardly seems to be an opportunity to generate a common hope. Can it do so? Libeskind suggested that the preservation of fragmentation in his architectural design forms, somewhat cryptically, the foundation for a future vision of Berlin society. “The absolute event of history – the Holocaust – with its concentration camps and annihilation – the burn-out of meaningful development of Berlin and of humanity – shatters the place while bestowing a gift of that which cannot be given: the preservation of the sacrifice, the offering: guardian night-watch over absent and future meaning.”¹⁶³ In this passage, it becomes clear that what Libeskind has designed was as much memorial to the Holocaust as it was a museum of Berlin history that would include Jewish history. The competition committee asked for some architectural acknowledgement of the Holocaust in the architecture; what Libeskind offered was a Holocaust memorial that argued that this particular event’s acknowledgement must be the foundation of all future tellings of history. In essence, the

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

“impossible gift” of Jewish lives sacrificed would become the condition of possibility for all future genuine historical narrative. “Out of the disaster of the too Late there raises what is Early: Out of what is too Far, the Near.”¹⁶⁴

Libeskind’s proposal did not so much articulate a common vision as it alluded to the hope for a future vision – a hope that must have its foundation in the proper acknowledgment of the extreme sacrifices of the Jewish citizens of the past. What his words lacked in clarity, they compensated with pure appeal to pathos. Knowing the background of the competition committee, the struggle to acknowledge Jewish heritage in the museum, and the conceptual struggles over how Jewish history should be displayed with Berlin’s history, Libeskind offered an architectural solution that at least, according to his explanatory report, would both integrate Jewish history while allowing for a degree of autonomy. But more importantly, it would create a piece of architecture that would not be neutral, but would itself memorialize the absence of Jewish life and culture caused by the Holocaust.

The rest of Libeskind’s explanatory report and conceptual drawing dealt with many of the more mundane aspects of architectural design – the walls, the angles, the use of space within each section, and the exterior design. However, while Libeskind at least nodded in the direction of building functionality, he made it clear that he found such concerns to be of secondary importance compared to the conceptual inspiration. In his index to drawings, he went so far as to say that “since the museum represents an open idea, the functions [of the spaces] and their numerical equivalents [i.e. his labels] can be arranged in other configurations.”¹⁶⁵ In fact, the flexibility of the museum’s spaces, cut up intermittently by the void line running through the center of the museum, would make the building all the more resistive to the ideology that made

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

the Holocaust possible, according to Libeskind. “The museum ensemble is thus always on the verge of Becoming – no longer suggestive of a final solution.”¹⁶⁶

As one can ascertain from the meeting minutes of the competition committee, Libeskind’s proposal was hailed as a useful reinterpretation of Berlin history and Jewish history. While there were concerns about the viability of the project, initial concerns were largely swamped by what seemed like an enormous architectural opportunity for the country. Josef Kleihues, writing to Libeskind just a few days after the competition, noted that the press for the project was mostly positive.¹⁶⁷ Indeed, most of the local press had covered the competition committee’s deliberation and had largely echoed the committee’s glowing reviews of the Libeskind proposal.¹⁶⁸ However, Kleihues implored Libeskind to move to Berlin as soon as possible in order to be able to push the work of the building forward quickly. Perhaps, similar to the concerns Kleihues voiced to Walter Momper, he knew that the competition would be the first step in a long, arduous process in order to see the Berlin Museum extension to completion.

2.4 CONCLUSION

Daniel Libeskind’s Berlin Museum extension proposal may have been lacking in particulars of architectural design, but it flourished in connecting with the competition committee’s sensibilities regarding the appropriate sentiment the architecture must express. While the Jewish

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ Josef Paul Kleihues, letter to Daniel Libeskind, 28 June 1989, in *Daniel Libeskind Papers* 920061, Box 1, Folder 3.

¹⁶⁸ “Berlin-Museum,” *Bild* (Berlin), June 27, 1989; Falk Jaeger, “Ein Chance und eine Provokation für Berlin,” *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), June 25, 1989; and “Mailänder baut Museumserweiterung,” *Volksblatt* (Berlin), June 27, 1989.

Department was to only be a small part of the overall usage of the extension, Berlin's difficult history has an early 20th century hotbed of Jewish cultural development, as the center for the cultural destruction wrought upon Jewish people, and its then-current division and scarring created a wellspring of conflicting sensibilities about how to display the city's Jewish cultural history. The symbolism of Jewish cultural integration was a key component of the design, but Daniel Libeskind was able to do more – he wove the city's sense of physical and spiritual fragmentation into a larger narrative about cultural destruction of Jewish citizens, such that the history of one mirrored the historical trajectory of the other. However, in so doing, Libeskind brilliantly called forth an emerging sense of “hope” in his extension design, refusing simply to dwell upon the themes of guilt and repentance that had dominated many of the early history of the West German state. For the competition committee, the symbolic spirit of the entry was too much to overlook – Libeskind's design provided an opportunity to articulate some positive vision of Post-War German identity, even if the particulars of that vision remained hazy and opaque.

The selection of Daniel Libeskind's design signals to researchers the extent to which public architecture is a thoroughly rhetorical enterprise and the extent to which the narrative of the design may trump the particulars of the architectural craft. The competition seemed to acknowledge that Libeskind's building sketches and models would be nearly impossible to build and that the proposal left much to be desired regarding the particulars of space usage. At the same time, it functionally admitted that the persuasive force of Libeskind's competition narrative was too much to resist; they recognized that a major statement needed to be made to reconcile Berlin's past with its potential future. Their sentiments were closely aligned with Libeskind's design intentions. In an unpublished and undated interview text with Jeffrey Kipnis, he declared

that “Tafuri was very much to the point in his critique of an architecture which aspires to build the future. Dreaming of the future, like dreaming of the past, is escapism in the present. However, the problem of looking forward is part of the present; it plagues the present and cannot be erased from it.”¹⁶⁹ However cryptically, Libeskind seemed to be suggesting an important distinction: an architectural design cannot proclaim to be the future (that is escapist), but architecture must somehow work through the tensions of the present in anticipation of a possible ideal future.

But here is where the most curious question lies: if the architecture is so open-ended and undefined, what of its symbolism seems to point toward and illuminate this potential future? This question is more difficult to answer, as the competition committee and Daniel Libeskind did not speak much to this subject in the competition proposal. In order to be able to find this answer, the next chapter will examine one of Libeskind’s clearest attempts to explain the design of his architecture and compare them to available archival materials to ascertain just how the building provides, in the words of the competition committee, a “hope for a common vision.”

¹⁶⁹ Daniel Libeskind, “Whims, Musings, Fragments and other Paraphernalia Culled from Conversations with Jeffrey Kipnis.” Unpublished manuscript. In *Daniel Libeskind Papers* 920061, Box 11, Folder 6.

3.0 DESIGNING A SYMBOL OPEN TO THE FUTURE

On the evening of November 9, 1989, during what was to be a routine report on agricultural reforms to take place in the German Democratic Republic (GDR), Gunther Schabowski (Media Chief for East Germany) announced that “a decision was taken that makes it possible for all citizens to leave the country through East German border crossing points.”¹⁷⁰ After affirming under questioning from media sources that the policy was to be effective immediately, GDR citizens began amassing at the Berlin Wall for the opportunity to cross. While the first few were turned away by confused border guards, the situation quickly destabilized; too many people gathered to be effectively dispersed. Under orders not to provoke the crowd, guards eventually acquiesced to the demands of those on the streets. Ferdinand Protzman of the *New York Times* described the scene:

By 3 A.M. today [November 10th], West Berlin was beginning to resemble a giant block party. East Germans were crossing at Checkpoint Charlie at the rate of about 450 an hour. They were greeted at the border by about 500 West Berliners chanting “We want in! We want in!” and “Open up! Open up!” The street was littered with beer and wine bottles. A lesser, but steady, stream of weary, tipsy East Berliners was heading home.¹⁷¹

The next day, images of celebrating Berliners splashed across the front pages of newspapers and televisions across the world, though interestingly, little note was taken by the East German

¹⁷⁰ Quoted in Robert J. McCartney, “East Germany Opens Berlin Wall and Borders, Allowing Citizens to Travel Freely in the West,” *The Washington Post*, November 10, 1989.

¹⁷¹ Ferdinand Protzman, “Clamor in the East; East Berliners Explore Land Long Forbidden,” *The New York Times*, November 10, 1989.

press.¹⁷² World diplomats on both sides of the iron curtain hailed the decision by the GDR government, which Egon Krenz had controlled for less than a month after the political fall of Erich Honecker, as “positive” and a “good development,” though several countries (such as Israel, the US, and the USSR) remained concerned about the political stability of the situation.¹⁷³

By now, it is quite common to consider the opening of the Berlin Wall as the decisive moment for the reunification of Germany and the end of the Cold War. However, the clarity of vision that allows one to make such a declaration is only possible retrospectively, through the process of public memory selection. While it is now commonplace to see the images of Berliners standing, drinking, dancing, and slowly demolishing the wall as a condensed symbol of the fall of communism in Europe, the ramifications of these celebrations were more unstable and open to interpretation in the immediate aftermath of the event. Most had a strong sense that the opening of the Berlin Wall signaled a strong political change, but it was unclear whether East Germany would reunify with the Federal Republic of (West) Germany (FRG), be an independent state with modern economic liberalization, or retrench as a communist society with slight changes to

¹⁷² Although the East Berlin newspapers were organs of various political parties, the similarity of news coverage across different papers, even sometimes using the same page layouts, suggests that the East German government had strict control and strong agenda setting influence for most if not all East German papers. As a result, coverage may have been planned days in advance, making it impossible for the East Berlin papers to cover fall of the Wall in a timely fashion. For example, news about the “Mauerfall” does not reach the front page of the *Berliner Zeitung* for four days, in November 13, 1989. Even then, the event is spun as part of Egon Krenz’s “renewal of Socialism” plan, rather than a threat to the continued existence of the German Democratic Republic. In fact, the SED (Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands, or Socialist Unity Party) had just been completing a ten day public conference about the renewal of socialism during the fall of the Berlin Wall, and as such, that conference was the sustained focus of East Berlin newspaper coverage until November 13. For examples, see “150 000 Berliner: Ja zum Aktionsprogramm der SED,” *Berliner Zeitung*, November 11, 1989; and “Wiedervereinigung nicht auf der Tagesordnung,” *Berliner Zeitung*, November 13, 1989. In the last page of the November 11 *Neues Deutschland* (SED paper), they make it clear that most citizens only want the right to visit West Berlin, but are perfectly happy in the German Democratic Republic. “Eine Nacht und ein Tag hüben und drüben an der Bornholmer Brücke,” and “Nur noch wenige wollen für immer aus der DDR weg,” *Neues Deutschland*, November 11, 1989.

¹⁷³ David Remnick, “Soviets Clear East Berlin Policy Shift,” *The Washington Post*, November 10, 1989; and Thomas L. Friedman, “Clamor in the East; U.S. Worry Rises Over Europe’s Stability,” *The New York Times*, November 10, 1989.

its travel policy.¹⁷⁴ Internationally, even more angst was expressed over the situation: Israel objected strongly to any thought of German reunification, the Soviet Union wanted East Germany to remain part of the Warsaw Pact, and even the United States seemed pensive about impending changes in Europe.¹⁷⁵ Contrary to the public declarations of support for the democratic process and the potential for a new Germany, both Great Britain and the United States stated to Mikhail Gorbachev just a few months before the fall of the Berlin Wall that the maintenance of Cold War political boundaries and the continued division of Germany was in their security interests.¹⁷⁶ What contemporary public memory typically sees as a necessary and inevitable outcome of the historical event was, in the immediate aftermath, rife with contingency and possibility; polysemic images were made stable only later by the retrospective narration of historical events.

I have two main reasons for offering this quick reminder concerning the fall of the Berlin Wall. First, it concretizes the theoretical point that the process of symbolic making depends not only upon the event itself, but also upon its subsequent iterations for those making sense of it. The fall of the Berlin wall “illuminated,” in a single set of simple images of exuberant joy, the later, presumed retrospectively to have been inevitable, consequences of history: that communism would collapse internally and that the demand for democratic governance would sweep across East Europe and the Soviet Union member states, a process that took over two

¹⁷⁴ Peter Grier, “West’s Joy at Changes in East Germany Tinged with Caution,” *Christian Science Monitor*, November 29, 1989; Martin Kettle, “Comrades are Sinking Slowly in the West,” *Guardian* (London), November 29, 1989; and Anna Tomforde, “East German Rivals Join to Reject Unity Plan,” *Guardian* (London), November 30, 1989.

¹⁷⁵ Jim Hershberg, “German Reunification: A Tale of Two Plans,” *Christian Science Monitor*, November 29, 1989; David Horowitz, “Getting Their Act Together?” *Jerusalem Post*, November 10, 1989; Don Oberdorfer, “Leaders Come to Grips with Post-Cold War Era,” *Washington Post*, November 30, 1989; and “Reunification Would Be ‘Grave Problem’ for Jews,” *Globe and Mail* (Canada), November 13, 1989.

¹⁷⁶ Michael Binyon, “Thatcher Told Gorbachev Britain Did Not Want German Reunification,” *Times Online* (UK), September 11, 2009, <http://www.timesonline.co.uk>.

years to be completed (measured by the post-coup liberalization of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics). As the above suggests, those living through that time saw the fall of the Berlin Wall as prelude, or “anticipation,” of coming events, yet the supposed content of that “illumination” of historical change had not been revealed. As Ernst Bloch argues, “cultural heritage means the knowledge of what is missing that propels one to culture; separation of utopia from the ideology in cultural works; keeping the promise of culture, which means building its house.”¹⁷⁷ If one can think of the event of the fall of the Berlin Wall and its circulated images across televisions and newsprint worldwide as a “cultural work,” then Bloch might suggest to the reader that the image-event itself contains a latent utopian vision.¹⁷⁸ Contemporaneous commentators noticed the shattering of a concretized ideological divide, and worked to fulfill the promise of the “coming culture” or historical future with particular visionary contents, most of which turned out to be at least partially incorrect now, given the ability to retrospectively interrogate them. Daniel Libeskind’s design for the extension of the Berlin Museum, as least according to the architect’s own words and drawings, constitutes a similar example of an “illumination” in that it had significant symbolic power, yet its ambiguities in symbolic details set the ground for historical narrations and re-appropriations detailed in subsequent chapters.

Second, this specific event has consequences for this study insofar as the fall of the Berlin Wall and the influx of refugees from the GDR created a crisis in West Berlin politics that threatened radically to change the political situation of Berlin, putting many of the city’s building

¹⁷⁷ Bloch, “Art and Society,” 58.

¹⁷⁸ John W. Delicath and Kevin Michael DeLuca, “Image Events, the Public Sphere, and Argumentative Practice: The Case of Radical Environmental Groups,” *Argumentation* 17 (2003), 315-33. I use the term “image-event” to designate a publically salient event, understood primarily through visual imagery, which has the potential to assert argumentative opposition to the status quo and open space for public controversy. However, in contrast to Delicath and DeLuca’s formulation of the image-event as an intentional strategy of protest groups, my usage, in accordance with Bloch’s discussion of anticipatory illumination, suggests that the term can be expanded to include unintentional or uncontrolled events that still open up the space for public dissent and debate over a society’s future.

projects, including Daniel Libeskind's Extension to the Berlin Museum to house the Jewish Department, on hold. As correspondence between Libeskind and Karlheinz Wuthe, a fellow architect in Berlin, indicates, Libeskind moved to Berlin in 1989 to deal with a number of political instabilities, but came only to find more.¹⁷⁹ The threats to the building's continuation by political inertia and by those interested in creating a "green corridor" of park space where the extension was to be built were supplemented by the seeming financial insolvency of East Germany and the potential dissolution of long-ingrained geopolitical boundaries that run through the city (discussed in Chapter Four).¹⁸⁰ How could the project become meaningful to such a widely fluctuating set of potential interests and objections, even while its public visibility remained overshadowed by other social and political events?

In this chapter, I focus on one of Daniel Libeskind's first public articulations of his design's symbolism: a speech at Hannover University on December 5, 1989. The transcript of this address gets reprinted, with some alterations, in several publications over the next decade, making it significant for understanding some of the later discussions of the museum.¹⁸¹ However, it also provides an important source for understanding Libeskind's artistic vision of the extension. Comparing Libeskind's stated premises for his design in the Hannover talk with the Getty Research Institute's archive of Libeskind's material from the design phase of the project, I argue that Daniel Libeskind's design is less concerned with the specific contours of the museum

¹⁷⁹ Daniel Libeskind to Karlheinz Wuthe, November 23, 1989; and Wuthe to Libeskind, December 13, 1989, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 26, Folder 4.

¹⁸⁰ For a list of perceived political and social barriers to the construction of the building prior to the fall of the Berlin Wall, see Bernhard Schneider to Daniel Libeskind, October 22, 1989, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 26, Folder 4.

¹⁸¹ For examples, see Daniel Libeskind, "Between the Lines: The Jewish Museum, Berlin," *Research in Phenomenology* 22 (1992): 82-7; Libeskind, "Between the Lines: The Jewish Museum," in *Jewish Museum Berlin: Concept and Vision* (Berlin: Jüdisches Museum Berlin Verlag, 1998), 6-10; and Libeskind, *The Space of Encounter* (New York: Universe, 2001), 23-30. In subsequent texts, Libeskind has frequently made changes and deletions to fit the publication and the occasion, but most one can find full sentences and paragraphs lifted from the text of his Hannover speech.

extension as meaningful in themselves than it is with documenting design inspirations that informed his design process. The lineaments of the structure do not correspond directly with his professed design inspirations, yet the architectural symbol is meaningful as a distillation of sensibilities about the troubles and difficulties with the representation of Jewish culture in Berlin. While the fall of the Berlin Wall, as political event, necessitated his subsequent public defenses of the building's symbolism, of which this speech is the first significant example among the dozens of speeches and interviews given to both the German and the international press, the lack of direct correspondence between his speech and the archival evidence also suggests a parallel between the circulation of the images of the Berlin Wall and his design: they were both visual "anticipations" of the future of Berlin – powerful symbolic images of a coming society – yet their particular meaning and function will be continually negotiated through subsequent re-narrations of them in relation to present concerns.

The argument of this chapter is essential for understanding the later controversies surrounding the museum for a couple of reasons. First, the flexibility of the design will enable Libeskind and later interlocutors to have a wide degree of interpretive latitude with regard to the building's final structure and function. Significant differences over interpretations of the coming community called forth by the building could explode into controversy; Libeskind's approach to design gives a certain amount of license to competing interpretations of the building. Second, and more importantly, those interpretations are not governed by particular lineaments of the building itself, but instead by the ability to fit well with the larger historical narrative and ethical sensibility provided by Libeskind's professed design process. While many possible interpretations of the building will come to exist, their ability to be accepted is governed by an "enunciative modality" (a term Michel Foucault uses to discuss the cultural conditions under

which certain people are granted significant authority to interpret certain types of phenomena), which gives Libeskind, as the design's author, a privileged position to speak about appropriate ways to view and use the museum.¹⁸² This insight reveals an important aspect of the rhetoric of "anticipatory illumination" at work in the development of this project. Though the content of what is illuminated by a visionary work of art is unknown at its time of production, a hermeneutic guideline is developed by later interpreters for its discovery: a society ought, in most circumstances, to heed closely the suggestions of the designer. Libeskind provides a path, shown through the work of art and its accompanying explanation, for developing a more appropriate relationship to the past and the future. It is ultimately this interpretive flexibility of the building that demonstrates Libeskind's true brilliance as a designer – his building can never be a thing of the past; interested parties are constantly in dialogue with the building's architecture to interpret it and make it meaningful at a particular time and place.

Rather than providing a line-by-line reading of the transcript of Libeskind's address at Hannover, this chapter is organized around the four aspects of the project's design in the first half of the lecture: the city map as it related to prominent Jewish contributors to Berlin culture and history, Arnold Schönberg's opera *Moses und Aron*, the *Gedenkbuch* (a book list of Jewish people murdered during the Holocaust), and Walter Benjamin's *Einbahnstrasse*. In each section, I begin with an explanation of each of the project's inspirations, followed by a discussion of his design materials available at the Getty Research Institute. In order to understand the significance ascribed to each interpretive move, material from the second half of the address, which deals with the social significance of his design to German and Jewish history and society, will be referenced when appropriate. In addition to a quick recapitulation at the end of each section, the

¹⁸² Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (London: Routledge, 2002), 54-61.

conclusion reflects upon the overall significance of Libeskind's design explanation and how the building can be understood as an instance of anticipatory illumination.

3.1 SITING BERLIN

Libeskind delivered his address at Hannover University on December 5, 1989. Its numerous reproductions in print have made it a germinal source for understating the design inspirations of Libeskind's project. Libeskind begins the address by naming his project and providing some basic information about the above-ground design:

The official name of the project is the "Extension of the Berlin Museum with the Jewish Museum Department," but I have called it "Between the Lines." I call it this because it is a project about two lines of thinking, organization and relationship. One is a straight line, but broken into many fragments; the other is a tortuous line, but continuing indefinitely. These two lines develop architecturally and programmatically through a limited but definite dialogue. They also fall apart, become disengaged, and are seen as separated.¹⁸³

Two things are apparent from the outset. First, the lines in Libeskind's design, by virtue of being an extension to a history museum, signify something about the nature of historical progression of cultures in relationship, which becomes important as the speech culminates. Second, Libeskind makes clear that he sees the design as a form of "dialogue," a spatial-visual text that speaks to its surroundings.

If the extension design functions as a "dialogue," what is said? Libeskind does not directly offer an answer, but he does provide some indirect answers in the form of his design inspirations. After that brief introduction, he immediately starts to lay out "aspects" of the project that were important to the design. I quote the first at length:

¹⁸³ Daniel Libeskind, "Between the Lines," speech given at Hannover University, December 5, 1989, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 11, Folder 20, para.1.

The site is the center of the old city of Berlin on Lindenstrasse near the famous Baroque intersection of Wilhelmstrasse, Friedrichstrasse, and Lindenstrasse. At the same time, I felt that the physical trace of Berlin was not the only trace, but rather that there was an invisible matrix or anamnesis of connections in relationship. I found this connection between figures of Germans and Jews; between the particular history of Berlin, and between the Jewish history of Germany and of Berlin. I felt that certain people and particularly certain writers, people in music and art and poetry formed the link between Jewish culture and German culture. So I found this connection and I plotted an irrational matrix which was in the form of a system of squared triangles which would yield some reference to the emblematics of a distorted star: the yellow star that was so frequently worn on the site. I looked for addresses of where these people lived or where they worked, for example someone like Rachel Varnhagen I connected to Friedrich Schlieiermacher, and Paul Celan to someone like Mies van der Rohe and so on, and I was quite surprised that it was not so difficult to hear the address that these people made: That they formed a particular urban and cultural constellation of Universal History. So that is one aspect of the project.¹⁸⁴

The physical layout of the city becomes an extremely important characteristic of the narrative that Libeskind spins about the design's "dialogue" with its surroundings, but Libeskind's thinking here meshes several different understandings of the city. Each of the historical "layers" uncovered by Libeskind is significant to understanding the tensions, contradictions, and complexity of his thinking, and, as such, are deserving of closer consideration.

First, Libeskind alludes to the extensions placed in the city near the intersection of Friedrichstrasse, Lindenstrasse, and Wilhelmstrasse. In the 18th century, this area would have been considered the southernmost part of Frierichstadt, with the *Hallesches Tor* securing the main part of the city. Developed by city master architect Johann Philipp Gerlach, the round plaza (known as the *Rondell*) at the center of this intersection created an important open space for residence and an entry point for commercial movement to and from the south of Berlin. This area had been a central part of both the commercial and political landscape of the city. Numerous changes were made over the years, including the renaming of it as *Belle-Alliance-Platz* in 1815 after the Battle of Waterloo and *Mehringplatz* in 1947 to honor Franz Mehring, a German

¹⁸⁴ Ibid, para. 2.

publicist of the 19th and early 20th century. A peace column was added to the center of the plaza in 1843.

However, after being decimated in the final days of World War II, with an estimated 76 percent of the city's buildings either completely destroyed or in ruins,¹⁸⁵ this area underwent a number of changes that had a significant impact on its physical form and significance to the city. The competition booklet provided to all architects submitting a design for the Berlin Museum extension makes this clear: "the long-term-oriented planning strategies at no time concerned themselves with the preservation, repair and improvement of the injured city, but rather with its fundamental reorganization. In this context, Friedrichstadt, the heart of the urban structure, became a playground for a dreamed-of 'city of tomorrow'." Consistent with the emerging West German political narrative encapsulated in the concept of *stunde null* (discussed in Chapter Two), the decimation of the city provided an opportunity to remake Berlin into a model for Western democracies.¹⁸⁶

One particular example of this impetus to erase the old city and replace it with a new, modern one was the "Hauptstadt Berlin" design competition of 1957-1958. After nearly a decade of reconstruction and clean-up in West Berlin, the city administration, with aid from the Federal Government, hosted an "urban-planning idea competition" to remake the image of the city. At the outset of the competition booklet, two main objectives were highlighted: that the destruction of the city in the war offered a unique opportunity to remake the city in a modern image, and that

¹⁸⁵ Tusa, *Last Division*, 11.

¹⁸⁶ *Competition for an Extension*, 32; and Brian Ladd, *The Ghosts of Berlin: Confronting German History in the Urban Landscape* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 176-8.

such ideas ought to embody the image of hope for the reunification of the city and the nation.¹⁸⁷

The competition booklet provided to Daniel Libeskind characterized the practical outcome of its directives for the surrounding area for the extension:

Virtually all of the entries were radical new plans which, in a projection of the programmatic concepts of the ‘reconstruction plans,’ showed a radical disregard for any historical reference. The invitation of entries encouraged such ‘tabula rasa’ ideas...Only a few arbitrarily left individual buildings were referred to as so-called fixed points and accordingly incorporated by the participants into their planning concepts for their nostalgic value. Friedrichstadt as an element of the city was, on the other hand, liquidated in all of the relevant entries.¹⁸⁸

Comprised of some of the most important figures in urban design of the period (including Le Corbusier), the competition participants all crafted images of a futuristic city in line with the modernist trends of the period while participating in the erasure of its troubled history.¹⁸⁹

The dream of a restructured and reunified Berlin was short lived, as the East German Government, feeling provoked by the audacity of such a competition, hosted their own the next year, only encompassing the East Berlin. Two years later, the Berlin Wall was erected, ending hopes for reunification. Although the “Hauptstadt Berlin” models were never put into effect, the assumption that the destroyed city remained a “tabula rasa” canvas for architects and urban planners drove much of the later development of the area. Like most other US and Western European urban development beliefs of the same period, automobile traffic demands became primary concerns:

The present-day Mehringplatz (formerly Belle-Alliance-Platz) is a significant example in point. A planned urban motorway route approximately following what is Franz-Klühs-

¹⁸⁷ Senator für Bau- und Wohnungswesen, Berlin (West), ed., *Hauptstadt Berlin* (Berlin: Wilhelm Ernst und Sohn, 1957), 4-5. Two introductory notes, the first written by West German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer and the second by West Berlin’s governing mayor Otto Suhr, lay out these objectives clearly.

¹⁸⁸ *Competition for an Extension*, 33.

¹⁸⁹ Ladd, *Ghosts of Berlin*, 188; and Joachim Nawrocki “Berlin – eine Viermächtestadt,” in *Chronik Berlins*, ed. Bodo Harenberg (Dortmund, Germany: Chronik, 1991), 495. In addition to the “Hauptstadt Berlin” competition, West Berlin enlisted the help of several modernist architects (including Gropius, Le Corbusier, and Niemeyer) to design apartments for its “Internationale Bauausstellung” in the Hansa district of the city.

Strasse was the planning premise for re-designing the square and at the same time determined its spatial character. The square was consequently ‘unhitched’ from its main axis Friedrichstrasse, i.e. the traffic was diverted away from it, and the streets leading into the square Wilhelmstrasse and Lindenstrasse – were directed tangentially past both sides to the road on the bank of the Landwehr Canal.¹⁹⁰

The site for Libeskind’s museum extension sits at the very place on Lindenstrasse where the original street was modified to flow away from the old southern entry gate for the city (Hallesches Tor) toward an east-west highway connecting the main part of West Berlin to its easternmost districts such as Kreuzberg and Neukölln. Once the city changed the streets in the late 1960s, Mehringplatz became a pedestrian park with a set of circularly arranged modern apartments.¹⁹¹

With this history in mind, it seems clear that Libeskind would see the changing of Lindenstrasse as symptomatic of the city’s loss of historical connection due to the conduct of the nation in World War II and its political aftermath. With the Berlin Wall only a few blocks to the north, the significant north-south streets running into Mehringplatz – Wilhelmstrasse, Friedrichstrasse, and Lindenstrasse – all lost their original function of connecting this area to the city center, and the remnants of Southern Friedrichstadt were cut-off to a significant extent from the rest of the city.¹⁹² This part of the city now existed as a disconnected fragment; its rich history as commercial route into the city and administrative center was paved over by the work of urban planners. However, the district’s marginality perhaps saved it from being entirely destroyed, as the architectural competition book notes that the exact space now designated for

¹⁹⁰ *Competition for an Extension*, 34.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid*, 34-5.

¹⁹² *Ibid*, 34.

Libeskind's Berlin museum extension was earmarked for a highway project that was never completed.¹⁹³

Libeskind's design materials clearly show the interest Libeskind took in the changes to Lindenstrasse. One in particular, produced a few months after this lecture was given, includes pencil marks of Lindenstrasse's original trajectory into Mehringplatz.¹⁹⁴ This structural change to the city is best understood as analogy to the second type of relationship to the city that Libeskind identifies – the history of Berlin's Jews. The same drawing that includes the penciled lines of the original Lindenstrasse also includes several lines intersecting through the site that are labeled with the names of prominent Jews in Berlin – the very same names that he mentions in his speech (Celan, Hoffman, van der Rohe, Varnhagen, etc.). It is worth repeating part of the above passage from Libeskind's speech here: “I felt that the physical trace of Berlin was not the only trace, but rather that there was an invisible matrix or anamnesis of connections in relationship. I found this connection between figures of Germans and Jews; between the particular history of Berlin, and between the Jewish history of Germany and of Berlin.” This remark concerning the visual evidence confirms that Libeskind saw a similarity between the physical traces of history that have been submerged in Berlin's cityscape and the cultural erasure of the Jewish influence on the history of Berlin. Consequently, his design exercise, penciling in lines to make visible a set of historical associations that had been rendered invisible by World War II and the process of urban reconstruction, was a rhetorical gesture to “conjure up” an absence and render it present to mind.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹³ Ibid, 57-8.

¹⁹⁴ “Site Plan,” 27 April 1990, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Roll 80.

¹⁹⁵ Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *New Rhetoric*, 115-20.

But to what extent does this particular design exercise actually have bearing upon the physical shape of the museum? With regard to the discussion of the movement of Lindenstrasse, the building resides at the point of the street's changed structure, but no indication is given that this particular inspiration was incorporated into the structure. But with regard to the latter issue, the connections of prominent Berliners of Jewish heritage, could it be possible that the erratic lineaments of the museum's above-ground structure are composed from them? Inspecting the visual evidence, I suggest that it is not likely to be the case.

Three pieces of material in the Daniel Libeskind Papers at the Getty Research Institute seem to have direct bearing on the latter question. The first, a set of façade drawings in pencil provide perhaps the best possibility for arguing that the lines of the museum are derived from the lines of connection between the addresses of prominent Jews in Berlin.¹⁹⁶ These prints show, in a flattened form, the designs for each zinc-exposed side of the building. Each piece is given both a label such as "Celan," "Varnhagen," or "E. T. A. [Hoffmann]" at the top, and a letter to explain where each façade section fits on the building on the bottom. With orange colored pencil, erratic shapes for cut-out windows are shaded in order to contrast them with the rest of the metallic exterior. At first glance, it seems that each exterior might be aligned with the address points of each particular figure, but other evidence makes this conclusion less likely. Even within this set of drawings, figures such as Varnhagen and Schleiermacher have labeled segments at more than one angle. Moreover, earlier exterior designs are broken up in a similar way, but with different associations. Rather than particular figures, each façade is labeled with words such as "Leitfrage" (central question), "Nachholen" (to catch up or make up for something), or

¹⁹⁶ "Abwicklung," set of 4 blueprints in pencil, April 4-5, 1991, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Roll 147.

“Uncover,” just to provide a few examples.¹⁹⁷ As in the previously discussed sections, no explanation exists on the plans connecting the designs to their respective words. At best, the connection between the physical layout of the museum and the addresses of prominent Berliners of Jewish descent would be, from this evidence, inconclusive.

However, other material makes the case even less likely. In the same drawing, discussed above, that penciled in the original trajectory of Lindenstrasse into Mehringplatz, Libeskind also created a matrix of lines from the addresses of different prominent Berliners of Jewish descent, most of whom have already been mentioned. Not only do the lines not correspond with the lines of the museum, one could not even claim that they pass through all of the facades. Since the drawing only covers the immediate area around the museum, with the lines extending indefinitely from the edge of the paper towards their theoretical endpoints at the homes and workplaces of the labeled figures. Libeskind’s extension design is affixed, from under the subtly translucent print, to the site in advance, suggesting that the exercise of making visible these “spiritual” connections through Berlin (with the architect’s pencil) is not directly manifested in the physical appearance of the building.¹⁹⁸

An earlier drawing titled “Star of David Site Plan” performs a similar exercise, but with a different result.¹⁹⁹ Beginning with a map of the city, Libeskind plotted a set of lines connecting the addresses of these same figures, but on a much larger scale. Once connected, they do form something like a distorted Star of David, which is made even more apparent by the choice only to display “strips” of the cityscape that follow the lines of connection between these Berlin figures (all else is left blank on the print). This particular piece of visual evidence, having been

¹⁹⁷ “Zeigen,” architectural print, no date (but classified as circa 1989 materials from the competition phase), in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Roll 40.

¹⁹⁸ “Site Plan.”

¹⁹⁹ “Star of David Site Plan,” architectural print, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Roll 39.

reproduced for several different publications that discuss Libeskind's design, is often shown at a scale that makes its significant features invisible. If one looks closely, not only can one read the labels of the particular figures and their addresses, but one can see the form of Libeskind's extension darkened in one of the visible strips of the city. It is not composed of several lines of the "Star of David," but already resides in completed form on a horizontal (i.e., east-west) line connecting Mies van der Rohe to Paul Celan at roughly the point where Rahel Varnhagen's address intersects vertically. From this visual design, one cannot conclude that the lineaments of the museum match these addresses, only that the museum site resides at a point of connection for some of them, in the matrix of "spiritual" connections of the city's Jewish community.

What then should one make of Libeskind's insistence in his speech that both the connections of addresses of prominent Berliners and the site's location on the disruption of the old Lindenstrasse? One can make a strong claim that the changed urban landscape of Berlin post-World War II did have a certain importance in his mind. One can also say that he was interested in bringing together the intellectual influences of prominent Jewish Berliners in his work. But neither the visual evidence nor Libeskind's speech allows one to say with any significant probability that there is direct correspondence between his mental exercise of working through the history of the site and the final structure of the building proposal itself. One would particularly lack any visual evidence that any of the lines of historical connection and erasure mentioned by Libeskind are responsible for the lineaments of his museum form. As one more closely examines his other design inspirations, this same pattern continues.

3.2 SILENT MUSIC

While Libeskind's matrix of connections formed the first aspect of the project, the second, as described by him, has to do with Berlin's musical heritage:

Another aspect was Arnold Schönberg. I was always interested in the music of Schönberg and in particular his period in Berlin. His greatest work is an opera called "Moses and Aaron" which he could not complete. For some reason the logic of the text, which was the relationship between Moses and Aaron, between, you can say, the revealed and unimaginable truth and the spoken and mass-produced people's truth led to an impasse in which the music, the text written by Schönberg could not be completed. In the end, Moses doesn't sing, he just speaks "oh word, thou word" and you can understand it actually as a text as opposed to the norm of opera whose performance usually obliterates the text. When there is singing you cannot understand the words, but when there is no more singing, you can understand very well the missing word which is uttered by Moses, which is the call for the word. So that was the second aspect.²⁰⁰

Libeskind, trained as a classical musician before becoming an architect, had long thought about the two disciplines as related: both strive for a precise harmony that draws in the audience, yet leave room for individuals to "construct their meanings."²⁰¹ In what ways, if any, does Arnold Schönberg's *Moses and Aron* inform Libeskind's design and explain its function?²⁰²

Before addressing this question directly, some background on Schönberg and the play is necessary. Born in Vienna in 1874 to parents of Central European Jewish lineage, Arnold Schönberg was largely a self-taught classical composer. Schönberg caught his break playing cello in an amateur orchestral group in 1895, led by upcoming composer Alexander von Zemlinsky, with close connections to the Vienna concert scene (including Johannes Brahms).

²⁰⁰ Libeskind, "Between the Lines," Hannover Address, para. 3.

²⁰¹ This relationship is made explicit in a lecture given by Libeskind in Great Britain. Daniel Libeskind, "The Links Between Music and Architecture," *Independent* (London), July 29, 2002, <http://www.independent.co.uk>.

²⁰² Eric Zakim, "The Dialectics of Nerves and Muscles: Schoenberg's Moses as the New Jew," *The Opera Quarterly* 23 (2009): 476. I choose to use the single "a" in the title for "Aron" because it is often done that way by Schönberg. Strongly superstitious about numbers, he reportedly eliminated an "a" from the title to prevent it from having thirteen characters. In a related move, I use the German spelling "Schönberg" in my own writing, though others substitute the English "oe" for the "ö" character. When quoting or citing, I defer to the words of each author.

Zemlinsky was a close confidant and influence in the development of Schönberg's strong emotional style early in his development. Of course, his Jewish heritage and unusual, though creative, arrangements of music made finding the support to stage his music difficult, precipitating a brief move to Berlin (one of three over a thirty year period) and a conversion to Lutheranism around the turn of the century.²⁰³

Bouncing between a Berlin relatively receptive to his music and a Vienna that despised his compositions (a few performances provoked verbal outrage and physical fighting amongst the crowd), Schönberg began to take up expressionist painting as a vehicle for communicating ideas and moods which he felt could not be explored within the conventional strictures of musical language. Finding the seven-tone scale increasingly restrictive for the expression of his ideas in music, he abandoned it in favor of a more complex development of dissonant sounds and unusual note progressions that could evoke and properly texture a wider range of emotional experiences. In a 1909 letter to Ferruccio Busoni (an Italian composer and friend), he explained, in a semi-poetic form that moves back into prose:

I strive for: complete liberation from all forms / from all symbols / of cohesion and / of logic. / Thus: / away with "motivic working out." / Away with harmony as / cement or bricks of a building. / Harmony is *expression* / and nothing else. / [...] And the results I wish for: / no stylized and sterile protracted emotion. / People are not like that: it is *impossible* for a person to have only *one* sensation at a time.

One has *thousands* simultaneously. And these thousands can no more readily be added together than an apple and a pear. They go their own ways.

And this variegation, this multifariousness, this *illogicality* which our senses demonstrate, the illogicality presented by their interactions, set forth by some mounting rush of blood, by some reaction of the senses or the nerves, this I should like to have in my music.²⁰⁴

²⁰³ Unless otherwise specified, information about Schönberg's life is taken from Malcolm MacDonald, *Schoenberg* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 1-87.

²⁰⁴ Arnold Schönberg to Ferruccio Busoni, 18 August 1909, in *A Schoenberg Reader: Documents of a Life*, ed. Joseph Auner (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003), 70-1.

Schönberg's works until the early 1920s seem to conform to this account; they were increasingly polyphonic, structurally diverse, and unbound to a particular key.

However, two shifts occurred in Schönberg's thinking in the early 1920s. Searching for a method to provide some architectural stability for his innovations, he developed a twelve-tone method of composition that enabled a larger degree of play within particular parameters. Dividing an octave into twelve different tones (even those not belonging to a particular key), Schönberg wrote music through different variations of those twelve tones in a series (all twelve tones must also be used before a repetition of old ones can occur). Using human language as an analogous form of human expression to explain his thoughts, Schönberg wrote:

Composition executed tonally in every sense proceeds as to bring every recurring tone into a direct or indirect relationship to the fundamental tone [...] Composition with 12 tones related only to one another (incorrectly called atonal composition) *presupposes the knowledge of these relationships*, does not perceive in them a problem still to be solved and worked out, and in this sense works with entire complexes similar to the way in which language works with comprehensive concepts whose range and meaning are assumed generally to be known.²⁰⁵

Freed from harmony within a particular key as a fundamental organizing principle of music, Schönberg suggests that at each twelve tone progression evokes something akin to a linguistic concept, which can then be serialized into a larger score designed to convey an idea.

Schönberg's second shift in thinking was not so much musical as it was religious. Based upon his continued experiences with anti-Semitism, even after his conversion to Protestantism, he became increasingly interested in development of Jewish consciousness. Having dealt with subdued anti-Semitism for his entire life, Schönberg noticed an escalation in overt expressions of this sentiment during and immediately after World War I. By 1921, he had been driven to the breaking point. Taking his family to vacation in Mattsee, a small Austrian town near the border

²⁰⁵ Arnold Schönberg, *Gedanke* Manuscript, 12 November 1925, in Auner, *Schoenberg Reader*, 177.

of Southern Germany, he was visited by local authorities a few days into the trip and asked to leave because Jews were no longer welcome in the area. In a letter written to Wassily Kandinsky, an artist teaching at the recently founded Bauhaus school in Germany, nearly two years later, he expressed the effect that such experiences had upon him. "I have at last learned lesson that has been forced upon me during this year, and I shall never forget it. It is that I am not a German, not a European, indeed perhaps scarcely even a human being (at least, the Europeans prefer the worst of their race to me), but I am a Jew."²⁰⁶ Schönberg's Jewish consciousness, put on display to an anti-Semitic Kandinsky, became an important part of his intellectual and artistic development later in life. Besides supporting Zionist causes in the 1920s and 1930s, Jewish spiritual belief became an important topic for musical exploration. While exiled in Paris in 1933, he was formally re-admitted into the Jewish religious community.

Schönberg lived in Berlin from 1925 to 1933, which coincided with the blossoming of both his aesthetic and spiritual development. *Moses und Aron* (intentionally misspelled by Schönberg to keep the title from having thirteen characters) was the largest and most grandiose of his compositions from this period and was the first opera composed entirely from his newly-developed twelve tone method. Based on the biblical passages in Exodus describing Moses and Aaron's leadership of the Jewish people out of Egypt and Moses' ascension to the mountain to receive God's commandments, the opera is divided into two acts. The first act begins with a conversation between God and Moses about Moses' inability to speak effectively and lead the Jewish people, to which god responds by sending him a brotherly companion, Aaron, who has the ability to effectively communicate with them. A dichotomy of roles develops between the two: Moses is the intellectual leader and the keeper of the idea of God, while Aaron tries to make

²⁰⁶ Arnold Schönberg to Wassily Kandinsky, 19 April 1923, in Auner, *Schoenberg Reader*, 168.

those ideas accessible to a people that demand visible proof and practical incentives for their allegiance. The end of the first act brings this tension to a crescendo, with Aaron performing miracles to convince the Jewish people to follow Moses. Moses remains silent, seemingly pained by the distortions produced by Aaron in his descriptions of god and the performance of miracles, but begrudgingly accepts Aaron's tactics as necessary to lead God's chosen people from Egypt.²⁰⁷

Act Two begins with Moses having ascended the mountain of revelation to await a message from God. The Jewish tribes in the desert become restless and violent, while the elders become increasingly skeptical toward Aaron and their new God. When the Israelites demand evidence of God's existence and his ability to reward them, Aaron asks them for gold so that he may form an image of God. Though he makes it clear that such an image would be arbitrary, the statue of the golden calf is embraced by the people, who pay it tribute and human sacrifices for appeasement. After an evening of debauchery, Moses descends from the mountain, stone tablets in hand and destroys the image of the calf. Moses demands to know why Aaron has done such a thing, as he had prohibited the embodiment of God in an image. Aaron, trying to defend his behavior, replies that Moses' tablets (with the commandments) are an image, and even when Moses moves to destroy them, Aaron suggests that the act of destroying the tablets is also an image; destroying the finite (tablets) because they cannot contain the infinite (God's desires) is a way of making the inconceivable understandable to an audience (his followers). Moses, feeling fully trapped by images that deceive about the nature of God, ends Act two in monologue: "then I have fashioned an image, too, false as an image must be! Thus am I defeated! Thus, all was but

²⁰⁷ My descriptions are taken from a recent production of the opera in Vienna available on video. Arnold Schönberg, *Moses und Aron*, DVD, Vienna State Opera, directed by Reto Nickler (Halle/Saale, Germany: Arthaus Musik, 2006).

madness that I believed before, and can and must not be given voice. O word, thou word that I lack!”²⁰⁸

Although Schönberg left a sketch for Act Three, it is short, without musical score, and often not included in performances. Given the poor outline that exists, many scholars, much like Daniel Libeskind, treat the first two acts in isolation.²⁰⁹ Schönberg took quite a bit of license with the biblical text, making the conflict much more generic and abstract than in the context of the other events in Exodus.²¹⁰ The purpose, of course, was to distill a set of conflicts between idea and expression:

The spiritual problems are reduced to their basic form, call it what you will: one may describe it as the struggle between spirit and non-spirit, the power of God and magic, law and image, the inconceivable and the visible, worship of God and self-glorification, saintliness and sin, spirit and flesh, and logos and instinct.²¹¹

The last words of Moses in the second act suggest that these tensions have no resolution. All attempts at communicating the idea of an omnipotent, invisible, and unimaginable God will fail, as verbal or visual image substitutes for the idea.

In what way does this tension find its way into Libeskind’s extension design? Of course, one ought to remember that his interest is not in the representation of God per se, as he indicates in his Hannover address, but instead in “the logic of the text” that metaphorically explores the difference between “the revealed and unimaginable truth and the spoken and mass-produced

²⁰⁸ Quoted in Karl H. Wörner, *Schoenberg’s ‘Moses and Aaron’*, trans. Paul Hamburger (New York: St. Martin’s, 1959), 37.

²⁰⁹ Arnold Schönberg, “Moses und Aron,” in Auner, *Schoenberg Reader*, 217-8. Schönberg’s outline for act three consists of a single scene in which Aron is imprisoned. After a soliloquy in which Moses condemns Aron and the rest of the tribes for being ruled by images, rather than the idea of God, he allows Aron to go free. Once released, Aron stands, but then immediately collapses dead. Moses then says: “in the desert you shall be invincible and shall achieve the goal: unity with God.”

²¹⁰ For a detailed analysis of his divergences from the biblical text, see Bluma Goldstein, “Schoenberg’s *Moses und Aron*: A Vanishing Biblical Nation,” *Political and Religious Ideas in the Works of Arnold Schoenberg*, ed. Charlotte M. Cross and Russell A. Berman (New York: Garland, 2000), 159-92.

²¹¹ Wörner, *Schoenberg*, 39.

people's truth." Schönberg's opera probes this tension metaphorically in its very form of musical expression. While Aaron sings his lines in beautiful harmony, Moses's speaks his lines in a gruff voice. The title of Libeskind's original proposal to the competition committee, "Between the Lines," and his choice to use lined musical paper for his proposal description replicate the metaphorical tension between the musical and unmusical in Schönberg's opera. Moreover, music/spoken word, as a divide, is embodied in his proposal, wherein it stands for a host of other tensions also evoked in the opera: "The Museum must serve to inspire poetry, music and drama (etc.) and must give a home to the ordered/disordered, chosen/not chosen, welcome/unwelcome, vocal/silent."²¹²

Though Libeskind uses Schönberg's opera as an inspiration for the architectural design, it would be a mistake to assume that he sees his work as just an architectural embodiment of the same basic problematic outlined in *Moses und Aron*; it is designed to offer an architectural solution to it. In Libeskind's sketchbooks from the preliminary design period, the opera is a dominant theme. The name "Moses" appears on one of the pages in a notebook containing very early sketches, along with the image of a music score in two movements.²¹³ This thought develops into the presence of two different lines in a seemingly later notebook, one straight and ordered and the other crooked and disordered, which turns to a speculation on sound waves, juxtaposing the straight-line representation of silence to the erratic line of music (related explicitly to *Moses und Aron*). In the middle of these visual speculations, Libeskind's verbal notes make it clear that he is interested neither in order or disorder as dominant theme, but something he termed "hypoorder."²¹⁴ Even when producing architectural prints, Libeskind

²¹² Daniel Libeskind, *Gedenkbuch: Berlin*.

²¹³ Daniel Libeskind, Notebook sketch, Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 5, Notebook 1.

²¹⁴ Daniel Libeskind, Various sketches, Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 6, Notebook 1.

explicitly linked the building's design to *Moses und Aron*: one can find images of the museum's metallic exterior with musical bars running through them and in another image the final words of Moses, "O word, thou word that I lack," are printed into the void line at the center of the museum.²¹⁵ As is insinuated in the above-quoted passage from his competition proposal, it would seem that "hypoorder" would be a way of designing the architecture that balances the notions of order and disorder, of voice and silence, in such a way that both are "give[n] a home" in the building. While the finished components of Schönberg's opera seem to leave an audience with a sense of hopelessness given the impossibility to express the idea of God in an image, Libeskind's architectural solution would hold the two together in tension, at least symbolically in the figure of the two lines, one counterbalancing the other.

Libeskind also seemed keenly aware that simply holding these two countervailing tendencies (vocal/image pushing against the silent/thought) together in architectural tension itself was not enough. One must also destabilize the very image of the museum extension as a "home" for these irreconcilable tensions. The first two we have identified as the above-ground relationship between two lines, but two below-ground layers serve to "upend" the stability of that relationship: the underground hallways and the "X" image passing through the lot.²¹⁶ Libeskind's original design outlines a basement floor plan with successive halls at staggered angles, as if one took rapid photographic images of falling books, labeled in these sketches as the interruption of the text. Such images are repeated often in his preliminary sketches of the museum (sometimes books, sometimes in stone tablet form), and is a component of the museum

²¹⁵ For examples, see Daniel Libeskind, *Architectural Prints*, 1989, Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Roll 40; Folio Roll 42.

²¹⁶ Though one can find various strands of his thinking on this throughout the notebooks, all of these images come together and are labeled in Daniel Libeskind, *Various Sketches*, Daniel Libeskind Papers, Box 8, Notebook 1.

design at least until early 1990.²¹⁷ In much the same way that Schönberg's opera is "interrupted by the logic of the text," a text that Schönberg strived to complete, though ultimately unable to finish to his satisfaction, the image of the falling books "interrupts" the coherence of the architectural logic above-ground.

The "X" running through the museum extension site further unhinges the representational stability of the architecture. According to prints available to the competition committee, the lines of the "X" meet at the point they pass under the void line of the above-ground portion of the museum, although through a part exterior to the main zig-zag, and, as such, would not be built.²¹⁸ This space, often referred to as the "voided void," performs what Libeskind terms in one of the notebooks as a "crucifixion of the text," a gesture to make sure that there is "no more worship" of the image as such.²¹⁹ The use of an "X" to mark through the text is a common device for Libeskind in his writings and projects during the mid and late 1980s, in which he was identified as a significant player in developing the architecture of deconstruction. In philosophical and literary criticism circles, the practice of crossing out words or phrases with an "X" is known as writing "sous rature" (under erasure). Gayatri Spivak explains its use in the context of Jacques Derrida's work:

It is the strategy of using the only available language while not subscribing to its premises, or "operat[ing] according to the vocabulary of the very thing that one delimits." For Hegel, as Hyppolite remarks, "philosophical discourse" contains "its own criticism within itself." And Derrida, describing the strategy "of a discourse which borrows from a heritage the resources necessary for the deconstruction of that heritage itself," remarks similarly, "language bears within itself the necessity of its own critique." The remark becomes clearer in the light of writing "sous rature": "At each step I was obliged to

²¹⁷ Libeskind, Various Sketches, Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 7, Notebook 2; Box 8, Notebook 2.

²¹⁸ Daniel Libeskind, "Kellerschloss," Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Roll 53.

²¹⁹ Libeskind, Various Sketches, Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 8, Notebook 3.

proceed by ellipses, corrections and corrections of corrections, letting go of each concept at the very moment that I needed to use it, etc.”²²⁰

If the literary and philosophical application of this textual practice can be considered analogous to the architectural application in Libeskind’s work, then it seems plausible that the “voided void” is designed to put the architectural design, as symbol, under erasure as well. Needing to express the relationship between voice and silence, image and idea, through a form of architectural language, Libeskind signals architecture’s own inadequacy to do the issues justice. His basement design “interrupts” or “un-grounds” the symbolism of the above-ground portion of the museum extension – a symbolic expression that is necessary for the architecture to attempt, but even as a “solution” to Schönberg’s dilemma between representation and idea, must *necessarily* acknowledge its own arbitrary signification and insufficiency for the occasion.

Taking the tension between the idea and image in Schönberg’s *Moses und Aron* and translating it to architectural language, on its own, is an interesting academic enterprise, but is not an architectural response that has specific application to Berlin’s particular history and peculiar representational difficulties. To accomplish that, Libeskind layered another level of symbolism onto the architecture. With the zigzag portion of the museum containing different materials on the history of Berlin, the void line continuously bumps up against historical telling with its emptiness, suggesting that the language of the museum’s historical narrative is incomplete and inadequate. “And what is not visible is the collection of the Jewish Museum, which is reducible to archival material, since its physicality has disappeared.”²²¹ Taking Schönberg’s development of the twelve-tone method and rejection of stabilized harmonies as a parallel gesture, one can see the real genius in Libeskind’s use of this particular inspiration.

²²⁰ Gayatri Spivak, “Translator’s Preface,” in Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans. Gayatri Spivak (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), xviii.

²²¹ Libeskind, “Between the Lines,” Hannover Address, para. 12.

Much like tonal harmonies are only one possibility in music that rely upon exclusions of certain “minor” or odd tones on a scale, so to historical narrative telling requires a selection of material from only a partial stock of materials, while leaving others consigned to the oblivion of invisibility.

Carefully inspecting the design evidence for traces of how Libeskind used Schönberg’s *Moses und Aron*, it seems that Libeskind wanted to produce a building that, while rife with multiple layers of symbolism, still acknowledged the insufficiency, perhaps even the danger, of visual and spatial symbolism in representing German-Jewish history and culture. Using Schönberg’s *Moses und Aron*, an opera that explores the Old Testament prohibition of graven images of God, as a conceptual starting point, Libeskind thinks that he has made a building that can have it both ways. While representation of Jewish life and history within Berlin was a necessity for consciousness raising and cultural visibility, Libeskind’s used the empty space of the void line to intertwine historical storytelling in the museum extension with an acknowledgement that any such narrative would be partial and insufficient. Moreover, insofar as the entwining of the two lines of the museum created a “hypoorder,” at least in Libeskind’s eyes, the above-ground portion of the museum risked becoming another graven image of German-Jewish life and culture; the visible and invisible, ordered and disordered (and the rest of the dialectical tensions Libeskind identifies), are brought together into a single structure, similar to how the Taoist *Taijitu* image expresses the balance between *yin* and *yang* in a single circular form. The use of the “X” imagery in the underground portion of the design, evoking the textual process of putting words under erasure, provided another way to destabilize the symbolism of the architecture. The interaction of the various building elements, each seeming to question the

symbolic possibility of others, serves to create a multi-layered text where no particular content can be definitively ascribed.

While one can question whether or not Libeskind developed an adequate “solution” to the conceptual tension between the need for representational imagery and its inevitable distortion or inaccuracy, it is clear that the topic of Schönberg’s opera heavily influenced Libeskind’s thinking in developing his architectural design for the Berlin Museum extension. However, much like physical layout of the city discussed in the first section of this chapter, the opera cannot be said to have direct correspondence with elements of the building structure; it was instead an influence on Libeskind’s basic thinking about the conceptual problems of the extension project. If, for Libeskind, *Moses und Aron* provides an abstract rubric for the problems of symbolic language, of ideas, images, and historical narratives, then he would have turn elsewhere for thinking about the representational problems of Berlin’s particular history.

3.3 GEDENKBUCH BERLIN

As Libeskind meanders through his explanation of his inspiration, the third aspect seems to be of a largely sentimental character:

I was interested in the names of those people who were deported from Berlin during the fatal years that one knows historically. I received from Bonn two very large volumes called “Gedenkbuch” – they are incredibly impressive because all they contain are names, just names, dates of birth, dates of deportation and presumed places where these people were murdered. So, I looked for the names of all the Berliners and where they had died, in Riga, in Lodz, in all the concentration camps. So this was the third aspect.²²²

²²² Libeskind, “Between the Lines,” Hannover Address, para. 4.

At this point in the speech, Libeskind is becoming increasingly cryptic and less descript about his inspirations for the extension design. What is the purpose of looking through a book like this, and in what way does it inform the architectural design?

Two main pieces of archival material provide visual evidence of this particular inspirational link between the design and the Gedenkbuch, and both were part of the materials made available to the competition committee: the exterior of the competition committee book and the competition model for the museum. A copy of the first is available in the Getty Museum Archives under the title “Gedenkbuch Berlin 6000000.”²²³ The book is clad in a thick canvas cover with three screws creating a top edge binding. “Gedenkbuch” is written in golden lettering with “Berlin” crossing it at a 45 degree angle in red stencil, forming an offset “X” pattern on the top portion of the cover. Toward the bottom, “6000000” is stenciled in gold lettering in the lower center. The interior of the book contains the written justification for Libeskind’s competition entry (on lined music paper), small drawings of the extension design, and a listing of the sizes and use of interior spaces. Designed to accompany a model and some large plotted drawings, this book served as the explanatory report for much of the rest of the competition materials.

²²³ Libeskind, *Gedenkbuch: Berlin*. While the finding aid at the Getty Research Institute identifies this as a “commemorative book,” I have good reason to believe that the book is actually part of the original submission to the competition committee. First, while the cover is clearly a reproduction of the volumes provided to Libeskind by the West German government, it is produced on a very sturdy canvas/cardboard cover with three screws affixing a top spine and with protruding caps on the back – not the type of quality that one would expect from a reproduced commemorative book designed for a coffee table. Second, the book contains varying qualities of paper, with drawings on relatively thin, translucent sheets and the written overview of the projects on thick, lined musical paper. Given that the latter type of paper also bears the imprint marks of a typewriter (not a photo-reproduction), one would at the very least have to say this book was likely handmade and produced in extremely limited quantities. Third, the first interior page actually has a photocopy of the original “Gedenkbuch” in black and white with text across upper third of the cover. In painted red block lettering pattern at roughly a 45 degree angle, with text ascending through the “UC” in “Gedenkbuch,” the word “Berlin” is superimposed. With a discerning eye, one can find pencil marks for defining the size of the block lettering to be superimposed, suggesting this particular book is an original material, not a reproduction. It may be the case, given the size of the competition committee, that more than one of these books existed, but I at least think it very likely that this particular book was designed to be viewed by the competition committee.

Reflecting upon his decisions several years later in his autobiography, Libeskind discussed the decision to design the competition proposal in this manner:

The competition organizers had asked for a report to accompany the models. I decided to do my report on musical notation paper (hence “Between the Lines”), but to write it with the structure of the *Gedenkbuch*.... This was an anonymous competition, and had my name been discovered by any of the Germans [because of its Yiddish origin], I would have been disqualified; but it blurred in with all the rest. The competitors were asked to select numbers in which to identify themselves. I chose 6,000,001.²²⁴

While it is unclear as to why Daniel Libeskind feels that the discovery of his name would be sufficient condition to disqualify him from the competition, especially since the city government sent him a personal invitation to enter the competition (other than, like any other candidate, association of a name with an entry would violate the principle of impartial judging),²²⁵ it might have – in conjunction with his status as a cultural outsider – changed the positive perception that the judges had about the boldness and vision of the project.²²⁶ Like the slight change to the competition entry number from 6000000 to 6000001, this ought to be treated as the effect of fifteen years of subsequent experiences (and difficulties) and forgetting that is typical of personal memory.

However, regardless of the reliability of certain aspects of Libeskind’s recounting, one can get a sense of Libeskind’s interest in the *pathos* of the *Gedenkbuch* as a form of persuasion. In an earlier portion of his autobiography, the moral and emotional imperative of putting the

²²⁴ Daniel Libeskind, *Breaking Ground* (New York: Riverhead Books, 2004), 93-4.

²²⁵ Herr Keller to Daniel Libeskind, 29 November 1988, Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 26, Folder 2.

²²⁶ While I disagree with the extremity to which Daniel Libeskind characterizes the risk in his name, I think that his position as both Jewish and cultural outsider (American citizen and former Israeli inhabitant) would have changed how a mostly local competition committee would perceive his project. The subject position of the speaker might make a difference in how the message is perceived, especially given the legacy of verbal condemnation of Germany by both the American and Israeli governments. What might seem as thoughtful reflection on the part of someone within West German society might be perceived as a verbal ideological weapon coming from a person that does not lead a daily life in Germany. This issue will be taken up in much more depth in Chapter Four.

Gedenkbuch and the number 6000000 (corresponding to a rough estimate of European Jews that died in concentration camps) at the visual forefront of the project:

The Berlin government has always promoted cultural affairs, and now it was inviting me to participate in an architectural competition to create a Jüdische Abteilung—a Jewish Department—for the Berlin Museum.

Jüdische Abteilung! The words stabbed me in the heart.

On the face of it, the Senate's intention was admirable. It was indeed time for the Berlin Museum to acknowledge the incalculable cultural and historical contributions made by Jews. But to use that phrase! It was the *very phrase* used by Adolf Eichmann, the SS lieutenant colonel who masterminded the removal of Jews from their homes into ghettos, and from ghettos into the cattle cars that took them to the camps. It was the Jüdische Abteilung der Gestapo that had the responsibility for carrying out the "Final Solution" (a phrase Eichmann claimed to have coined).

The competition organizers weren't thinking much about history, I suppose. Or perhaps they hadn't moved very far *in* history. They were unable to imagine the Jews as anything other than as outsiders.²²⁷

Libeskind's accusation that the competition organizers that not thought much about history or appropriate structure is certainly not factually true (as discussed in the previous chapter), though he is most certainly free to think that their verbal and structural choices were inappropriate.²²⁸ His feeling that the West Berlin government participated in an act of forgetting suggested a necessary response: that he create a visible reminder of the atrocities of the Holocaust in his design.

The binding of his competition proposal suggests that the entire design embodies, at its heart, the memories of dead Jewish victims in the Holocaust. His proposal book is shrouded in black canvas, cut through only by the golden and red stencil lettering on the front cover and the metal screws along the top that bind the book together. The physical form of Libeskind's

²²⁷ Libeskind, *Breaking Ground*, 79.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, 101-2. Libeskind's concern with the label "Jüdische Abteilung" is interesting, given how mundane such phrase would seem to cultural insiders. It likely has such a strong negative valence because of his admitted unfamiliarity with the language.

proposal book announces symmetry between the lists of dead in the original *Gedenkbuch* sent to him by the West German government and the descriptions of his building extension that comprise the content of this book. In the poetic diatribe typed upon musical paper, in the contours of the lines of the plotted extension drawings, and in the listing at the back of the proposal associating seemingly random numbers on the large-scale drawings with the particular functions of the museum extension space, one ought to see the memory of those Jewish people sent to their deaths in the concentration camps.

To drive this point home further, Libeskind took the liberty of making the dead visible to the competition committee on the architectural model itself. While several subsequent study models have been generated in the planning and development of Libeskind's building, the one submitted for the June 1989 architectural competition used pages of listings of Jews from the *Gedenkbuch* to cover the surface of the model's base.²²⁹ On what would be the ground-level from which the body of the museum emerges, the names stream diagonally around the building extension, the Collegienhaus, and the "shards" of concrete scattered by Libeskind across the lot. It seems that Libeskind wanted to argue that the Jewish dead of the Holocaust ought to be the grounding from which the spirit of the project takes its form. Given his perception that the German government and the competition committee itself were trying to forget them, both the form of his competition booklet and model are a powerful rejoinder.

Again, with regard to the inspirational character of the *Gedenkbuch*, the influence on Libeskind seems beyond question. But it is less clear whether it had much effect on the particulars of Libeskind's design. Reflecting back upon the words of his speech, Libeskind never

²²⁹ My description is based upon a personal photo of the model taken at the Jewish Museum Berlin in September of 2009. Published images of the model are also available in Daniel Libeskind, *Countersign* (New York: Rizzoli, 1991), 94-5.

directly connects the practice of ordering the *Gedenkbuch* and looking through the names to the production of the building. Instead, he makes an enthymematic argument that allows the audience to conclude the names and addresses of Berlin Jews became part of the structure of the building. Even in his after-the-fact recount of the design process, he never directly connects particulars of the building to the *Gedenkbuch*. “I began plotting the Berlin addresses for names taken at random from the *Gedenkbuch* on my map of the city. (I found these addresses in prewar phone books.) Then I looked for the specific addresses of people that I admired, Jews and Gentiles, and I paired some of them, drawing a line from the address of one to the address of another.”²³⁰ Upon later reflection, Libeskind at least suggests that the exercise of plotting addresses was a starting point for what became the “Star of David Site Plan” discussed in a previous section, but he does not go so far as to argue that this mental exercise had impact directly on specific walls or angles in the museum.

Other evidence ought to create further doubt that the names from the *Gedenkbuch* have a direct connection to the lineaments of Libeskind’s museum extension. In a 2008 interview with Hanno Rauterberg, Libeskind claimed clearly that the museum does not convey any particular “symbolic idiom,” nor can it be reduced to a particular idea. “You mean the shattered Star of David? The zigzag thunderbolt? But they are symbols that do not exist. Many people just thought them up because they cannot bear the openness and lack of symbolic signs in my architecture. But the building resists such premature attributions and one-dimensional interpretations.”²³¹ While he is not specifically referring to the use of the *Gedenkbuch*, he does make it clear that no particular strategy of designing, even the use of the Star of David, directly connects to the

²³⁰ Libeskind, *Breaking Ground*, 92.

²³¹ Daniel Libeskind, “This Building Tells a Story,” in Hanno Rauterberg, *Talking Architecture: Interviews with Architects* (Munich: Prestel, 2008).

museum's physical structure. A letter from May 4, 1990 by Helmuth Braun is even more informative. Writing to Libeskind, Braun sends an attached document with aggregate deportation figures from Berlin, with Braun directing Libeskind to the *Gedenkbuch* to find the particular names of the deported.²³² If one takes the contents of the letter as a response to a question asked by Libeskind about deportation in Berlin, it would seem that the process of using the *Gedenkbuch* and using the particular names had not been fully completed even after his address to Hannover University in December 1989, and, as such, could not have been fully incorporated into the lineaments of the competition design.

At this point, one can begin to notice a trend in the design comments that Libeskind made in his address. Much like the previous two aspects of the project he outlined, his design documents, letters, and personal memoirs indicate that *viewing* the *Gedenkbuch* did have an important effect on how he viewed the importance and magnitude of the project. Moreover, one can say with reasonable certainty that Libeskind wanted to use the physical structure of the *Gedenkbuch* in his competition proposal, the book binding and the pages of names covering the model, to impress upon the committee that the Holocaust needed to be at the forefront of the memory politics of the museum extension project – something he believed had been forgotten in the competition call for entries. However, one cannot make a strong claim, and in fact one has some textual reason for skepticism, that the *Gedenkbuch* had a direct bearing on the physical structure of Libeskind's extension design. It might be more interesting to note, as the next section demonstrates, that the design aspect receiving the least verbal treatment from his Hannover University speech might have had the most direct impact on the particulars of the building.

²³² Helmuth Braun to Daniel Libeskind, May 4, 1990, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 26, Folder 6.

3.4 TWO WAY STREET

Almost as if he runs out of steam to speak, Libeskind only mentions the last aspect in passing: “The 4th aspect of the project is formed by Walter Benjamin’s One Way Street.”²³³ In his memoir, he explains more about how Benjamin’s work informed his own:

When I’d started thinking about what to design, I’d bought a map of Berlin. Then I’d pulled out a dog-eared copy of my favorite book on the city, *Einbahnstrasse*, or *One-Way Street*, by literary critic Walter Benjamin. It’s a strange book, a supposed guidebook—marvelously enigmatic and apocalyptic, divided into sixty sections of aphorisms and ruminations. Benjamin was writing an epic reported to be his greatest work when he fled Berlin for France in 1933. Seven years later, unable to escape occupied France for Spain, and with his book still unfinished, he committed suicide to avoid capture by the Gestapo.²³⁴

Just to be clear, Libeskind is referring to two different works in this passage: *Einbahnstrasse*, which was finished in 1928, and the *Passagenwerk* (Arcades Project), which Benjamin had begun in 1928, but remained unpublished in his lifetime. In some ways, they are related, as both take street life as an important point of cultural reflection and both use an aphoristic style of writing. Though Libeskind talks about referencing this work as a beginning point for his design, he does little to explain *how* it was used or *what* content piqued his interest in *One-Way Street*.

To investigate these questions, Libeskind gives a few coded references as starting points. For instance, he seems particularly interested in *One-Way Street* as a way to write about the city, and also refers to it as a guidebook, presumably of Berlin. It is true that many of the aphorisms are labeled after things one might encounter walking through the city, such as “Travel Souvenirs,” “Monument to a Warrior,” “Stand for Not More than Three Cabs,” and “Caution:

²³³ Libeskind, “Between the Lines,” Hannover Address, para. 5.

²³⁴ Libeskind, *Breaking Ground*, 91.

Steps.”²³⁵ Some aphorisms dwell upon urban spaces, while others use something akin to the language of a street sign or advertisement as an opportunity to speculate upon another topic altogether. In this way, Benjamin does not seem to so much document the particular structure of Berlin as he uses the experience of walking as a way to spur an interior dialogue of memory, class, ritual, and society.²³⁶ In essence, the physical city space itself only provides a prompt for other, invisible traces of self and society that they evoke; the practice of peripatetic urban experience by a person (*flâneur*) only about looking at others and being seen by those others, it also elicits possibilities for thoughtful social criticism.²³⁷

Taking his words as a guide, the inspirational character of Benjamin’s style of writing on Daniel Libeskind’s design work becomes more apparent. Particularly with the first and third design inspirations previously discussed, Libeskind’s practice of design is less concerned with the particulars of the structure of the city, addresses of prominent Jews, and the *Gedenkbuch* than he is with using those materials as a prompt for thinking about the social, perhaps even spiritual (in the more loose German sense of *Geist* – translated at different points as either spirit or mind), dimensions of the building project. Even though Daniel Libeskind spent little time in Berlin prior to the proposal of his museum extension, the map of the city and the addresses of its inhabitants provides the opportunity for him to become something like a “virtual *flâneur*” of Berlin, of seeing the matrix of invisible connections that make up the heart of Jewish-German cultural development. Those points of connection not used to build a structure per se, but instead ground the attitude of the designer as he then goes through the process of designing a building for a

²³⁵ Walter Benjamin, “One-Way Street,” in *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings*, ed. Marcus Bullock and Michael W. Jennings (Cambridge, MA: Belknap/Harvard, 1996), 1:444-88.

²³⁶ Mike Savage, “Walter Benjamin’s Urban Thought: An Analysis,” in *Thinking Space*, ed. Mike Crang and Nigel Thrift (London: Routledge, 2000), 33-53.

²³⁷ Alan Latham, “The Power of Distraction: Distraction, Tactility, and Habit in the Work of Walter Benjamin,” *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 17 (1999): 451-73.

cultural diaspora whose physical impact of the city, up to that point, had largely been erased by the actions of the Third Reich and Berlin's subsequent division into two different cities.

Libeskind's notebook sketches also point to another way of thinking about Benjamin's *One-Way Street*. In the recount above, Libeskind dwells upon Benjamin's life path and eventual death, and it is clear that Libeskind sees the metaphor of the title of this work as important for thinking about cultural destruction. One notebook begins with an abstract sketch that opposes a one-way street to a two-way traffic movement. As the sketches progress, he plays with the idea of unraveling history ("unroll the Torah" and "unfold the book" are written on various pages), along with the segmentation of historical narrative. The notebook ends with a series of sketches of the city in ruins from bombing and aerial raids.²³⁸ The association of these images and notes suggests that Libeskind saw the notion of the "one-way" as the march toward inevitable destruction, eventually dislocating historical narrative altogether.

It is not until a later notebook that Libeskind finds his solution to the progression of historical narrative in the various possible interruptions of the text, which is discussed previously concerning the insertion of the symbolism of erasure. But he also notes on one page that "interrupting means opening the street! So that one → becomes ← two and void is not 'void'."²³⁹ Libeskind seems to argue that doubling the lines of historical narrative so that openings and interruptions occur serves as a symbolic opening of historical temporal progression, such that the seeming inevitability he sees in the metaphor of the one-way street is avoided. The crossing of the void line, which leaves spaces unable to be curated in the museum extension, creates a "narrative break down" in any potential story of inevitable historical progression.²⁴⁰ The

²³⁸ Libeskind, Various Sketches and Notes, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 7, Notebook 2.

²³⁹ Libeskind, Personal Note, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 9, Notebook 4.

²⁴⁰ Libeskind, Personal Note, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 9, Notebook 5.

intersection of two lines of thought, two “streets” one might argue, provides a potential corrective to the troubling history of Benjamin’s life, especially as it might be seen as an exemplary case in the larger cultural destruction of Jewish life in Berlin during the Holocaust.

In Libeskind’s competition proposal, references to Walter Benjamin or *One-Way Street* are meant to recall the influence of this particular text on the architect’s view of historical narrative embodied in the museum architecture. He argues directly in the opening narrative that the traditional arrangement of linear historical narrative would be interrupted by his museum structure, and that the movement between spaces could occur in several different ways.

Standard exhibition rooms and traditional public spaces have been dissolved and disseminated along a myriad of complex trajectories in, on, and above the ground...Linear structures interact to create an irregular and decisively accentuated set of displacements, providing an active path and distancing the viewer in the investigation of exhibits. These may be arranged both horizontally (plan), vertically (section), or in combinations of the two.²⁴¹

Following the lead of Benjamin, the exhibits themselves become only starting points for the reflection of viewers upon history. Moreover, the opening of multiple paths through the museum offers a freedom of narrative construction and experience by museum visitors. In addition to the walkways linking the segments of each floor across the void line, several elevators and staircases are designed into the structure to increase freedom of movement and to spark potential innovations for curating the displays.

In the final section of his proposal booklet, Libeskind gives an explicit nod to Benjamin for this innovation. In his index to the diagrams, he writes, “since the museum represents an open idea, the functions and their numerical equivalents can be arranged in other configurations. The numbers used reflect persons and acts unknown. For all CAPITALS refer to Walter Benjamin”

²⁴¹ Libeskind, *Gedenkbuch: Berlin*.

(referring to labels written in all capital letters).²⁴² The next several pages list a set of arbitrarily assigned numbers that correspond to parts of the building, and each number is described a function, such as “Graphic Collection” or “Toilettes and Cleaning Equipment.” At certain points in the list, some descriptions are given all capital letters, which correspond to names of particular aphorisms in *One-Way Street* like “TO THE PLANETARIUM” and “ENLARGEMENTS.” In a set of large-scale prints for the different floors of the museum, the random numbers are embedded along walls or in certain room segments, giving some idea to the competition committee of how the various museum spaces could be used and arranged together.²⁴³

Walter Benjamin’s *One-Way Street*, though treated with few words in his Hannover speech, provided a method for Libeskind of proceeding with the process of design. Much like Benjamin’s use of the city in his writing, particular material spaces were deployed as prompts for interior dialogue and reflection. Moreover, Benjamin’s death, which Libeskind treats as an example of a larger cultural trends, inspired Libeskind to design a space that does not dictate the movement of museum visitors; the one-way street of historical narrative is opened to various possible intersections, interventions, and re-formations. But Libeskind did not conceive that space as an abstract symbol for the idea of openness per se. Instead, as the various aspects of the project demonstrate, the potential symbolic field of the museum itself is destabilized, while still perhaps inviting provisional, contingent uses and interpretations. The museum spaces, much like the spaces of the city, would be flexible and open to continual re-use in a variety of different ways. In much the same way that Andreas Huyssen theorizes Berlin’s city space as a “palimpsest” (a manuscript in which the words can be scraped away and new writing can be overlaid on the same page), the museum spaces in Libeskind’s extension design provide the

²⁴² Ibid.

²⁴³ Libeskind, 4 Drawings, August 1, 1989, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Roll 53.

ability to be reimagined based upon the contingent desires of the Berlin Museum curatorial staff and contextual needs in the future.²⁴⁴

3.5 CONCLUSION

In one of Libeskind's later notebooks in which he was also speculating about the material to be used for the exterior of the building, a quote, attributed to Bruno Schultz (a Polish writer and artist killed during the Third Reich's occupation), was scrawled across two pages: "my colored pencils rushed in inspiration across columns of illegible text in masterly squiggles, in breakneck zigzags that knotted themselves suddenly into anagrams of vision, into enigmas of bright revelation, and then dissolved into empty, shiny flashes of lightening, following imaginary tracks."²⁴⁵ No other commentary is present on the page. Though he does not make direct mention of it anywhere else, this passage is a window into Libeskind's thoughts about the process of his architectural design. His interest in addresses and structure of the city, the fascination with the problem of symbolism in *Moses und Aron*, the importance of remembering those Berlin Jews listed in the *Gedenkbuch* who were deported and murdered, and the method of historical narration and urban investigation in *One-Way Street* all form the inspiration that drives his pencils to rush across the page in his notebooks, often taking the form of illegible notes and squiggles. Those thoughts suddenly produce an "enigma of bright revelation," his eventual design for the extension of the Berlin Museum that would house the Jewish Department. To be

²⁴⁴ Huyssen, *Present Pasts*.

²⁴⁵ Bruno Schultz, quoted in Daniel Libeskind, Personal Note, Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 9, Notebook 6. The quote seems to be taken from a section titled "The Gifted Epoch" in Schultz' *The Sanitarium at the Sign of the Hourglass*, but the direct source of Libeskind's translation of the passage is unknown.

covered in a luminous, composite material, the structure itself would be a “flash of lightning” illuminating future imagined paths for Berlin’s open and unknown future. Such an interpretation is consistent with Libeskind’s later commentary about the process of architectural invention: “inspiration comes forth from an unpredictable source buried in an unknown place. It is the encounter of this inspiration with the real facts of the project that forges the result.”²⁴⁶

Throughout, one can hear echoes of the concept of “anticipatory illumination” in his speech at Hannover. In one sense, his design inspirations are largely historical in character. Certain Jewish people of cultural importance resided particular places in Berlin, the historical character of the city’s own structure had been erased by the demands of the divided present, Arnold Schönberg wrote *Moses und Aron* while living in Berlin, people in the *Gedenkbuch* were forced to leave, and Walter Benjamin took his own life only a few years after fleeing this place of which he thought enough to write a pseudo urban narrative. In his inspirations, one can see the rise and fall of nineteenth and twentieth century Jewish society. The aftermath of a war correlating with these events left physical scars upon the city’s physical makeup, as Lindenstrasse attests. Yet, in fusing these historical strands into a symbolically enigmatic composition open to as yet unimagined future curatorial designs and viewership needs, Libeskind’s architectural design holds open potential interpretive futures for the museum itself, and by synecdochal relation (as part of the Berlin Museum), the city as well. The architecture was made to feel as if it were significant, as if it would show a way of re-narrating Berlin’s own history, and in so doing, would offer a way to see the culture of Berlin that has yet to arrive.

But in the fall of 1989, likely no one, not even Libeskind himself, knew exactly *why* or *how* the extension of the Berlin Museum would have importance the city (or the nation/the

²⁴⁶ Daniel Libeskind, *Counterpoint: Daniel Libeskind in Conversation with Paul Goldberger* (New York: Montacelli, 2008), 16.

world) when it opened a dozen years later. Recall the discussion of the fall of the Berlin Wall at the outset of this chapter. The opening of the Berlin Wall seemed to be a significant, perhaps even a watershed event on November 9, 1989, but if we are honest with ourselves about the contingency of the situation, then it is fair to say that people of the time had little idea what the fall of the Berlin Wall would ultimately mean for Germany or for the rest of the world. In the following years, much ink would be spilled trying to make accurate predictions, and, in retrospect, the unification of Germany and the eventual collapse of Soviet Communism looks to us *now* like it was probably the only inevitable outcome of the fall of the Berlin Wall.

The same thing can be said for Libeskind's design for the extension of the Berlin Museum: its eventual evolution into an autonomous Jewish Museum in Berlin may seem like a natural and inevitable consequence of Libeskind's design; people will speak of his design inspirations (such as the coordinates of Jewish addresses in the city) as if they had a direct bearing on the lineaments of the museum and will cite his articulated vision for the building as proof for why his building must be built or must become something in particular. However, its eventual evolution into the Jewish Museum Berlin was the product of historical forces, political accidents, continued public advocacy by Libeskind, and the work of several visionary curators working over a long period of time – rhetorical maneuvers that will be the topic of subsequent chapters of this dissertation. Libeskind himself tried to resist these more reductive readings of his work. This is the real value of Bloch's concept of anticipatory illumination: it draws our attention to literary works, images, and building designs that seem to announce that the future will be different, that draw people's attention to them, but yet acknowledges that the content of that future are not yet known. The brilliance of Libeskind's design process is that he seems to be self-consciously aware of the cultural need for Germans and Jews to articulate a vision of their shared

cultural heritage, and to have that vision be a guiding force in the development of mainstream German society, while at the same time not confining the building to any particular symbolic configuration that would foreclose future interpretive and dialogic possibilities. The design moves people in a number of different ways, and he leaves enough interpretive wiggle room in his descriptions for the building to be continually reimagined based upon changing political and social circumstances.

The German press made sure to take plenty of photos of the fall of the Berlin Wall and the celebration events that followed in its immediate aftermath. By the next year, those photos had become the basis for a book-length photo documentation of the event produced by Wilhelm Heyne Verlag (Press) in Munich. In it, images of celebrations were interspersed with a few photos of the wall's construction in 1961 and the massive East German protests that had at least partial responsibility for its opening on November 9, 1989. On each page, quotes from officials or short commentary are provided, but little substance or interpretation is given about the significance of the event. By the time of its publication, little was known about the future of Germany, but the written commentary does seem to make one predictive commitment: this was the day the German people came together again.²⁴⁷ By the spring of 1990, it seemed likely that reunification seemed inevitably on the horizon, though few people knew what form a new national state would take. Part of what the images of the events of that fateful November day “illuminated” could be viewed, if only in a blurry, vague sort of way. But as the year progressed, the trajectory of history anticipated by the images came into sharper focus.

²⁴⁷Bernhard Michalowski, Christine Proske, and Günther Fetzter, eds., *9. November 1989: Der Tag der Deutschen: Eine Bilddokumentation* (Munich: Wilhelm Heyne, 1990).

4.0 CANCELLATION

At the groundbreaking ceremony for Daniel Libeskind's extension to the Berlin Museum on November 9, 1992, Berlin Jewish Society President Jerzy Kanal (recently appointed after the death of Heinz Galinski) spoke to the symbolism of the occasion: "I wish that all inhabitants of this city, regardless of their ethnic origin, live here in peace and freedom."²⁴⁸ Joined by Daniel Libeskind, Culture Senator Ulrich Roloff-Momin, and Mayor Eberhard Diepgen, the public unity between the Jewish community and the government contrasted sharply with the public dispute over delaying the project just a year previous to this moment. In late summer and early fall of 1991, Diepgen lobbied for the project's delay, citing a funding crisis for the city, only to receive public pushback from other political parties, the Berlin Museum staff, and several prominent international voices that saw the dispute over the museum as a symbolic fight over the newly unified German nation's tolerance for ethnic difference. While only a small part of the building was dedicated to the Jewish Museum Department, Kanal's words suggest that the building had become more than a local museum expansion – public controversy had made it an internationally recognized symbol for freedom and tolerance of difference within Germany. In essence, it illuminated a set of values that the newly reunified Germany ought to embody.

²⁴⁸ [Ich wünsche, daß alle Einwohner dieser Stadt, unabhängig von ihrer Herkunft, hier in Frieden und Freiheit.] Quoted in Christoph Lang, "Mazel Tov 'Jüdisches Museum'!" *Berliner Morgenpost*, November 10, 1990.

The Libeskind building project was just an example of the interest international audiences had taken in actions of Germany regarding its treatment of ethnic minorities, particularly the global Jewish diaspora. Accordingly, German officials were particularly sensitive to international perceptions. For example, in the October 5, 1990 edition of *The Jerusalem Post*, Ernie Meyer reported “representatives of the German Embassy...marked the unification of West and East Germany by placing a wreath at Yad Vashem’s Ohel Yizkor [Hall of Remembrance].”²⁴⁹ The Israeli response asserted that Germany’s gesture was not sufficient to allay international concerns about the direction of the new German nation.

“[Prime Minister Yitzhak] Shamir said ‘...We were...disappointed that in the unity documents no proper public mention was made of the lessons of the Holocaust.’ He said that he hoped ‘the lesson of history would be reflected in (Germany’s) future attitude towards the Jewish people and in particular in the policy of support and assistance to the State of Israel.’”²⁵⁰

After East Germans “voted decisively to abolish their country” with the March 18th election of the “Alliance for Germany” ticket, the reunification negotiation process with West Germany moved quickly to completion.²⁵¹ The Israeli Prime Minister demanded an acknowledgement of the Holocaust in founding documents and continued material support of Israel as necessary contrition for the crimes perpetrated against Jewish people during the last period of German unification. Although the Germans themselves seemed largely enthused about the process of reunification as one new nation, fears of German unity became a recurring theme in the international press, especially in Israel (but also in Canada and the United States).²⁵²

²⁴⁹ Ernie Meyer, “German Official Lays Wreath at Yad Vashem,” *Jerusalem Post*, October 5, 1990.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁵¹ Michael Meyer, “East Germany Turns Right,” *Newsweek*, March 26, 1990. For a social account of the only free East German election to take place, see Kerstin Decker, “Es war ein Kreuz,” *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), March 17, 2010.

²⁵² For examples, see Douglas Davis, “Jacobovits Warns of Danger of Nazi Revival if German Economy Falts,” *Jerusalem Post*, July 23, 1990; Douglas Davis, “A Few, Lonely Voices Fear the New Germany,” *Jerusalem Post*, October 3, 1990; Jennifer Gould, “In Germany, a Disturbing Lapse in Memory,” *Toronto Star*, September 17, 1990; “Israel Official Boycotts Visit by Germans,” *Toronto Star*, June 26, 1990; Henry Kamm, “Anxiety Tugs at

Helmut Kohl's address celebrating reunification is another example where the enthusiasm for reunification had to be balanced with messages that would ease international concerns. Even while framing official German unification as a day of celebration, he felt compelled to speak about the need to "never forget, suppress, or play down the crimes committed in this century by the Germans."²⁵³ While many may have welcomed Kohl's words as a frank acknowledgement of German responsibility for the devastation of World War II and the Holocaust, I think it is important to remember how unusual it would be for a head of state to discuss a matter of collective national guilt during an event celebrating the foundation of this newly reunified country; it is likely testament to the difficult constraints of his unique rhetorical situation. On one hand, Germans needed to feel proud and hopeful about their future as a country, but, on the other hand, the rest of the world needed to be reassured that this new Germany would not create the same difficulties as previous iterations of that nation.

The scene at the Yad Vashem and Helmut Kohl's address were part of the government's effort to finesse conflicting demands of various groups through which the image of a reunified German nation would be produced (and re-produced). One can read the unified German Government's words and deeds as a form of "constitutive rhetoric" (a form of public address that attempts to call an identity into being) that balances German's identification with its tragic past and the desire to carve out a hopeful future as a single nation.²⁵⁴ Germans needed to be reassured of their country's path of nationalistic development, but others needed to be convinced that

Germany's Jews, Bitterness Sears the Die-Hard Nationalists," *New York Times*, September 25, 1990; Herb Keiron, "Let's Improve Ties, Shamir Tells Bundestag Members. WJC Views German Unification with Anxiety and Suspicion," *Jerusalem Post*, March 22, 1990; Arthur Miller, "Uneasy About the Germans," *New York Times*, May 6, 1990; and Scott Sullivan, "Can Germany be Contained," *Newsweek*, July 30, 1990, 28.

²⁵³ Quoted in W. Ermel, "Time for the Healing to Start," *Herald* (Melbourne), October 5, 1990.

²⁵⁴ Charland, "Constitutive Rhetoric."

Germans would not forget their past.²⁵⁵ While the rhetorical work of Helmut Kohl, Richard von Weizsacker and other German officials had a constitutive goal, namely to link the new German nation with the previous versions of a united Germany while signaling to international onlookers that the new German nation would not be a threat to global peace, the continued dissatisfaction expressed by Israeli government officials (and more quietly by other western nations) and the persisting doubts of German's themselves about the viability of the reunified nation suggest that the persuasive effectiveness of rhetorical tactics by German officials were mixed at best. Thus, admonitions of an insufficient commitment to take responsibility for the Holocaust on the part of the Israeli government were not merely external commentary for Germans to discuss; they impinged upon the constitutive possibilities of what it meant to be German.

This chapter documents the design issues with and public conversations surrounding the development of Daniel Libeskind's extension of the Berlin Museum from the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989 to the extension groundbreaking in November 1992, with close attention given to the period between July and September of 1991 in which the threat of delay to the Libeskind building was at the forefront of public discussion. If one begins with the premise, established in Chapter Three, that the extension design, while having a certain ethos derived from the publically professed convictions of the architect, was an open-ended symbol, then one can reasonably conclude that the work of professional advocacy and public discourse continued the process of making the architecture meaningful to a German society in transition. In addition to a domestic public conversation that divided mostly upon political lines, the international outcry over delay of the project created enough pressure for continuation. While international discussion assumed Germany was interested in forgetting its troubled past, the domestic

²⁵⁵ "Voices of the New Germany: Hope, Guilt, Fear, Joy and Deep Satisfaction...In the Words of the Prominent, Glimpses of a Nation's Complex Feelings," *New York Times*, October 4, 1990.

conversation concerned itself with the proper relationship between Germans and Jews expressed in the space of display. The former exerted strong public political pressure for continuation, but the subtleties of the latter – arguments about the unsuitability of alternative spaces and the desirability for an integrated display of German and Jewish history – carved a potential constitutive path for Berlin city officials to eventually follow. The interaction between the pressure of international agents and the deliberative sensibilities of the domestic press impinged upon the Berlin government's vision of the city, much like in the case of Kohl and company's constraints for the German reunification ceremonies, but it also left open a narrative avenue for the reconstitution of Berlin identity. Again, this narrative path of positive cultural connection is couched in the language of anticipatory illumination: Libeskind's design (and its curatorial plan) not only connects the history of Germans and Jews in its structure, but it also embodies a vision of a tolerant, reunified German nation.

However, one notable absence in the public conversation is striking: the East German press said little, if anything at all, about the controversy surrounding the continuation of Libeskind's extension. Press from thousands of miles away covered it, yet papers printed only blocks from the proposed building site took little overt interest in sharing information about the project with their readership. The lack of shared understanding on the significance of the controversy at hand suggests that the East Berlin public, as read through its organs of dialogue (print media), do not yet at this moment see Libeskind's project *as their own*, as something in which they had a stake. In essence, though East and West Germans may share the same national laws at this point, they were not yet fully integrated as a single national public. Berliners lived in a shared urban space and were part of the same nation, but they, as of yet, could not imagine

themselves as having shared local or national concerns, even in a matter so central to projected local and national identity as the proper display of German-Jewish history.

The two unique attributes of this case – the active participation of international agents in Berlin’s local political decision making and the refusal of the former East Berlin public to participate in the controversy over cancellation – provide an opportunity to reflect upon Gerald Hauser’s theory of reticulate public spheres as it relates to alien communication. If, as Hauser argues, “disagreements arise and lend themselves to rhetorical development only because there is a shared understanding of what is significant” among different actors sharing public space and if the very nature of a public is “the interdependent members of society who hold different opinions about a mutual problem and who seek to influence its resolution through discourse,”²⁵⁶ then one must conclude that West Berlin shared a reticulate public sphere with interested international parties, while those just a few miles away in East Berlin did not fully share a public sphere with West Berlin. In other words, the history of West Germany’s occupation and alliances with other Western nations had built a network of public conversation designed to influence German cultural practice, but a fully integrated public sphere East and West Berlin had not been discursively constituted. Contrary to Gerard Hauser’s suggestion that publics within a reticulate public sphere treat “alien communication,” i.e., communication from outside groups, as “something interacted *about* rather than interacted *with*,” contemporary public spheres, especially those in transitional nations, must navigate controversies in which transnational voices may become active voices in a controversy on the constitutive content of a national culture, while other subgroups within a nation may choose to frame themselves as “alien” voices.²⁵⁷ Thus, researchers should be wary of distinctions made between the interior and exterior of the

²⁵⁶ Hauser, *Vernacular Voices*, 152; 32.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 70.

reticulate public sphere, in which discrete publics advance particular agendas and propagate partial visions of a culture, based upon national or local boundaries.

The chapter begins with the difficulties that Daniel Libeskind and Rolf Bothe (Berlin Museum curator) encountered in the early planning stages of his extension project, followed by a more general discussion about issues facing the city. As the threat to delay the museum extension by five years came into public conversation, I examine the reactions in three parts: the international backlash, the domestic solution-oriented conversation, and the silence of the East Berlin press. In the aftermath of those conversations the project continued and most of the public conversation died down. The conclusion documents the emergence of a museum narrative as it relates to the imagined future of Germany as a unified nation with Berlin as its capital and reflects upon the implications of this case for the study of newly emerging public cultures.

4.1 EARLY ISSUES IN PROJECT PLANNING

In a letter to Karlheinz Wuthe on the 23rd of November, 1989, Daniel Libeskind thanked the fellow architect for his interest in collaboration, but made it clear that collaboration would no longer be necessary.²⁵⁸ Libeskind had recently set-up an office in Berlin, leaving his teaching position in Italy and foregoing gainful future employment with the Getty Institute.²⁵⁹ Upon his arrival in Berlin, he found that navigating the different layers of bureaucracy in Berlin would be difficult to handle. Bernhard Schneider, a local architect and a Competition Committee representative for the Senator for Culture in Berlin, outlined the various possible difficulties

²⁵⁸ Daniel Libeskind to Karlheinz Wuthe, November 23, 1989, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 26, Folder 4.

²⁵⁹ Libeskind briefly discussed his decision to stay in Berlin in *Breaking Ground*, 85-8.

faced in the construction of the museum: environmental concerns, changes in governmental representation, construction difficulties, conceptual uncertainties, and funding.²⁶⁰ Though many of the problems interrelate in some fashion, each one reared its head in only the first two years of the project's development.

Libeskind's letter to Wuthe also noted that he had begun the process of working through the landscape issues with local officials. The concern emerged over a city decision on how to use the land. As the Competition Invitation booklet for the museum indicates, in 1977 the International Bau-Ausstellung (IBA), anticipating the 750th anniversary of the City of Berlin a decade later, wanted to use this part of the Kreuzberg district as an exemplary mixed-use urban living space. As part of that initiative, an east-west "green corridor" was designated in place of the 1965 Urban Master Plan's presumed installation of an east-west highway connecting the traffic of the divided city.²⁶¹ The site for the extension of the Berlin Museum was on this east-west axis, and, as a result, needed to be consistent with the overall "green" amendments the IBA made to the Urban Master Plan.

One of Libeskind's first tasks in the planning process of the building was to interface with both leaders of local community groups and the city government to provide an adequate compromise on the use of outdoor spaces and building placement. In the competition models and drawings, little attention was given to the building's exterior. In a 1:500 scale "Lageplan" [site plan] printed in the immediate aftermath of the competition, landscaping seems like a non-issue: musical bars stream out from the facades of the museum to the streets, rather than populating the

²⁶⁰ Bernhard Schneider to Daniel Libeskind, October 22, 1989, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 26, Folder 4.

²⁶¹ *Competition for an Extension*, 57-8.

space with trees or walking paths.²⁶² The competition model's interest in highlighting the loss of Jewish Berliners in the Holocaust also came at the expense of any imaginative landscape design. Moreover, the irregular shape and placement of the building could have made or broken the ability to use the rest of the area since the empty lot was surrounded by buildings in use. The competition committee, in the rules for the design, was careful to highlight the importance of green space, so Libeskind, in his first real design challenge, would have to satisfy interested local parties before any other part of the project, such as interior design, could get off the ground.²⁶³

For the most part, Libeskind was able to satisfy potential detractors successfully. By the first part of 1990, he had generated a set of ground plans that called for the museum extension to shift north, closer to the Collegienhaus, by 10-15 meters, and had generated several different alternatives for the organization of outdoor park space. In each alternative, Hollmanstrasse, which divided the main building from the proposed extension, was maintained, while creating a walking corridor to the south of the building and reasonable sized park area in the eastern portion (museum extension back) of the lot.²⁶⁴ As a set of documents forwarded in February 1990 to Libeskind from Volker Heise confirm, attending local stakeholders at community meetings about land-use for the new building project were satisfied that these changes would allow for continued bicycle traffic north of the building through Hollmanstrasse, while creating allowances for east-west foot travel in the wooded area to the south of the building. They were also happy with the

²⁶² Daniel Libeskind, "Lageplan Wettbewerb," August 1, 1989, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Roll 52.

²⁶³ Though it is not possible to know for sure, one could speculate that Daniel Libeskind purposefully did not do much with the landscape in his competition proposal in order to minimize a potential point of conflict and to hold attention on his building design.

²⁶⁴ 4 Drawings, February 15, 1990, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Roll 59.

potential inclusion of a children's play area in the rear of the building (an idea that did not come to fruition in the final product).²⁶⁵

Libeskind recounted a rather interesting conversation with Wolfgang Nagel, Senator for Construction and Housing (West Berlin), in late 1989 or early 1990. After watching the Senator cancel a project by a peer (Steven Holl) for an American Memorial Library, he was called to the Senator's office to answer questions about his museum extension:

"What qualifies you, Libeskind, to build in Berlin?" he demanded.

I was speechless. It was not a real question...

"Okay," he said, jerking his head toward a model of the building, "is this the project?"

I nodded.

He studied it. "How do I get into this building?"

"There is no door for you, Senator. For you, there is no entrance to this building...because there is no way into Jewish history and into Berlin's history by a traditional door. You have to follow a much more complex route to understand Jewish history in Berlin, and to understand the future of Berlin. You have to go back into the depth of Berlin's history, into its Baroque period, and therefore into the Baroque building first."

Nagel studied the model. His face softened, and he said, "Mr. Libeskind, I don't care about your past. I like your style. I welcome you to build in Berlin." And then he shook my hand and left.²⁶⁶

While the particulars of the conversation may be embellished by over a decade between the event and its commitment to the written record by Libeskind, it does reveal the extent to which particular public officials felt passionately, both positive and negative, about his extension design.

²⁶⁵ Volker Heise to Daniel Libeskind, February 1990, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 26, Folder 7.

²⁶⁶ Libeskind, *Breaking Ground*, 98-9.

Thanks in no small part to the heavy advocacy work of Josef Kleihues as one of the dominant architectural voices of the IBA, the late 1970s and 1980s introduced a number of innovative architectural works in the western part of the city.²⁶⁷ As the head of the competition committee, Kleihues played an important role in the selection of Libeskind's extension design and continued to support it throughout the process.²⁶⁸ Other architects in Berlin, such as Volker Heise, Bernhard Schneider and Karlheinz Wuthe, also continued to express their support and admiration for Libeskind.²⁶⁹ The enlistment of local professional voices willing to support Libeskind's ideas, particularly given their connection to city officials, provided some political cover for Libeskind and heightened credibility for his ideas within (former) West Berlin's intellectual community.

On the other hand, the instability of the political situation in Berlin did create some difficulties. Walter Momper, the mayor of Berlin at the time of the competition committee's selection, and a member of the Socialist Party of Germany (SPD), had been a strong advocate for the development of the museum extension, and had put his support for Libeskind's design in writing.²⁷⁰ However, following reunification, Eberhard Diepgen of the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) defeated Walter Momper and took over duties as mayor of Berlin in early 1991. Although, as the previous passage from Libeskind's memory suggests, Wolfgang Nagel had been sufficiently convinced of the building's quality and had become a defender of the project, Libeskind confided in Heinz Galinski in a letter that political opposition to the project was

²⁶⁷ The designs of the two of the more significant IBA projects are documented in Balfour, *Berlin*, 233-44.

²⁶⁸ Libeskind, *Breaking Ground*, 87. Kleihues' comments at a roundtable arranged to commemorate the opening of the empty building on January 31, 1999 confirmed his continuing commitment to the idea that Libeskind's building was a welcome addition to the landscape of Berlin. "Podium Discussion," January 31, 1999, Audio Cassette Recording, Record No. PR 990131, Research Library, Jewish Museum Berlin.

²⁶⁹ Karlheinz Wuthe to Daniel Libeskind, December 13, 1989, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 26, Folder 4.

²⁷⁰ Walter Momper to Rolf Bothe, November 6, 1989, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 26, Folder 6.

mounting.²⁷¹ Even with the retention of Nagel as Senator for Construction and Housing, the election of a more conservative local government would increase the pressure to justify the extension's unique contribution to Berlin.

Construction problems in Libeskind's own design created some of the most difficult early issues to overcome. With the basement design being a series of loosely connected exhibition spaces made to visually evoke the images of falling books and their erasure with an "X" of hallways (as discussed in Chapter Three), the large amount of excavation required for the basement alone would be costly. When one added the cost of anchoring an above-ground building whose vertical angles progressively became more oblique as one moved from Lindenstrasse east to the back of the extension (as if the building itself were warping and plunging into oblivion), the engineering difficulties became substantial. Moreover, the Berlin government added some reasonable, though previously unstated, stipulations during the early planning phase in 1990 that further increased costs, such as air conditioning, security systems, and emergency electrical provisions.²⁷² Thus, when the first cost estimates for the building came in at 178.5 million DM, the government scoffed and asked Libeskind to make changes.²⁷³

Libeskind wisely decided to placate some of the building demands of the city. In the latter half of 1990 and the first part of 1991, he straightened the walls, which would dramatically lessen the burdens of anchoring an otherwise lopsided above-ground structure.²⁷⁴ He also reduced the overall floor area of the design a bit, while maintaining the integrity of the symbolic

²⁷¹ Daniel Libeskind to Heinz Galinski, September 11, 1990, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 26, Folder 7.

²⁷² *Ibid.*

²⁷³ Russell, "Project Diary," 76.

²⁷⁴ One can visibly see the changes in the final preliminary designs available in the Getty Research Institute's archives. Daniel Libeskind, 6 Blueprints, March 15, 1991, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Roll 144.

layout.²⁷⁵ Finally, Libeskind completely overhauled the structure of the museum's basement. He eliminated the falling book design. In place of the "X" figure that connected to the Collegienhaus at the east end of the southern wing, the underground passage moved closer to the front door on the west side of the southern wing. The basement would only consist of a small exhibition space on the west side, directly underneath the above-ground line constellation at the front of the building, and three hallways that crossed one another: one leading to an outdoor garden, one leading to a tower to the south of the extension's main building, and one that led to a main staircase providing access to the three above-ground floors of the building.²⁷⁶ The changes, taken collectively, cut the overall cost estimates by one-third.²⁷⁷

In addition to changes to the building design, some of the political changes happening in Berlin created unanticipated issues with the conceptual use that had justified the building. For the competition, architects were charged with the task of designing an extension that would perform various needed functions. Not only would it house the Jewish Department and the Theatre Department of the West Berlin museum, but also the building would provide storage space for collections of the museum not on display, would have an independently accessible restaurant, and would offer sufficient office space for the growing museum staff. After the fall of the Berlin Wall and the official reunification of the city, the East's city museum collection and the large amount of unused buildings in the Mitte district suddenly made an extension of the Collegienhaus less of a pressing concern, since some of that unused space in the East could be used potentially to divide displays and store any excess artifact holdings for the Berlin Museum. Moreover, West Berlin and East Berlin had already begun the process of renovating the Neue

²⁷⁵ Russell, "Project Diary."

²⁷⁶ Daniel Libeskind, 10 Blueprints, September 1, 1990, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Roll 129.

²⁷⁷ Russell, "Project Diary."

Synagogue on Oranienburger Strasse to use both as a place of worship and to house a cultural museum about the Jewish faith.²⁷⁸ Even before the official process of political reunification began, Ernst Cramer, a member of the Society for a Jewish Museum in Berlin, expressed doubt as to whether Libeskind's extension was necessary in a Berlin no longer cut in two.²⁷⁹

With regard to the potential redundancy of two Jewish Museums, Rolf Bothe, Director of the Berlin Museum, provided a defense of the difference between the two types of collections. However, Ernst Cramer's concerns were shared by some of Berlin's officials, prompting an official response letter to be sent to the Senate Administration for Cultural Affairs by Bothe.

“The Berlin Museum and its extension, primarily concerned with the history and culture of Berlin, its Jewish and non-Jewish citizens of the nineteenth and twentieth century, is developed as an integrative concept that an international committee of experts at the Aspen Institute Conference unanimously favored and only with Daniel Libeskind's design would it be ideally realized in an architectural form.”²⁸⁰

The Centrum Judaicum on Oranienburger Strasse would primarily be concerned with providing a research archive and a very small set of displays about the Jewish faith generally; it would not have the room to house an integrated historical collection.

The argument for the use of already built spaces would prove more difficult to dispel. Cramer made clear in his first letter that the reconstructed Ephraim-Palais would provide suitable space for the museum, and even chose to resign from the Board of the Society for a Jewish Museum a year later.²⁸¹ Political forces in Berlin, especially those of the new local government,

²⁷⁸ “Viele Spenden für Aufbau der Synagoge,” *Berliner Zeitung*, June 28, 1989.

²⁷⁹ Ernst Cramer to the Board of the Society for a Jewish Museum in Berlin, February 5, 1990, in Weinland and Winkler, *Das Jüdische Museum*, 291-3.

²⁸⁰ [Im Berlin Museum und seinem Erweiterungsbau, der vorrangig der Geschichte und Kultur Berlins, seiner jüdischen und nichtjüdischen Bürger im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert gilt, ist ein integratives Konzept entwickelt worden, das von einer Tagung im Aspen-Institut einstimmig befürwortet und nun mit dem Entwurf Daniel Libeskind's vorbildlich in eine architektonische Form umgesetzt wurde.] Rolf Bothe to the Senate Administration for Cultural Affairs, July 17, 1990, in Weinland and Winkler, *Das Jüdische Museum*, 295.

²⁸¹ Ernst Cramer to the Board of Directors of the Society for a Jewish Museum in Berlin, March 4, 1991, in Weinland and Winkler, *Das Jüdische Museum*, 300-4.

continue to press the issue about the need for more display space. The situation became critical in the summer of 1991, when Rolf Bothe and Vera Bendt (Director of the Jewish Museum Department of the Berlin Museum) sent a mass letter to supporters, both within Germany and abroad, arguing for the need to continue building the museum extension. In it, they argued that the Märkisches Museum, the building that housed the former East Berlin City Museum, had neither the display space necessary for an integrative museum, nor the office and storage space to house the large collections and workers of the Berlin Museum generally. To add the Ephraim-Palais as a display space would also not work, as “the palace has rooms which are too small, whose ceilings are too low and at the same time windows which are too large and no climatological system. It is inappropriate for conservational reasons.” Moreover, they note that Vietel Ephraim’s historical significance as a “Münzjuden” [“mint-Jew”] for Friedrich II would only fuel potential anti-Semitic feelings about the culture (in that Ephraim had been accused of circulating counterfeit money).²⁸² Regardless of the objections raised by Bendt and Bothe, these arguments, exchanged in private during 1990 and the first part of 1991, would find their way into the public conversation just two weeks after Bothe and Bendt’s letter had been written.

In the meantime, Bothe had spent a considerable amount of energy devising how the extension building, after Libeskind made his major structural changes, would be curated. With crisis looming in Berlin, they put Libeskind’s plans on display, along with a written scheme of the interior, at the Joods Historical Museum, Amsterdam in the early summer of 1991. As the exhibition booklet makes clear, the Theatre Department and restaurant would no longer be

²⁸² Rolf Bothe and Vera Bendt to “Friends and Colleagues” with accompanying background material, June 30, 1991, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 27, Folder 1. The cover letter is reprinted in Weinland and Winkler, *Das Jüdische Museum*, 305.

housed in Libeskind's extension.²⁸³ Instead, the basement hallways of the extension would be used to display the Jewish Department materials proper, while the above-ground portion of the museum would house a general history of Berlin from 1871 (declared nationhood) to the present day. On the interior walls of the exhibition space (created by the void line running through the center of the museum), a history of the contributions of Jewish Berliners would be integrated into the rest of the museum narrative. As for the void line itself, "for the period of persecution, these structures become memorials, and the Jewish history disappears; its roots may be perceived by the visitor behind the closed walls and beneath these, on the lower level." History of Berlin before declared nationhood would be displayed in the Collegienhaus.²⁸⁴ With its new division of exhibition space, Bothe's interior concept hoped to prove to detractors that Libeskind's extension for the Berlin Museum was still necessary and desirable from a symbolic perspective, even with the availability of already built, but unused, spaces in East Berlin.

For the early development of Libeskind's extension project, numerous concerns reared their respective heads. Both the architect and his supporters did an effective job dealing with them, for the most part, as evidenced by how green space was included to the satisfaction of most of the community, how Libeskind proved adept at convincing some local leaders to advocate on his behalf, and how design costs were reduced significantly by making a few subtle design changes. On the other hand, some political leaders still viewed the project with suspicion, and perhaps more importantly, still saw the extension as superfluous in a reunified city with several empty spaces already built. Though Libeskind, Bothe and Bendt worked diligently to explain the importance of the building, not all were convinced. Most of the conceptual objections

²⁸³ The restaurant was visibly moved in working sketches starting September of 1990. Daniel Libeskind, 27 working sketches, Autumn 1990, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Flatfile 21.

²⁸⁴ Rolf Bothe, in *Between the Lines*, catalogue for exhibition at the Joods Historical Museum, Amsterdam, June 7-September 22, 1991, Call No. II.1.1 Libes 30, Research Library, Jewish Museum Berlin.

seemed to be a front for an issue that went far beyond the confines of this particular building project: the extreme cost of and infrastructural problems with reunifying Berlin itself. In the next section, I outline just some of the most obvious economic and social troubles that came with early reunification efforts.

4.2 THE PRESSURE OF REMAKING BERLIN

Before political unification became a reality, economic unification made its way to Berlin. Immediately, the high number of Eastern refugees that came across the border after the fall of the Berlin Wall became an economic problem of care for the west. Moreover, the relative value of western Deutschmark compared to the currency of East Germany created real disparities in buying power of citizens, putting pressure on leaders to reform. A few months after East Germany's free election, political leaders decided to switch to the western currency standard, even though that choice could have flooded the eastern market with costly, though likely superior, western products. Eastern companies were threatened with bankruptcy, as they had little access to capital under the new system and little demand for their products.²⁸⁵ Though the opening of their insular society left them with little choice but to adapt and struggle for survival, the optimism of reunification in the East was dampened by the prospects of high unemployment and economic pain in the short term, economic burdens that would be the primary responsibility of the local government to alleviate.²⁸⁶

²⁸⁵ Wilbur G. Landrey, "Germanys Take Biggest Step Toward Reunification," *St. Petersburg Times* (Florida), July 1, 1990.

²⁸⁶ Robert Dodge, "East Germans Tense on Road to Reunion," *Toronto Star*, July 15, 1990.

For those in West Germany, economic and political reunification did not immediately threaten the prosperity of most citizens, but also came with a fairly significant cost. By 1989, West Germany's economy was a major global economic force and heavily industrialized. When the two countries switched to a unified currency, West Germany shouldered quite a bit of the cost for switching the currency of individuals at a one-to-one or two to one ratio (up to a reasonable cap) when the Eastern currency had much less worth. West Germany also agreed to significantly aid the East in meeting its debt and payroll obligations, no small cost in a state-planned economic structure with a large governmental bureaucracy.²⁸⁷ The large infusions of cash did little to help, and it became apparent that the process of political reunification would need to happen quickly to avoid a full-scale collapse of East Germany's economic system so that the strength of West Germany's currency would create some temporary stability in the East German economy while the state-owned businesses there could transition to a market economy.²⁸⁸ Even then, little guarantee could be made that companies in West Germany would wish to invest in the East.²⁸⁹

Political and economic unity seemed to do little help to those in East Germany, as some of the worst forecasts proved correct. Under the previous system, employment was not necessarily tied to demand for production, making it possible to provide full employment to the country's citizens. It may not have generated wealth, but it most certainly provided some degree of economic security, no matter how small, to workers. Just a few months after reunification, those unemployed or drastically underemployed in the former East numbered nearly one third of

²⁸⁷ David Binder, "Cost of Paying East's Debt Growing Problem for Bonn," *New York Times*, August 1, 1990.

²⁸⁸ Mark Almond, "Feeding an Economy's Almost Insatiable Appetite," *Times* (London), August 10, 1990.

²⁸⁹ Ferdinand Protzman, "East Germany's Economy Far Sicker Than Expected," *New York Times*, September 20, 1990.

the working eligible population.²⁹⁰ Reserved optimism or mild concern turned to a full-scale crisis, with rising incidents of violence and suicide among East Germans who could no longer see much hope for the future. Additionally for West Germans, it became clear that they would be expected to, and as a political reality *must*, pay for reform with tax increases.²⁹¹

In Berlin, the situation was only a little less dire. During the years of division, West Germany heavily promoted the growth of West Berlin through direct subsidies to investors and financial aid to the city government, even though it was technically still under the political control of the “four powers agreement” set out at the end of World War II. Reunification ended the special political status of the city, and halting economic aid under old agreements was close behind.²⁹² However, Berlin had three major benefits working in its favor. First, the legacy of Western investment left a private infrastructure in the city that was still largely viable. Even with the economic troubles of the former East, in Berlin, some possibility existed to find work in the western sector of the city. Second, the tourist industry in Berlin increased substantially after the fall of the wall. North Americans and Western Europeans, eager to see a closed communist society up close, took advantage of the city’s enjoyable, yet low cost nightlife.²⁹³ Finally, in the reunification agreements, the capital of Berlin was positioned to become the new capital of Germany, and, with that move, some investment and economic support from the national government for renovation would follow suit.²⁹⁴ Even though, in a technical sense, West Germany politically absorbed the East in the reunification process, both the social gesture of

²⁹⁰ Iain Jenkins, “Germany Wakes to a Nightmare,” *Sunday Times* (London), March 31, 1991.

²⁹¹ John Eisenhower, “Germany to Raise Taxes on 1 July,” *Independent* (London), February 22, 1991; and Charles Lane, Karen Breslau, and Michael Meyer, “Why Don’t They Share?,” *Newsweek*, April 1, 1991, 28.

²⁹² Alan Ferguson, “Westerners Fear They’ll be ‘Piggy Bank’ for Reunification,” *Toronto Star*, September 30, 1990.

²⁹³ Marc Fisher, “Cutting Costs in Berlin,” *Washington Post*, February 10, 1991.

²⁹⁴ Ian Johnson, “Berlin or Bonn: Germans Weigh Capital Options,” *St. Petersburg Times* (Florida), September 16, 1990.

moving the capital to the former East and the financial comparisons made Berlin a desirable choice for the April 1991 vote.²⁹⁵

Still, the economic situation in Berlin looked bleak by the summer of 1991. Following the trend of the rest of the former East Germany, the number of Berliners on the jobless rolls rose to 192,000 in August; many more only worked part-time for low wages.²⁹⁶ Anticipating potential investment and an influx of government workers, rents across the city, whether residential or commercial, skyrocketed.²⁹⁷ East Berliners also seemed to share some of the resentment that their peers in nearby towns felt toward the economic affluence of West Germany. In the same way that railway workers throughout East Germany went on strike to protest wages in November 1990, Eastern Berliners organized a weekly protest in order to air their economic grievances to the new government.²⁹⁸ Even the West's attempt at providing job training did little to help, as training depended upon availability of jobs – a problem across most economic sectors.²⁹⁹ The seeming hope of 1989 and early 1990 receded in the face of the staggering reality of unemployment and price pressures.

Economic pressures only magnified the difficult challenge of trying to patch together the city infrastructure on a limited budget. As one international writer put it, “like two giant pieces of a cracked dinner plate, 28 miles in breadth, Berlin is being glued together.”³⁰⁰ Eastern Germany

²⁹⁵ Alan Ferguson, “Berlin Angles to be New Capital,” *Toronto Star*, September 10, 1990; Stephen Kinzer, “Berlin to Regain Full Capital Role,” *New York Times*, June 21, 1991; and John Tagliabue, “Kohl Urges Berlin as Unified Capital,” *New York Times*, April 24, 1991.

²⁹⁶ “Mehr als eine Million in Ost Deutschland arbeitslos: 192 000 Berliner sind ohne Job,” *Berliner Zeitung*, August 7, 1991.

²⁹⁷ David Binder, “City of Past and Future, Berlin Refashions Itself,” *New York Times*, August 20, 1990; and Francine S. Kiefer, “Berlin Braces for Influx of People, Power, and Money,” *Christian Science Monitor*, June 26, 1991.

²⁹⁸ “Berliners Blast Kohl for Broken Promises,” *Toronto Star*, March 24, 1991; and John Tagliabue, “Railways in Eastern Germany Crippled by Strike,” *New York Times*, November 27, 1990.

²⁹⁹ John Tagliabue, “From Misery and Jobs in Berlin to Hope and No Jobs,” *New York Times*, January 31, 1991.

³⁰⁰ Binder, “City of Past and Future,” A3.

possessed most of the older state and art buildings in the Mitte district and had not fully restored many of them, making the process of reunifying cultural institutions and governmental functions capital intensive.³⁰¹ Moreover, phones, railways, subways, roads, and city sanitation infrastructure needed to be patched together so that East and West could be practically linked by the new nation's government. Adding to these pressures, the legal framework for property ownership established in reunification agreements made it difficult to determine what properties were owned by the state, were perhaps subject to a challenge of a legal claim, or had no real historical claim on them at all.³⁰² The cost of creating physical reunification of the city would be massive, and with dwindling tax funds with which to make it happen, the challenges perhaps seemed unrealistic or insurmountable.

Much difficulty exists in any process of identifying or evaluating the motivations of actions, particularly when one is mindful that public issues are often used to conceal other intentions. I do not intend to suggest that these issues justified the position of Eberhard Diepgen or others in the local government as they were put in public by the media in August of 1991, as they could just as easily have been convenient excuses for delaying or cancelling a project of which they had already wanted to be rid. However, the financial and structural problems that the Berlin government faced in late 1990 and 1991 were real, and the broader burdens of reunification added to those difficulties. The cost of Libeskind's extension to the Berlin Museum was ample even though it had already been reduced due to accommodations made by the designer. The issue of financial cost, in comparison to its perceived benefits, especially given

³⁰¹ John Russell, "Berlin's Museum Intrigue Goes Public," *New York Times*, August 22, 1990.

³⁰² Francine S. Kiefer, "Berlin, One Year After the Wall Came Down," *Christian Science Monitor*, November 8, 1990.

Berlin's pressing hardships with evident human costs, provided the setting for Diepgen to float the idea of a five year delay of the project.

4.3 A FIVE YEAR PLAN

In some ways, Libeskind's working conditions and prospects for building his Berlin Museum extension were never on stable footing, but the limited correspondence available from the first part of 1991 seems to suggest that Daniel Libeskind, Rolf Bothe and Vera Bendt knew that the political, economic, and social landscape of Berlin was not necessarily conducive for the project. Insofar as they could, they responded to specific design challenges and concerns in a timely fashion, but it became increasingly obvious that technical objections might be obscuring more fundamental concerns about the project's costs and its necessity to a reunited Berlin. After the local elections had resulted in a rearrangement of the political leadership of Berlin, with Eberhard Diepgen assuming the role of mayor, Daniel Libeskind made a concerted effort to update Jewish community leaders on the progress of the project and to open his design studio to visitation.³⁰³ In February of 1991, Bendt, Bothe and Libeskind were able to secure a coalition agreement amongst members of the Berlin Senate to begin building before the end of the year, including important building and city planning representatives from the three major political

³⁰³ Daniel Libeskind to Heinz Galinski; and Libeskind to Hermann Simon, 11 January 1991, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 27, Folder 4; Box 28, Folder 7. The letters also suggest that Vera Bendt and Hans-Peter Herz, head of the Society for a Jewish Museum in Berlin, would also be invited to any meeting that the two wished to convene about the project.

parties (CDU, FDP, and SPD).³⁰⁴ Even with explicit political guarantees, the extension project would not necessarily be safe with the deteriorating social and economic situation in the city.

The Berlin Museum agreed to send some of Libeskind's design materials for a special display at the Israel Museum to help with the international visibility of the project. In preparation, Daniel Libeskind would give a talk on May 8th, 1991 about the significance of his design and its importance to Berlin.³⁰⁵ Given some of the Israeli fear about reunification discussed at the outset of this chapter and the special political relationship Israel had with the former West German state since the Adenauer administration, the decision to send display materials to Israel at a time of political instability in Berlin was almost certainly a strategic decision. Not surprisingly, after Libeskind's presentation, Izzika Gaon, Senior Curator of Design at the Israel Museum, sent a letter to Heinz Galinski (leader of the Jewish community in Berlin) expressing interest in the completion of the museum, reaffirming its value to Jewish culture, and thanking Galinski for his continued support of the project.³⁰⁶ Since Galinski was likely not directly involved with bringing Libeskind to Israel, the timing and content of the letter at least allude to the possibility that domestic support for the Berlin Museum extension was slipping, and that Gaon was possibly solicited by either Bothe or Libeskind to provide a subtle appeal to Galinski to continue his public support for the extension.³⁰⁷

The special exhibition at the Joods Historical Museum in Amsterdam also was used to increase the international profile of Libeskind's design and serve as evidence of its importance

³⁰⁴ This agreement is alluded to later by Nina Libeskind. Nina Libeskind to Willy Brandt, 30 July 1991, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 27, Folder 2.

³⁰⁵ Rolf Bothe to Daniel Libeskind, 22 March 1991, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 27, Folder 2.

³⁰⁶ Izzika Gaon to Heinz Galinski, 31 May 1991, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 27, Folder 4.

³⁰⁷ This possibility is reinforced by a handwritten note from Gaon to Nina Libeskind on the bottom of the letter copy saying that the letter was actually sent on June 2. This copy, part of the Libeskind's archived correspondence, was likely given later for the portfolio of documented international support she was accumulating. Nina Libeskind had solicited Gaon for a support letter to Eberhard Diepgen on August 3, 1991. Nina Libeskind to Izzika Gaon, 3 August 1991, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 27, Folder 4.

not only to Berlin, but also to the global Jewish cultural diaspora – a move that would further increase pressure on Berlin city officials to continue supporting the building project. Daniel Libeskind, in a June 1991 letter to Volker Hassemer, Senator for City Development and Environmental Protection, expounded upon the positive reception of this exhibition and its meaning to Berlin in the eyes of the international community to Berlin.³⁰⁸ A variation of this letter, accompanied with a copy of the exhibition booklet, was also made available to Wolfgang Nagel and Ulrich Roloff-Momin (Senator for Cultural Affairs).³⁰⁹ Daniel Libeskind and Rolf Bothe both seemed to believe that visible international support for the museum extension would increase its chances of success, while leaving its opponents politically vulnerable to condemnation.³¹⁰

The international interest in Libeskind's architectural vision would not be enough on its own. On July 15, Daniel Libeskind requested of Ulrich Roloff-Momin a meeting to present the results of the first planning phase for the extension.³¹¹ This request came on the heels of an announcement by Eberhard Diepgen at the beginning of July to the local press that certain projects, such as the Berlin Museum extension that would house the Jewish Museum Department, would have to be cancelled or suspended in light of the financial difficulties of the city.³¹² Given its timing, the goal of such a request was clear: to reinforce that the design was nearly ready to be built, to explain that it was functional, and to build dissent within the Senate against any attempt to cancel the project. From all indications, Diepgen seemed to be employing

³⁰⁸ Daniel Libeskind to Volker Hassemer, 18 June 1991, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 27, Folder 6.

³⁰⁹ Daniel Libeskind to Wolfgang Nagel; and Libeskind to Ulrich Roloff-Momin, 18 June 1991, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 28, Folder 4; Box 28, Folder 5.

³¹⁰ Rolf Bothe also made sure that Eberhard Diepgen was aware of the visitor metrics for the Jood Historical Museum exhibition. Judith Belinfante to Rolf Bothe, 15 July 1991, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 28, Folder 7.

³¹¹ Daniel Libeskind to Ulrich Roloff-Momin, 15 July 1991, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 28, Folder 5.

³¹² Rolf Bothe to Martin Sanders, 24 July 1991, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 27, Folder 2; Daniel Libeskind, *Breaking Ground*, 140-1.

a similar tactic, having met sometime in mid-July with Heinz Galinski to negotiate on potential budget cuts in Berlin's city-funded Jewish cultural projects.³¹³ The economic pressures of reunification, along with some of the expressed reservations about the necessity of the Berlin Museum more a year prior by Ernst Cramer, created an opening to stop the project, or to at least reassess its long-term viability in Berlin. While such concerns had been brewing behind closed doors, they would start to come to the surface of public discussion in late July of 1991.

In addition to the growing pressures of reunification costs, the city of Berlin also had put together a bid to host the 2000 Olympic Games in Berlin. On the surface, such a bid could have both symbolic and practical benefits for the city. By the time of the games, the national capital would have been recently moved to the city, allowing the German government to showcase its new capital. Sentimentally speaking, holding the games in Berlin would make a strong symbolic statement about global unity in the aftermath of the Cold War. Moreover, the economic benefits of tourism would be a huge boon to the city economy, and it would force the national government to increase the subsidization of city reconstruction – a source of funds that had withered away in the wake of political reunification. Since the local government desperately needed funds for infrastructure improvement, the bid would potentially inject both public and private investment dollars into a fledging economy with desperately high unemployment. However, the amount of building necessary to host such a large event, given that concerns existed about Berlin's ability to even meet the demands of moving the national government alone, placed the feasibility of Berlin's bid in doubt and required a massive reallocation of funds

³¹³ Bothe to Sanders, 24 July 1991.

from current building projects such as the Jewish Department Extension to the Berlin Museum.³¹⁴

Moreover, the Olympic bid, aside from sheer logistical concerns, was a terrible political blunder in the context of Diepgen's advocacy for austerity in cultural programming. His concern with ballooning costs of reunification and the desire to host the Olympics were at odds with each other, creating space for criticism by opposing interests that Berlin did not suffer a deficit of funds per se, but instead suffered from a deficit of political commitment to certain kinds of projects, such of those that would support Berlin's Jewish community. While city officials did not directly speak to this contradiction, it almost certainly had an effect on the overall public relations strategy for Eberhard Diepgen. First, he knew that the support, or at least consent, of the local Jewish community would be absolutely essential to getting the Libeskind building project delayed, and, as such, engaged Heinz Galinski directly about becoming a public ally for sidelining the museum extension. Though not acknowledged explicitly in the public conversation, Nina Libeskind's correspondence from the period suggests indirectly that Galinski was assured by Diepgen that, in exchange for public support of the Senate's decision, that the city would provide funding for building a Jewish School in the city.³¹⁵ With nearly all cultural projects being threatened, Diepgen perhaps hoped to strike a deal that would be less costly for the city government, give him political cover, and would still satisfy some of the more important priorities for the Jewish community living in Berlin.

Second, Diepgen quickly moved away from the language of cancellation when referring to Libeskind's museum extension. Instead, he tried to sell the funding crisis as a temporary

³¹⁴ For discussion of building concerns and finances, see Stephen Kinzer, "Berlin, Named the Seat of Power, Now Wonders if it has Room," *New York Times*, June 24, 1991.

³¹⁵ Daniel and Nina Libeskind to Peter Raue, 5 August 1991, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 28, Folder 5.

condition that could be resolved in a few years, thus necessitating a five-year delay of the project after which it could be reevaluated. While the language of delay could provide palatable political cover, Diepgen also stopped short of guaranteeing that the project would be finished at a later date. For Daniel and Nina Libeskind, such a delay would certainly endanger their financial commitments to the project, as they had moved their family to Berlin to work on it. In addition, they saw the real political writing on the wall: that delay and reconsideration would take the momentum out of the current push to complete the extension, which had begun in 1988 only after twenty years of persistence by Berlin's Jewish community and by the administrators of the Berlin Museum. In a letter to Peter Herz, the head of the Society for a Jewish Museum in Berlin, Nina made their perspective clear and implored Herz to push for Galinski's continued support and to secure a more rapid timetable for beginning construction. As an alternative, she argued for breaking ground early, by 1993 at the latest, with a long construction period that would allow the city of Berlin to extend building costs over several years.³¹⁶

With Eberhard Diepgen's public proclamation about the future of cultural projects in early July and his behind-the-scenes work to build support in the Jewish community for a delay of the museum extension, the prospects of the project looked bleak to Daniel and Nina Libeskind. Though they still had the support of some Senators and were working closely with Rolf Bothe to find a political solution to the impasse, the potential of eroding support by Galinski and Herz would likely be too much acquiescence on the part of prominent Jewish community spokespersons to muster any political battle for continuation. With the support of the local Jewish community potentially in jeopardy, they chose to move beyond local politics and solicit the involvement of important members of the architectural community, the global Jewish

³¹⁶ Nina Libeskind to Hans-Peter Herz, 30 July 1991, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 27, Folder 2.

diaspora (particularly in the United States and Israel), and the English-speaking international media.

4.4 WORLD ORDERS

The fall of the Berlin Wall, although also an indirect cause of the economic and political difficulties for the Libeskind's extension of the Berlin Museum, also inspired museum officials and the local Jewish community to organize outside support both within national boundaries and beyond them for the completion of the extension project. As mentioned earlier, Bernhard Schneider had, as early as the fall of 1989, suggested that the international press and Jewish emigrants living in the United States could be a strong lobbying force and could push for some measure of stable financial commitment by the Berlin government.³¹⁷ It is unclear how much success these early efforts for international political and collection support had, but certain individuals in the United States likely had taken some interest in the museum's mission. In a letter dated July 24, 1991, Rolf Bothe wrote to Martin Sanders, an art collector from New York and supporter of other causes in European and Jewish art, asking him to organize supporting letters from friends for the continuation of the extension. In it, Bothe makes clear that the extension was under the imminent threat of cancellation and argues that statements of support from influential members of the international Jewish community directed to Diepgen would be of use. The letter was also accompanied by photocopies of recent speeches made by Bothe outlining the necessity of the extension and some descriptions of the building's intended use in

³¹⁷ Schneider to Libeskind, 22 October 1989.

this new climate (including, according to the text of the letter, a copy of the Amsterdam exhibition booklet).³¹⁸

Nina Libeskind also took a leading role in trying to get public support from both the international scholarly art/architectural community and influential Jewish political and social leaders. In late July and early August, Nina sent letters to several members of the former category, such as Akira Asada (an Architecture and Urban Planning expert from Tokyo), Peter Eisenman (Architect), Kristin Feireiss (Berlin-based Architectural Researcher), Zvi Hecker (Tel-Aviv-based Architect), John Hejduk (New York-based Architect), Andreas Huyssen (at that time the head of the Germanic Languages and Literatures Department at Columbia University that had a particular interest in German art and architecture), Daniel Karpinski (Toronto-based Architect), Josef Kleihues (Berlin-based Architect and head of the 1989 extension competition committee), and David Shapiro (Poet and Art Critic from New York).³¹⁹ Not only did Nina solicit those who were involved in projects in Berlin, but she also appealed to people that might speak to the significance of Daniel's design in the global architectural community (such as Asada, Hejduk, and Karpinski). Moreover, from the tenor of most of this correspondence, many of these individuals had a personal relationship with either Daniel or Nina Libeskind. The social network of the architectural community (likely enhanced by their frequent moves for Daniel's

³¹⁸ Bothe to Sanders, 24 July 1991.

³¹⁹ Nina Libeskind to Akita Asada, 1 August 1991, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 27, Folder 1; Nina Libeskind to Peter Eisenman, 8 August 1991, Box 27, Folder 3; Nina Libeskind to Kristen Feireiss, 19 August 1991, Box 27, Folder 3; Nina Libeskind to Zvi Hecker, 5 August 1991, Box 27, Folder 6; Nina Libeskind to John Hejduk, 1 August 1991, Box 28, Folder 1; Nina Libeskind to Andreas Huyssen and Nina Bernstein, 1 August 1991, Box 27, Folder 1; Daniel Karpinski to Daniel and Nina Libeskind, 4 August 1991, Box 28, Folder 2; Nina Libeskind to Josef Kleihues, 19 August 1991, Box 28, Folder 2; David Shapiro to Eberhard Diepgen and Heinz Galinski, 19 August 1991, Box 28, Folder 7.

teaching projects) offered the opportunity create an avalanche of support from a professional public interested in making sure such an innovative architectural design would be built.³²⁰

From the latter, Nina focused her efforts on three main groups: other Jewish intellectuals and community leaders in Germany, important Jewish figures in the United States, and interested parties in Israel. In Germany, she was able to secure support from Richard Grimm (Jüdisches Museum München), Rolf Liebermann (a Swiss-born composer of Jewish descent that had directed the Hamburg State Opera until 1989), Paula Lindberg-Salomon (a German-born composer of Jewish descent), and Monika Richarz (Germania Judaica Köln).³²¹ Nina procured strong support from the United States Jewish community, headlined by Dean Rabbi Marvin Hier of the Simon Wiesenthal Center and a scathing reprimand from Eli Rosenbaum, a prosecutor of Nazi war criminals for the United States Department of Justice that saw the discontinuation of the project as a direct assault on the memory of so many Jewish Germans lost during the Holocaust.³²² Israeli support included letters from the Association for the Advancement of the Israel Museum in Jerusalem, Jerusalem's Mayor Teddy Kollek, and former Israeli Ambassador to the United Nations Benjamin Netanyahu.³²³ Nina also attempted to directly involve the World Jewish Congress, but the congress made clear that it preferred to work only with the local Jewish community leaders rather than assert direct influence on the government of Berlin (they did send

³²⁰ Nearly all of these solicited individuals provided Daniel and Nina Libeskind copies of letters sent to Diepgen and Galinski.

³²¹ Richard Grimm to Eberhard Diepgen, No Date Given, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 27, Folder 5; Rolf Liebermann to Diepgen, 5 August 1991, Box 28, Folder 4; Paula Lindberg-Salomon to Diepgen, 13 August 1991, Box 28, Folder 4; and Monika Richarz to Diepgen, 16 August 1991, Box 28, Folder 5.

³²² Rabbi Marvin Hier to Eberhard Diepgen, 15 August 1991, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 28, Folder 1; Eli Rosenbaum to Diepgen, 16 August 1991, Box 28, Folder 6.

³²³ Verein zur Förderung des Israel-Museums in Jerusalem to Eberhard Diepgen, 8 August 1991, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 27, Folder 3; Teddy Kollek to Diepgen, 15 August 1991, Box 28, Folder 2; and Benjamin Netanyahu to Diepgen, 23 August 1991, Box 28, Folder 5.

a letter encouraging Heinz Galinski to support the Berlin Museum extension).³²⁴ The confluence of these support letters seemed to send a clear message: even if Heinz Galinski would support delay or cancellation of the Berlin Museum extension, his opinions were not representative of the broader Jewish community in Germany and around the world. Of course, in asking that these position statements also be sent to Galinski, Nina was also attempting to put pressure on him for publically supporting delay of the building project.

Nina Libeskind, making a smart public relations decision, sent a blank draft letter to the various people she solicited for written support. Analyzing a copy of this draft letter, a few important themes emerge. First, it refers to Daniel's building as the Jewish Museum, deemphasizing the practical issue that, at this time, the building was still to be an extension of the Berlin Museum with only part of the additional display space being devoted to Jewish content. Although "Jewish Museum" was convenient shorthand used in public talk about the building, in this context it elides some of the details that would be difficult to encompass in their message (i.e. that space for the theatre department, parts of the main exhibition, and offices were also being eliminated). Second, the draft letter immediately states that the building acknowledges the Holocaust in its design, making it an important memorial space as well as a place for didactic exhibits on the contributions of the Jewish community to Berlin. Third, once it establishes that this building is a "Jewish Museum" (not an extension) and that it is themed around the Holocaust, the letter suggests that eliminating such a project would send a bad cultural signal at a sensitive time in Germany's reunification process, making the national frame of political reunification the proper symbolic context in which to see this political decision (even though the local government is responsible for the cost). It mentions neo-Nazi activity in Dresden and the

³²⁴ Nina Libeskind to Israel Singer and Edgar Bronfman, 30 July 1991; Singer to Heinz Galinski, 30 July 1991; and Singer to Nina Libeskind, 30 July 1991, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 28, Folder 7.

controversy over possible construction of a supermarket at the Ravensbruck site as other related contemporary events that, taken together with the cancellation of this building project, would reflect badly on the German state. Finally, the draft letter closes by minimizing the financial concerns of the project by comparing it to the possibility that Berlin could be seen as a bastion of intolerance – an image that the Federal Republic of Germany worked very hard for over forty years to overcome.³²⁵

Given that many of the people sent this letter were likely not well-informed of the intricacies of the situation in Berlin, the framing of the letter could be seen as more important for persuading the writers than Diepgen himself, except insofar as the perceptions of the former would create concerns about bad press and an international backlash. In nearly all of the correspondence directed to Diepgen (presumably copies also went to Galinski) by supporters, most of the themes enumerated in the draft letter are present. For those that had a professional stake in the development of Libeskind's museum extension, the letters often mention how important the building would be to the world architectural community. For those writing to express their support as part of the global (or local) Jewish diaspora, more emphasis was placed on the need for a reunited Germany to send a positive signal of tolerance and respect for the Jewish community in the face of concerns about insensitivity and growing anti-Semitic activity (especially in the areas of former East Germany). In all cases, the letters make the bottom line clear: this decision should be about the proper symbolic message, not the financial concerns of the local government. A few even make reference to the city's willingness to spend for the Olympic Games as proof that financial considerations ought not to be decisive on this matter.

³²⁵ Draft letter to Eberhard Diepgen and/or Heinz Galinski, No Date, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 27, Folder 4.

In conjunction with the letter writing campaign, Nina Libeskind also spearheaded an effort to draw international media attention to a possible cancellation. During the months of July and August, Nina dialogued with the Kreisberg Group, a public relations firm in New York specializing in advocacy for public art and architecture projects.³²⁶ Most of the dialogue concerns the sharing of contact information of various news agencies and potential strategies for building interest in the story. They suggested contacting ABC, the Associated Press, CNN, *Der Spiegel*, *New York Times*, *Newsweek*, Reuters News Agency, and *Time* as potential outlets that would have interest in the story, making sure to pass along contact information when possible.³²⁷ In one fax dated August 1, 1991, the Kreisberg Group also mentioned two strategies for making the story more interesting to news outlets: emphasize both controversy about world Jewish issues and the cost of the project, which would be eye-catching to an international audience not used to seeing a local government commit such a large amount to a cultural project (the amount of local sponsorship of cultural projects in Berlin is quite unusual to an audience from the United States).³²⁸ Both suggestions were designed to have a singular effect, reframing the project as a national or global concern that is symbolically about a commitment to a historically marginalized population in Germany, not merely an issue about local budget constraints.

For the most part, the reframing of the issue paid dividends for Daniel and Nina Libeskind in terms of both visibility and in emphasizing the significance of Berlin's decision for international audiences interested (and perhaps nervous) about the reunification of Berlin. The Reuters wire report was the first to make it to an English-speaking audience (picked up by *The*

³²⁶ The website of the Kreisberg Group (www.kreisberggroup.com) still lists Daniel Libeskind and Associates as a client.

³²⁷ Andrea Schwan to Nina Libeskind, 30 July 1991; 7 August 1991, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 28, Folder 2.

³²⁸ Andrea Schwan to Nina Libeskind, 1 August 1991, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 28, Folder 2.

Globe and Mail in Canada), and it was also the most sympathetic to the government's position. At the outset, the report highlights the governmental rationale for the project delay based on economic concerns. It does acknowledge, via quotes from Libeskind, that delay could really mean cancellation and that the funding instability raises questions about proper priorities of the local government. However, extensive space is dedicated to discussing the various funding issues facing the city. "It's not a question of saving money at the expense of the Jews" proclaims Volker Liepelt (CDU floor leader on the city parliament) in an extended quotation, "but we face serious problems in getting over the next two or three years because of missing funds from Bonn." The slashing of federal subsidies is mentioned twice as a rationale for short-term delay while money is devoted to infrastructure, and very little is made of the decision to push a bid for the Olympics in Berlin.³²⁹

The New York Times took a more balanced approach. The article did mention the concerns about the "the city's attitude towards the thousands of Jewish Berliners who perished in the Holocaust" and also made clear that postponement might really just be a strategy of cancelling the project altogether. Although the political climate "has raised questions about Berlin's role as the cultural capital of a reunited Germany," the substance of the debate was directed toward whether Berlin can and ought to spend money on Libeskind's architectural project. Much was made of the fact that members of the Jewish community in Berlin were divided on the wisdom of the expenditure when the influx of Jewish immigrants from Eastern Bloc countries had created a demand for basic infrastructure such as schools and housing. Moreover, it mentioned the debate over the necessity of new space from the previous year that "led to the resignation of one board member" of the Society for a Jewish Museum in Berlin. The

³²⁹ "Jewish Museum on Hold? Berlin Considers Cost-Cutting Measure," *Globe and Mail* (Canada), August 2, 1991.

strongest argument for the necessity of Libeskind's building was not based on the profundity of the design, but upon the ability of the museum to, in the words of Vera Bendt, "serve the function of providing a kind of cultural reparation." Some concern was raised about the symbolism of Berlin's bid for the Olympics given that the last time it hosted, in 1936, it was used to glorify the National Socialist state, but the tradeoff in funding between the Olympics and this project was not emphasized. Ultimately, the article walked a diplomatic line between the monetary concerns of Berlin (which are echoed by local Jewish leaders) and the potential symbolic statement postponement would make to the outside world.³³⁰

As the month progressed, media coverage became much more favorable to Libeskind's situation. An article in *The Toronto Star* (written by one of their relatives) began by setting the museum cancellation against the national government's multi-billion dollar financial commitment in the (first) Gulf War. While lavishing praises upon the design of the building, the end of the article devoted a mere two lines to the governmental rationale for delay ("a virtual cancellation"), finishing with a meditation on the symbolism of this decision.³³¹ Jonathan Glancey's piece in *The Independent* claimed that "something will have to give" for Berlin to succeed in their Olympic bid (associated later in the article with the 1936 games). "The axe seems likely to fall...on the greatest new building and most moving new monument Berlin may never have: the Jewish Museum." Cost the equivalent of a mere, according to Libeskind, "10km of urban motorway," the article, even when acknowledging the governmental position, minimized it in favor of exploring the symbolic statement made by delay and/or cancellation (the language switches between the two).³³² The strongest statements against delay were made by

³³⁰ John Tagliabue, "Jewish Wing for Berlin Museum in Jeopardy," *New York Times*, August 7, 1991.

³³¹ Michele Landsberg, "Museum Honoring Jews of Germany Faces Delay," *Toronto Star*, August 10, 1991.

³³² Johnathan Glancey, "Architecture: Too Poor for its Richest Plan?," *Independent* (London), August 21, 1991.

freelance reporter Nomi Morris (who had written a piece about Libeskind's architecture only two months prior),³³³ arguing that it "would be a polite way of canceling the new Jewish Museum, and preventing a lawsuit by the internationally renowned architect." Turning the tables on the governmental rationale for suspending the project, Morris believed "it is precisely the unification of Germany that makes it more urgent than ever that the Jewish Museum go up." She finished by minimizing the financial impact of the museum compared to the costs of highways or the Olympics, making it clear that a decision by the Berlin Senate would "send out a message about its values," not its wallet.³³⁴

The Israeli coverage was even more pronounced in its commitment to symbolism of the Berlin Senate's decision over and above any financial concern. *The Jerusalem Report* framed the controversy in terms of the moment: "Berlin has become the focus of architectural scheming unparalleled since Adolf Hitler commissioned Albert Speer to transform the capital into a showpiece for the Third Reich." Libeskind's architecture was an important part of the remaking of Berlin's image as a "gentle metropolis" against previous (though unrealized) urban planning initiatives.³³⁵ Nomi Morris' piece also ran in the *Jerusalem Post*, but some additional material printed in this version charged the city with insensitive behavior towards its Jewish residents:

Officials have vowed to consult the local Jewish community if it delays the project. But why should a fledgling group of 8,500 Jews be asked to assuage the city's conscience? The influx of 4,000 Soviet Jews...has understandably brought the Jewish community of Berlin its own particular brand of internal politics right now. Should Jews around the world have to fight for this building? No, this one rests squarely on the shoulders of the citizens of Berlin.

³³³ Nomi Morris, "The Hot Architect in a Super-Hot City," *Toronto Star*, June 23, 1991.

³³⁴ Nomi Morris, "Berlin Cannot Afford to Delay Jewish Museum," *St. Petersburg Times* (Florida), August 25, 1991.

³³⁵ Michael Z. Wise, "Lightning Over Berlin," *Jerusalem Report*, August 29, 1991.

After discrediting any potential conflicting opinions from the Jewish community in the above passage, she quoted a line from Libeskind suggesting that Jews have already done enough for the construction of this museum by virtue of “being murdered.”³³⁶ If the later articles are any indication, Nina’s attempt at reframing the controversy from the local sphere of finances to the national sphere of German public memory politics was quite effective for both attracting attention and getting favorable coverage from newspapers.

Daniel and Nina Libeskind also had some success drawing the attention of television coverage in Great Britain. Chris Hale of Skyscraper Productions in the United Kingdom came to Berlin toward the end of August to do shooting for a documentary to air on the BBC.³³⁷ The short piece, which aired on the BBC’s “Late Night Show” on September 16, 1991, repeated much of the same framing of the news coverage, but with a broader spectrum of commentary on the situation.³³⁸ The program began by making the symbolic issues surrounding the museum the focal point of controversy:

But in Germany, this year, in the city of Berlin, plans for one particular museum have developed from a disagreement over aesthetics into a powerful debate as to how Berlin and the united Germany should come to terms with some of its terrible past. The museum in question is one dedicated to the city’s Jewish history.

At the outset, the documentary suggested that the debate was never about cost, but about “aesthetics,” no doubt taking as fact Libeskind’s belief that the monetary issue concealed other motives concerning the “tastefulness” of his design or the appropriateness of even having a Jewish Museum in Berlin.

³³⁶ Nomi Morris, “A Crying Shame, were this to Die,” *Jerusalem Post*, August 23, 1991.

³³⁷ Chris Hale to Nina Libeskind, 23 August 1991, in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 27, Folder 6.

³³⁸ British Broadcasting Corporation, “The Late Night Show,” 16 September 1991, directed by Chris Hale. VHS copy, 1.9 Kontr 108 Bd. 1, Research Library, Jewish Museum Berlin. Transcriptions of text from the documentary were done by the author.

The documentary then gave a brief outline and context of the design, first with Daniel Libeskind standing in the overgrown lot where the building would be placed (with fencing and an old tire in the background) explaining his vision, followed by a set of cascading designs by other architects (such as Bernard Tschumi, Peter Eisenman, and Coop Himmelblau) that place Libeskind's design in a larger conversation with the "deconstructive architecture" movement. Charles Jencks (architectural theorist and critic) then came on-screen, proclaiming that the city of Berlin itself was a city where the conventions of Neo-Classical architecture were deconstructed by the force of German history, "erased again and again through the passions of the Prussians and militarism – destroyed, destroyed." The documentary later returned to this theme, suggesting that the architectural style deployed not only fits well with the history of the city, but as Charles Jencks again confirmed, it put itself in dialogue with Berlin's traumatic past.

After establishing background on the design, the documentary sets the scene of the controversy, first by showing a visual cascade of newspaper reports on the delay, narrating over them that the city's decision (a polite cancellation) has sparked international outrage. Eberhard Diepgen was then afforded the opportunity to explain the city's decision:

Our priority is that we have to build up all the buildings, the infrastructure in the East part of the city and we have not the money to do all of the good things we have decided in the past in the West part of the city. So we have to postpone a lot of projects that are important projects. And one of these projects, that's the museum, the Berlin museum, the museum for the whole history of Berlin, and part of this history is the Jewish history in the city.

While Diepgen was technically correct about the actual structure of the Berlin Museum and its extension (only a small part of the space at this time would actually be devoted to Jewish history), his words would easily be perceived as out-of-touch with the deeper reality that Berlin (and Germany – a population for which he is not a representative) needed to acknowledge the past treatment of its Jewish population. If one could not see that from his words, the immediate

cut to Daniel Libeskind would make that deeper trouble perfectly clear: “I think that kind of pragmatism, that accounting book logic...the logic where numbers and fiscal budgets determine the urgency, is exactly the type of logic that was used here in a disastrous way in 1933 and from then on led to the destruction of the city.” In this case, it was not just a question of values (East Berlin infrastructure or the Jewish Museum), but that even making a pragmatic calculation about costs is implicated with a style of thinking that showed insensitivity toward the Jewish population of Berlin and its memory.

The problem of memory was particularly acute for a united Germany. The documentary started to establish this argument by beginning with an image of the fall of the Berlin Wall on November 9, 1989 and Germans celebrating in the streets. However, it was quick to convert this image from an historic triumph to a case of collective forgetting, noting that German Jews remember that *Kristallnacht* occurred on the same day, then visually juxtaposing celebration images with footage of the destruction and looting of Jewish businesses. Moving to images of people walking by a sign erected on Wittenberg Platz in Berlin with a list of concentration camps (the sign was erected by the League for Human Rights in 1967) without taking much notice, the voiceover suggested that the visibility of Jewish history in Berlin was far outweighed by the relics of the perpetrators, ending with a shot of an empty lot that contains the remains of the Gestapo headquarters. Nomi Morris was interviewed to make the stakes of memory politics in the city clear: “I believe that the opening of the wall plunged Germany into a real identity crisis, almost like a midlife crises...and the questions that come up with the Jewish Museum and the other incidents that have erupted in controversy here I think are symptomatic of the confusion over values.”

This confusion over values had also spilled over into the Jewish community in Berlin. Heinz Galinski gave his opinion, in which he endorsed the design for the Jewish Museum – by this time he had again become a public defender of the project. But another prominent member of the Jewish community gave a different view about the integrative design of the museum (remember: the controversy was about aesthetics and memory, not money). Rabbi Speer argued that Jewish and German history should be housed in separate displays, as they are “separate worlds” of experience. Moreover, he suggested, the content of the Jewish Museum should be entirely owned and controlled by the Jewish community, not by the city government. Although a repetition of an older argument from the 1980s about the proper way of displaying Jewishness (that will again resurface in Chapter Five), Libeskind was tapped for the final word on the subject. Those that do not want to think about Jews as a part of German identity, he argued, would like a museum that is both separate and ethnographic. The difficult proposition, in his view, was to highlight how individuals in the Jewish community, whether religious or secular, were part of the narrative history of the city itself. The bottom line: someone was going to have to “wake up” and acknowledge the history of the city, and presumably, now (just after reunification) would be the best time to do so.

Chris Hale’s documentary for the BBC showed just how successful the strategy of reframing the Berlin Senate’s decision as an issue of national and international concern about the symbolic treatment of the Jewish community had been. For those uninitiated into the intricacies of Berlin politics or unaware of the dire financial condition of the city, the rationale provided by Diepgen in the documentary would have seemed trivial in comparison to other concerns; he might even have seemed deluded about the relative insignificance of a Jewish Museum in Berlin. Compared to the importance of the architecture as part of a global design movement and to the

importance of sending the right international signal about memory politics in a unified Germany, concerns about funding were almost insulting to consider. Even those in the local Jewish community who oppose the project lacked the correct frame of reference and perhaps even suffered from the “confusion over values” symptomatic of German culture at this time. If this controversy was primarily about aesthetics and memory, then there was only one answer: Berlin must decide to proceed with the construction of the “Jewish Museum.”

Nina Libeskind had developed, in conjunction with the Kreisberg Group, a strong way to generate international opposition to delay or cancellation of Daniel’s building design. The volume of letters being sent to Eberhard Diepgen and Heinz Galinski demonstrated that international backlash was likely if the project were cancelled. International press coverage also would create an unsavory situation for the Berlin Senate, as the decision was filtered through the lens of national and international memory politics, rather than local budgetary concerns. That reframing of issues was fully crystallized in a 20-plus minute BBC documentary over Libeskind’s design and the delay/cancellation controversy. Not only did the local Berlin government have the international audience to appease, the funding decision had also become a hot topic of domestic public discourse.

4.5 DOMESTICATION OF THE DEBATE

When analyzing the early coverage in West Berlin of the potential delay of the Berlin Museum extension, it is important to remember a few pieces of the cultural context that help to make sense of how the domestic discussion developed. First, as discussed in Chapter Two, the project for the extension of the Berlin Museum that would house the Jewish Museum department had a

long history going back to the 1970s. Building in Berlin often takes a long time, as there must be a negotiation on nearly every technical aspect of the project; finding a site for the extension and developing a rationale for the competition alone took several years. Second, the Martin Gropius building had, since 1986, housed the city's displays of Jewish life and culture. Although it was recognized as a temporary solution incongruous with the ultimate vision of integrated history, even cancellation of Libeskind's building would not be seen as a signal that the city refused to display and celebrate the history of its Jewish citizens. Thus it is not surprising that even coverage from the *Spandauer Volksblatt*, a publication with historic ties to the West Berlin Social Democratic Party (SPD), would not see the announcement of postponement as anything more than a weathering of difficult financial times in the city.³³⁹ Unlike the reactions of international audiences that had little understanding of Berlin's financial difficulties and previous display commitments in the Berlin Museum, the (mostly former West) Berlin public had a more nuanced understanding of the difficult decisions facing the city, and, as such, were more likely to sympathize with the position of Mayor Diepgen. In order to make the delay into a local controversy, two questions had to be brought to the forefront of public discussion: the length of the delay and the undesirability of possible alternatives for housing the Jewish collection of the Berlin Museum.

The first question begins to emerge very early in the public discussion. Perhaps it was a strategic blunder on the part of the Eberhard Diepgen and Klaus Landowsky, the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) parliamentary chair. They began discussing their ideas for budget cuts well in advance of the Berlin Senate's discussion of the budget for the next year, leaving ample time to turn public sentiment against the move. Only a few days after Nina Libeskind had

³³⁹ "Das Geld fehlt: CDU will Jüdisches Museum in Berlin stoppen," *Spandauer Volksblatt*, August 2, 1991.

lobbied Hanns-Peter Herz to talk with Heinz Galinski about negotiating a shorter delay timetable, Galinski had made the proposal of a one-to-two year delay to Diepgen, which made the daily news.³⁴⁰ Similar to some of the international coverage, such a long delay could mean the eventual death of the museum extension altogether. Given that Berlin already housed several local museums, including ones devoted to dogs and old medical technologies, it would be rather embarrassing if the city would have “no museum for the history of approximately 170,000 previous Jewish Berliners,” as Vera Bendt proclaimed to the press.³⁴¹ Within a few days, members of the SPD, the Alliance ‘90/Green coalition, the Free Democratic Party (FDP), and the Party for Democratic Socialism (PDS) (a new iteration of the East German Socialist Unity Party) all condemned Diepgen and Landowsky’s plan for delay of the Berlin Museum extension. Even Ulrich Roloff-Momin, the Senator for Cultural Affairs (and technically unaffiliated with a party) rebuffed the suggestion in favor of beginning the new building at the earliest possible date.³⁴²

The immediate political opposition to delay suggests that, even without the international pressure placed on Berlin (this opposition preceded most of the international press by a few days), Diepgen and Landowsky would have had a difficult time mustering domestic support for delaying (or cutting) the Libeskind building. Even though the CDU was the ruling party, the number of parties in German politics requires building coalitions across party lines for the purpose of making majorities on policy issues. With so many of the other parties aligned against him, merely trying to push through a delay would not be enough. Instead, the issue would have

³⁴⁰ “Galinski: Kritik an Bau-Aufschub Jüdisches Museum,” *Berliner Morgenpost*, August 3, 1991.

³⁴¹ [kein Museum für die Geschichte der früher rund 170 000 Juden Berlins.] “Baugeginn ungewiß für Jüdisches Museum,” *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), August 4, 1991.

³⁴² “Kultursenator: Jüdisches Museum so bald wie möglich bauen,” *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), August 6, 1991; and “Opposition mahnt,” *Berliner Morgenpost*, August 6, 1991.

to turn around whether the Libeskind building was necessary to have a display of Jewish history in Berlin.

Rolf Bothe, writing a guest column in the *Berliner Morgenpost*, produced a position piece that distilled the other side of the debate. Recounting the decisions made by the city over the past several years, Bothe tried to remind the local public that the concept of the integration of Jewish history into Berlin history had been developed over many years in order to prevent any isolation of the Jewish community. While Diepgen may call for a delay now, he stated at the opening of the Jewish history displays in the Martin Gropius building in 1986 (during a previous period in office) that he would work to put an integrated museum extension at the forefront of the city's agenda. He then repeated his objections to other possible solutions: the Märkisches Museum was not in good condition and did not have adequate space, the Centrum Judaicum did not have the display space for a history of the Jewish community, and that the Ephraim-Palais was so poorly reconstructed by the former Eastern government that it did not have the room organization nor was it climatologically fit for preserving valuable materials. Moreover, the symbolic gesture of putting the Jewish museum in the home of a vilified "Münzjuden" would be a poor decision for the city. "With an evenhanded appraisal of the historical facts, there is no alternative to the integrationist model for Berlin."³⁴³

It seems clear, given how little Diepgen made himself available for public comment about the delay of the Berlin Museum extension project, that neither he nor Landowsky wanted this issue to be played out in the public eye. They likely would have preferred to make vague statements about financial conditions without having to answer to a loud opposition. But when

³⁴³ [Für das Integrationsmodell gibt es bei gerechter Würdigung der historischen Tatsachen für Berlin keine Alternative.] Rolf Bothe, "Auf das Jüdische Museum kann an der Spree nicht verzichtet werden," *Berliner Morgenpost*, August 14, 1991.

that did not occur, they had to establish that it was not financially possible for the city to support any new building. On August 11, *Der Tagesspiegel* ran an article titled “No Exception for the Jewish Museum.”³⁴⁴ The article began with an astonishing figure: that the Senate must somehow cut roughly four billion DM from its annual budget in order to make the city budget for the next year. Mayor Diepgen suggested that this shortfall come from the new building projects previously authorized in West Berlin. The Jewish Museum, also part of the old western zone of the city, cannot be an exception, according to Diepgen. With infrastructural development desperately needed in the Eastern sector of the city, a funding freeze for Western projects was really about showing solidarity during the reunification process. One can see a clear attempt to reframe the issue so that the symbolism of solidarity would take precedence over parochial concerns about new development in an already privileged portion of the city. Moreover, the Jewish Museum project was put into context of a series of financial commitments that have to be put aside, not a singular target of public attack.

Once opportunity cost of new building was established as part of the debate, the next tactic was to suggest another alternative that both allowed for a Jewish Museum in Berlin while still meeting the need for Eastern-sector development. Ernst Cramer, having previously resigned from his position in the Society for a Jewish Museum in Berlin, resurrected an old private conversation about what he considered a fitting and cost-appropriate alternative to the Libeskind building: the Ephraim-Palais. He began by suggesting that all of the plans and development mentioned by Rolf Bothe in the previous article were done assuming a divided city, and that unification required one to ask again what is the best course of action. Funds given by the West Berlin government to former East German government to reconstruct the Centrum Judaicum and

³⁴⁴ “Keine Ausnahmeregelung für das Jüdische Museum,” *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), August 16, 1991.

the Ephraim-Palais should be put to good use, now that all Berliners have access to them. The government, he suggested, had already committed much money to the reconstruction of Jewish cultural heritage in Berlin; more expense was not necessarily better for Germany. To counter Bothe's objections to the use of the Ephraim-Palais, Cramer argued that it could be made a suitable space for less money and in less time than the Libeskind building. If the city was in a rush to find a home for its Jewish history collection, they could move to the Ephraim-Palais very soon, whereas even the best projection (assuming an immediate start) would not have the Libeskind building finished before 1998. Finally, if one believed in an integrated solution, Cramer argued that the works of Jewish figures were already in museums dispersed across the city – integration of historical displays did not require a new building.³⁴⁵

The force of this argument is unique, as it tried to use the rationale to oppose delay of the Libeskind building as a reason for choosing an already existing building. In conjunction with the economic rationale for using the space and the belief that integration of historical displays does not require a separate building, Cramer's guest article responded to most of the serious objections to delaying, if not just tabling, the extension to the Collegienhaus. Not surprisingly, Diepgen came out in support of the proposal. However, many of the same parties opposed to the delay also repeated their litany of objections to this possible alternative.³⁴⁶ As soon as it had been proposed, Diepgen pulled the Ephraim-Palais off the table as an alternative site for the Jewish Museum and made another radical suggestion: that the city of Berlin sell the Ephraim-Palais, which sat on some prime real estate for private investors, and use the proceeds to fund Libeskind's building. Not surprisingly, such a suggestion did not sit well with other audiences, as

³⁴⁵ Ernst Cramer, "Ephraim-Palais ist ein würdiger Standort," *Berliner Morgenpost*, August 18, 1991.

³⁴⁶ Ulrich Zawatka-Gerlach, "Diepgen für ein Jüdisches Museum im Ephraim-Palais," *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), August 21, 1991.

it could have been perceived as insensitive to the memory of the Jewish community in Berlin, and, as such, would have provided confirmation of anti-Semitic motivations by partisans on the other side of this issue both domestically and internationally. Ephraim may not have been a popular figure in the history of Berlin, but selling an important landmark in the history of Jewish life to private interests would also not be a palatable solution.³⁴⁷

While Diepgen continued to focus on the financial cost of the Libeskind project and the need to cut construction throughout West Berlin, Ernst Cramer's proposal to use the Ephraim-Palais as an alternative site drastically changed the terms of the debate for those that wanted the extension of the Berlin Museum to be built. Of course, Bothe came back to the public conversation on the Ephraim-Palais to make sure the proposals to either use or sell the building were politically dead. In an interview with the *Spandauer Volksblatt*, he argued that it would take roughly two-thirds of the estimated cost of the Libeskind proposal just to make the Ephraim-Palais suitable for displays, and then, it would only offer a little more than half of the space originally allotted to just the Jewish Museum section of the extension.³⁴⁸ Of course, for Bothe, it was not just about finances, but also about the appropriate method of storytelling about Berlin's Jewish community. Placing a Jewish Museum in the Ephraim-Palais or the Centrum Judaicum would isolate it from the rest of the city's historical displays, not treating it as a component of the same history.³⁴⁹ An opinion piece by Thomas Gaehtgens made the argument even more clearly: one always must be concerned about saving money, but in this instance, it was more important, especially at this important historical juncture, to Berlin's history clearer, bolder, and more exciting. The Senate should have felt bound to support Daniel Libeskind's innovative

³⁴⁷ Jörg Meißner, "Jüdische Museum: Bau durch Ephraim-Palais finanzieren?," *Berliner Morgenpost*, August 22, 1991.

³⁴⁸ "Jüdisches Museum muß gebaut werden," *Spandauer Volksblatt*, August 21, 1991.

³⁴⁹ "Resolution für das Jüdische Museum," *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), August 18, 1991.

architectural solution to the problem of integration, regardless of its short-term costs; Berliners should not settle for less.³⁵⁰

Two deliberate international interventions did make their way into the Berlin newspapers. First, likely due to the work of either Rolf Bothe or Nina Libeskind, the German Press Agency (DPA) had been given copies of some of the letters to Diepgen from various parties, and that report made its way into both of the major West Berlin daily papers.³⁵¹ The reports list Eli Rosenbaum, Phyllis Lambert (Canadian Center for Architecture), and Andreas Huyssen by name as being among the supporters for the museum, and the *Berliner Morgenpost* includes a closing quote from Rosenbaum (one of the least charged statements in the letter) asking Diepgen to reconsider his position and to make the Jewish Museum an important priority to the city. Second, Kurt Forster of the Getty Center in Los Angeles wrote a defense of the Libeskind design for the *Berliner Morgenpost* titled “A Jewish Museum belongs in Berlin.”³⁵² Forster sets the stakes high, suggesting that this moment was one of particular importance for how Berlin would tell its own history. He detailed the virtues of Libeskind’s design, as expected from an architectural scholar, and suggested that Berliners had a historic opportunity to build a significant example of public architecture. It should not have been a tradeoff between schools for the Jewish community and the museum, as that falsely assumed that the museum was primarily for the Jewish segments of society. Forster ended by arguing that this building was about Berlin meeting its obligations to its past, and as such, the city should go through with the project. Though Forster did not make any direct statements about forgetting the Holocaust, he provided the strongest argument found

³⁵⁰ Thomas W. Gaehtgens, “Gegen Notlösungen,” *Tagespiegel* (Berlin), August 20, 1991.

³⁵¹ “Briefaktion für Jüdisches Museum,” *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), August 24, 1991; “Jüdisches Museum löst Proteste aus,” *Berliner Morgenpost*, August 23, 1991.

³⁵² Kurt W. Forster, “Ein Jüdisches Museum gehört zu Berlin,” *Berliner Morgenpost*, August 25, 1991.

in the domestic press for seeing the building of Libeskind's unique architectural integration of histories as setting a tone for newly-united Germany to remember its past.

Interestingly, the more ominous language of forgetting the Holocaust or of disrespecting the Jewish community that played such a large part in the international discussion over the museum did not surface often in the domestic conversation about the Berlin Museum extension. However, as the month of August progressed, stories did start to allude to international supporters for Libeskind's design, and some certainly did speak about Germany sending the wrong signal internationally, but there was not a strong engagement in Berlin with the same themes that showed up in the international press. Moreover, the city's Olympic bid was not in any way associated with its financial troubles, which might seem odd to the outside observer. For the most part, the debate was entirely driven by the extension cost versus the opportunity to appropriately display an integrated Jewish and Berlin history (a premise that few Germans contested). The Jewish Museum controversy had struck a chord with the local papers in Berlin that had operated in the Western-sectors of the city, but those from the East seemed to have an entirely different agenda.

4.6 THE FORGOTTEN PUBLIC

Compared to both the international and West Berlin journalistic coverage, papers that had originated in the former East German parts of Berlin displayed relatively little interest in the controversy over the potential delay and/or cancellation of Daniel Libeskind's extension to the Berlin Museum. Early in the controversy, both the *Berliner Zeitung* and the *Neues Deutschland* ran pieces about political opposition to Diepgen and Landowsky's proposal, citing the public

proclamations of Heinz Galinski and various other non-CDU political factions, though only the *Berliner Zeitung* put an actual beat writer on the issue (the *Neues Deutschland* piece was a reprint of a DPA wire report). Neither of the articles included much substance to the dispute, and the piece in *Neues Deutschland* was a two paragraph blurb in a side section called “City Survey” (Stadtumschau).³⁵³ In addition, the *Berliner Zeitung* ran a one paragraph blurb on Diepgen’s opposition and his advocacy of the Ephraim-Palais (from a wire report), but the substantive staging of the other parts of the controversy – the in-depth discussion of Libeskind’s symbolism, the project’s significance to the image of a united Berlin (and Germany), the appropriate telling of history, the problems with the Ephraim-Palais – are entirely absent from the coverage of these two papers.³⁵⁴ The only other mention of the issue was in summarizing the aftermath of the August controversy over delay when particular decisions to fund Libeskind or to break ground had been made, and even those reports tended to speak in terms of political point scoring rather than the stronger messages about Berliner and German collective identity.³⁵⁵

What would explain this seeming disinterest by the former East German local media in a project? Moreover, why does the coverage that exists contain little information about the overall point of the project (the display of integration, the importance of the architecture, its symbolic value in the context of unification)? One can entertain a number of possible hypotheses. First, it is possible that these media outlets, in comparison to their counterparts in the East, had no real experience with the history of the project stretching back to 1974, and, as such, lacked a good frame of reference for the controversy. Second, both the *Berliner Zeitung* and *Neues*

³⁵³ Merlies Emmerich, “Bau des Jüdischen Museums offen,” *Berliner Zeitung*, August 3-4, 1991; “Bauverzögerung des Jüdischen Museums,” *Neues Deutschland*, August 3, 1991.

³⁵⁴ “Diepgen gegen neues Jüdisches Museum,” *Berliner Zeitung*, August 21, 1991.

³⁵⁵ Sascha Adamek, “Museum wird 1993 gebaut,” *Berliner Zeitung*, September 26, 1991; “Jüdisches Museum wird gebaut,” *Neues Deutschland*, August 28, 1991.

Deutschland were former Socialist Unity Party papers, so their relative silence was perhaps indicative of a party position (the *Junge Welt*, which had served the youth wing of the Socialist Unity Party, had no coverage whatsoever). Third, it could be argued that both Rolf Bothe and Daniel Libeskind had little relationship with these papers that had traditionally circulated in East Berlin, and, as such, they had no easy contacts (writers from the arts sections, for example) that would be willing to stoke the controversy in the pages of their publications. Finally, it is possible that the paper content was a reflection of the values and interest of their targeted readership, and that an East German public was just more interested in other issues.

Of course, it would be impossible to completely rule out any of these potential reasons, but one can try to make a reasonable assessment of their probability in influencing this outcome. The first seems like a factually true and likely possibility since the East German press prior to the fall of the Berlin Wall had little opportunity to cover cultural events in the West. For example, when Libeskind was announced as a prize winner for the extension competition in 1989, they had no coverage of that news. Instead, most of the news on Jewish issues had to do with the joint venture to fund the reconstruction of the Centrum Judaicum.³⁵⁶ This first hypothesis might also explain why the *Berliner Zeitung* chose to do a big interview piece with Dr. Hermann Simon about the Centrum Judaicum construction process and its larger symbolic purpose at the same time that Libeskind's building was being threatened with delay, not even asking Simon a single

³⁵⁶ "Arbeitskollektive spendeten für Centrum Judaicum," *Tribune*, June 28, 1989; Renate Oschlies, "Präsidium des Internationalen Kuratoriums 'Neue Synagoge Berlin-Centrum Judaicum' tagte," *Neue Zeit*, June 28, 1989; "Viele Spenden"; "Wiederaufbau der Neuen Synagoge Berlin findet große Unterstützung," *Neues Deutschland*, June 28, 1989; "Wiederaufbau der Neuen Synagoge wird in aller Welt gefördert," *National Zeitung*, June 28, 1989. Nearly all of the pieces are from the national press agency and differ very little in content, demonstrating the practical control of media in East Germany at the time, regardless of the diversity of media outlets.

question about the controversy surrounding the Berlin Museum extension (Simon had done a book-length documentation of Berlin's first Jewish museum in the 1930s).³⁵⁷

The second and third possibilities are more difficult to verify, but are probably the least likely to be a factor. If one assumes that the *Berliner Zeitung* and *Neues Deutschland* still had a strong relationship to the politics of the Socialist Unity Party (even though *Berliner Zeitung* had been sold to West German investors a year prior), it would be hard to understand why they did not see the controversy as more important. The PDS (*Partei des Demokratischen Socialismus*), successor to the SED as a political faction after unification, had made some of the strongest statements against the attempted construction delay by Diepgen and Landowsky. Moreover, the symbolism of narrative historical integration would be consistent with past party ideology that Jewish citizens were one of the most victimized groups during the Third Reich (but they were not a special or unique group of victims in that narrative).³⁵⁸ As for the possibility that few people contacted news outlets that had operated in the East, this is a likely possibility, but the fact that both papers ran pieces, even if small, contemporary with some of the first ones out of the West Berlin press suggests that the papers would have to be seen as sympathetic to their message, and would potentially pull in a portion of the public that could be active supporters. But even if they did not keep contact with the East German presses, why would those presses not be interested in contacting Bothe and Libeskind, or vice versa?

As for the fourth possibility, it seems not only the most likely candidate (and it is commensurate with the first hypothesis), but would also be one of the most insightful about the

³⁵⁷ "Markante Silhouette setzt Zeichen," *Berliner Zeitung*, August 17-18, 1991.

³⁵⁸ The East German news coverage of the fiftieth anniversary of *Kristallnacht* is demonstrative of this attitude. "Bewegende Begegnung im Gedenken an Pogromnacht," *Berliner Zeitung*, November 9, 1988; "Die Geschichte verpflichtet uns zu Wachsamkeit und Völkerverständigung," *Junge Welt*, November 9, 1988; and "Verband der Jüdischen Gemeinden in der DDR ehrte die Opfer von Rassenhaß und Völkermord," *Neues Deutschland*, November 10, 1988.

structure of the public sphere in Berlin in the fall of 1991. Is it possible that the targeted readership of the *Berliner Zeitung* and the *Neues Deutschland* would not have been perceived as interested in the details of the controversy of the Libeskind extension to the Berlin Museum, and furthermore, that they would be perceived as having little deliberative attachment to the historical symbolism of the building? Likely so, and two strong pieces of additional evidence help to support the argument: the coverage of the *Neue Zeit* (another former East Berlin paper) and the substantial amount of attention given in several former East Berlin papers to another controversy over the potential demolition of a Lenin memorial.

Before discussing the difference in the coverage of the *Neue Zeit*, some context about changes to the publication industry in East Germany is necessary. In the year between the fall of the Berlin Wall and German reunification, the East German media underwent a series of structural reforms. Most of the media industries under the control of political parties and the state were sold to private companies in West Germany and Europe. The *Neue Zeit*, much like the *Berliner Zeitung*, *National Zeitung*, and *Tribune*, were among the East Berlin papers that changed hands before the documents of political unification were ratified (the *Neues Deutschland* was retained in a trust and continued to function as an organ of the PDS). While the other papers of minor political parties of the East (*National Zeitung* and *Tribune*) stopped printing within a year after unification, the *Neue Zeit*, which, unlike the *Berliner Zeitung*, had a very small readership in East Germany before the fall of the Berlin Wall, underwent editorial restructuring in 1990 while continuing to print. Its new parent company, which also owned the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (one of the nationally circulating papers in West Germany),

wanted the *Neue Zeit* to compete with some of the other established major West Berlin papers such as *Der Tagesspiegel* and *Berliner Morgenpost*.³⁵⁹

The process of media restructuring and its relationship to readership helps to explain why the *Neue Zeit* focused more on the controversy over the continuation of the Libeskind project while other papers with established readerships, such as the *Berliner Zeitung* and *Neues Deutschland*, devoted little time to the story. It began with a wire report on August 6th, but in it, the paper chose to isolate the political conflict between the CDU and other factions (the FDP in this particular case). Moreover, the article offered reasoning why a Jewish Museum would be needed in Berlin sooner rather than later – the rise of right extremism in the aftermath of reunification made it imperative to set up a museum that would teach tolerance and understanding about Jewish life in Germany.³⁶⁰ A week later, on August 14, the paper published a half-page length piece by Helmut Caspar, one of their reporters. While the piece remained ambivalent about whether the extension should be delayed, Caspar did an excellent job in framing the controversy. While no one would deny the very real financial problems of the city, he noted, the extension to the Berlin Museum that would house the Jewish Museum collection had been a work in process for over 20 years. Quoting extensively from Bothe, Galinski, and Libeskind, Caspar's article provides strong context for the political discussion about this issue in former West Germany – something that the *Neues Deutschland* and the *Berliner Zeitung* do not do at any point in their coverage.³⁶¹ And the next day, the paper printed another small blurb with the SPD's position on Libeskind's building extension, arguing that Jews in Berlin have been waiting a half century to have a display space of their own (a piece of historical reporting that

³⁵⁹ For an explanation of the process of newspaper restructuring in East Germany, see Heinz Pürer and Johannes Raabe, *Presse in Deutschland*, 3rd ed. (Konstanz, Germany: UVK, 2007), 218-20.

³⁶⁰ "Museumsbau sollte nicht verzögert werden," *Neue Zeit* (Berlin), 6 August 1991.

³⁶¹ Helmut Caspar, "Lebendiger Quell der Anschauung und Erkenntnis," *Neue Zeit*, 14 August 1991.

applies mostly to the history of West Berlin).³⁶² Finally, when the Senate chose to continue funding for the detailed building plan toward the end of August, the *Neue Zeit* also made sure that news was reported.³⁶³ Overall, though the *Neue Zeit* did not carry as much content as some of the traditional West Berlin papers on the Libeskind building controversy, it carried more than other, more traditional East Berlin news outlets and did so with an eye toward framing the controversy in West Berlin politics and culture.

In comparison, another cultural issue, the proposed demolition of the Lenin memorial, was a significant controversy in both the *Berliner Zeitung* and *Neues Deutschland* during roughly the same period. After the December 1990 elections in Berlin, the city government began the process of working through how to integrate East Berlin. Part of this process was trying to figure out what to do with literally hundreds of monuments to communism produced by the SED. One of the first targeted was a large statue of Lenin in the *Platz der Vereinten Nationen* in the Friedrichshain district of East Berlin. The district council, after public outcries wanting to keep the monument, chose to recommend demolition to the city, an outcome Volker Hassemer was all too willing to accept.³⁶⁴ The decision was appealed in a public forum, but Hassemer, unwilling to reconsider, both affirmed that a democratic decision was made to destroy the memorial and then proceeded to insult those that wanted to keep it as being subservient to a cult of personality (i.e. they were Lenin worshippers) unfitting for a democratic society.³⁶⁵ In response, the *Berliner Zeitung* offered space for a guest column in which a more sophisticated argument was made for keeping the monument. Wolfram Hülsemann, a protestant youth pastor residing in East Berlin, argued that the Lenin statue was not symbolic of Leninism per se, but of

³⁶² “SPD: Baubeginn Jüdisches Museum nicht verschieben,” *Neue Zeit*, 15 August 1991.

³⁶³ “Bau des Jüdischen Museums weiter ungewiß,” *Neue Zeit*, 28 August 1991.

³⁶⁴ Alexander Osang, “Das Denkmal Lenin hat verloren,” *Berliner Zeitung*, 20 September 1991.

³⁶⁵ Sascha Adamek, “Stadtforum im Denkmalstreit,” *Berliner Zeitung*, 23 September 1991.

a historical journey that the East German people had taken through totalitarian governance. Markers should be left to teach one's grandchildren of that time. He concluded by arguing that if the grandchildren want to then demolish the monument, then he would not stand in the way, but now is not the time to erase even the worst parts of East German history. Such an argument, coming from a member of the church (which was the institution that protected dissent in East Germany) would most certainly have some degree of credible appeal.³⁶⁶ Even though there was constant, visible protest at the site,³⁶⁷ it was removed from the list of protected places and demolished in November of 1991.

Presuming that the readership of both papers was perceived to be made up largely of former East Germans, the Lenin memorial demolition would be both more appealing and more meaningful to a readership that had just spent over forty years under socialist rule. It is not just the amount of coverage (of which I cite only a small part), it is also that the nature of the coverage suggests significance to the readership – as if the issue was something over which the reader ought to care and about which one ought to speak to others. For that readership, the Lenin controversy tapped into a shared past that, even while not perfect, was part of the history of that “public.” As subsequent scholarship has noted, one of the difficulties in the process of reunification has been the preservation and integration of the East German past – a past that many East Germans have been struggling to prevent from being erased.³⁶⁸ The controversy over the Lenin memorial was just an early example of that larger trend.

³⁶⁶ Wolfram Hülsemann, “Denk – Mal,” *Berliner Zeitung*, 23 September 1991.

³⁶⁷ Karin Nolte, “Wie lange wird Lenin auf dem Havemann-Platz stehen?” *Neues Deutschland*, 30 August 1991.

³⁶⁸ For examples, see Maoz Azaryahu, “German Reunification and the Politics of Street Names,” *Political Geography* 16 (1997): 479-493; Daphne Berdahl, “(N)Ostalgie’ for the present: Memory, Longing, and East German Things,” *Ethnos: Journal of Anthropology* 64 (1999): 192-211; and Allan Cochrane, “Making Up Meanings in a Capital City: Power, Memory and Monuments in Berlin,” *European Urban and Regional Studies* 13 (2006): 5-24.

In contrast, the expansion of the Berlin Museum that would include an integrated Jewish museum component, while certainly part of a more distant shared collective past of all Berliners, was not as pressing because the that readership would not have participated in the previous fifteen years of collectively defining the extension purpose. It was an interpretation of historical events that they did not help to produce, unlike the more ethnographic treatments of Jewish culture that would be a part of the Centrum Judaicum with which East Berliners would have been familiar. Moreover, it is likely that the organs responsible for documenting and reporting public controversy – the former East German press – seemed to have little frame of reference for how to make the Libeskind building extension controversy significant to its readership. The lone exception, the *Neue Zeit*, was a former CDU publication with only a small readership in the former GDR and was being run based on West German marketing principles. In the final section, I briefly discuss the resolution to the Libeskind building conflict toward the end of 1991 and then draw some preliminary conclusions about the value of this particular case to communication and public sphere scholars.

4.7 BUILDING AND THE NEW BERLIN

By the end of August 1991, most of the significant public backlash against Eberhard Diepgen and the Berlin Senate for threatening delay of the Libeskind building extension had quieted down. An agreement was reached on August 25 between key coalition and opposition members of the Senate and Diepgen to provide 3.2 million DM in funds for the planning cost in 1992, with

a tentative starting construction date.³⁶⁹ Though some members of Diepgen’s ruling CDU party still vocally advocated pushing construction to 1995 (a three year delay), continuing political pressure by the FPD and the SPD killed that talk by mid-September. On November 9, 1992 – the 54th anniversary of *Kristallnacht* and the 3rd anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall – the groundbreaking celebration for the Libeskind extension (now colloquially referred to as the “Jewish Museum”) occurred, though technically major construction would not begin until early the next year. As discussed at the beginning of this chapter, people who had been bitter disputants in the press just a year before came together with the new head of the Jewish community in Berlin, Jerzy Kanal, to extol the virtues of the building for Berlin’s future. As Diepgen declared, “The Jewish Museum in Berlin will still deliver its aesthetic and intellectual message to both Berliners and visitors from around the world, even when the murky brown wave of the present has long since subsided.”³⁷⁰

In Diepgen’s words for the groundbreaking, one can again decipher the language of “anticipatory illumination.” The Jewish Museum has a message, both in its aesthetic design and in its intellectual content, which will be of interest to Berliners and visitors to the city long into the future. It is a projection not just of the city’s past, but also of its future values – values framed around vague notions of tolerance for diversity, a memory of the traumatic past, and a cosmopolitan welcoming of strangers into Berlin. Those were not the same arguments made by Diepgen about the museum a year earlier; it was the culmination of political pressure from abroad and the domestic discussion about the importance of this particular building that likely led to his change of heart, or, at least, his practical politics.

³⁶⁹ Adamek, “Museum wird 1993 gebaut.”

³⁷⁰ [Das Jüdische Museum in Berlin wird seine ästhetische und intellektuelle Botschaft den Berlinern und Besuchern aus aller Welt noch künden, wenn die trübe braune Woge der Gegenwart längst verebbt ist.] Quoted in Lang, “Mazel Tov.”

Moreover, changes in the cultural situation in Berlin made funding Libeskind's building more sensible and palatable, given the direction of the city. Just a month or two after the controversy over delay, the discussion over the design to rebuild Potsdamer Platz dominated the news. Potsdamer Platz, the center of cultural activity and nightlife during the Weimar Republic, had been almost completely destroyed during World War II. Since it resided at a point just south of the Brandenburg gate through which the Berlin Wall ran (separating Potsdamer Platz from the adjacent Liepziger Platz in East Germany), rebuilding in the area had not been prioritized. But now that the city center had been reunited, the Berlin government had a strong interest in rebuilding Potsdamer Platz as a center for corporate and financial activity. With guarantees to rent space from both Daimler-Benz and Sony, the city pushed through plans to turn the area into a modern city center.³⁷¹ In essence, modern architecture was potentially a vehicle for developing a corporate and tourist base in the new Berlin, and Libeskind's building could begin to be seen by government and corporate interests as an asset in the new cityscape.

The Jewish community itself was also beginning to change. With the failed coup in the Soviet Union during August of 1991 and the subsequent devolution of control to former Soviet states, the demographics of Berlin was about to change. As soon as September of 1991, Heinz Galinski predicted a massive influx of Jewish peoples from former Soviet republics, given the relative tolerance of contemporary German society and the open immigration and citizenship laws Germany had for people of Jewish descent.³⁷² Furthermore, since those people were not

³⁷¹ Though the competition for the space was completed in October of 1991, lingering controversy existed in the press over whether the Richard Rogers design should be preferred over the winning Himmeler/Sattler entry. Ultimately, Himmeler/Sattler became the master planning firm, with individual companies having pieces subcontracted in accordance with the parameters of the master plan. For commentary on the controversy, see Rainer Stache, "Der Potsdamer Platz oder warum sich Berlin mit großer Architektur so schwer tut," *Berliner Morgenpost*, 25 October 1991; and Stache, "Potsdamer Platz – Der Gegenentwurf der Investoren," *Berliner Morgenpost*, 16 December 1991.

³⁷² "Galinski sieht Probleme für jüdische Gemeinde," *Berliner Morgenpost*, 1 September 1991.

originally covered in the original restitution agreements between Konrad Adenauer and the State of Israel, the German government was preparing to release additional reparation money as well.³⁷³ The Jewish Museum component of the Berlin Museum could be more easily seen as a form of cultural outreach and as a symbol for Berlin's increasingly diverse citizenry in the coming years. Both the architectural and the cultural context that made supporting the Libeskind extension potentially more important and reasonable play a role in subsequent chapters in its development – one can glimpse only the faintest hint of what is on the horizon for Berlin.

As a way of concluding this chapter in the development of the Jewish Museum, I would like to discuss the implications this study of the delay controversy for the Libeskind building has for public sphere scholarship. If we can consider newspapers and other media to be organs of public sentiment, and, by extension, a proximate reflection of public discussion and attitudes – they document and report on issues deemed important to their constituent readership – then it is reasonable to draw two conclusions. First, the international discourse about the Libeskind building did not merely comment negatively upon the threat to delay the project; both international media and letter writers sought to increase visibility for the project, to shame local officials for a shortsighted political decision that was not sensitive to the global Jewish community concerned about Germany, and to influence officials to change their mind. International actors configured themselves as active stakeholders in an otherwise local affair, and the actions of local officials only confirmed that those international stakeholders were important to the discussion. Second, the East German public had little interest in the Libeskind building extension project, and, consequently, did not configure itself as a stakeholder in the conversation, for better or for worse. It is not just that the East German public seemed to not have a strong

³⁷³ “Entschädigung für osteuropäische Juden,” *Berliner Morgenpost*, November 8, 1992.

opinion in the continuation of the project; they seemed genuinely uninterested in the controversy, as if it were happening in some land far away (with the obvious exception of the reconfigured *Neue Zeit*).

The confluence of these two conclusions says something unique and profound about the nature of reticulate public spheres. Previous scholarship has been divided on the degree to which consensus is a necessary component of the public sphere, or the degree to which certain baseline rules of conversation must be enforced.³⁷⁴ The case discussed in this chapter does little to resolve these scholarly controversies, but it does add a wrinkle to the discussion. Whether a society has consensus or divergence of opinion on a topic, some sense of common topics of conversation and their relative importance seem to be a binding force for a “public sphere” to exist. For example, Hauser argues that publics are “those who are (or should be) engaged to some degree by contestable concerns, questions, problems, and issues that are (or should be) subject to active deliberation. Members of society who are engaged by discourse of this sort are in some respect participating in a public sphere.”³⁷⁵ If this premise is indeed the case (that public spheres are defined by active discursive participation by interested parties), then the two conclusions drawn above from this specific case study require that we acknowledge that international actors shared a public sphere with West Berlin citizens, while those only a few miles away in East Berlin were not yet part of a merged public conversation with the West. In other words, Eastern papers (designed for East Berlin readers) treated the conversation over delay to the Libeskind building as a form of alien communication, while the West Berlin press seemed to treat international

³⁷⁴ G. Thomas Goodnight, “Opening Up ‘The Spaces of Public Dissension’,” *Communication Monographs* 64 (1997): 270-275; Hauser, “On Publics,” 275-279; and Kendall R. Phillips, “The Spaces of Public Dissension: Reconsidering the Public Sphere,” *Communication Monographs* 63 (1996): 231-248.

³⁷⁵ Hauser, “On Publics,” 278.

voices as a legitimate stakeholder, with a partially-shared reference world, in the discussion over the proper representation of Berlin's Jewish history.³⁷⁶

Such a wrinkle should reconfigure how scholars understand Hauser's notion of "alien communication" in public spheres. Though he does acknowledge in some cases that public spheres have exceeded national boundaries, especially in a globally connected information age,³⁷⁷ for the most part, Hauser treats national boundaries as a primary grounding for the divide between interior and exterior of public spheres. Even when he acknowledges that some groups within a nation break away from its shared reference world, those examples (such as the break-up of former Yugoslavia and the *Peuple Québécois* movement in Canada) often are based upon an assertion of an alternative national identity. While this case study may be unique, it highlights the extent to which a newly formed nation – a society in transition – may not have built enough of a shared reference world to have a unified public sphere, while the history of strong public connections between West Berlin, West Germany, and international actors in Canada, Great Britain, and the United States (perhaps influenced by the history Allied intervention in West German politics since World War II) formed the basis of a partially-shared reference world for communication and deliberating across national boundaries. In essence, the case suggests scholars should soften traditional lines of demarcation between the interior and exterior of a public based upon claims of shared national identity in opposition to alien communities.

On the other hand, while this case may call for a subtle reworking of Hauser's work, it certainly still largely confirms the significant value the notion of a "reticulate public sphere" has

³⁷⁶ An article in the West Berlin press about the narrative of the Holocaust and Jewish identity within East German ideology highlights the degree to which, even a couple of years after reunification, East and West Germans did not share a similar reference world. Gerald Mackenthun, "'Teilnahmsloser Antifaschismus' in der DDR schloß die Juden aus," *Berliner Morgenpost*, November 14, 1992.

³⁷⁷ Hauser, *Vernacular Voices*, 71.

for scholars. Urging scholars to “draw...inferences about publics, public spheres, and public opinion from actual social practices of discourse,”³⁷⁸ Hauser suggests that public spheres are developed from a coalescence of perceived interest in a common trajectory for a group, society, nation, or transnational entity and a commitment to work through that trajectory through discourse on common topics of significance. Such commitments and common visions can be tracked empirically through the close examination of public discourse as it occurs on an everyday basis. It is this basic theoretical inference that makes this study possible (using the news as a way to track the common interests and topics of a society) and that uniquely allows scholars to see the disjunction between the discursive arenas of East and West Berlin in this moment of transition. If, as I argue, such a theory allows scholars to see such unique dimensions of public deliberation, then Hauser’s general project to re-theorize the public sphere as a primarily rhetorical construction continues to have much value for future scholarship.

³⁷⁸ Hauser, *Vernacular Voices*, 275.

5.0 DILLEMMAS AND DISTRUST

By the mid-1990s, Berlin's role as the symbolic front in the Cold War had turned from indefinite political reality to fading memory, capped by the political reorganization of Russia after a failed coup attempt in August of 1991. For the Germans, it was not just an issue of international geopolitics; the definition of the nation itself would have to be rethought. As discussed in the previous chapter, the early years of reunification required Germany to develop a national narrative sensitive to both internal needs and international concerns – the controversy over the continuation of the Libeskind building was an episode in that larger conversation about national self-definition.

However, it was not just Germany's dominant culture that was struggling with the new state of affairs – the Jewish community in Berlin and across the country was itself undergoing a significant transformation. After the democratization of many of the states in Central and Eastern Europe, the mass migration of Eastern European and Russian Jews to Western Europe (particularly Berlin) was striking. These newcomers did present some issues, as was noted publically during the rededication of the Centrum Judaicum on May 7, 1995:

Until German reunification, there were 6,000 Jews in the western half of the city, divided for three decades by the Berlin Wall, and just 200 in the east. The community since has grown to 10,000, thanks to the influx of Jews from the former Soviet Union. Hermann Simon, director of the foundation that rebuilt the synagogue, said he expected it to play a central role in the integration of these immigrants. "We want to create such a positive environment here that my children would never even think of leaving Berlin," Simon

said. A newly founded school, a kosher restaurant and Jewish shops show that Jewish life is returning to the city.³⁷⁹

Simon tried to thread the proverbial needle between two seemingly opposed outcomes, arguing that places for the affirmation of Jewish diasporic *difference* such as the Centrum Judaicum aid in the process of cultural *integration* for those migrants from the former Soviet Union.

Simon's words signal the presence of a classic double bind experienced by the Jewish community between the desire to integrate into a society and the desire to maintain some degree of cultural distinction from that dominant society. According to Kathleen Hall Jamieson's distillation of Gregory Bateson's work on the subject, "double binds involve a powerful and a powerless individual, or...social and institutional norms and a vulnerable class."³⁸⁰ They are a simplification of choices into a seemingly dichotomous "no-win" situation for those in a vulnerable class. While double binds often refer to the specific choices individuals must face, the concept can also be related to classes of minoritarian or oppressed groups that face difficult decisions with each choice entailing negative consequences.³⁸¹ Jamieson's book outlines a number of specific double binds as they relate to women's issues (e.g. Silence/Shame, Femininity/Competence, Sameness/Difference), but her organizational schema suggests that each vulnerable population may have a standard set of double binds commonly experienced by members of that class.

³⁷⁹ Bettina Vestring and Mary Williams Walsh, "Berlin Synagogue Restoration leads Community Revival," *Jerusalem Post*, May 10, 1995. The story makes clear that the celebration took place on Sunday, May 7.

³⁸⁰ Kathleen Hall Jamieson, *Beyond the Double Bind: Women and Leadership* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 13.

³⁸¹ For examples of scholarship on this subject, see Marc Baer, "The Double Bind of Race and Religion: The Conversion of the Dönme to Turkish Secular Nationalism," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 46 (2004), 682-708; Mary Becker, "Four Feminist Theoretical Approaches and the Double Bind of Surrogacy," *Chicago-Kent Law Review* 69 (1993), 303-311; Jessica R. Cattelino, "The Double Bind of American Indian Need-Based Sovereignty," *Cultural Anthropology* 25 (2010), 235-262; and Keith E. McNeal, "Behind the Make-Up: Gender Ambivalence and the Double Bind of Gay Selfhood in Drag Performance," *Ethos* 27 (September 1999), 344-378.

For the Jewish diaspora in Europe, and particularly in Germany, the double bind regarding the need to seem integrated versus the desire to maintain some degree of autonomy, as assumed by Simon's words, has a long and complicated history. The development of German enlightenment thought, along with the emerging influential and educated Jewish component of the German middle class in the eighteenth century helped to propel an image of the Jewishness that could be assimilated into the national identity of the German people.³⁸² Such forces also aided a century long push for Jewish emancipation and civil rights protection across disparate German lands, culminating in the formation of a German Empire in 1871 that codified full legal civil rights for all Jews in the nation. Such a doctrine conforms to a traditional understanding of human societies in sociology, in which the conditions for social solidarity and cohesion can only exist when a singular "group consciousness" is created through adherence to laws and commitment to work toward a common cause.³⁸³ In this version of integration, Jews largely gave up their diasporic status, often their religion and custom, and simply melded with the dominant society's customs, though debates existed about the extent to which one must fully give up any sense of "Jewishness."

By the early twentieth century, a number of ethnic Jews had largely integrated into German society. However, such progressive developments were counteracted by two concerns. First, Germanic anti-Semitism fueled the belief that Jewish people could not fully integrate into German society and had weakened the collective society. Persisting anti-Semitism was fomented into extreme racial discrimination that accompanied the rise of the Third Reich, the rhetorical separation of Jewishness from German national identity, the erosion of Jewish civil liberties, and

³⁸² Marion Kaplan, "Redefining Judaism in Imperial Germany: Practices, Mentalities, and Community," *Jewish Social Studies* 9 (2002): 1-33.

³⁸³ Emile Durkheim, *The Division of Labor in Society*, trans. George Simpson (New York: Free Press, 1964), 70-132.

finally the attempted extermination of all European Jews.³⁸⁴ Second, internal dialogue within the Jewish community about the loss of Jewish community and spiritual identity was perceived to have followed the push for integration, which aided in the development of the Zionist movement.³⁸⁵ “The others assure the Germans that they are no *different* from them,” Martin Buber argues, “in order to be not considered aliens. But we affirm that we *are* different, and we add a truth to our soul, which no one can deny: we are not aliens.”³⁸⁶ After World War II, intellectuals such as Gershom Scholem sought to understand to what extent Jewish identity could be integrated in the (fragmented) German national identity, and whether an attempt to do so was even desirable.³⁸⁷ In essence, contemporary Jews in Europe are caught between a proverbial rock-and-a-hard-place – whether Jews try to integrate or separate, they risk losing their identity or potentially being subject to discrimination/limitations of citizenship.

But Simon’s words at the opening of the Centrum Judaicum suggest a couple of new wrinkles that are useful in discussing the next episode in the development of the Jewish Museum Berlin. First, he is articulating a distinct double bind from the traditional integration/autonomy binary that Jews had always faced that complicates our understanding of domination and victimization.³⁸⁸ It is Eastern European and Russian Jewish emigrants that must integrate with the German Jewish community – a diaspora within a larger dominant culture is trying to

³⁸⁴ See Thomas Pegelow, “‘German Jews,’ ‘National Jews,’ ‘Jewish Volk,’ or ‘Racial Jews’? The Constitution and Contestation of ‘Jewishness’ in Newspapers of Nazi Germany, 1933-1938,” *Central European History* 35 (2002): 195-221; and Vibeke Rützou Peterson, “The Best of Both Worlds? Jewish Representations of Assimilation, Self, and Other in Weimar Popular Fiction,” *German Quarterly* 68 (1995): 160-73.

³⁸⁵ Much of the German-Jewish integration struggle in the 18th through early 20th century is discussed and catalogued in Ritchie Robertson, ed., *The German-Jewish Dialogue* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

³⁸⁶ Martin Buber, “Zion, the State and Humanity: Remarks on Hermann Cohen’s Answer,” in *The Jew: Essays from Buber’s Journal Der Jude*, edited by Arthur A. Cohen (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1980), 96.

³⁸⁷ Gershom Scholem, “Jews and Germans,” *Commentary* 42, no. 5 (1966): 31-8.

³⁸⁸ Jamieson, in her discussion of the double binds that women face, does recognize that men also face their own set of double binds, but largely still depends on a relatively strict binary between a dominant position and the position of victim caught in a double bind. See Jamieson, *Beyond the Double Bind*, 13.

consolidate its identity (Eastern European and Russian Jews were predominantly secular in religious practice and had preserved little traditional culture of the diaspora).³⁸⁹ Second, Simon signals a path through this double bind that that uses cultural affirmation as a form of integration into community, a variation of the contemporary “multiculturalist” approach to integration. In this formulation, integration is no longer synonymous with assimilation to dominant societal norms; within a broader social contract (e.g. basic laws and codes of conduct), there is a range of human and cultural diversity tolerated and even celebrated in a society. However, such an approach comes with its own double bind, as John Nagle notes, with each end of the dilemma corresponding to a different social group being coerced. Minority groups are pressured to conform to democratic principles and to put their difference on display for others in society (under the implied threat of derision or discrimination for not being the “model minority”). For the majority group, exerting pressure to adopt dominant cultural behaviors on minority groups violates the principles of multicultural democracy, subjecting a society to internal fragmentation or external (i.e. global) derision. Thus, the double bind of multiculturalism often produces, in practice, social dissatisfaction for both groups because it “hinders the development of a politics of solidarity beyond a recognition that difference is good in itself.”³⁹⁰

The preceding discussion forms the backdrop for this chapter’s analysis of a public controversy regarding the proper use of the Libeskind building between 1995 and 1998, ending with the hiring of W. Michael Blumenthal as Director of the Jewish Museum. Former Jewish

³⁸⁹ Internal division within the Jewish community in Germany was a prominent theme in German news coverage during the mid-to-late 1990s, suggesting that Hermann Simon’s concerns here are both not unfounded and not atypical. Olaf Gloeckner, “Only Renowned Immigrants are Mentioned in the Press: German Media and the Russian-Jewish Minority from 1990 to 2005,” in *Russian-Jewish Emigrants After the Cold War: Perspectives from Germany, Israel, Canada, and the United States*, ed. Olaf Gloeckner, Evgenija Garbolevsky, and Sabine von Mering (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Center for German and European Studies, 2006), 102-112.

³⁹⁰ John Nagle, *Multiculturalism’s Double Bind: Crating Inclusivity, Cosmopolitanism and Difference* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009), 5.

Museum Director Amnon Barzel's public declarations about the purpose of the museum and his attacks against the Berlin Museum institution illuminated a series of double binds facing the development of the museum. For the Jewish community, the traditional double bind between integration and cultural autonomy seems to have been acutely felt, with Barzel being the strongest voice rejecting a perceived pressure to be a "model minority." On the other hand, the Berlin Museum institution (and the city government) does not want to be in a precarious situation of being perceived as overbearing or coercing the integrationist model, though it is clear that the post-Cold War narrative of a culturally tolerant Berlin and Germany requires adherence to a multiculturalist take on difference integrated within a larger whole. The entire controversy becomes a no-win situation for both the Jewish community and the Berlin Museum. Everyone loses face, Barzel loses his job, and the future of the Libeskind building is thrown into crisis. However, the appointment of the new Jewish Museum Director created a moment to change the tenor of the debate, with Blumenthal proposing a version of the integrationist model that also allowed for an autonomous Jewish Museum Berlin. In so doing, Blumenthal navigated a path through the seeming impasse of the two double binds facing the German government and the Jewish community.

This chapter illustrates a complicated entanglement of double binds that defy simplistic transposition into oppressor/oppressed relationships, but it also demonstrates that institutionally powerful German and Jewish voices can form a coalition to advance an agenda in the face of opposition and international criticism. As Hauser argues, even in cases where a wide swath of dissenting and incommensurable opinions are considered, publics, by virtue of seeing what is at stake in common topic of conversation, often negotiate contingent forms of self-regulation

designed to manage differences without necessarily reaching consensus.³⁹¹ With regard to the specific questions above about the meaning and desirability of integration for the Jewish Museum, public discussion was split into stages in order to make provisional progress. Without concretely defining the meaning of “integration” in the exhibits, enough abstract defense of this organizing term occurred in order to draw a conclusion on its desirability. Many of the arguments in favor of integration were predicated on following the integrated architectural vision of Daniel Libeskind based on its ability to illuminate a unique future for Berlin. With that question resolved institutionally, the stage was then set for W. Michael Blumenthal to resolve the double bind faced by the Jewish community by arguing for museum autonomy, which also helped the German government and the Berlin Museum institution save face in the wake of firing Barzel.

This chapter begins by detailing the arguments and institutional decisions that led to integration becoming the key concept for a Jewish Museum in Berlin during the 1970s and 1980s, along with some of the unresolved ambiguities in discussions over the term (accentuated by Libeskind’s design). Once this conceptual foundation is established, it will detail some of the institutional changes that led to Amnon Barzel’s employment with the museum and his decision to break with the integrationist model. Once the public became aware of Barzel’s conceptual and personal controversy with other members of the Berlin Museum staff in the Summer of 1995, the chapter outlines the public reactions to this scandal. It first tracks the diffusion of different takes on what the Jewish Museum should be before detailing the political alignments that calcified in late 1996 and early 1997 leading up to Barzel’s dismissal. In the aftermath of the embarrassing public fallout, the chapter discusses W. Michael Blumenthal’s solution to the knot of double binds

³⁹¹ Hauser, “On Publics,” 275-9.

animating the controversy. Finally, in the wake of this explosion of public discourse, the chapter offers a few concluding comments regarding the power of double binds and the means by which they could be overcome.

5.1 INCEPTION OF THE INTEGRATION MODEL

The development of the integration model of a Jewish Museum in Berlin had much to do with the institutional arrangements and financial support for the museum. During the first decade of planning for the Jewish Department of the Berlin Museum, the concept of integration was not a large topic of conversation. As discussed in Chapter 2, the department would be integrated into the institution. Physical integration was not conceived as an encompassing rationale, nor was it related to the dilemmas of German-Jewish identity. When the notion of integration was mentioned, it was driven primarily by two interests: it made advocacy for the extension to the Berlin Museum easier, and institutional sponsorship was a form of reparation of wrongs done to previous generations of Berlin's Jewish citizens. Finding room to display Jewish history was primarily a German concern; insofar as Heinz Galinski and others from within West Berlin's sparsely populated Jewish community seemed involved, it was to support the visibility to Jewish life and culture in any reasonable way possible. The Berlin Museum institution seemed like the only reasonable sponsor for such a venture.

In the early 1980s, discussions of two Berlin Museum expansion proposals – one to rebuild the Ephraim-Palais and the other by Ernst Gisel to build an extension building behind the Collegienhaus – helped to develop and bring attention to the significance of “integration” as a concept. In the scrapped proposal for the renovation of the Ephraim-Palais, a certain spatial

distance did exist between the main building of the Jewish Museum and its addition, but the inclusion of other elements of the city's history still conveyed a sense of closeness or "consubstantiality" between Jewish history and Berlin history.³⁹² Gisel's proposal for an on-site extension building brought an expanded sense of spatial contiguity as integration into view along with the institutional and historical senses of integration. Rather than simple institutional affiliation, spatial and substantive proximity, particularly as it impacted the narrative of city development, started to become more important for the administrators of the Berlin Museum and members of the Jewish community. The notion of integration became a more substantial idea, and, as such, it created some pressure on the West Berlin government to deliver on the promise of including Jewish history into the official narrative of the city's history.

Once a fuller idea of integration was out in the public, no substitute seemed politically feasible. The plan for rebuilding the Ephraim-Palais fell through because the East German government agreed to take the materials and rebuild it at the original location, and Gisel's proposal was unworkable because the land behind the Collegienhaus had already been promised to the Internationale Bauausstellung (IBA) for developing modern community housing in celebration of Berlin's 750th anniversary. Mayor Richard von Wiezsäcker's proposed alternative to use the basement of the Martin Gropius building, then being renovated, for Jewish history displays under the auspices of the Berlin Museum only heightened the contrast between mere visibility and substantial integration of the histories and exhibits; it showed more clearly what seemed to be missing in earlier discussions of the Jewish Department and how that concern needed to be given voice. That the space being offered was the basement of the Martin Gropius

³⁹² Burke, *Rhetoric of Motives*, 20-23.

Building only intensified fears of separation, perhaps even “ghettoization,” of the city’s Jewish history, and that concern was becoming an increasingly public concern, as noted in Chapter 2.

To satisfy all parties, an agreement was reached between the Berlin Senate, the Berlin Museum, and the Jewish community in Berlin to use the Martin Gropius Building’s basement as a temporary exhibition space for the Jewish collection while a suitable extension was built to the Berlin Museum that would house and properly integrate the Jewish department with the rest of the exhibits. Furthermore, with the IBA’s projects seemingly stalled and not all land used, the Berlin government was able to negotiate for an adjacent piece of land for the construction of an extension. Finally, to clarify the notion of an integrationist museum exhibition plan that would satisfy all parties, the Aspen Institute Berlin hosted a conference of experts, eventually endorsing a working paper by Rolf Bothe and Vera Bendt to house an autonomous Jewish Museum department (with displays controlled by that department head) within a fully-contiguous set Berlin Museum history displays – a way to allay potential concerns about cultural appropriation while guaranteeing the display of Jewish history would not be separated from the rest of the city’s history.³⁹³

The minutes taken at the competition committee’s meeting in June 1989 to choose a winning design demonstrate that the integrationist model became one of the dominant distinguishing mechanisms when parsing the merits of the top architectural proposals for the museum extension.³⁹⁴ Moreover, Daniel Libeskind saw the importance of the integrationist model to the project and sought to expand that line of thinking beyond what had been previously imagined by Berlin Museum administrators and city planners. As Libeskind recalled in his memoirs, “the requirement was for a separate extension that would house various departments; I

³⁹³ Bothe and Bendt, “Ein eigenständiges Jüdisches Museum.”

³⁹⁴ Cierpiatkowski and Keil, “Ergebnisprotokoll,” 7.

would offer a design that would architecturally integrate Jewish history into Berlin's rich, multi-textured history and enable people, even encourage them, to feel what had happened."³⁹⁵ Libeskind's proposal further developed the integration model through the spiritual condensation of Berlin's Jewish history through the architectural design process. For Libeskind, rather than neutralizing space, visitors ought to be aware of their physical surroundings as a way to counteract the perceived separation of exhibits; architecture could remind visitors of the inseparability of Berlin's history and Jewish history. As he would recount in a public conversation with Jacques Derrida, Libeskind "tried to make a connection between those who were the carriers of the spiritual entity of Berlin as an emblem" in the physical layout of the museum.³⁹⁶ Though, as Chapter Three notes, it is difficult to see the direct translation between his design inspirations and the exact contours of the final design product, Libeskind's description of his museum extension proposal *clearly sought to extend the ideational force* of the integration model by adding an architectural/spiritual component to it.

At least until the fall of the Berlin Wall, there was little trepidation over the concept of integration – it was rarely seen as a part of a double bind regarding Jewish identity. Both the practical benefits of sponsorship stability and the sense of cultural responsibility for the destruction of the visible Jewish presence in Berlin drove the arguments for institutional integration of a Jewish Museum Department with the rest of the Berlin Museum. The Jewish community in Berlin and administrators at the Berlin Museum saw the physical integration of Jewish Museum exhibits, both in proximity and curatorial cross referencing, as a bulwark against any perceived "ghettoization" of Jewish life and culture in the city. Because the institutional voice for the display is Germans, not Jews, the double bind experienced here is an early variant

³⁹⁵ Libeskind, *Breaking Ground*, 82.

³⁹⁶ Libeskind, "Between the Lines," *Research in Phenomenology*, 83.

of the multiculturalist double bind, if anything at all. Germans, as a dominant culture within a society, have an obligation to be inclusive and affirming of the Jewish community and its historical role in the development of Berlin; anything other than an integrationist model, as noted previously, would be read as a form of exclusion by Germans (as was the case with the plan to use the basement of the Martin Gropius building). However, the decision to make the Jewish Museum department in charge of developing its own displays with little oversight was a decision that would have lasting ramifications – both over the meaning of independence and the meaning of having Jewish people represent *themselves* and their history as integrated with the Germans.

5.2 INSTITUTIONAL TRANSFORMATIONS AND THE THREAT TO INTEGRATION

As discussed in Chapter 4, the period between the fall of the Berlin Wall and the groundbreaking for the museum in November 1992 created a number of issues that affected the integrationist model. Although Rolf Bothe had put together a working group in March 1989 to hammer out some of the exhibition details, institutional instability prevented many of the most basic questions from being answered. Obviously, reunification had created an enormous financial burden for the city. Moreover, the Berlin Museum had to turn much of its energy toward institutional integration with its counterparts in East Berlin. More than just a merging of departments and employees, an entirely new schema for the division and composition of collections across several different museums had to be formulated. Both the financial and the institutional factors contributed to the threats to Libeskind's extension building by the Berlin Senate, which, along with design changes made by the architect to reduce costs, meant that the

Berlin Museum could not anticipate with any degree of certainty just how much space would be added for exhibitions within the Libeskind extension.³⁹⁷

A curating schema was most clearly laid out by Bothe during this period in an essay published in the exhibition book for the summer 1991 display of Libeskind's extension design materials at the *Joods Historisch Museum* in Amsterdam. According to Bothe, two floors of the above-ground portion of the extension would be used to show the history of Berlin from 1871 to the present, with the Jewish Museum in the basement hallways. "The 19th century periods prior to 1871 are dealt with in the existing museum building." With this configuration, the subterranean connection between the Collegienhaus and the Libeskind extension would guarantee that the Jewish Museum would be integrated into the viewing experience of any visitor (i.e., they would have to pass through the exhibition to get to the other parts of the museum). In addition, the walls created from the "void line" running through the museum would be used to display materials about the Jewish influence in the history of Berlin during the respective time periods covered in a room, an innovative way to deal with the issue of integration of the Jewish Museum components into the mainstream history of the city. "For the period of persecution, these structures become memorials, and the Jewish history disappears; its roots may be perceived by the visitor behind the closed walls and beneath these, on the lower level."³⁹⁸ Such an arrangement of materials was designed to give the Jewish Museum department its own space – respecting the Jewish diaspora as a unique subset of the larger society – while also stressing those moments in which Jewish citizens had contributed to the development of the larger society. It also mirrored Libeskind's architectural narrative of the sometimes tragic and destructive

³⁹⁷ Weinland and Winkler, *Das Jüdische Museum*, 60-61.

³⁹⁸ Bothe, untitled essay, in *Between the Lines*, catalogue for exhibition at Joods Historisch Museum, Amsterdam.

relationship between Germans and Jews (i.e., the absence embodied in the void line) to acknowledge the limits and practical failures of cultural integration at certain points in history.

As interesting as Bothe's description of an integrative curatorial solution to the museum exhibitions and as important as it was to the continuation of the project, it did not have sufficient polish. Not only did this plan seem to leave out important components of the original extension plan (such as a restaurant in either building or a theatre department), but also, in order to sell the museum project to both the local and international public during the institutional crises in 1990-1991, Bothe had to modify plans based upon access to both new collections and new museum spaces formerly held by the East Germans. In particular, the merger of the Märkisches Museum collections and space potentially threatened the current use of the Collegienhaus. To deal with these challenges and to give interested public parties a general sense of the use of the available spaces for the Berlin Museum's historical collections, Bothe argued that the history of Berlin should be divided. The history of Berlin up to 1871 should be the subject of the Märkisches Museum, while history from the formation of the first German Empire to the present would be displayed in the Collegienhaus and the Libeskind extension. The latter two buildings would also house the Jewish Museum and other specialty departments. In the context of threats to the building project, this division created a strong intellectual rationale for the necessity of the extension space while also using a historical demarcation that would seem reasonable to the local public and politicians.³⁹⁹

As the political situation stabilized and plans for the construction of the Libeskind extension were finalized in late 1991 and early 1992, Bothe decided that it was time to work more carefully on the particulars of exhibition layouts. The working group he commissioned to

³⁹⁹ Weinland and Winkler, *Das Jüdische Museum*, 50-52.

meet during the spring and summer of 1992 took his basic schema described above as a framework for displays. The Jewish Museum would be located in the basement, with religion and history of Jews in Berlin being placed in designated exhibition rooms off of the main hallway. The two axes intersecting the main hallway (which now were punctuated with the E.T.A. Hoffmann Garden and the Holocaust Memorial Tower) would cover history of Jewish self-assertion and resistance against anti-Semitism. Jewish themes would also be integrated into the main exhibition, but one major conceptual change was made: the walls of the void line, even those in display rooms, would stay empty and untouched (rather than being the place for integrating Jewish history into the main exhibition).⁴⁰⁰

The results of this working group was the first comprehensive plan produced in which all of the spaces of the Collegienhaus and the Libeskind building were broken down into individual room plans. This report, produced for the Senator for Building and Housing in October of 1992, extended the integrative model of design into other areas; theatre, fashion, and art departments would be respites from the larger historical narrative of the museum at key places in the above-ground extension exhibition. The Collegienhaus spaces would be renovated and used for breakout departments deserving of special attention, such as domestic life in the 19th and 20th century, images of Berlin and its planning, and 19th century genre painting in the city. The plan confirmed that the Jewish Museum department would have its own space in the basement of the museum extension and would be encountered by any visitor that wished to reach the main portion of the Berlin history exhibition.⁴⁰¹ By the time the groundbreaking ceremony occurred on November 9, 1992, the Berlin Museum had worked out and had approved a basic conceptual

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid, 62.

⁴⁰¹ Kurt Winkler, ed., "Konzeption des Erweiterungsbaus des Berlin Museums mit Abteilung Jüdisches Museum," working paper presented to the Senator for Building and Housing, October 25, 1992, in Weinland and Winkler, *Das Jüdische Museum*, 316-36.

division of displays across several buildings and had a room-by-room layout of visitor movement from which to work on more detailed display plans.

Seeming conceptual and institutional stability would not last long. With the impending reunification of the city's history collection also going through a lengthy political process (though informal approval had been given for some time), most of the most influential characters also seemed to be turning over. Vera Bendt, who had coordinated the Jewish Museum department of the Berlin Museum, moved on to do work at the Jewish Museum in Frankfurt. Rolf Bothe, the director of the Berlin Museum that had seen the extension through financial difficulty, chose to leave in the latter half of 1992 in order to take a position at the National Museums in Weimar.⁴⁰² Perhaps most tragic of all, Heinz Galinski, the head of the West Berlin Jewish community for 43 years and integral advocate for integrated Jewish displays at the Berlin Museum, died on July 19, 1992.⁴⁰³

With most of the leaders for the Jewish Museum project gone, work did continue behind the scenes to more clearly develop the integration model design concept. After producing some sample exhibitions for the groundbreaking of the Libeskind extension, Berlin Museum curators and their counterparts from the Märkisches Museum noticed that the combined collections allowed for dense cross-referencing and associations between genres and moments in history. That experience, along with desire to follow the inspiration of Libeskind's architecture, suggested an innovative way of designing the main historical exhibition. As Martina Weinland and Kurt Winkler describe it:

The place of a chronological framework was to be taken by the hypothesis of a network of smaller exhibition units linked to each other by cross-references in content and the

⁴⁰² Weinland and Winkler, *Das Jüdische Museum*, 74.

⁴⁰³ Jola Merten, "Ruth Galinski: 'Er mußte reden, weil die anderen schwiegen,'" *Berliner Morgenpost*, July 19, 1997.

goal of a “phenomenological” association with the individual document, which is to be deciphered as the point of crystallization of a multidimensional hermeneutic process in the museum.⁴⁰⁴

In other words, a linear historical narrative would be the general framework for the progression of exhibitions, but rather than trying to tell a comprehensive history in which the collections would be only supporting materials for a didactic narrative, particular materials themselves would be featured, perhaps around a particular person or theme, and that “crystallization” would be something connected to both a historical period and other particular identity or genre-driven concerns the curators wished to convey. Similar to what Kenneth Burke would call a “representative anecdote,” the particular instance would be a place to narrate the features of a shared history.⁴⁰⁵ Not only would such an innovative method of display work well to accomplish the integrationist mission of the museum (and extend it to the entire Berlin Museum collection, not just the Jewish Museum collections), it also mirrored the associative narrative structure of Walter Benjamin’s “One-Way Street,” an important inspiration for the structure of Libeskind’s extension design (discussed in Chapter Three). Thus, the architectural structure would seem more in-sync with the display of the Berlin Museum collections.

In the meantime, the absence of Rolf Bothe and Vera Bendt necessitated the hiring of replacements. In the job advertisement circulated in the Summer of 1993, the Senate Administration for Cultural Affairs made it clear that the Director of the Jewish Museum would need to balance two major components of the job: exhibition design in coordination with the administrators of the Jewish Museum and the Märkisches Museum, and the need to build public

⁴⁰⁴ Weinland and Winkler, *Das Jüdische Museum*, 65.

⁴⁰⁵ For a brief theoretical discussion of the “representative anecdote,” see Kenneth Burke, *a Grammar of Motives* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1945), 59-61.

awareness about the museum.⁴⁰⁶ Nearly a year later, the position was finally filled by Amnon Barzel, an Israeli who spent nearly all of the ten previous years as the director of the Luigi Pecci Museum (of contemporary art) in Italy.⁴⁰⁷ The choice was not an obvious one, since Barzel neither had any previous experience in Berlin nor did he have any particular specialization in German-Jewish history; he was a contemporary art specialist with strong ties to the Israeli art world.

For the position as Director of the Berlin Museum, the Senate chose Reiner Güntzer, a curator trained in the natural sciences, not culture. Almost immediately, difficulties in the working relationship began to emerge between Güntzer and Barzel. While he received permission to do his first Jewish Museum exhibition inside the unfinished Libeskind building, he insisted on a separate budget and a certain degree of independence for decision making. In response, Güntzer publically suggested that funding for acquisitions would be dependent upon a design concept that Barzel needed to complete, and that both the concept and funding would have to work within the existing institutional structure and Jewish Museum department vision plan laid out by the Berlin Museum.⁴⁰⁸

Both the ambiguity over the concept of integration and the institutional turnover at the Berlin Museum changed the stakes in the conversation. Though some work had been done to flesh out what an integrated exhibition with some Jewish Department independence would look like, the main appeal to the use of the term both prior to and after German reunification seemed to be ideological – it provided a pushback against seeming attempts to marginalize the Jewish

⁴⁰⁶ Public job advertisement by the Senate Administration for Cultural Affairs, July 1993, in Weinland and Winkler, *Das Jüdische Museum*, 337.

⁴⁰⁷ Rick Atkinson, “The Berlin Squall; for the Jewish Museum, a Stormy Evolution,” *Washington Post*, November 26, 1994.

⁴⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

Museum Department and for threats to the Libeskind building. As an appeal to a dominant culture within the society, integration was a cultural imperative; German history must invite and include all citizens (and those that *should have been* properly seen as citizens), not just those with a Germanic cultural heritage. But now that the actors had changed – with an Israeli art specialist overseeing the Jewish Museum department and a Berlin Museum director that did not specialize in cultural or anthropological display – a volatile situation would lie ahead. For Barzel, the notion of integration would feel like a trap, especially with the Jewish Museum Department being given “autonomy.” For Gützer, Barzel would behave like a bad subordinate – breaking all previous agreements on what the Berlin Museum should display and asserting much more than the limited “autonomy” granted to the Jewish Museum Department in his (and the Berlin government’s) estimation. During the end of 1994 and the first part of 1995, these tensions would largely remain behind closed doors. But as Barzel took his first exhibition public, so too did he take that opportunity to advance his own vision of a Jewish Museum for Berlin in a public forum.

5.3 CONCEPTUAL CONTROVERSY GOES PUBLIC

“Survival in Sarajevo,” an exhibition of large photographic prints by Edward Serotta (of Savannah, Georgia), was open to the public in the unfinished shell of the Libeskind building between May 1 and June 4, 1995, with the topping-out ceremony for the structure occurring on May 5. Serotta’s images documented the everyday lives and humanitarian work of a small Jewish community from 1989 to 1994. Over ninety five percent of Sarajevo’s pre-World War II Jews were deported to concentration camps, fled into exile, or survived the war and then moved

to Israel. The few that survived and stayed in Sarajevo were often able to do so because of their neighbors' willingness to hide them from Nazi occupiers, leaving a Jewish community with roughly seventy members in 1989. With the onset of sectarian violence in the former Yugoslavia, that Jewish community turned itself into an effective humanitarian organization offering food, medical help, and protection from persecution to their neighbors in the city. Their group, La Benevolencija, stayed above the political fray, and, by doing so, provided important humanitarian services to non-combatants during the Bosnian war. Though not a display about the Jewish community of Berlin, Amnon Barzel argued that the exhibition spoke to certain historical parallels between the destroyed Berlin of fifty years prior and the sectarian violence of Sarajevo, such that "people here [in Berlin] understand what is happening in Sarajevo" and could identify with the cooperative, humanitarian message of the exhibition.⁴⁰⁹ As a first major display, the exhibition choice was illuminating to Barzel's beliefs regarding the museum – it is only a "proper" place to exhibit the work if one sees the museum's mission as showing work of the entire Jewish diaspora with only a loose connection to the city or the nation.

In addition to being the first public display inside Daniel Libeskind's building, the exhibition also provided the opportunity to publish a booklet entitled *Positionen zum Erweiterungsbau des Berlin Museums mit Jüdischem Museum von Daniel Libeskind* (Positions on the extension of the Berlin Museum with the Jewish Museum by Daniel Libeskind). Inside, some of the major stakeholders in and public advocates of the project provided short essays about the importance of the coming museum space and, of course, Libeskind's architectural design. Ulrich Roloff-Momin, Senator for Cultural Affairs, penned the first piece, highlighting the importance of the integrationist narrative, as embodied in the architecture of Libeskind, and

⁴⁰⁹ Clive Freeman, "Jewish Museum in Berlin Still a Controversial Construction Site," *Deutsche Presse-Agentur*, May 6, 1995.

emphasizing the prominent place the museum would have within the larger organizational structure of the city museum system. It is clear, even from his words, that the Jewish Museum's role and purpose was starting to expand; it would not only be a place for displaying the history of Jewish life and culture in Berlin, it would "also be a vibrant center of Jewish life and contemporary Jewish art."⁴¹⁰ Renate Altner and Dominik Bartmann provided a detailed plan for the movement and structure of an integrated exhibition of Jewish and German history. Framing the end of the "Nachkriegszeit" and the unification of Europe as a significant moment to build a truly cosmopolitan society, the history of German-Jewish cultural relations in Berlin, particularly their shortcomings, would be pedagogical prompts for reflection on the cultural politics of the present.⁴¹¹ In fact, in Kurt Winkler's commentary that ends the booklet, the extension project is thought to parallel the process of redefining Berlin, "a place of critical reflection on one's own history and active engagement with the urban future."⁴¹² These perspectives seem to reaffirm the conceptual commitment to integration.

But true to the title of the booklet, positions on the use and curation of the Libeskind building were not singular. Edward van Voolen, curator of the Jewish Historical Museum in Amsterdam, wrote a rather strong invective about the institutional politics of the Jewish Museum since political reunification. He suggested that strong political forces were arrayed against the museum, citing both the 1991 controversy over potential cancellation and the lengthy (nearly a year) hiring process of Amnon Barzel, an appointment that certain unnamed people with power

⁴¹⁰ [auch ein lebendiges Zentrum jüdischen Lebens und aktueller jüdischer Kunst sein.] Ulrich Roloff-Momin, "Vorwort," in *Positionen zum Erweiterungsbau des Berlin Museums mit Jüdischem Museum von Daniel Libeskind*, ed. Jochen Boberg and Helmut Braun (Berlin, Berlin Museum and Märkischen Museum, 1995), 5.

⁴¹¹ Renate Altner and Dominik Bartmann, "Zur Präsentation der Berlingeschichte im Libeskindbau," in Boberg and Braun, *Positionen zum Erweiterungsbau*, 15-18.

⁴¹² [ein Ort der kritischen Besinnung auf die eigene Geschichte und der aktiven Auseinandersetzung mit der urbane Zukunft sein.] Kurt Winkler, "Die 'Leere' ausstellen? Daniel Libeskind's Museumsbau als museologische Herausforderung," in Boberg and Braun, *Positionen zum Erweiterungsbau*, 60.

apparently attempted to prevent from occurring. Van Voolen also explicitly derided attempts to limit Barzel's operating and purchasing budget, demanding that the Berlin Senate "give the museum the financial provisions that would make it possible to develop the concept detail."⁴¹³ Though not specific, one can assume that van Voolen referred to an ongoing controversy about the small budget given to Barzel for the purpose of procuring new materials for a collection.⁴¹⁴ Even with strong support given by van Voolen, he still cited the importance of the integrative model to the overall purpose of the museum. Quoting some of the conversation from the Aspen Institute conference in 1988, the case was made that pairing the Jewish Museum with the Berlin Museum would have a practical benefit: more people will come to see the exhibits. He also supported the architectural vision of historical and spiritual integration of peoples embodied in Libeskind's architecture. However, in resolving his support for Barzel with a commitment to the integrative model, he argued that the notion of integration, set out by the Berlin Museum staff to date, was still ill-defined and must adjust to a changing present. The most important of these adjustments was the addition of a Jewish cultural present, particularly in art, similar to Roloff-Momin's framing of the integrative model. But in the final analysis, van Voolen pushed strongly for allowing Barzel to create a vision of the museum as he saw fit.

The real jewel of the booklet was the extended piece written by Amnon Barzel that provided a conceptual outline for his vision of the Jewish Museum, and it had little in common with previous iterations of the integrative model. Barzel began by explaining the need to break with previous iterations of the integrative model, particularly the institutional integration of the Jewish Museum with the rest of the Berlin Museum. Citing the break of Jewish and German

⁴¹³ [gibt dem Museum die finanzielle Ausstattung, die es möglich macht, das Konzept detailliert zu entwickeln.] Edward van Voolen, "Zum Richtfest des Jüdischen Museums im Berlin Museum am 5. Mai 1995," in Boberg and Braun, *Positionen zum Erweiterungsbau*, 11.

⁴¹⁴ Denis Staunton, "Jewish Scars Reopened Over Berlin Museum," *Observer* (UK), May 14, 1995.

culture imposed during the Third Reich, Barzel suggested that German-Jewish culture, insofar as it existed, was pushed into exile. Thus, a Jewish Museum could not be bounded by the protocols of a narrow, city-focused narrative – the Jewish Museum content, by necessity, would not fit well within the Berlin Museum. To do a Jewish Museum in Berlin well, one could not focus on the Jewish community in this location, but must instead speak to the entire diaspora’s cultural development. As a result, the historical displays of the Jewish Museum and the Berlin Museum ought not to run parallel, nor should they be in the same building. If there was to be anything of an “integrated” history, it was only that, in the process of telling Jewish history, German-Jewish conditions should be uniquely highlighted. Moreover, in his way of thinking, previous attempts to design an interface between the Jewish Museum contents and the rest of the Berlin Museum had been unworkable; a romanticized integrated museum model would not prove useful in practice.⁴¹⁵

Given the concerns laid out above, Barzel proposed an entirely new arrangement for the use of Daniel Libeskind’s building. The underground floor, accessed by the Collegienhaus next door, would focus entirely upon the period of persecution between 1933 and 1945. In it, the museum would tell a complex narrative of repression and resistance. Topics “include the mechanisms of repression, economic boycott, burning of books, 'Kristallnacht' and escape deportation, but also the efforts of self-help organizations, cultural initiatives and individuals who stood protectively in front of their Jewish friends.”⁴¹⁶ Perhaps most interestingly, the intersecting hallways that lead to Libeskind’s “Holocaust Tower” and “E.T.A. Hoffman Garden”

⁴¹⁵ Amnon Barzel, “Das Konzept des Jüdischen Museum im Berlin Museum,” in Boberg and Braun, *Positionen zum Erweiterungsbau*, 36-38.

⁴¹⁶ [Dazu gehören die Mechanismen der Unterdrückung, wirtschaftlicher Boykott, das Verbrennen von Büchern, die ‘Kristallnacht,’ Flucht und Deportation, aber auch die Bemühungen von Selbsthilfeorganisationen, kulturellen Initiativen und einzelnen Bürgern, die sich schützend vor ihre jüdischen Freunde stellten.] Barzel, “Das Konzept,” 40.

installations would be renamed the “Axis of Holocaust” and “Axis of Exile” respectively. In those portions of the underground level, permanent exhibitions of stories and documents would tell the story of those that emigrated to safety in strange lands and of those that suffered and were murdered in camps at the hands of the National Socialist regime.

On the ground level, Barzel planned to place the main exhibition for the history of Jewish life in Berlin. The displays would cover the timeframe from 1781 to 1933, and would tell a distinctive Jewish cultural narrative that would have reference to the broader history of Berlin. While the end point was common, the beginning point was rather unique, as it coincided with a historic Jewish cultural event in Austria, not Germany – the removal of the requirement to wear distinctive Jewish badges. Also of interest: the easternmost void on the ground level would be open, and in it would be displayed Jewish examples of Jewish religious art. “Each Jewish object is a piece of survival, and each is witness to a historic event.”⁴¹⁷ The first above ground level would be devoted to Jewish art collections gathered from the various museums from around the city, and the second floor would be used for large special exhibitions. The space devoted to art and special shows would dwarf the space for the main historical exhibitions in the underground and ground floors.

While it is hard not to be impressed today with the breadth of Amnon Barzel’s vision for the museum, it radically parts with any previous understanding of what the Jewish Museum ought to be and how it ought to relate to the Berlin Museum. While both Ulrich Roloff-Momin and Edward van Voolen seemed to argue for an expansion upon the integrative model – engaging with contemporary Jewish culture in art – Barzel repudiated the integrative model entirely at the outset of his proposal. The concern seemed to be motivated as much by

⁴¹⁷ [Jedes jüdische Objekt ist ein Stück des Überlebens und jedes ist Zeugnis eines historischen Ereignisses.] Barzel, “Das Konzept,” 42.

administrative and institutional goals as curatorial ones. As he argued, Jewish culture, for him, extended well beyond Berlin, and, as such, ought to be divorced from the narrow context of Berlin history. Such a divorce also meant administrative independence from the rest of the Berlin Museum – an idea partially achieved through a Berlin House of Representatives resolution just a month later in June of 1995 reaffirming full administrative autonomy for the Jewish Museum Department displays.⁴¹⁸ But that would not be enough, as the Jewish Museum Department would only maintain control of part of the Libeskind building and still be tied to the Berlin Museum. In Barzel’s vision, the entire Libeskind extension would be a Jewish Museum; all other Berlin Museum functions would be moved to the Collegienhaus or elsewhere in the city.

While most of the Berlin news coverage of the “Survival in Sarajevo” exhibition provided a basic background of the show for reading audiences,⁴¹⁹ Thomas Lackmann of *Der Tagesspiegel* both noted the broader conceptual controversy being subtly fought out in the exhibition booklet produced for the topping out celebration and then used that narrative to frame how a visitor ought to see the display of Serotta’s photos. In the fights over administrative autonomy and a larger budget to procure collections (mostly of the art variety), what was also being tested was the continued relevance of the integrative model to the reunified Berlin. In Lackmann’s view, Amnon Barzel was crafting a much larger mission for the museum: a cosmopolitan space for the celebration of Jewish life and culture across the global diaspora. In other words, a museum dedicated to Jewishness as cultural or ethnographic category, with perhaps a local flavor similar to Jewish museums in Vienna or New York. “Survival in Sarajevo”

⁴¹⁸ Draft resolution of the 86th session of the Berlin House of Representatives, June 8, 1995, in Weinland and Winkler, *Das Jüdische Museum*, 371.

⁴¹⁹ Harriet Schwerin, “Vom Menschlichen,” *Berliner Zeitung*, May 2, 1995; and Uwe Sauerwein, “Der Lohn – ein warmes Mittagessen,” *Berliner Morgenpost*, April 29, 1995.

is “the presentation of this museum idea,” an opening salvo in what will be an increasingly public fight over the future of the Jewish Museum and the city’s unique integrative model.⁴²⁰

To the international press, both Barzel and Jerzy Kanal, new head of Berlin’s Jewish community, framed resistance to Barzel’s vision of an autonomous Jewish Museum in the Libeskind building as a revision of the city’s previous commitment to the Jewish community. “It was built as a Jewish Museum and we expect it to be just that. If it’s just a department, we wouldn’t have had to fight for it for 25 years.”⁴²¹ While it would be easy to frame such commentary as deceptive, it would be more appropriate to think about that comment in light of both previous controversy and significant institutional turnover. The important participants from the Berlin Museum and the Jewish community, Rolf Bothe and Heinz Galinski, were no longer involved in the process; a lot of institutional memory was lost. Moreover, the fight over cancellation a few years before was still an alive memory, creating an overall feeling of defensiveness and hostility. It would be easy to misperceive the reiteration of dependent administrative arrangements as an attempt quietly to reign in the scope of the Jewish Museum project. Finally, such words do speak to the power of Libeskind’s architecture – it was designed especially as a Jewish Museum, even if that component was to be only a small part of the total exhibition space within the extension building. It was almost as if the Libeskind building design was logically demanding to become more than it was originally meant to be.

Though the above commentary in international news is illustrative of the mentality that called for largely abandoning the integrative solution, this dispute did not yet cause an explosion of international media coverage like the 1991 controversy. One can speculate a number of reasons (Barzel did not have the same media strategy as Libeskind, the story is more about

⁴²⁰ Thomas Lackmann, “Die Welt in der Zentrifuge,” *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), April 30-May 1, 1995.

⁴²¹ Jerzy Kanal, quote in Staunton, “Jewish Scars,” 17.

internal politics of display, etc.), but it would behoove the reader to recall that international voices in the previous controversy organized around a simple opposition between remembering and forgetting Berlin's Jewish history. In this case, the terms of engagement are so complex, with a number of people bantering about a vague notion of "integrative model," that distilling the controversy for an international audience unfamiliar with the politics of identity and assimilation in Germany would prove quite difficult, and perhaps uninteresting.

Without the focused microscope of international media attention, and with the Libeskind building still only a shell, the Berlin government and the reorganized city museum administration went to work trying to smooth out differences between previous work on the integrative model and Barzel's own vision for a Jewish Museum in Berlin. Over a period of five months, between June and October of 1995, a series of meetings were held to hash out the concept for the Libeskind extension. However, over the course of those five months, little progress was made. Similar to the topping out ceremony, the Berlin Museum administration and the Berlin Senate authorities on culture produced a planning document that reaffirmed the history of negotiation and a commitment to the integrative model (with much of the Libeskind building's space still committed to things other than a Jewish Museum). But Amnon Barzel produced yet another document around the same time, making slight modifications to his previous proposal, while still demanding that the Libeskind building become an autonomous Jewish Museum that went well beyond the history of just Berlin or even Germany.⁴²²

At least if the concept discussion was not yielding positive results, the discussion did manage to keep most of the institutional infighting out of the news for the remainder of the year. On occasion, either Reiner Güntzer or Amnon Barzel would give an interview that would both

⁴²² Weinland and Winkler, *Das Jüdische Museum*, 69.

make the paper and remind the public that a behind-the-scenes controversy was brewing, but, for the most part, coverage was too disconnected in time and place to be considered at the forefront of public conversation.⁴²³ In the international press, the single write up on Libeskind's architecture employed the familiar tropes of memory and forgetting, emphasizing the uniqueness and importance of his architecture, but entirely overlooked the burgeoning controversy over use of the building.⁴²⁴

But the impasse could not be sidelined forever. By the end of the year, the Berlin Museum administration had decided to authorize another round of discussions about the concept for the museum, this time pulling together a “commission of experts” headed by Edward van Voolen, perhaps trying to politically isolate Barzel and force his hand with regard to the integrative model. This was a sensitive situation, and perception that the government or the Berlin Museum was trying to strong-arm the head of the Jewish Museum Department would have attracted attention (as it would later) – this is part of the pressure created by the multiculturalist double bind. Not surprisingly, the commission poured over the documentation of the history of the Jewish Museum department of the Berlin Museum, and found that the integrative model was the central organizing point and justification for the museum. Moreover, the committee also argued that Daniel Libeskind's architectural design was a fulfillment of, and only made sense within, the view of integrated history outlined by the Aspen Institut in 1988 and the architectural competition brief later that same year. However, the committee created the opening for potential curatorial concessions, arguing that the concept of the “integrative model” had become lost in previous detailed outlines of the exhibition space, and, as such, it remained a

⁴²³ “Güntzer will Jüdisches Museum im Verbund halten,” *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), August 13, 1995; “Ich will kein stilles, sondern ein lebendiges Museum,” *Berliner Morgenpost*, September 25, 1995.

⁴²⁴ Christopher Hume, “Jewish Museum Designed to Embod Message,” *Toronto Star*, November 18, 1995.

vague organizing concept that needed to be developed. As a solution, the committee's report recommended coordinating a working group headed by Daniel Libeskind, designed to bring about agreement between the architectural design and the museological concept employed within it.⁴²⁵

Bringing Libeskind into the fold for working through the exhibition design was a shrewd gamble for a difficult situation. From just a public political standpoint, Daniel Libeskind had a good deal of credibility. He had taken on the Berlin Senate in the court of public opinion and won big in 1991; it would be clear that he would not simply parrot the interests of the city government. Since that time, he had been involved in bidding several other architectural projects in the city, raising global interest in Berlin's cityscape. His international reputation was also useful, as what Libeskind said would not only matter to the local population, but to those paying attention from afar. But from the standpoint of internal politics, having Libeskind head a working group would be potentially dangerous. On one hand, he overtly supported the integrative model, so having him become an advocate for it might provide some political cover for those politicians that did not care for Amnon Barzel or his design. However, there was a risk that the working group would emerge with both Libeskind and Barzel in fundamental agreement on a plan that would part with the integrative model, yet still work well with his architectural design.

The fact that Libeskind participated in the "commission of experts" suggests that he probably had a certain degree of empathy with the integrative model. It is hard to know to what extent his preferences were manifested in the discussion, but it is clear that the end product of that working group produced another affirmation of the integrative model. However, some of Amnon Barzel's ideas in his alternative design model were also incorporated. For instance, the

⁴²⁵ Resolution of the Committee of Experts, December 4, 1995, in Weinland and Winkler, *Das Jüdische Museum*, 376.

Jewish Museum component of the extension was still relegated to the underground, but the axes that ended with the E. T. A. Hoffman Garden and the Holocaust tower dealt with the themes of migration and of cultural integration/separation, respectively. The ground level would be reserved for special exhibitions, but would also have the easternmost void line component open for a display of Jewish-themed religious art and texts (similar to Barzel's proposal). In the results of the Libeskind group, the history of Berlin from 1871 to the present would still be the dominant component of the museum, contra Barzel's proposal, occupying the first and second above ground floors with the void walls being used to integrate Jewish themes into the main exhibition. In doing so, the group hoped continually to remind visitors of the tensions between a diaspora's integration and its independence as a component of and a contribution to the larger history of the city, with the breaks in the exhibition produced by the void line helping to evoke that theme (an architectural contribution to the historical narrative structure).⁴²⁶

While the Libeskind working group was meeting to narrow the differences between the architectural and curatorial concepts of the museum, *Der Tagesspiegel* hosted a series of five brief position outlines in the arts section over a two and a half week period in February and early March.⁴²⁷ Mimicking the diversity of stakeholders in the Jewish Museum project, each article was penned by a representative of an interested party: a former leader in the Berlin Parliament, a former mayor of Berlin and ambassador to Israel, a chair of the community association connected to the Berlin city museum, an architect from Frankfurt, and the head of Berlin's museum education office. Each was asked to address, given the controversy at the topping-out

⁴²⁶ Daniel Libeskind, Organisatorisches und räumliches Grundkonzept für das Jüdische Museum und Berlin Museum auf Grundlage des "Integrativen Modells" (working group report), 24 February 1996, in Weinland and Winkler, *Das Jüdische Museum*, 377-90.

⁴²⁷ Jochen Boberg, "Unglaubliche Chance," *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), March 2, 1996; Jürgen Bostelmann, "Ein Prüfstein," *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), February 20, 1996; Salomon Korn, "Phantomschmerzen," *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), February 22, 1996; Hanna-Renate Laurien, "Herkulesarbeit," *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), February 14, 1996; Klaus Schütz, "Ende der Durchreise," *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), February 16, 1996.

ceremony the previous year, the proper role of a Jewish Museum in the reunified Berlin and the particular relevance of the integrative model. While the German public, government, and professional communities were well represented in this series, the perspective of Berlin's Jewish community, as well as any voice of international interest in the project, seemed to be entirely overlooked.

Not surprisingly, then, several of the answers largely reiterated variants on the Berlin government and city museum position. The integration of the Jewish Museum into the Berlin Museum was necessary to make sure it was not ghettoized, but “rather part of the culture of our city, our country.”⁴²⁸ The integrative concept is not just about valuing Jewish culture, but the museum would also serve a larger instructional purpose about the value of tolerance in society – the examples of Jewish life and its contributions to the city's history would demonstrate the importance of accepting other minorities as well.⁴²⁹ Moreover, the architecture evoked the destructive, yet undeniably important, relationship between German and Jewish culture, and, as such, the museum concept should be made to match.⁴³⁰ Taken together, these arguments suggested that the integrative model was the best option given the building's symbolism, the need by dominant society to demonstrate the importance of Jewish culture to Berlin, and the pedagogical value of demonstrating tolerance to young Berliners. In essence, many of these voices reaffirmed what a multicultural dominant culture within a society would be expected to value.

However, other perspectives offered show that, while mainstream Berlin society needed the Jewish culture to be part of its larger institutional structure of cultural self-display, such a

⁴²⁸ [veilmehr Teil der Kultur unserer Stadt, unserer Landes.] Laurien, “Herkulesarbeit,” 23.

⁴²⁹ Bostelmann, “Ein Prüfstein,” 19.

⁴³⁰ Korn, “Phantomschmerzen,” 21.

position did not account for the double bind regarding cultural identity facing the Jewish diaspora. Jochen Boberg suggested that the integrative solution served the needs of German society – the need to reconnect Jewish identity to the history of the city – without acknowledging that, in practice, integration has meant for Jewish people the marginalization of their identity in relation to a dominant culture. Regardless of the romantically integrative ideal, conflicts over power and display space between Berlin Museum officials and Amnon Barzel were indicative of the ideal’s failure when applied as a principle by representatives of a dominant culture.⁴³¹ Klaus Schütz, a former mayor of Berlin and West German ambassador to Israel, went further, arguing that the integrative solution, which focused on the contribution of Jewish people to the history of the city, would be an insufficient representation given Berlin’s new role as capital of an undivided Germany (and its emerging aspirations as a globally significant city). Instead, he suggested three different primary places of Jewish representation – the city museum, the Centrum Judaicum, and a Jewish Museum – the latter of which would be housed in the Libeskind building and would be devoted to explaining the contributions of Jewish communities to the culture of the entire continent.⁴³²

Ultimately, the public conversation over the use and development of the Jewish Museum seemed to mirror the inability to reach a common conclusion in institutional circles. For the Berlin Museum and the Berlin government, the integrative model was appealing, perhaps even necessary for helping to define the culture. It fit with Libeskind’s description of his design motives and it offered a conceptual repudiation to culturally separatist belief systems – a response that seemed to have a strong resonance with non-Jewish Germans concerned about properly atoning for their past. On the other hand, the integrative model may have served the

⁴³¹ Boberg, “Ungalubliche Chance,” 23.

⁴³² Schütz, “Ende der Durchreise,” 19.

interest of Germans, rather than a growing Jewish community understandably wary about what the idea of integration meant for Jewish culture (and its representation) in practice. Moreover, the use of Libeskind's stunning architecture as merely a component of a local history museum, given both its growing global interest and Berlin's new role as capital of one of the cultural and economic engines of Europe, seemed to lack perspective, imagination, and ambition about the potential significance of a Jewish Museum in Berlin.

Not surprisingly, only a few months after the completion of the report by the Libeskind-headed "commission of experts," Barzel was again making headlines arguing against both the integrative model and the status of the Jewish Museum as part of the reorganized Berlin Museum institutional structure.⁴³³ After a year-long process of negotiation, largely behind closed doors, about the mission and contents of the Jewish Museum, the underlying tensions could no longer be even partially concealed from public view. Furthermore, there was not much more that could be said to convince any of the stakeholders to change their position. Whispers began to emerge that Barzel needed to be pushed out of his position. For the next year, the Berlin Museum would be caught up in a nasty public controversy, a product of perceived forced choices that created a no-win situation for all involved.

5.4 PUBLIC POLITICAL ALIGNMENTS

As Barzel vocalized again the struggle over the meaning of the Jewish Museum in public during May of 1996, press coverage initially focused heavily on the conceptual issue at hand. For

⁴³³ Paul Kaiser, "Klaffender Riß," *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), May 20, 1996.

example, Thomas Lackmann of the *Tagesspiegel* suggests that the controversy can be read as a definitional dispute over the concept of integration. While not entirely accepting Barzel's grievances, Lackmann did seem to accept *at least* the idea that physical integration of the Libeskind building space might be inappropriate because it forces a minority cultural narrative to be told from the perspective of, and in relation to, the historical displays of a majority culture. At the same time, Lackmann held on to the broader idea of integration as a theme to be explored – a separated Jewish Museum can explore the points of convergence and divergence from German society, posing the integration/separation dialectic as a problem to be explored rather than resolved. One can read in his words the beginnings of a public connection with the idea of a fully independent Jewish Museum in Berlin, going so far as to suggest that the vision of the architect (in the design) has partially illuminated this way forward.⁴³⁴

Vera Bendt made a similar argument in an open letter to Mayor Eberhard Diepgen at the end of May 1996. Taking the opportunity to rehash the history of the Jewish Museum's development to that point, she argued that the notion of an "integration model" for the Jewish Museum was originally designed to deal with the problem of space in the (West) Berlin Museum and the fear of marginalizing the history of Berlin's Jewish citizens. In contrast, since 1990, the notion of "integrative model" had been used to prevent the further development of Jewish historical displays, insisting that the Jewish Museum must remain a department within the institutional structure of the Berlin Museum and must only be allowed to occupy part of the space in Libeskind's building extension. Ultimately, Bendt suggested that a more robust model of integration for the Jewish Museum, and one she believed to be revealed in the Libeskind design, would see both cultural autonomy and integration as rights of minority cultures and

⁴³⁴ Thomas Lackmann, "Das Brennglas für Berlin," *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), May 31, 1996.

would explore the tension between these two ideas in both the particulars of Jewish history and the pedagogy of display for the audience.⁴³⁵

Both the article from Lackmann and the letter from Bendt revealed to the public the extent to which Barzel's public campaign for an autonomous Jewish Museum was beginning to have an effect on how a Jewish Museum in Berlin could be imagined. Perhaps sparked by the public interest in Libeskind's design and the controversy over its continuation, the entire extension was becoming synonymous with the Jewish Museum. "Anything other" than a solution that develops an autonomous Jewish Museum in the entire extension "would be embarrassing for Berlin, for Germany, [and] for the Germans."⁴³⁶ Of course, some still felt committed to the idea of integration, particularly of showing that Jewish history was part of the mainstream history of Berlin.⁴³⁷

Berlin's Jewish Society went even further, demanding complete institutional autonomy for the Jewish Museum.⁴³⁸ Jerzy Kanal, who had become the leader of the Jewish community organization in Berlin after the death of Heinz Galinski, became one of the most vocal proponents of Barzel's proposal. Even after the Berlin Senate granted the Jewish Museum the status of "Hauptabteilung" (principal division) within the city museum institution, the Jewish community organization condemned the decision as not going far enough, reiterating the demand that proper representation of Jews in Berlin ought to be exclusively handled by Jewish

⁴³⁵ Vera Bendt, Offener Brief an den Regierenden Bürgermeister von Berlin, 31 May 1996, *PR/4*:

Pressearchiv/Presseabteilung des Jüdischen Museums Berlin, Research Library, Jewish Museum Berlin.

⁴³⁶ [Alles andere wäre peinlich: für Berlin, für Deutschland, für die Deutschen.] Hans-Jürgen Kaack, "Amnon Barzel ist eine Herausforderung," *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), June 2, 1996.

⁴³⁷ Ulrich Neveling, "Berliner Mode unterm Davidstern?" *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), June 2, 1996.

⁴³⁸ "Kanal fordert 'Autonomie' für jüdisches Museum," *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), July 22, 1996.

inhabitants, and, as such, ought not be subject to review and control by other city museum officials.⁴³⁹

The conflict between Berlin Museum officials and Amnon Barzel over the exhibition plan and the Jewish Museum's institutional affiliation could no longer be kept from public view. The strategy from those interested in preserving the "integrative model" was to again tie the notion of historical integration to institutional sponsorship. However, while the talk of the "integrative model" had been important for the previous ten years, members of the public at large had not really been privy to all the arguments for an integrative model (recounted in a previous section). In response, the association of friends and supporters of the city museum had a book put together that summarized the history, with reprinted primary sources, of the development of the integrative model.⁴⁴⁰ Edited by Martina Weinland and Kurt Winkler, *Das Jüdische Museum im Stadtmuseum Berlin: Eine Dokumentation* provided a powerful rejoinder to those that felt the "integrative model" would define Jewish culture from the perspective of the majority. As discussed earlier in this chapter, the concept of integration was supported by both the Jewish community and the (West) Berlin Museum officials in the 1970s and 1980s as a way to both guarantee that Jewish history would not be marginalized in the history of Berlin and that the politics of cultural separation would no longer have a home in German society. While trying not to be too provocative in their support, the book does seem to lay out the "integrative model," however vague a phrase, as the basic premise for building any Jewish Museum in Berlin.

⁴³⁹ "Jüdische Gemeinde: Museumsprotest," *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), April 11, 1997; and Jola Merten, "Eklat: Jüdische Gemeinde steigt aus dem Museum aus," *Berliner Morgenpost*, April 11, 1997.

⁴⁴⁰ "Auf einem Auge blind," *Berliner Zeitung*, May 3, 1997.

Although a few reviews of the book expressed hope that the book would quell some of the open disagreement between Amnon Barzel and Reiner Güntzer,⁴⁴¹ a couple of objections were raised to its release and content. First of all, though Weinland and Winkler trafficked the book under the assumption of just providing historical documentation (of which it did do a good job), it seemed like a blatantly political text. As Thomas Lackmann noted, audience members at the book release in Berlin made some direct attacks on the lack of consultation with Barzel or members of his team in the text's production. Moreover, any historical documentation of the commitment to the integrative model did not deal with the most basic and fundamental claim made by Barzel: the context of reunification – with Berlin as national capital – and the international recognition of the Libeskind building created both the opportunity and the obligation for a much more ambitious, and culturally autonomous, Jewish Museum.⁴⁴² The changing political landscape, coupled with the transformation of the Jewish community's own internal transformation that required – according to Moche Waks of the Berlin Jewish Society Assembly – that “we reappraise our Jewishness in Germany,”⁴⁴³ meant that merely recounting the history of rationales or political deals was not going to resurrect the integrative model, at least in its original form.

Even though Barzel had the moral high ground on some arguments, pressure exists on minority groups within the multicultural double bind to behave like model citizens, a demand that Amnon Barzel struggled to do. While Barzel had his supporters, his brash communication style and willingness to take disputes public ultimately allowed the press to frame the conflict as

⁴⁴¹ “Folklore oder Weltniveau?” *Welt* (Berlin), May 3-4, 1997; and “Hungerstreik für ein Museum?” *Welt* (Berlin), April 29, 1997.

⁴⁴² Thomas Lackmann, “‘Dan müßte man den Libeskindbau sofort wieder abreißen’,” *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), May 3, 1997.

⁴⁴³ Moche Waks, quoted in Clive Freeman, “Jews Search for a New Definition of Their Identity in Berlin,” *Deutsche Presse-Agentur*, May 10, 1997.

a dispute between personalities. Reiner Güntzer and Cultural Senator Peter Radunski would at least pay lip service to dialogue and reconciliation – they did their best to keep the dialogue professional. Amnon Barzel, on the other hand, spoke directly and made demands. He announced publically that “either denunciation or divorce” would be the only possible courses of action.⁴⁴⁴ While Radunski is releasing statements asking for reconsideration and conciliation with the Jewish community,⁴⁴⁵ Barzel continued making incendiary comments that the behavior of the Senate and of the Berlin Museum made him doubt the ability to ever integrate German and Jewish history.⁴⁴⁶ In the end, what happened was that Berlin Senate and Berlin Museum officials were able to stay above the fray and push public consensus on the integrative model⁴⁴⁷ – conforming to the expectations on their end of the multiculturalist double bind – while Barzel was not looking like the model citizen expected in his half of that double bind.

But then again, any perception of unreasonable retaliation by those from the dominant society would likely be met with swift approbation. Not surprisingly, the decision to sack Amnon Barzel as head of the Jewish Museum was met with scorn and tarnished the reputation of the institution.⁴⁴⁸ An international press that had sat on the sidelines for most of this controversy all of a sudden sprung to cover news of the firing, as it fit a familiar trope of argument that might resonate with readers. The *Jerusalem Post* quoted Barzel at length insinuating that his firing is just another way to eliminate the Jewish Museum and that he was fired for entirely political

⁴⁴⁴ “Jüdisches Museum: Komplott? Dialog?” *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), May 24, 1996.

⁴⁴⁵ Axel Wallrabenstein, “Radunski: Autonomie des Jüdischen Museums stand nie zur Disposition,” 11 April 1997, Press Release, Senatsverwaltung für Wissenschaft, Forschung, und Kultur, in Press Archive, PR 4, Jewish Museum Berlin Library.

⁴⁴⁶ “Der Streit um das Jüdische Museum verschärft sich,” *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), July 4, 1997.

⁴⁴⁷ “Das Integrationsmodell muß bleiben,” *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), July 4, 1997; Jola Merten, “Jüdisches Museum – ein Symol...,” *Berliner Morgenpost*, July 2, 1997.

⁴⁴⁸ Clive Freeman, “Jewish Museum director’s dismissal creates furor in Berlin,” *Deutsche Presse-Agentur*, June 27, 1997.

purposes.⁴⁴⁹ *The Guardian* of London aired concerns that the firing was part of an assault on the Jewish community and that some officials had made inappropriate remarks about the importance of the museum.⁴⁵⁰ *The Jerusalem Report* wrote the most scathing piece, accusing both Barzel and Guntzer of personal politics, the Berlin government of carelessness, and the entire German people of being unwilling to confront their past. Paralleling the Berlin Museum issue to the debacle with the Holocaust Memorial (discussed in Chapter 6), they argue that “the first demonstrates how incompetent Berlin authorities are” while the second “how incompetent Germans are in dealing with their Nazi past.”⁴⁵¹

By October of 1997, it was public information that Amnon Barzel’s contract would not be renewed as Director of the Jewish Museum, but none of the larger questions about the fate of the institution had been resolved by the Berlin Museum institution. The public debate over the independence of the Jewish Museum and the museum concept had been a mess. And even though it became clear that Barzel could not effectively work with members of the Berlin Senate and the Mayor to develop a compromise, much of the public blame for miscommunication was also being laid at the feet of Berlin Museum Director Reiner Guntzer and members of the government. In response, Mayor Eberhard Diepgen began to signal that he could support “more autonomy for the Jewish Museum and more power for its Director.”⁴⁵² However, the extent of this supposed support was not stated, and not surprisingly, few were satisfied.

But there was more than enough public shaming for the deterioration of the debate to go around. The Jewish Society in Berlin was also facing serious criticism for its handling of the

⁴⁴⁹ “Firing of Berlin’s Jewish Museum head unleashes storm,” *Jerusalem Post*, June 29, 1997.

⁴⁵⁰ Denis Staunton, “Jewish Museum sacking sparks row in Berlin,” *Guardian* (London), July 10, 1997.

⁴⁵¹ Igal Avidan, “Berlin’s Jewish problem,” *Jerusalem Report*, September 29, 1997.

⁴⁵² [mehr Autonomie fuer das Juedische Museum und mehr Befugnis fuer dessen Direktor.]. Volker Müller, “Neue Scherben zum Sabbat,” *Berliner Zeitung*, September 30, 1997.

situation. The Chair of the Central Committee of Jews in Germany, Ignatz Bubis, publically chastised Berlin Jewish Society President Andreas Nachama for fanning the controversy with several inflammatory remarks made over the firing of Amnon Barzel.⁴⁵³ Hermann Simon, Director of the Centrum Judaicum, was also taking heat for participating in Stasi-related activities in the 1970s and 1980s. People were not only calling for an investigation, but suggesting that Simon should be removed as a representative of the Jewish community in the city assembly and he should not be considered as Director of the Jewish Museum.⁴⁵⁴

To complicate matters further, Academy of Art President György Konrád decided to seize the opportunity to join the discussion and advocate for a radical change to the Jewish Museum structure. Konrád began to tell the press and political figures openly that the Libeskind building was too important to be relegated to a city history museum, as had originally been planned. Instead, the museum should be a place that displayed the history of all European Jews, not just Jewish History in Berlin. Such an arrangement would be much more cosmopolitan and would maximize the audience base for the Jewish Museum.⁴⁵⁵ While his argument was not aligned with Barzel's position, it did seem to take some inspiration from it in terms of the magnitude of the architecture and the possibility of doing something much more significant for the city. Konrád called upon the government to have an open forum with all stakeholders about a new, larger vision for the Jewish Museum, and also called for the city to grant full autonomy to the institution (i.e. separating it from the Berlin Museum institutional structure).⁴⁵⁶

⁴⁵³ Jola Merten, "Bubis warnt Nachama vor falschen Tönen," *Berliner Morgenpost*, October 22, 1997.

⁴⁵⁴ Malte Lehming, "Turbulenzen in der Jüdischen Gemeinde," *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), October 29, 1997.

⁴⁵⁵ Volker Müller, "Städtisch ist zu klein gedacht für den Libeskindbau," *Berliner Zeitung*, September 8, 1997.

⁴⁵⁶ "Jüdisches Museum: Konrád und Jens für Autonomie," *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), October 26, 1997; Jola Merten, "'Der Senat zeigt wenig Bereitschaft nachzudenken'," *Berliner Morgenpost*, October 13, 1997.

But full autonomy could not yet be realized. Senator for Culture Peter Radunski secured what he termed “cultural autonomy” for the museum on October 20th, including the development of a new committee to design an exhibition for the museum’s anticipated opening in the fall of 1999.⁴⁵⁷ The exhibition committee would include Matthias Flügge (Vice President of the Academy of Art), Gary Smith (Einstein Forum Director), Hermann Simon, Monika Richartz (Jewish Studies scholar from Hamburg), Günter Gottmann (Deputy Chairman of the National Association of Berlin Museums), and Tom Freudenheim (Smithsonian Institute). Yet the Jewish Museum would still be considered part of the larger Berlin Museum institution.⁴⁵⁸ Not surprisingly, few were thrilled with the compromise position. 110 academics and artists from Germany signed on to an open letter asking that the Berlin government conceive of this “architectural artwork as a space to use for the self-presentation of a minority, as well as a ‘practice field’ of empathy for our mainstream society.”⁴⁵⁹ Regardless of the disdain felt for Amnon Barzel, the idea of institutional autonomy, of Berlin having a Jewish Museum primarily run and controlled by self-identified Jewish citizens, was now gaining a great deal of traction in the popular imagination.

In a little over a year, a controversy over museum concept had erupted into public political struggle and had left the Libeskind building again with no clear direction. The double binds experienced by both German officials and the Jewish community exerted powerful influence over the conversation. The government felt the need to tell an integrated history as part of its commitment to multicultural tolerance. The Jewish community was feeling its own

⁴⁵⁷ Jola Merten, “Radunski kündigt Gespräche über Jüdisches Museum an,” *Berliner Morgenpost*, October 21, 1997.

⁴⁵⁸ Volker Müller, “Jüdisches Museum wird unselbstständige Stiftung,” *Berliner Zeitung*, October 29, 1997; “Neue Struktur für das Jüdische Museum,” *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), October 29, 1997.

⁴⁵⁹ [architektonische Kunstwerk als Raum zur Selbstdarstellung einer Minderheit, aber auch als Übungsfeld der Einfühlung fuer unsere Mehrheitsgesellschaft zu nutzen.] Jola Merten, “Neues Konzept für Jüdisches Museum sieht Autonomie vor,” *Berliner Morgenpost*, October, 28, 1997.

pressure to resist the potential for cultural assimilation by asserting its need for autonomy in telling its history. Both party's public representatives had acted in a manner inconsistent with the codes of decorum expected of each in a multicultural society, and, as a result, both suffered from a crisis of public trust and confidence to be honest brokers in the conversation over what to do with the Jewish Museum building. All options currently on the table seemed completely unsatisfactory. Just a year shy of the completion of construction, it seemed that the Libeskind building was again threatened, not with cancelation, but instead with being a structure with no contents – a museum dedicated primarily to the failure of political imagination.

5.5 NAVIGATING THROUGH THE KNOT OF DOUBLE BINDS

In the aftermath of the Barzel firing, it was obvious to government officials that very little could be resolved if the Jewish Museum remained without a Director. Removing Barzel did not eliminate public antagonism in the press. To be able to change the public conversation, the Jewish Museum Director needed to be a person that could be trusted to run the institution in cooperation with the Berlin Museum institution and the city government, that had clear connections to Berlin (unlike Barzel), and that had an enormous amount of credibility with the Jewish community.

Though names like Hermann Simon and Gerhard Schoenberner (former head of the “Haus der Wannseekonferenz” memorial) were thrown around in the press, the heavy influence of National Culture Secretary Lutz von Pufendorf in the deliberations produced a surprise winning candidate for the position: Werner Michael Blumenthal. A U.S. citizen, Blumenthal was preferred to inside candidates that already had a public stake in the conflict over the Jewish

Museum. It was thought that Blumenthal, an ex-Secretary of Finance under Jimmy Carter and a member of the State Department under John F. Kennedy, had both the distance necessary from the controversy to serve as a good neutral arbiter of conflict and the diplomatic skills to work through issues without making conflict a personal matter.⁴⁶⁰

The Blumenthal selection also made sense in quelling some of the identity politics associated with previous controversies between the Berlin government and Amnon Barzel. Barzel was an Israeli Jew with little previous experience working and living in Germany. He was also primarily trained as an art historian, which explains his curatorial preferences regarding an independent museum of Jewish culture. By contrast, Blumenthal was a German Jew – he grew up in the town of Oranienburg just north of Berlin, son of banker turned textile salesman after the economic crash of the late 1920s. As an assimilated Jew, Blumenthal was actually baptized in the Presbyterian Church; he only developed closer contact with his ethnic identity after he personally experienced Jewish persecution. After his father was locked up in Buchenwald for several months and then released, Blumenthal, thirteen, fled with his family to Shanghai in 1939 to avoid persecution by the Nazi party. After the war, the family immigrated to the United States.⁴⁶¹ In Blumenthal, an assimilated German Jew who was forced to flee the country, live in exile, remake a successful life in the United States, and just now returning “home,” the Berlin government had hired a figure that personally embodied, and certainly understood, many of the complexities of German-Jewish identity.⁴⁶²

⁴⁶⁰ Kerstin Ullrich, “Jüdisches Museum: Ex-US-Minister wird Direktor,” *Berliner Morgenpost*, November 14, 1997.

⁴⁶¹ “Blumenthal nach Berlin,” *Hamburger Abendblatt*, November 14, 1997; “Neuer Direktor des Jüdischen Museums Berlin,” *Berliner Zeitung*, November 14, 1997; and Paul Stoop, “Ein Glücksgriff,” *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), November 14, 1997.

⁴⁶² Peter Radunski referred to Blumenthal’s life and personal history as a reflection of the history that will be shown in the Berlin Museum when introducing him to the public. Ingolf Kern, “Erst einmal spazierengehen,” *Welt* (Berlin), December 9, 1997. This history was also an opportunity to produce sentimental profile pieces about Blumenthal.

While some members of the Jewish community were wary of a non-practicing Jew becoming the Director of the Jewish Museum,⁴⁶³ those fears were quickly put aside. In his public introduction, Blumenthal argued that he was not tied to any past commitments to what the Jewish Museum would be, nor did he bring any preconceived notion of how the museum ought to be designed. His role, as he suggested, would be to listen to various stakeholders in the conversation, identify their concerns, listen to various ideas for the museum, let the committee put together to develop an exhibition concept do their work, and then make careful judgments about how to proceed. Most of all, he suggested that the conflict should be de-personalized and removed from the daily press, as that was destroying the image of the project in the public imagination and internationally. Blumenthal was trying to frame himself as an arbiter of conflict, though he also made clear that he expected to be able to do his work independently and without interference from the Berlin Senate or other Berlin Museum officials.⁴⁶⁴

For the next few months, the Jewish Museum was not much of an active conversation in the paper, which was partially the goal of hiring Blumenthal – no news was certainly preferable to more embarrassing news. He was to spend a few months talking through ideas with various stakeholders in the project before being committed to any particular idea anyway. So it is not surprising that little newsworthy information was emerging. However, some conversations were happening about the meaning of Jewish identity in Germany. Jacques Schuster, as Berlin historian, wrote an editorial arguing for the Jewish Museum being centered on Jewish history

Klaus Harpprecht, “Harte Nüsse reizen ihn,” *Zeit* (Hamburg), December 9, 1997; and “Man hoher Ansprüche,” *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), December 7, 1997.

⁴⁶³ Michael Wolffsohn, a Jewish historian, was among the most vocal critics of the Blumenthal selection. Walter Mayr, “Pendeln zwischen den Welten,” *Spiegel* (Hamburg), December 1, 1997.

⁴⁶⁴ “Autonomie erwartet,” *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), December 9, 1997; Stefan Elfenbein, “‘Ich komme nicht, um alte Geschichten aufzuwärmen’,” *Zeit* (Hamburg), December 9, 1997; Malte Lehming, “Chance für Berlin und seine Historie,” *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), December 8, 1997; Moritz Müller-Wirth, “Einer, der das Spiel bestimmt,” *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), December 9, 1997; Volker Müller, “Blumenthal ist da,” *Berliner Zeitung*, December 9, 1997; and Lisa Uphoff, “Durch das Brennblas der Geschichte,” *Berliner Morgenpost*, December 9, 1997.

and culture in Germany, not religious identity. The major premise: not all Jews are Jewish.⁴⁶⁵ Michael Blumenthal made a similar point a month later in a Siemens forum about the independence of Jews in Germany. He notes that even non-practicing Jews are very self-conscious about their identity as Jews in Germany; part of that has to do with the uneasy relationship between Jewish and German identity historically speaking. As he then argued, this was the reason why the Jewish Museum had to emphasize German-Jewish relations, not simply be a religious museum or be focused on the Holocaust.⁴⁶⁶

Blumenthal's book, *The Invisible Wall*, published only a few months later, was a part family history, part historic exploration of German-Jewish history that echoed the same basic sentiment that he laid out in the Siemens forum. In it, he argued:

The history of Germany's Jews can only be understood in the larger context of German history. From the beginning, the German-Jewish relationship was a marriage of convenience. Germany needed its Jews for economic reasons, and the Jews needed Germany as a safe haven with scope for their unique talents... Yet there was another side to this coin. Just as there were special conditions in Germany favoring Jewish advancement and assimilation, so there were peculiar historical factors that inhibited their true integration. Jewish successes were deceptive and obscured stubborn underlying forces arrayed against them.⁴⁶⁷

In Blumenthal's words, one can see an inversion of the logic animating so much of the public interest in the integrative model – instead of Jewish history being a necessary antecedent for understanding German history (the original argument made for a Jewish museum department within the Berlin Museum), Blumenthal suggests that *Jewish history* could not be understood absent some understanding of German history. Germany was the place where the intellectual and

⁴⁶⁵ Jacques Schuster, "Nicht all Juden sind jüdisch," *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), December 19, 1997.

⁴⁶⁶ Jola Merten, "Gedanken eines Amerikaners in Berlin über Juden und Nichtjuden," *Berliner Morgenpost*, January 21, 1998; Volker Müller, "Das Normale, das in Deutschland so schwer fällt," *Berliner Zeitung*, January 21, 1998.

⁴⁶⁷ W. Michael Blumenthal, *The Invisible Wall* (Washington, D.C.: Counterpoint, 1998), 387.

social development of Jewish life was allowed to take hold in Europe, though that relationship of “convenience,” often tense, was finally broken in the 1930s and 1940s.

Though Blumenthal publically stated that his personal preferences would not be guiding principles for developing the Jewish Museum, his take on German-Jewish identity did seem to be important for how both the independence of the museum and its overall mission developed during the first half of 1998. Just a couple of days after his participation in the Siemens forum, Blumenthal dropped a bombshell on the public: the Jewish Museum would be a museum about the history of Jewish life in Germany, with particular attention paid to the history of Berlin’s Jewish population. Unlike the Barzel proposal to make the Libeskind building an ethnographic museum about the global Jewish diaspora, with a particular interest in art, Blumenthal kept much of the historical spirit of the so-called “integrative model,” while dumping that specific terminology in favor of thinking about a national museum of Jewish history. Furthermore, Blumenthal revealed that, after discussions with stakeholders, most everyone agreed that the museum should have a national flavor in light of German reunification and Berlin’s role as the new capital. Blumenthal stated bluntly that the Libeskind building was a “Jewish building,” and that anyone who saw in it a museum extension was “blind.”⁴⁶⁸

It did not take long for journalists and stakeholders to see why choosing Blumenthal to head the Jewish Museum was such an inspired selection. His personal history, and his knowledge of a complicated Jewish history in Germany, was unimpeachable. He was able to negotiate to retain the basic elements that seems most important to the city government (Jewish history being intertwined with Berlin history), yet his particular way of framing the issue would deal with concerns that an “integrated” history would be akin to cultural assimilation by making Jewish

⁴⁶⁸ Thomas Lackmann, “Die neue Identität,” *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), January 23, 1998.

identity a subset of German identity. Finally, this announcement helped to make it clear that he was working independently on what he, and others, considered to be the best course of action, rather than feeling bound by previous commitments.

With the basic framework for the museum now made clear, members of the design working group could begin the long process of researching, laying out, and procuring additional collection materials for the museum exhibition – a preliminary version of which would be done by early summer. However, the issue of the museum’s institutional affiliation had not been resolved. By mid-February of 1998, Blumenthal started to become very vocal about the need for “maximum autonomy” for the Jewish Museum, which functionally meant removing its affiliation with the rest of the city museums spread across the city. Culture Senator Peter Radunski and Mayor Eberhard Diepgen opposed the idea, though they had already conceded to make it a principle division of the city museum structure so that it would have more autonomy than other similar institutions. Though political parties on the left, such as the Greens, were concerned about the public relations disaster of another open conflict between the Jewish Museum director and the CDU-controlled Berlin Senate, all parties were very careful to avoid the language of conflict when discussing the various forms that the institutional affiliation that the Jewish Museum could take.⁴⁶⁹

From Blumenthal’s perspective, one can understand completely why he insisted upon the museum’s autonomy. Personally, he was brought in to clean up a mess, and, in order to do it, he did not need other people looking over his shoulders trying to dictate terms of the compromise in the museum’s subject matter. Politically, the relationship between the Jewish community and the city government had been damaged in the conflicts over the previous year. In order to seem

⁴⁶⁹ “Blumenthal fordert Autonomie,” *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), February 21, 1998.

neutral in his pronouncements, Blumenthal could not be seen as an establishment choice or just a front man for the interests of the Mayor and Senate. But perhaps most importantly, with the design of the museum already seriously delayed, Blumenthal had a practical need to be the final decision maker for the Jewish Museum. Nothing happens fast if done by committee, so someone needed to be empowered to end debate and make decisions after the perspectives of stakeholders had been aired.

Fortunately, Blumenthal's basic vision of the Jewish Museum resonated with the public and with the Berlin Senate. While the basic sensibility of the integrative model for the exhibition remained intact, Blumenthal's unique way of presenting his design premise made it much easier for the public to understand why the institution needed to be both a stand-alone museum and be given full autonomy in producing the exhibition; Jewish history was a lens through which the history of Berlin could be understood, but Berlin history ought not put a limit on the telling of Jewish history.⁴⁷⁰ Blumenthal and Culture Senator Radunski were eventually able to come to an agreement that would make the Jewish Museum autonomous in everything but name. The museum would still be considered an economically dependent entity related to the city government, but would have full autonomy over staffing, financial decisions, and curatorial choices. In essence, the Berlin government would still provide funding, but a separate foundation would be formed to steer all other decisions and raise additional funds for the museum.⁴⁷¹

⁴⁷⁰ Hermann Rudolph, "Das Jüdische Museum jenseits des Streits um des Kaisers Bart," *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), March 25, 1998.

⁴⁷¹ "Eigenständigkeit des Jüdischen Museums," *Berliner Zeitung*, June 5, 1998; "Einvernehmen über jüdisches Museum," *Hamburger Abendblatt*, June 19, 1998.

5.6 CONCLUSION

In roughly half a year, Blumenthal had managed seemingly to turn the fortunes of the Jewish Museum and build a solid foundation for the future. He was able to gain the trust of most stakeholders, to manage the public image of the museum, make an informed decision about the overall mission of the museum that satisfied most interested parties, and to secure autonomy for all of the most important decisions to be made about the museum. More importantly, his vision of an autonomous Jewish Museum that fit most of the other parameters of the integrative model allowed both the German government and the Jewish community to act in a way consistent with expectations created by their respective double binds – the solution demonstrated a commitment to multiculturalism by dominant society while quelling Jewish fears of cultural assimilation imposed by that dominant society.

This case study illustrates a couple of key points. First, it demonstrates the extent to which double binds work in combination and upon multiple actors in a situation. Kathleen Hall Jamieson's work alluded to the double binds potentially experienced by dominant society, though her work largely dwelled upon the double binds experienced by women in the United States. Nagel's work on the multicultural double bind provided an important supplement to the discussion of double binds, as it outlined a type of double bind that made demands on both dominant society and the minority population. This chapter has added another crucial insight: double binds do not work in isolation – the combination of double binds experienced by various participants when struggling over the curation and institutional affiliation of the Jewish Museum created a significant impasse that took significant intervention on the part of an outside leader (W. Michael Blumenthal) to resolve. To be clear: the case study does not suggest that all double binds are of the same severity or quality. On the contrary, the ability of the Berlin government to

fire Barzel demonstrates the extent to which it was empowered to act in accord with its own double bind, perhaps at the expense of the double binds felt by the Jewish community. Moreover, while the integration/assimilation double bind was only experienced by the Jewish community, the multicultural double bind did place a set of competing expectations upon it to display their history to the larger society and to conduct itself as a “model minority.” It is Blumenthal’s intervention that allows the Jewish community to resolve the former double bind, and, in so doing, behave in a way consistent with the latter. The chapter demonstrates that, in complicated cases in which multiple double binds are experienced by various parts of a society, it may take significant reframing and external intervention to resolve an impasse within a significant cultural controversy.

Second, the driving undercurrent of the dialogue about the Jewish Museum and curating decisions alludes once again to the power of the rhetoric of anticipatory illumination in this particular controversy. Though the integrative model was originated at a time prior to the development of Libeskind’s museum design and the political integration of Germany, it still remained an important driving concept for the development of the museum. As the chapter often references, both sides appeal broadly to the notion that the Libeskind building illuminates a certain path forward, or that it demands to be used in a certain way. For the Berlin Museum institution and the Berlin government, what they see in the Libeskind building is the embodiment of the integrationist model – the building is physically connected to the Collegienhaus and was designed in the spirit of reconnecting Berlin history and Jewish history. Daniel Libeskind’s personal statements during this period also seem to lend credence to this belief. On the other hand, those arguing in favor of museum autonomy, both the Jewish community and other museum professionals, also suggest that the Libeskind building is obviously an independent

Jewish Museum in design, and, as such, demands the institutional affiliation and curatorial plan to match what it illuminates to the public. W. Michael Blumenthal's interventions into the controversy just a few months into his tenure as Director of the Jewish Museum restore unity by combining the visions of both factions. In the end, what is illuminated by the Libeskind building is the possibility for an autonomous museum of history and culture that reverses the question of the relationship between German and Jewish history – it was Jewish history that had to be read through its context in larger German history, not the opposite suggestion that Jewish history was some type of necessary supplement to German history. In so doing, Blumenthal showed how the Libeskind building could be both a statement on the German commitment to multiculturalism and could function as an independent voice for Jewish history and sensibilities.

With the completion of the Libeskind building less than a year away, Blumenthal labored tirelessly with consultants and curators to develop a new plan of displays for what would now be the Jewish Museum Berlin, a museum dedicated to two millennia of Jewish-German history. More than that, he would need to develop a plan of attack on the advertising front, taking advantage of Berlin's building boom and increasing desirability as a tourist destination to market the museum to the international community. Just when it seemed like everything was moving along swimmingly, another competing path of development for the Libeskind building began to become part of the public conversation: its potential use as a memorial. But this time, the controversy would not just be fueled by the desires of competing interests in the public conversation, but also by the experiences of those who visited the uncurated building when the completed building was finally opened for the prying eyes of the public and professionals.

6.0 MUSEUM OR MEMORIAL

In the September 11, 2001 edition of the *Berliner Zeitung*, Volker Müller, a local arts and entertainment writer, gave the reader a preliminary interpretation of his experience of walking through the newly opened and fully curated Jewish Museum Berlin. While Müller certainly was not totally pleased with all curatorial choices or with every element of the museum exhibition, he did acknowledge, at base, that the museum offered a unique experience to the visitor – an experience of embodied tension between the didactic fullness of the exhibition and the lurking emptiness conveyed by Daniel Libeskind’s architectural design. Rather than providing a seamless harmony, the exhibition and the architecture, as he says Ken Gorbey (the head exhibition designer) acknowledges explicitly, engage in a dialogue between the memorial elements of the architectural design and the celebration of German-Jewish culture in the exhibition: “They [the curators] want to say that these [people] have a future after Auschwitz.”⁴⁷²

Some critics have felt even more uneasy about the uncanny hybrid identity of the fully curated Jewish Museum Berlin. According to Robert Stein, “the Berlin Jewish Museum is commemorative—its educational purpose is secondary; it seems hardly to have been designed with exhibits in mind, although there are some cases and even rooms for them.”⁴⁷³ Axel Lapp argues that “the opportunity for a great museum has been missed” because the exhibitions are not

⁴⁷² [Sie wollten sagen, daß diese auch nach Auschwitz eine Zukunft hat.] Volker Müller, “Geschichte als Familienerlebnis,” *Berliner Zeitung*, September 11, 2001.

⁴⁷³ Robert Stein, “The Berlin Jewish Museum,” *Western Humanities Review* 58, no. 2 (2004): 87.

exhaustive and do not make great use of the building's unusual spatial arrangement.⁴⁷⁴ Julia Klein points out that the exhibitions contain too many objects and mixes authentic items with replicas without much care for delineating between them.⁴⁷⁵ And finally, Terry Smith suggests that the museum was "bursting at the seams with tokens of memory...so many, however, that the implacable negativity of the museum was obscured and its equally trenchant yet demanding hope was returned to a more easily accessible hopefulness."⁴⁷⁶

In all of these critiques, one can locate a singular root concern: the dominant memorial motifs of emptiness and loss, embodied most clearly in the museum's voids, seem in conflict with the actual use of the exhibit space that caters to the educational needs of an audience heterogeneous in age, sex, ethnic identity, national origin, and with varied levels of prior knowledge on the topic of German-Jewish history. As a finally finished product, the hybridized memorial/museum complex denies critics the opportunity to have a full experience proper to each generic form that comprises the Jewish Museum Berlin. The emptiness of the architecture (especially as one passes through the voids running through the center of the structure) is interrupted by a cacophony of audio-visual and interactive displays. Yet the architecture also interrupts, intrudes upon, and inconveniences the chronological narrative of the exhibition such that a visitor becomes keenly aware of the inevitable limitations of displaying German-Jewish history comprehensively.

While it would be easy to label the fully curated Jewish Museum Berlin as an aesthetic failure, this chapter contends that the aesthetic ambivalence (characterized effectively in Müller's article) is *precisely* the proper affect intended by the final compromise agreements made by the

⁴⁷⁴ Axel Lapp, "The Jewish Experience in Germany," *Museums Journal* 102, no. 1 (January 2002): 12-13.

⁴⁷⁵ Julia Klein, "The Jewish Museum Berlin: Amid Clutter, at Odds With Itself," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, November 9, 2001, B15-B17.

⁴⁷⁶ Smith, *Architecture of Aftermath*, 87.

architect, city officials, curators, and the public. In essence, the Jewish Museum Berlin is a form of generic hybrid produced from open stakeholder deliberation about the multiple purposes that the museum must serve. Audiences visiting can be neither consumed with the tragic past regarding the repeated attempts to destroy a cultural identity within the German nation nor can they simply be drawn unquestioningly to celebrate German-Jewish history without being reminded of the culture's traumatic history. Visitors are situated uncomfortably in the chasm between what was and what could be; they must have both a strong empathic connection with the past while maintaining hope that education about German-Jewish identity can pave the way for a more tolerant and loving human future, especially for the newly united Federal Republic of Germany.

It is only when both the building and the exhibitions are finally completed that the German public is allowed a full glimpse of what Libeskind's architectural vision foretold as a form of anticipatory illumination: a Germany that continues to mark human tragedy as an essential founding narrative of its existence, but that remains vigilant, through the process of citizen (especially youth) education, in trying to build a more tolerant and inclusive version of national identity. Though the exhibition is historical, its stated purpose is future oriented. As W. Michael Blumenthal, director of the Jewish Museum Berlin, put the issue in an interview a week after the museum's opening, "a wider hope is that this building, which deals with German-Jewish history, will have relevance for the present and the future, for the relationship between the majority and the Jewish minority as [well as] for the relationship between the majority and all other social minorities."⁴⁷⁷ This latter notion of tolerance, clearly articulated in the museum's

⁴⁷⁷ [Eine weitere Hoffnung ist, dass dieses Haus, das sich mit der deutsch-jüdischen Geschichte befaßt, eine Relevanz für Gegenwart und Zukunft haben wird, für das Verhaeltnis zwischen der Mehrheit und der jüdischen

exhibition, must include both the desire to treat all of its citizens equally and respectfully as well as caring humanely for those new and varied non-citizen groups residing within its borders.

This chapter narrates the struggles to complete the process of finishing Libeskind's building and curating the museum. While the controversies over the independence of the museum and the validity of the integrative model were resolved quickly after the appointment of W. Michael Blumenthal (as noted in the previous chapter), a new issue of contention emerged about the desirability of using the Libeskind building as a hybrid memorial/museum. In the face of failing public processes for selecting a design for the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, some members of the public openly advocated to keep the Libeskind building empty as a way to fulfill the German public's memorial obligation to Jewish victims of the Holocaust, against the hybrid memorial/museum model originally posited by Libeskind. In order to resolve this conflict over the proper generic framing and use of the Libeskind building, both the architect and museum staff had to develop a successful public campaign to maintain their vision for the Jewish Museum Berlin.

In working through this issue publically, this case illustrates an important, but often overlooked, principle in the development of genre theory: the appropriate genre classification and aesthetic evaluation of texts are not simply classificatory systems used by rhetorical (or architectural) critics, they are cognitive schema that are publically negotiated between audiences, patrons, and speakers/designers based upon a text/symbol's engagement with an exigency (or cluster of them) and their cultural context. Critics have already established that genres of speech,

Minderheit wie für das Verhältnis zwischen der Mehrheit und allen anderen gesellschaftlichen Minderheiten.] W. Michael Blumenthal and Ralf Melzer, "Ich bliebe, solange man mich will," *Berliner Seiten*, September 18, 2001.

writing, and visual symbolism are used as responses to a rhetorical situations,⁴⁷⁸ that genres are functional rather than formal,⁴⁷⁹ that literary and art historical genres also have a functional rather than purely formal basis,⁴⁸⁰ that audiences perception of generic expectations and knowledge of prior genres function as a limiting factor on rhetorical action,⁴⁸¹ and that hybrid genres are often unstable melding of different generic forms designed for unique situations that may inspire future symbolic responses to similar circumstances.⁴⁸² Furthermore, once it is recognized that genres are inductive categorizations (i.e., cognitive schemas) of speech/symbolic actions used by discourse producers and audiences to make integrated sense of particular symbolic acts,⁴⁸³ then it is given that audiences, not just critics, can use genres of symbolic action as litmus tests to judge the quality or appropriateness of a particular discourse or symbolic act.⁴⁸⁴ In this case, the Jewish Museum Berlin is a symbolic action yet to be completed, and as such, the German public, political officials, curators, and the architect are engaged in a form of negotiation over the proper generic classification over the final symbolic product. In essence, this case allows researchers to see genres not simply as resources used by rhetors, but as an ideological field of discursive production that can be the site of contestation between producers,

⁴⁷⁸ Kathleen Hall Jamieson, "Generic Constraints and the Rhetorical Situation," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 6 (1973): 162-70.

⁴⁷⁹ Carolyn Miller, "Genre as Social Action," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 70 (1984): 151-67.

⁴⁸⁰ Amy J. Devitt, "Integrating Rhetorical and Literary Theories of Genre," *College English* 62 (2000): 696-717; and Young, *Texture of Memory*, 2-7.

⁴⁸¹ Kathleen M. Jamieson, "Antecedent Genre as Rhetorical Constraint," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 61 (1975): 406-15.

⁴⁸² Kathleen Hall Jamieson and Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, "Rhetorical Hybrids: Fusions of Generic Elements," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 68 (1982): 146-57. For an example of hybrid genres in visual rhetoric, see Lester C. Olson, "Benjamin Franklin's Pictorial Representations of the British Colonies in America: A Study in Rhetorical Iconology," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 73 (1987): 18-42.

⁴⁸³ Karlyn Kohrs Campbell and Kathleen Hall Jamieson, "Form and Genre in Rhetorical Criticism: An Introduction," in *Form and Genre: Shaping Rhetorical Action*, ed. Campbell and Jamieson (Falls Church, VA: Speech Communication Association, 1978), 9-32.

⁴⁸⁴ Jamieson and Campbell's comparison between the eulogies of Senators Jennings Randolph and Charles Percy at President Kennedy's funeral demonstrates this point well. Jamieson and Campbell, "Rhetorical Hybrids," 149-50. See also, Jamieson, "Generic Constraints," 166-67.

patrons, and consumers of symbolic actions both prior to and at the moment of audience encounters with that symbolic action – the latter of which is clearly demonstrated at the outset of this chapter in the ambivalent, perhaps even lukewarm, reception to the fully curated Jewish Museum Berlin by both press and critics.

In order to capture the development of this emerging generic controversy and to understand its public resolution, this chapter begins the story where the last chapter ended: the crisis of leadership in the wake of Amnon Barzel's firing in 1997 and the hiring of Michael Blumenthal. After discussing the quick selection W. Michael Blumenthal as successor to Barzel, the chapter then works through the emergence of the dispute over whether Libeskind's building should be used as a museum or as the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, with its eventual resolution in the curating and opening of a Jewish Museum Berlin devoted to "two millennia of German-Jewish history." The chapter's conclusion discussed the importance of the case study for future communication researchers with regard to genre criticism.

6.1 THE MEMORIAL FOR THE MURDERED JEWS OF EUROPE CONTROVERSY

As the last chapter noted, within a few months of becoming the Director of the Jewish Museum department, W. Michael Blumenthal had negotiated masterfully autonomy for a Jewish Museum in Berlin that would satisfy proponents of the integrationist model and would also assuage concerns about cultural appropriation of Jewish history from the Jewish community. Yet, over the next couple of years, Blumenthal would have to manage another public conflict over the museum while finalizing the design and making the Libeskind building into a functional museum

space. This time, the conflict would not be with Berlin officials, or the Jewish community, but instead with the viewing expectations of the German and international public regarding the memorial needs of the city and the proper use of the Libeskind building based upon its perceived generic categorization.

Confusion over the function of the architectural design in Libeskind's Jewish Museum building was not a new phenomenon. Libeskind had always conceived of the building as a memorial/museum hybrid – the architectural design providing a mournful connection with the city's past and the cultural integration of German-Jewish identity, while the exhibition materials would provide a didactic exhibit about the city's history and the history of its Jewish community. In some ways, Libeskind's own vague proclamations about the nature of the architecture, documented in previous chapters, created openings for others to feel that the monumental function of the building was primary, while the use of the interior space as a museum was secondary, perhaps demonstrated by his own design proposal's unwillingness to commit to any particular use of interior space. Moreover, the public's exposure to the building through the 1991 controversy over its delay/potential cancellation meant that the symbolism of the architecture became the primary element in the public rationale for continuing the project. It also did not help that no use for the building had been finalized, making it difficult to talk about the significance of the exhibition design outside of very basic proclamations about the "integrative model" of historical display. In essence, the public sensibility about the project was almost entirely defined by the building's architecture, and the generic classification of the architecture's purpose would be easiest to classify as primarily memorial.

Public discussion to potentially use Libeskind's Jewish Museum building as a Holocaust memorial first began in 1995. During that time, public fighting over use of the building space

between Amnon Barzel and the Berlin government was just beginning, and, at the same time, Helmut Kohl had just vetoed the two final designs for the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, finding them distasteful. To some, it seemed like a perfect fit – the Libeskind building, which had no museum design to speak of, had already stood the test of public discussion years prior based on the architecture’s memorial importance, while the design competition for the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe produced no suitable candidate. Dominik Bartmann, then acting director of the Berlin Museum (between the resignation of Rolf Bothe and the appointment of Rainer Güntzer), felt compelled at that time to talk to the newspaper, explaining that Libeskind’s building was not simply a memorial. “The Libeskind building is neither a Holocaust memorial nor a multifunctional cultural center,” Bartmann writes, “but instead a museum with a permanent exhibition of collections that in certain areas pay homage to the exceptional contributions of Jewish citizens and trace their fate under National Socialism (extermination or emigration).”⁴⁸⁵ Julius Schoeps, head of the Moses Mendelssohn Center, began advocating using the Libeskind building as a Holocaust memorial again in 1997 with tensions escalating again between the Berlin Senate and Amnon Barzel, but even Andreas Nachama, head of Berlin’s Jewish Society, would not entertain the idea of using a potential Jewish Museum as a memorial.⁴⁸⁶

With the second design competition for a national Holocaust memorial set to close in the fall of 1997, debate over the use of the Libeskind building and the continued employment of Amnon Barzel added the complication of scrapping the museum project entirely in favor of a

⁴⁸⁵ [Die Libeskindbau ist weder ein Holocaust-Denkmal noch ein multifunktionales Kulturzentrum, sondern ein Museum mit einer ständigen Präsentation von Beständen, die in eigens dafür vorgesehenen Bereichen die außerordentliche Leistung jüdischer Bürger würdigen und ihr Schicksal im Nationalsozialismus – Vernichtung oder Emigration – nachzeichnen.] Dominik Bartmann, “Ein Museum ist kein Denkmal,” *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), June 7, 1995.

⁴⁸⁶ Jola Merten, “Die große Aufgabe heißt Integration,” *Berliner Morgenpost*, June 27, 1997.

Holocaust memorial. In a controversial move, the new Holocaust memorial competition would be by invitation only; 25 designers would be solicited for their entries, and would be given a ten thousand Mark honorarium for their trouble.⁴⁸⁷ The five-member commission put together to adjudicate the entries recommended two different proposals: one by Americans Peter Eisenman and Richard Serra, the other by Berlin Architect Gisine Weinmiller. To these, two more designs were added to the mix for public vetting (from Daniel Libeskind and French conceptual artist Jochen Gerz).⁴⁸⁸ When the designs went on display in early 1998, Ignatz Bubis, president of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, made it clear that he did not care for any of the proposed memorial structures. “A memorial that can be misconstrued in one hundred years should not be built,” he lamented, noting that each entry for the competition seemed too symbolically ambiguous to be adequate.⁴⁸⁹ Although Libeskind publically argued that no memorial design could be representationally adequate when dealing with an event like the Holocaust, it was clear that both the public and politicians were not entirely satisfied with their options.⁴⁹⁰

Meanwhile, talk of using Libeskind’s Jewish Museum building as a Holocaust memorial began to surface. In addition to Julius Schoeps, Gyorgy Konrád, president of the Academy of Art, suggested that the Jewish Museum, in addition to housing an exhibition, could just double as a memorial for those surviving the Holocaust.⁴⁹¹ Part of his reasoning was driven from the public controversy over the future of the building and lack of a clear vision for the building’s use as a museum. Daniel Libeskind, interested in defending some version of an “integrative” museum concept, rejected the idea, suggesting that using the Jewish Museum for this purpose would be an

⁴⁸⁷ Kai Ritzmann, “Holocaust-Mahnmal: Neuer Wettbewerb, neue Künstler,” *Berliner Morgenpost*, July 17, 1997.

⁴⁸⁸ Kerstin Ulrich and Peter Schubert, “Vier Entwürfe und keine Entscheidung,” *Berliner Morgenpost*, November 16, 1997.

⁴⁸⁹ [Ein Mahnmal, das in hundert Jahren mißverstanden werden kann, sollte nicht gebaut werden.] “Bubis: Mahnmal ist Friedhofersatz,” *Hamburger Abendblatt*, January 21, 1998.

⁴⁹⁰ “Libeskind warnt vor großen Erwartungen,” *Hamburger Abendblatt*, January 28, 1998.

⁴⁹¹ “Konrád: Libeskind-Bau soll Holocaust-Mahnmal werden,” *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), October 10, 1997.

insufficient substitute for a Holocaust memorial. However, Libeskind, certainly having a stake in the conversation, also took the opportunity to take an indirect jab at the favored Eisenman/Serra memorial proposal. “I am against a memorial that transforms the experience of murder into a carnival or haunted house,” Libeskind said, clearly referring to the proposed field of concrete blocks that populated the frontrunners’ memorial design.⁴⁹²

Conversations over the design to the Memorial for the Murdered Jews of Europe continued to spiral out of control in 1998 and 1999. Several German intellectuals, as well as a few governmental officials, came out as vocal critics of the project, suggesting that any memorial to an unimaginable event would be superficial and inadequate. After the public exhibition, the Eisenman/Serra design was chosen by the government, though Helmut Kohl recommended that the design itself be changed (ultimately reducing the total area for the pillars). Richard Serra withdrew from the project in the process of revision, leaving Eisenman as the lone architect on the project. After submitting a second proposal in the summer of 1998, the project was delayed until after the national elections in the fall. Though sponsors of the project wanted to see swift action, there was a growing feeling among several intellectuals that the memorial would not be representative of the German people, nor would it be representative of Jewish sensibilities.⁴⁹³ Martin Walser, in an acceptance speech for the Peace Prize of the German Book Trade, referred to the Eisenman plan as a “football pitch-sized nightmare,” an example of the exploitation of German shame for political purposes.⁴⁹⁴ Even Mayor Eberhard Diepgen joined the chorus, suggesting that the Eisenman design was too abstract to be meaningful to later generations of

⁴⁹² “Libeskind: Museum ist kein Denkmal,” *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), November 28, 1997.

⁴⁹³ “Architecten brauchen eine Gegenmacht,” *Welt* (Berlin), September 24, 1998; “Will Deutschland das Denkmal?,” *Berliner Zeitung*, September 10, 1998.

⁴⁹⁴ Martin Walser, “Erfahrung beim Verfassen einer Sonntagsrede” (speech, Frankfurt, Germany, October 11, 1998), *Friedenpreis des Deutschen Buchhandels*, <http://www.friedenpreis-des-deutschen-buchhandels.de>. This speech was the subject of some political controversy, as Ignatz Bubis accused Walser of trying to block German remembrance of the Holocaust.

German youth, preferring instead a more didactic museum exhibit (in cooperation with Steven Spielberg's Shoah Foundation) along with a small memorial.⁴⁹⁵

After the fall 1998 election, Michael Naumann, the National Secretary of Culture, suggested that the entire memorial could instead be re-envisioned as a museum. The idea was immediately slammed by Ignatz Bubis, though he did suggest that a memorial with some sort of exhibition place might be a desirable outcome.⁴⁹⁶ Several other local and international voices expressed skepticism of the plan, suggesting that the nearby "Topography of Terror" as well as the planned (and newly autonomous) Jewish Museum would provide enough context for the Eisenman memorial to be understood and respected.⁴⁹⁷ James Young, a U.S. scholar asked to participate in the competition selection process, criticized Naumann publicly for refusing to honor the public selection process for the memorial. He also argued that Naumann's idea about education missed the primary need for the memorial – Germany needed to make an independent, public commitment to Holocaust remembrance as a central, constitutive element of the new German republic.⁴⁹⁸ Eisenman, after a meeting with Naumann on December 19th, agreed to develop a third version of his memorial design that included a significant museum component.⁴⁹⁹

The conversation about using the Libeskind building as a Holocaust memorial died down for a few months at the beginning of 1998, but as soon as the positive press about Michael Blumenthal faded and the controversy over the Eisenman design emerged, so did a stronger and more sophisticated argument for using the building in a different way. Julius Schoeps, a familiar voice on this subject, guest authored a piece in an April *Tagesspiegel* about the future of the

⁴⁹⁵ Jola Merten, "Diepgens Entscheidung gegen Eisenman," *Berliner Morgenpost*, November 25, 1998.

⁴⁹⁶ Lars von Törne and Tissy Bruns, "Das hat nichts mehr mit einem Mahnmahl zu tun," *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), December 15, 1998.

⁴⁹⁷ "Es gibt genug Holocaust-Austellungen," *Berliner Zeitung*, December 16, 1998.

⁴⁹⁸ James E. Young, "Was keine andere Nation je versucht hat," *Berliner Zeitung*, December 18, 1998.

⁴⁹⁹ "Naumann will mehr Zeit für Mahnmahl-Konzept," *Welt* (Berlin), December 19, 1998.

museum – a time when the thematic purpose of the Jewish Museum had not been settled. In the piece, it seems clear that Schoeps’ opinion of Libeskind’s architectural design is not a high one – he flippantly compared it to the “Deconstructivism” of Derrida and Baudrillard (as if the two were the same), following with a rhetorical question asking whether Germans could entrust all of German-Jewish history to this style of expression. Schoeps’ strongest statement, though, seemed to be a direct attack on Libeskind’s conception of a hybrid memorial/museum, suggesting that such a union could not be concentrated thematically – the memorial function would struggle against the museum function such that neither would be able to succeed. Finally, Schoeps argued that the original purpose of the architecture, to be an extension of the Berlin Museum, has been clearly changed, suggesting that all arguments from tradition (i.e., it was always supposed to be a Jewish Museum) are not entirely accurate. Schoeps stopped short of suggesting that Libeskind’s building should replace the Eisenman proposal for a Holocaust Memorial, but it is clear that he felt that Libeskind’s building functions less as a museum than as a sculptural rendering of the Holocaust.⁵⁰⁰

A more ferocious attack on the Libeskind building was made by Gert Kähler in *Kultur*. Kähler framed his piece through a series of rhetorical questions about the relationship between the identities of the architect, the critic, and the purpose of a particular architectural design – suggesting that his arguments should be understood as professional judgment rather than a standard argument about the politics of identity in Germany. He based his criticism on an assumption about the function of architectural genres: architecture, particularly museum architecture, seeks to maximize the utility of spaces for display of materials within the museum, while other types of design, such as monuments, memorials, and installations, provide more

⁵⁰⁰ Julius Schoeps, “Blitzender Zickzackbau, kontrovers,” *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), April 17, 1998.

focus on artistic expression. To be clear: Kähler did not argue that museum architecture is inartistic, but rather that it must balance the banality of function with the desire for grand expression. After setting the table with the generic classifications (and making an implied case for the mutual exclusivity of those genres), he then claimed that Libeskind's architectural *oeuvre* does not have the necessary balance to be considered a museum – a claim supported not only by Libeskind's (then) tendency to enter more architectural design competitions than build actual buildings, but also by Kähler's perception of dysfunction in the recently opened Felix Nussbaum Haus (the first Libeskind museum building to be completed). In Kähler's opinion, Libeskind could not effectively differentiate between expressive form and everyday function, and as such, the Libeskind building was miscast as a museum. "The impression remains," he concluded, that "Libeskind's Jewish Museum in Berlin is the long sought after Holocaust Memorial. And as such, by the way, it is great."⁵⁰¹

By the beginning of 1999, the generic controversy had become visible enough to be picked up by national and international outlets. The architecture had been finished, and the end of January 1999 the building, empty of exhibits was opened to the public. *Der Freitag*, a national paper based in Berlin, argued that the architecture functioned so well as a memorial to the loss of culture caused by the Holocaust that it ought to remain empty with the Collegienhaus used as the Jewish Museum.⁵⁰² In the *Deutsches Allgemeines Sonntagsblatt* (Hamburg), a three-page article is devoted to the opening of the building, but the ending conversation suggested that the choice of generic function be left open to the public. Given the controversy with the Eisenman plan, the museum's obvious memorial elements, along with the concern that the Libeskind building may

⁵⁰¹ [Es bleibt ein Eindruck: Libeskind's Jüdisches Museum in Berlin ist das lang gesuchte Holocaust-Mahnmal. Als solches ist es übrigens großartig.] Gert Kähler, "Alles in der Feuerlinie," *Kultur*, December 1998.

⁵⁰² "Die Unsichtbare Sammlung," *Freitag*, January 29, 1999.

not make an adequate museum, why not allow the possibility of it being used as a Holocaust memorial to be entertained, argued the author.⁵⁰³ The *Irish Times* reported that museum curators felt the building could not be used as a museum, and given the troubles with the Eisenman design, the best use of the building might be to leave it empty as a memorial.⁵⁰⁴ *The Guardian* ran a standard piece about the museum but opened with the suggestion that it is a perfect monument to the victims of the Holocaust.⁵⁰⁵ And the *New York Times* opined that the architecture would crush any attempt to fill its voids with displays.⁵⁰⁶

At work in these commentaries seems to be two fundamental, related questions about the nature of Daniel Libeskind's design: is his building a stable generic hybrid and is framing the building as a museum/memorial hybrid the most effective use of its symbolic resources? Under the surface of these questions, one can glimpse the shift in rhetorical situation between the moment of the building design competition and the building's completion. While a hybrid memorial/museum seemed like the only effective way to design museum space a city museum that could respond to the competition committee's demands, in a reunited Berlin that is struggling to find appropriate memorialization for the Holocaust and is no longer short display space for a museum, one might have a different response. Moreover, as the museum had become physically present to the audience, it became harder to see how an idealized hybrid – especially one that tries to hold together so many contradictory impulses – would actually function as a single entity.

Noteworthy in this discussion is the extent to which the audiences – in this case building visitors, architectural critics, and members of the Jewish community – felt comfortable

⁵⁰³ Johannes Wendland, "Der totale Bruch," *Deutsches Allgemeines Sonntagsblatt*, January 29, 1919.

⁵⁰⁴ "A powerful enigma that is a museum to the Jews," *Irish Times*, January 19, 1999.

⁵⁰⁵ Johnathan Glancey, "The hole in the heart," *Guardian* (London), January 27, 1999.

⁵⁰⁶ Roger Cohen, "Fresh perspectives on past and present; Berlin," *New York Times*, March 14, 1999.

participating in shaping the nature of the Libeskind building as a form of symbolic action. In previous studies of speech genres, which often focused on the delivery of public speeches that respond at identifiable moments to particular situations, the purpose of critics and the audience was to judge (consciously or unconsciously) the adequacy of the orator's response to the rhetorical situation.⁵⁰⁷ Did they choose the right words? Did they frame the occasion the right way? Did the speech effectively use (or confront) generic expectations of listeners? In this case, we have critics and members of the audience actively participating in the creation of a rhetorical work and arguing over its proper generic framing. What does the architectural symbolism best communicate? What function would the spaces within the building best serve? Can it effectively serve two rhetorical purposes (to memorialize and to communicate accurate historical information)? The proper genre of expression for the Libeskind building is up for public debate, and, as a consequence, its potential use.

6.2 INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSES

Those involved in developing the Libeskind building into a Jewish Museum seemed to understand that they could not merely sit back while the debate happened around them. They developed a clear strategy for changing the landscape of the public debate. First, part of the strategy relied on a bit of serendipity: the exigency that helps to fuel public discussion, controversy over the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, eventually dissipated. However, part of that luck was self-created, as Michael Blumenthal, at the end of 1998, was given the task

⁵⁰⁷ This is not to suggest that there has not been fantastic work done in the area of speech genres and their application to visual rhetoric. For an example, see Olson, "Benjamin Franklin."

of coordinating the memorial project to go along with his duties as Director of the Jewish Museum. In that task, one of his chief goals was to help design complementary exhibition content to the Jewish Museum, with the expectation that Peter Eisenman's revisions to the design would add significant space for an archive and special exhibitions.⁵⁰⁸ The reception for that design (Eisenman III) in January 1999 was quite positive, though just a few weeks later accusations of back room political deals and design similarities to the E.T.A. Hoffman Garden (now the Garden of Exile) were leveled by none other than Daniel Libeskind himself.⁵⁰⁹ Moreover, the continued revisions were taken internationally to suggest that Germany is once again struggling to confront its past – particularly because the field of pillars in Eisenman's proposal continued to shrink in every revised design.⁵¹⁰ By the summer of 1999, the Bundestag had scrapped the Eisenman III proposal in favor of Eisenman II with a small underground information center attached – a compromise that allowed the memorial to function while satisfying the desire for context. Blumenthal, for his part, tried his best to suggest that the struggle with forms of Holocaust memory was a healthy rather than unhealthy phenomenon, making it seem that discontent was an expected part of the process.⁵¹¹ All parties were not satisfied (the memorial remains controversial), but the political decision to move forward finally defused the exigency that had helped to fuel calls for Libeskind's Jewish Museum building to remain empty and be used as a Holocaust Memorial.

⁵⁰⁸ Peter Schubert, "Mahnmal soll Zweigstelle des Jüdischen Museums sein," *Berliner Morgenpost*, January 19, 1999.

⁵⁰⁹ Malte Lehming and Moritz Müller-Wirth, "Mahnmal-Entwurf findet breite Unterstützung," *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), January 19, 1999; "Mahnmal: Libeskind kritisiert Verfahrensmängel," *Berliner Zeitung*, January 2, 1999; and "Streit um Eisenmans neuen Entwurf verschärft sich," *Welt* (Berlin), January 2, 1999.

⁵¹⁰ Stefanie Endlich and Rainer Höynek, "Ein 'Kombi-Entwurf' als Lösung?," *Aufbau* (New York), February 5, 1999; and Robert Von Rimscha, "Der Holocaust lehrt keine Hoffnung," *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), April 20, 1999.

⁵¹¹ W. Michael Blumenthal, "Streit um die Erinnerung," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, October 9, 1999.

Second, they had to differentiate the Libeskind building as a rhetorical hybrid incapable of functioning as solely a Holocaust memorial. Daniel Libeskind had previously emphasized the elements of the museum that called forth memorialization of the Holocaust, most notably during the summer 1991 controversy over cancellation of the project. During that period, arguments advanced by the opposition suggested that museum space was fungible, making it possible to do a Jewish history display in another unused but already built museum building. In order to counter those claims, Libeskind stressed the uniqueness of the building's memorial function, particularly as it related to Holocaust memory and the devastation wrought upon Berlin by World War II. Now, the situation was reversed, with the memorial end of the generic hybrid being stressed by the public and critics at the expense of any potential museum function.

One of the most powerful resources of argument that could be mustered in this situation was the voice of the identified designer (the author of this architectural symbolism, if you will). While certainly by this time Daniel Libeskind, in any strict sense, could not be considered to be the sole authority on the design of the building – the composite structure was the work of not only Libeskind, but a team of designers and curators compromising with the perspectives of political officials and inspectors over the previous decade. However, Libeskind's words carried an authoritative force with regard to the symbolism and proper function of the architecture, and, as such, they were a strategic way to try to exert control over the building's public image and interpretation.⁵¹²

⁵¹² Michel Foucault noted that the "author-function" of discourse was partially dedicated to confining the play of meaning in discourse through recourse to a principle of proper interpretation. An recognized author of a symbolic action in our society is empowered to speak upon the nature of her or his "utterance," so to speak and further elaborate it, put it in conversation with other discourses, and most importantly, to resolve perceived contradictions or omissions from that symbolic action. See Michel Foucault, "What is an Author," 113-38. In the spirit of Foucault's thinking, this chapter argues that Daniel Libeskind performed the public role of author or creator of this particular symbolic action (the museum building), and in so doing, used the cultural authority granted to an author of a discourse to exert control over the interpretation and function of the building.

Libeskind liberally gave interviews to both the Berlin and the international press even after the building was completed. In those interviews, he tried to downplay the elements of the design specifically relevant to Holocaust memory while still acknowledging its influence. “There are elements,” he told Alexander Pajevic in the summer of 1998, but “the museum is a museum and not a memorial.”⁵¹³ At the podium discussion for the opening of the empty building and the architecture, he made an impassioned defense of the building as a hybrid memorial museum, suggesting that the future of museum space would eschew a fascination with perceived neutral design. Moreover, it must embody both “tragedy and hope” and must ask the viewer to become aware of their own relationship to history.⁵¹⁴ Libeskind pushed different elements of his design into public view, especially his claim that the museum is an attempt at finishing Arnold Schönberg’s *Moses und Aron*.⁵¹⁵

But it would not be enough only to have the architect speak on behalf of the design. An entire volume was published at the end of 1998 that framed the newly autonomous museum as being a museum discussing the perils of intolerance through the German-Jewish example.⁵¹⁶ Blumenthal, now positioned to easily differentiate the Jewish Museum from his role with the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, argued that the Jewish Museum Berlin will be part of a series of institutions (including the memorial and the Topography of Terror) educating the public about the past.⁵¹⁷ Both Blumenthal and Tom Freudenheim spoke strongly about the need to think about the Jewish Museum as not only a commemoration of the past (including tragedy),

⁵¹³ Alexander Pajevic, “Das Museum ist ein Museum und kein Denkmal,” *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), August 20, 1998.

⁵¹⁴ Libeskind et al, “Podium Discussion.”

⁵¹⁵ Frederik Hanssen, “Das Zwölftongebäude,” *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), October 10, 1999; and Daniel Libeskind, “Chamberworks, in *Music Architecture*, ed. Roland Ritter and Michael Hoberz (Graz, Austria: Haus der Architektur, 1997), 28-43.

⁵¹⁶ Stiftung Jüdisches Museum Berlin, *Jewish Museum Berlin: Concept and Vision* (Berlin, Jüdisches Museum Berlin Verlag, 1998).

⁵¹⁷ W. Michael Blumenthal, “Es ist unsere Mission, das Gute und das Böse in diesem Museum darzustellen,” *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), June 24, 1999.

but a place to reinforce a positive message about the contributions of the Jewish diaspora to mainstream society and the continued living tradition of Jewish community in Germany and throughout Europe.⁵¹⁸ This final issue was considered particularly important because of the rapidly growing Jewish population in Berlin – Eastern European Jews flocked to Berlin to take refuge from the hardships in former Soviet Bloc countries at an amazing rate and these people would need a place to gather in celebration of their diasporic heritage.

Most importantly, the museum needed advocates outside of the institution that could speak to the significance of the project and the importance of the Jewish Museum *as* a museum. Fortunately, the museum found a close ally in Thomas Lackmann, one of the arts reporters for the *Tagesspiegel*. Lackmann had followed the development of the museum, including most of the major public controversies, as part of his regular beat. In 2000, Lackmann published a book entitled *Jewrassic Park: Wie baut man (k)ein Jüdisches Museum in Berlin* that treated the entire museum development as a multi-act farce. While he certainly took some liberties with accentuating the low points of public conversation, in the end, Lackmann developed his eight theses for a Jewish Museum in Berlin that looked remarkably like the proposal being advanced by Blumenthal, Libeskind, Freudenheim and company. In it, he made clear that the museum should be both about the past and about the future, and in its hybridity it should refuse easy answers or to resolve contradictions.⁵¹⁹

Finally, curators of the museum needed to demonstrate that leaving the building empty would rob it of its potential. Even before they had a fully developed curatorial strategy, the Jewish Museum gave the press sneak peeks of potential items and exhibitions to be found in the

⁵¹⁸ Shirley Apthorp, “Cultural Void,” *Weekend Australian*, July 22, 2000; Toby Axelrod and Volker Müller, “Ein lebendiges Jüdisches Museum soll es werden,” *Berliner Zeitung*, July 27, 1998; and Alan Freeman, “We’re a Museum of Life, . . . Not Death,” *Globe and Mail* (Canada), March 16, 1999.

⁵¹⁹ Thomas Lackmann, *Jewrassic Park* (Berlin: Philo, 2000).

new museum.⁵²⁰ They held interpretive dance exhibitions in the building, showed old films, and even had a benefit auction using the space – things that would not be possible when thinking about the interior of the building as simply a somber space of Holocaust memorialization.⁵²¹ By promoting these events in the museum, the museum staff seemed intent on making it clear that the building had much more potential than being merely a memorial to one particular event.

The combination of these factors – the eventual settling of the Memorial for the Murdered Jews of Europe competition, the barrage of experts speaking on behalf of the hybrid design, and the attempts to use the Libeskind building for innovative exhibitions – helped to quell the public conversation on the use of the building. Moreover, as the curatorial strategy began to come into view, the Jewish Museum institution promoted and advertised the innovative and provocative decisions that would be made. From the perspective of the institution’s board, there was never any real threat to the use of the building as a museum. However, the public still had to be fully convinced in the viability of the Jewish Museum Berlin in that building. The next section concerns how the public was finally able to see what a hybrid memorial/museum over German-Jewish history would look like, but with mixed results.

6.3 TE PAPA ON THE SPREE?

Ken Gorbey’s reputation as a museum curator preceded his appointment at the Jewish Museum Berlin. A 2000 headline announcing his appointment in the *New Zealand Jewish Chronicle*

⁵²⁰ Thomas Lackmann, “Des Glückes hübsche Siebensachen,” *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), November 29, 1999.

⁵²¹ “Die Inszenierung des Lichts in Film und Architektur,” *Welt* (Berlin), August 18, 1999; “Schulfrei am Weltkindertag,” *Tagesspiegel* (Berlin), November 6, 1999; and Gabriella Walde, “Prozession durch Labyrinth,” *Welt* (Berlin), June 14, 1999.

declared “NZ museum expert to provide Te Papa-zing to Berlin Jewish Museum.”⁵²² Though this particular article was somewhat flattering to Mr. Gorbey, the phrase “Te Papa-zing” referred to a much more perjorative take on his curatorial work. Opened in early 1998, the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa (or “Te Papa” for short) is a museum dedicated to the natural, social, and artistic history of New Zealand. While many national museums tend to be very traditional with the display of materials (the Smithsonian institution is no exception), curators at Te Papa sought to design much more interactive exhibits that would be accessible to the public. In so doing, it drew the ire of museum experts around the world for being more like a theme park than a museum, but it also attracted two million visitors its first year – it was the bane of the curatorial community, but a public success.⁵²³

With Gorbey now heading up the curating group, the question of whether he would bring Te Papa with him might be a concerning one. After all, who would want a Jewish Museum, with part of the architecture functioning as a memorial to the Holocaust, to have the feel of a theme park in the exhibitions? Gorbey seemed aware of the concern, telling the *Dominion* (Wellington, NZ) that the exhibitions will not be designed with fun in mind, but that the museum still needs to be “democratized” so that it can more readily appeal to a broader public.⁵²⁴ *The Weekend Australian* takes the observation further:

Blumenthal has recently gone to press saying that the name Jewish museum is misleading. It is, he says, a museum for Germans, not for Jews, because it is the Germans who need the museum. The board’s intention is to create a museum that attracts, at least notionally, every German-speaker. That means a level of accessibility for which Te Papa is an exemplary model.⁵²⁵

⁵²² Mike Regan, “NZ Museum Expert to Provide Te Papa-zing of Berlin Jewish Museum,” *New Zealand Jewish Chronicle*, March 2000.

⁵²³ William J. Tramosch, “Te Papa: Reinventing the Museum,” *Museum Management and Curatorship* 17 (1998): 339-50.

⁵²⁴ Howie Craig, “Jewish Journey in Berlin,” *Dominion* (Wellington, NZ), September 21, 2000.

⁵²⁵ Shirley Apthorp, “Cultural Void,” *The Weekend Australian*, July 22, 2000.

It is this tension between accessibility of the museum exhibits and profundity of the architecture that gets played out in the press. What will the museum look like? Who will it serve? Will it live up to expectations?

W. Michael Blumenthal, though largely past the conversation about whether the building should be left empty, still needed to convince people that the curatorial decisions were correct. In the pages of the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, Germany's most well-known newspaper, he tried to make the case in August 2000. First dispelling the argument about whether to leave the building empty as a memorial, Blumenthal declared that "the architectural masterpiece will remain, no matter whether empty or a full museum. But...the house is meant so serve a more profound purpose, which goes far beyond architecture." He then argued that his exhibition team felt it was possible to curate in a way that respected the building, before moving on to the more significant questions about the style of curation.

A frequent objection is that a concept that uses up-to-date and interactive museum technology and wants to attract young people holds the danger of shallowness. Don't worry. Our museum has nothing to do with Disneyland. It is true that our exhibition policy does not mainly aim at the highly educated or academic visitors. Perhaps intellectual snobs will not be 100 percent satisfied. But I would be glad if all Germans came to visit and nobody was bored. One can make a museum equally attractive for different types of visitors, older or younger, with or without knowledge, and use the latest in museum technology without sacrificing seriousness. Popular does not necessarily mean unscholarly or infantile.

In this passage, it is clear the Blumenthal meant to take the offense. Criticisms of the museum's aims to use technology and appeal to popular audiences were a form of snobbery, not real

objections.⁵²⁶ Blumenthal and other members of the Jewish Museum Berlin would repeat this message in several media outlets over the next year.⁵²⁷

The opening of the museum on September of 2001 finally put these controversies to an end, though not all were delighted with the final product. Johannes Rau, German President, gave a speech at the opening celebration in which he provided context for the museum. In the end, he asked that the museum be seen for what it was – an amazing building that housed a museum designed to cater to multiple audiences and that spoke to the basic concern of tolerance in a multicultural society.⁵²⁸ Ken Gorbey suggested that they did extensive audience testing of the museum in order to make the experience comfortable, and the museum provided associates in each room that could answer questions about particular exhibits.⁵²⁹ Cilly Kugelmann, vice director of the museum, argued that the museum achieved what it wanted to achieve in catering to the public.⁵³⁰

The visitor statistics produced by the Jewish Museum Berlin bear this out. By the end of 2002, the museum had a total of 923,927 visitors, making it the second most visited museum in Berlin during that period. Of that amount, 74% of visitors were from Germany. The museum also took care to ask visitors about their experience, with 98% of visitors reporting that they liked the museum, and 80% of visitors spending more than two hours in the exhibition. By these statistical standards, the Jewish Museum Berlin was a wild success.⁵³¹

⁵²⁶ W. Michael Blumenthal, "Where Architecture and Exhibition Become One," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (English Edition), August 21, 2000.

⁵²⁷ For examples, see "44th Annual Leo Baeck Memorial Lecture," *LBI News* (Leo Baeck Institute), Winter 2000/2001; and Roger Cohen, "A Jewish Museum Struggles to Be Born," *The Jerusalem Post*, August 21, 2000.

⁵²⁸ Johannes Rau, "Das Jüdische Museum will and soll kein Holocaust-Denkmal sein," *Frankfurter Rundschau*, September 10, 2001.

⁵²⁹ Alessandra Kroegel, "Not a Lot of Swaskitas, But What It Means to Be a Jew in Germany," *Art Newspaper*, September 2001.

⁵³⁰ Axel Lapp, "Besucherorientierte Geschichte," *d'Letzebürger Land*, August 30, 2002.

⁵³¹ Stiftung Jüdisches Museum Berlin, *Annual Report 2001-2002* (Berlin: Jüdisches Museum Berlin, 2003), 44-46.

Yet, the critical response was not nearly as optimistic. Andrea Hilgenstock of the *Nürnberger Zeitung* argued that the exhibition seemed to juxtapose the trauma of the architecture with a dose of normality – not exactly a ringing endorsement for the exhibition.⁵³² Julius Schoeps asserted that the architecture overwhelmed the exhibits and made it impossible to tell a reasonable narrative of Jewish history. He went so far to suggest that no curator could have done adequate work with this architecture, though he was particularly perturbed by the outcome of the exhibits as having little narrative through line.⁵³³ These notes, combined with those at the outset of this chapter, demonstrate that the reception of the museum by experts was not all that warm.

Others tried to strike a more balanced tone. Michael Wuliger of the *Allgemeine* argued that expectations were not met precisely because there was too much hype about what the Jewish Museum ought to become. However, he also suggested that the Jewish Museum Berlin designers should not be let off the hook for designing a cluttered museum that seemed to overwhelm the architecture.⁵³⁴ Axel Lapp admitted that the curators had been able to work with the architecture at points. “Where the exhibition works brilliantly – for example in the sections on integration and assimilation in the early 20th century or in the section that highlights the cultural and scientific achievements by Jewish men and women – it becomes an integral part of the architecture.” But other parts, Lapp felt fought the architecture or just did not work with the space.⁵³⁵ Volker Müller’s words that begin this chapter have a similar tone – the museum does seem to be doing something important, but the profundity of the architecture does not seem to be matched well with the interior design.

⁵³² Andrea Hilgenstock, “Bürger dieser Nation,” *Nürnberger Zeitung*, September 12, 2001.

⁵³³ Phillip Gessler, “Ich erkenne keine Geschichte,” *Tageszeitung* (Berlin), September 11, 2001.

⁵³⁴ Michael Wuliger, “Zuviel versprochen,” *Allgemeine* (Jewish paper), September 26, 2001.

⁵³⁵ Lapp, “Jewish Experience,” 13.

Though the reception of the exhibition design was decidedly mixed, it seems as if the curators wanted that to happen. Both Blumenthal and Gorbey were very deliberate in talking about opening the museum to new visitors. More importantly, they tended to speak in terms of needs. While the architecture is stunning, Berlin needed a Jewish Museum that would be accessible to as many people as possible. In order to do that, choices were made that certainly detracted from the architecture. In essence, they built the memorial/museum hybrid that could be successful in Berlin, even though it felt like the genres were not fully integrated.

6.4 CONCLUSION

By the end of 2002, nearly a million visitors had passed through the Jewish Museum Berlin. From the perspective of public popularity, it was a resounding success. However, as reported at the beginning of this chapter, for some reporters and architectural critics, the alliance between the architecture and the displays seemed a little unsettling and dissatisfying. After the opening of the museum, of course, these critiques of the museum read like a lament of what could have been possible based upon the desires of the critic. The Libeskind building could have been left empty, which would have allowed the architectural design to shine. Its sharp angles, its voids, its use of oblique architectural design principles to make one aware of gravities pull – all of that could have been left alone and Berlin could have had, under the auspices of it being a Holocaust Memorial, an empty building as one of its premier tourist attractions. On the other hand, the imposition of the architecture, the heavy use of contemporary media technology, and the difficulty in arranging the display space could have been avoided by using a different building or by building a more neutral space that reminds people of a traditional museum. In that world, one

could have a thorough didactic historical exhibit of Jewish life in Germany and across the European continent.

Perhaps some of the critics are right. In some ways, the end product of the Jewish Museum Berlin, insofar as the opening can be considered a “finished” symbolic artifact, is somewhat disappointing. To a serious museum goer, the interactive displays feel distracting. For someone who admires the architecture, the sheer number of displays overwhelms what might be one of the most unique pieces of architecture in history. For someone who has a strong interest in German-Jewish history, the exhibition is quite apolitical (i.e., the display does not take a position on the core issues surrounding Jewish identity and the desirability of integration, nor is it too heavy-handed in its confrontation with anti-Semitism) and inevitably oversimplify Jewish culture (as would any museum that relies so heavily on example and synecdoche to narrate the complex history of peoples). More than that, it could have conformed to generic expectations. It could have focused on a single rhetorical function and have excelled in that area. When compared to all the things it could have been, the finished Jewish Museum Berlin could not meet all of those expectations.

But, as mentioned at the outset of this chapter, rendering that type of judgment seems shortsighted. The Jewish Museum Berlin, as it exists, is the outcome of a long, deliberative process infusing the needs, desires, and expectations of multiple communities. It could not, and will never be, everything to all people. It is a great piece of architecture. It is a magnet for visitors (both German and non-German). And as a museum, it tries particularly hard to cater to those who are not frequent museum goers and those that are young by making the displays visually stimulating and physically interactive. It tries to make the history of German-Jewish relations instructive for people today without being overbearing. It is, in essence, the

memorial/museum hybrid with which nobody in particular is satisfied (other than maybe Daniel Libeskind), but was designed to give the city of Berlin, the people of Germany, and the world what they needed.

Moreover, the completed Jewish Museum Berlin finally provided a clear symbolic content to the hope for the future that so many had felt it illuminated. At the outset of the design competition for an extension to the (West) Berlin Museum a decade earlier, it was clear to the competition planners that this building could be no ordinary building – it had to both house museum displays and say something profound on its own regarding the attempted extermination of all Jewish people in Europe. While the Jewish Museum Berlin, as a finished product, looked nothing like what was imagined more than a decade prior, a key element of the project remained: it would be a memorial/museum hybrid in which the interplay between architecture and display would be contentious yet mutually enriching. One must celebrate Jewish history and acknowledge all who have been lost. One could not simply dwell on persistent anti-Semitism and not recognize the impressive contributions of the Jewish diaspora to its dominant society. It must give hope and convey tragedy; it needed to articulate the various tensions in the German-Jewish history without resolving them for the audience. Regardless of the particular differences between the first proposal for an extension to the Berlin Museum that would house the Jewish Museum department and the fully autonomous Jewish Museum Berlin that discusses two millennia of German-Jewish history, the design's hybrid generic character helped to situate visitors uneasily as consumers of a partially annihilated history and participants in crafting an uncertain future. As a form of moral instruction and insight for the newly reunified German nation, the Jewish Museum Berlin's hybrid character is suggestive of the need to acknowledge the violence of the

Holocaust as a constitutive element for the nation's identity, but also to emphasize respect for difference within the nation as strength rather than weakness.

This chapter sought to extend current scholarship on rhetorical genres by arguing that the notion of genre was not just a constraint on the rhetor, an opportunity for a rhetor's invention, or a repository of expectations used by audiences and critics to judge the quality of a symbolic action – rhetorical genres are cognitive schema deployed by rhetors, audiences and critics simultaneously to co-create the symbolic content of an utterance or symbolic representation. While it is possible to entertain arguments over whether a particular discourse succeeds (as the critics at the outset of this chapter do), it is also important to recognize that generic categories can be tools in a struggle to define what a discourse is and what it ought to be. In the case of the Jewish Museum Berlin, the completed architecture (but incomplete museum) became a site of deliberation over the proper rhetorical function (tied intimately to architectural genre) of the space. While, in the end, the original vision of having a memorial/museum hybrid prevailed, the very existence of that conversation demonstrates the potential power of audiences, patrons, and critics to influence the outcome and very definition of a symbolic activity. Even in the context of a speech fully crafted and delivered to its intended audience, a critic deploying generic schema can change not only the judgment of a speech, but its perceived message. Edwin Black so eloquently notes about John Jay Chapman's "Coatesville Address" that is it not merely a speech given to an audience of three, but a living document that "shares, in its more modest way, a quality of the supreme works of our literature."⁵³⁶ Black worked diligently (in this germinal work for generic criticism) to rescue a speech almost nobody heard and few had read from the dustbin of history by appealing to a very traditional codification of rhetorical genre (speech vs.

⁵³⁶ Black, *Rhetorical Criticism*, 89.

literature) – one that had literally been used to define the disciplinary boundary between English and Speech Communication for at least forty years – and convincingly shifting its generic classification for an audience of professionals interested in it.

In some ways, the argument of this chapter is not unique – Edwin Black, among others, stumbled upon its insights a long time ago. On the other hand, it is fair to say that perhaps the full extent of its impact has yet to be acknowledged or explored. As Black suggests, “the speech is not a cold marble monument. It lives. But to see its life, we must find its proper context.”⁵³⁷ What Black does with this insight is to push critics to speeches not merely as isolated moments in time designed for an immediate audience, but as participants in a larger universe of ideas, forms of expression, and cultural developments – in short, as related to its generic cousins. But perhaps Black’s words have not yet found their proper context. What this chapter illustrates is that the zinc-clad concrete structure is also not a “cold marble monument” in the figurative sense – it is living symbolism in which multiple communities work to define and delimit based upon cultural context, situational demands, and expressed desires. The “proper context” or genre is not merely found, but struggled over in conversation between interested participants. Moreover, as the succession of the chapters in this dissertation demonstrates, the work of elaborating, in Black’s words, “the vision of the fullest rhetorical potentialities” of any symbolic action may never be fully completed.⁵³⁸ The next chapter, by discussing the spatial arrangements of Libeskind’s original proposal and the opened Jewish Museum Berlin using Michel Foucault’s concept of “heterotopias,” demonstrates the extent to which the continual resituating and recontextualizing of seemingly stable, “concrete” symbolic actions can occur over even a relatively short period of time.

⁵³⁷ Ibid, 83.

⁵³⁸ Ibid, 89.

7.0 TRANSFORMING SPACE: JEWISH MUSEUM AS DOUBLED HETEROTOPIA

Asked to articulate the aspirations of the Jewish Museum Berlin on the occasion of its fully-curated public opening, director W. Michael Blumenthal argued that it sought both to tell the entire history of Jewish life in Germany and to “show that the various minorities in a multicultural society, whether religious or cultural in kind, can live together peacefully and must be recognized as citizens.”⁵³⁹ Averaging just over 350,000 visitors annually split between Germans and international visitors in 2005 and 2006,⁵⁴⁰ the museum developed this bifurcated rhetorical strategy to confront two different concerns: how to create an appropriate museum devoted to German-Jewish history after the Holocaust, and how to make local historical concerns relevant to global audiences.⁵⁴¹ The Jewish Museum Berlin’s development coincided with German reunification and the reframing of Berlin as an important cultural capital of Europe, making it well situated to demonstrate the necessity for continual rhetorical adaptation over time. In so doing, this history not only builds an appreciation for the evolving demands placed upon enduring rhetorics in transitional societies, but it also offers opportunities to adapt, clarify, and

⁵³⁹ [Darüber hinaus wollen wir vermitteln, dass in einer multikulturellen Gesellschaft die verschiedensten Minoritäten, ob religiöse oder kultureller Art, friedlich miteinander zusammenleben können und als Staatsbürger werden müssen.] Claudia Becker, “Erinnerungen an Juden in Deutschland,” *Berliner Morgenpost*, September 9, 2001.

⁵⁴⁰ Based upon the visitor statistics compiled by the Jewish Museum Berlin for the years 2005 and 2006. Stiftung Jüdisches Museum Berlin, *Annual Report 2005-2006* (Berlin: Jüdisches Museum Berlin, 2007), 34-35.

⁵⁴¹ This chapter provides a concrete example of how processes of globalization (in this case global tourism) intersect with the rhetorical practices of cultural self-presentation. For work outlining this concern within communication, see Peter Monge, “Communication Structures and Processes in Globalization,” *Journal of Communication* 48, no. 4 (1998): 142-53; and Raka Shome and Radha S. Hegde, “Culture, Communication, and the Challenge of Globalization,” *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 19 (2002): 172-89.

expand available theoretical concepts used to describe audience identification and the work of spatial rhetoric.

Libeskind's 1989 competition design, discussed at length in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3, can be accurately described as a heterotopia. Heterotopias, according to Michel Foucault, are closed or semi-closed spaces that relate to other sites, "but in such a way as to [suspend], neutralize, or invert a set of relations" at work in a culture.⁵⁴² He outlines six heterotopian characteristics: they are culturally specific, their function shifts over time, they juxtapose several seemingly incompatible spaces within a single site, they organize temporal experience, they have distinct rituals of entrance, and they perform a necessary social function (often social fantasy or compensation).⁵⁴³ Foucault's criteria provide a "systematic description" to scholars interested in "heterotopology" – reading the values, forms of knowing, and tactics of power at work in a culture through its arrangements of space.⁵⁴⁴

Heterotopias are not *just* different spaces; they actively confirm, mutate, or resist the sensibilities of a culture. Heterotopias work like a collective mirror, allowing a culture to glimpse some essential aspect of its self image through an arrangement of space.⁵⁴⁵ But just like mirrors enable one to reevaluate and scrutinize one's self presentation, heterotopias can distort, magnify, or in some other way transfigure cultural self-discourse.⁵⁴⁶ According to Foucault, "it is on the basis of this newly perceived order that the codes of language, perception, and practice are

⁵⁴² Michel Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," trans. Jay Miskowiec, *Diacritics* 16 (1986): 24. The French term *suspendent* is better rendered as "suspend," rather than the translator's choice of "suspect." Thanks to one of the anonymous reviewers for calling attention to this issue.

⁵⁴³ Ibid, 24-27.

⁵⁴⁴ Ibid, 24.

⁵⁴⁵ Ibid, 24.

⁵⁴⁶ Kevin Hetherington, *The Badlands of Modernity: Heterotopia and Social Ordering* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 141.

criticized and rendered partially invalid.”⁵⁴⁷ Heterotopias, though active, are neither essentially progressive nor conservative in orientation; their functions can vary widely from the hegemonic accommodation of seemingly contradictory differences to the inversion of established cultural values.⁵⁴⁸ It is also not necessary that such spaces (or peoples using them) are consciously resistive to or recuperative of dominant cultural practices. Their unusual arrangement participates in the transformation of values, sometimes imperceptibly, by rearranging the “lines of making sense” available to a culture.⁵⁴⁹ In essence, Foucault provides an outline for researchers to trace the rhetorical agency of some spaces, echoing Raymie McKerrow’s call to see space and time as “symbolic processes which are fully implicated in engaging, constraining, producing, and maintaining discursive practices.”⁵⁵⁰

Of course, identifying Libeskind’s 1989 design as a heterotopia does not alone offer a new insight for scholars of rhetoric and public address. Researchers have already identified several heterotopias, from airport terminals, to cars with loud stereos, city plazas, and World’s Fair exhibitions, among others.⁵⁵¹ But something occurs to this heterotopia during the process of its construction and curation that makes it helpful for understanding both the vibrancy of spatial

⁵⁴⁷ Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (New York: Vintage, 1994), xxi. Foucault’s preface suggests that spatial arrangements can be read, like a text, in order to trace historical changes in a culture.

⁵⁴⁸ Scholarship testifies to this variation of functions and outcomes. See Meiling Cheng, “Highways, L.A.: Multiple Communities in a Heterolocus,” *Theatre Journal* 53 (2001): 429-54; Josh D. Kun, “The Aural Border,” *Theatre Journal* 52 (2000): 1-21; Joost van Loon, “Chronotopes: Of/in the Televisualization of the 1992 Los Angeles Riots,” *Theory, Culture and Society* 14 (1997): 89-104; and Andrew Wood, “The Middletons, Futurama, and Progressland: Disciplinary Technology and Temporal Heterotopia in Two New York World’s Fairs,” *New Jersey Journal of Communication* 11 (2003): 63-75.

⁵⁴⁹ Barbara Biesecker, “Michel Foucault and the Question of Rhetoric,” *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 25 (1992): 356. Biesecker’s explanation of agency in Foucault’s work has heavily informed this essay’s interpretation of heterotopian spaces.

⁵⁵⁰ Raymie McKerrow, “Space and Time in the Postmodern Polity,” *Western Journal of Communication* 63 (1999): 272.

⁵⁵¹ Antonio A. Arantes, “The War of Places: Symbolic Boundaries and Liminalities in Urban Space,” *Theory, Culture & Society* 13, no.4 (1996): 81-92; Sonia Liff and Fred Steward, “Shaping E-Access in the Cybercafé: Networks, Boundaries and Heterotopian Innovation,” *New Media and Society* 5 (2003): 313-34; Daniel Makagon, “Sonic Earthquakes,” *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies* 3 (2006): 223-39; Wood, “Middletons,” 63-75; and Wood, “A Rhetoric of Ubiquity: Terminal Space as Omnitopia,” *Communication Theory* 13 (2003): 324-44.

rhetoric and the variations of audience identification strategies. For Foucault, space and time are closely linked, and accordingly, he isolates three ways in which the concept of time relates to heterotopian spaces: heterotopias are *kairotic*, responding to specific contextual circumstances;⁵⁵² they establish “heterochronies,” different experiences of time enabled by the arrangement (disposition) of space;⁵⁵³ and their functions change based on the passage of time.⁵⁵⁴ While nearly all previous scholars have emphasized the timeliness of heterotopias and a few have highlighted temporal configuration in them,⁵⁵⁵ the passage of time and its effect upon heterotopian spaces has had little, if any, treatment to date.

How does an enduring heterotopian space, such as Libeskind’s Berlin Museum extension, respond to changing cultural conditions? Although recognized as a masterful negotiation of the cultural tensions existing at the time of the architectural competition, the changing political, economic, and cultural contexts in Berlin created a series of unanticipated challenges and opportunities for his design. Several factors—the fall of the Berlin Wall, the reunification of Germany, the movement of the national capital to Berlin, the financial burden of rebuilding and reintegrating the city’s infrastructure, the changes in the Berlin Museum collections, gallery spaces, and mission—participated in a changing climate of opinion in the city.⁵⁵⁶ Amazingly, the extension survived a 1991 threat to delay construction by Berlin’s mayor Eberhard Diepgen, the

⁵⁵² For treatments of *kairos* in communication, see Montesano, “Kairos and Kerygma,” 164-78; Pauley, “Rhetoric and Timeliness,” 26-53; and Scott, “Kairos as Indeterminate Risk Management,” 115-43.

⁵⁵³ Foucault, “Of Other Spaces,” 26. For time as figuration in public address scholarship, see Lake, “Between Myth and History,” 123-51; Leff, “Dimensions of Temporality,” 26-31; Megill and McCloskey, “The Rhetoric of History,” 221-38; and Zulick and Leff, “Time and the ‘True Light’,” 20-31.

⁵⁵⁴ Foucault, “Of Other Spaces,” 25. Public memory studies provide insight about the influence of time on rhetorical objects. See Hasain, “Anne Frank,” 349-74; James, “Envisioning Postcommunism,” 157-76; and Nora, “Between Memory and History,” 1-20.

⁵⁵⁵ For treatments of temporal disposition in heterotopias, see van Loon, “Chronotopes,” 89-104; and Wood, “Middletons,” 63-75.

⁵⁵⁶ “Climate of opinion” refers to the set of background assumptions, beliefs, and practices that make a rhetorical appeal intelligible. Carl L. Becker, *Heavenly City*, 1-31.

abandonment of the Collegienhaus by the Berlin Museum, and severe monetary shortfalls, while seizing the opportunity in the late 1990s to become an autonomous “Jewish Museum Berlin” partially sponsored by the national government.⁵⁵⁷ When finally opened with displays in September 2001, local and international audiences recognized the museum as both a significant acknowledgement of the contributions of the Jewish community to the nation and an exemplary expression of the complex difficulties diasporic groups experience living within a larger dominant culture.⁵⁵⁸

The re-use of Libeskind’s structure as an autonomous Jewish Museum in the newly-relocated national capital of Germany, a city interested in building its image as an international tourist destination and European cultural center, necessitated a series of changes in its interior presentation, as documented in Chapters 5 and 6.⁵⁵⁹ This chapter isolates one example of particular significance, the placement of Israeli artist Menashe Kadishman’s installation *Shalechet* (or *Fallen Leaves*) in the “Memory Void,” the easternmost (rear) fragment of the void line. Formed by over ten thousand steel cut faces strewn across the floor, Kadishman dedicated the work to not only the victims of the Holocaust in particular, but also all victims of violence and war more generally. Asking museum visitors to walk upon these roughly-cut steel faces with horrifying expressions, the installation invites viewers to reflect upon their own participation in and privileges conferred from other analogous acts of violence. Situating German-Jewish history as a paradigmatic example, the installation’s call for viewer participation in a metaphorical act of violence (stepping upon the “face” of an unknown other) promotes identification with the

⁵⁵⁷ Michael Spens, “Berlin Phoenix,” *Architectural Review*, April 1999, 40-47.

⁵⁵⁸ Jeff Barak, “To Learn from the Mistakes of the Past,” *Jerusalem Post*, September 17, 2001; Stephen Erlanger, “A Memory-Strewn Celebration of Germany’s Jews,” *New York Times*, September 10, 2001; Dieter J. Optitz, “Haus des Erinnerns,” *Berliner Morgenpost*, September 10, 2001; and Natan Sznajder, “Wem gehört das Jüdische Museum?” *Tageszeitung* (Berlin), September 8, 2001.

⁵⁵⁹ Abbott, “Washington and Berlin,” 101-24; and Huyssen, *Present Pasts*, 72-84.

significance of this particular history museum's story and message for an international, culturally diverse audience.

This chapter argues that Menashe Kadishman's *Shalechet* performs a unique function in the Jewish Museum Berlin's spatial rhetoric: it "doubles" Libeskind's original heterotopia in that the exhibit constitutes a second heterotopia within the encompassing one provided by the architecture. This conclusion has two main implications for scholars of public address and spatial rhetoric. First, the emphasis on the historical shifts in the Jewish Museum Berlin's use of space reveals the extent to which heterotopian spaces are dynamic sites of rhetorical invention adapted not only to their immediate surroundings, but also to temporally fluctuating cultural sensibilities. Highlighting the museum's spatial audience adaptation confirms Foucault's often overlooked suggestion, in his second criteria, that heterotopian spaces are temporally contingent and will only remain relevant if they adjust to changes in a cultural situation. Libeskind's heterotopian design, by the time of its completion, needed another strategy of making its historical displays relevant and interesting to a non-Jewish and non-German viewing audience. Kadishman's heterotopian installation, *re-framing* the rest of the museum's historical displays as an example with which the international viewer can identify through a personally relevant analogous situation, provided a necessary supplement for the international viewership of the Jewish Museum Berlin.

Second, treating Libeskind's museum design and the space of Kadishman's installation as a doubled heterotopia helps to locate the different strategies of identification at work in each. Libeskind's architectural design articulated an inextricable relationship between German and Jewish histories in Berlin, such that one was "consubstantial," in Kenneth Burke's terms, with

the other.⁵⁶⁰ Kadishman's *Shalechet*, in contrast, uses a different rhetoric of identification, what James P. Zappan calls "dialectical-rhetorical transcendence," particularly necessary for international museum visitors.⁵⁶¹ Kadishman's artwork transforms the significance of the museum's historical narrative, otherwise directly relevant only to a Jewish or German person, into an example so that an international viewer can relate this history to other examples of violence against cultural diasporas closer to that visitor's own experience. In other words, heterotopic doubling reveals the different rhetorical logics made available to visitors for making sense of and caring about the historical materials on display in the Jewish Museum Berlin.

The chapter unfolds simply, starting with a discussion of Libeskind's original 1989 design. That section is followed by an elaboration of the shifts in the building's layout and use over time, with particular attention given to the placement of Menashe Kadishman's *Shalechet*. The sections describe how each heterotopia meets Foucault's six criteria and how each develops a type of identification. Because, as the author of this essay, my research journey took me into the exhibit space at a specific historical moment, I emerge as observer and participant in the later portions of the essay to underscore the experience of Kadishman's installation and its location within the architecture.

⁵⁶⁰ Burke, *Rhetoric of Motives*, 20-23.

⁵⁶¹ "Dialectical-rhetorical transcendence" is synthesized from various parts of Kenneth Burke's work, cultivating forms of shared interest across identities and nationalities. "This dialectical-rhetorical transcendence is significant for rhetorical theory because it challenges rhetoric as a socially responsible endeavor to view...individual discourses in relation to each other, to act as well as to study these discourses, and thus to intervene by seeking not only to persuade others in their own best interest but also to create larger communities of interest that transcend individual and group ideologies and interests." James P. Zappan, "Kenneth Burke on Dialectical-Rhetorical Transcendence," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 42 (2009): 281.

7.1 LIBESKIND'S PROPOSAL AS HETEROTOPIA

During June 22 and 23, 1989, a competition committee commissioned by the city deliberated upon 165 different designs submitted for the Extension of the Berlin Museum with the Jewish Museum Department.⁵⁶² Many of the technical aspects of the project had been decided by the city government over the previous two years. The extension would be located at Hollmanstrasse 19-22, an empty lot just to the south of the Berlin Museum. The Jewish Museum Department was allocated thirteen hundred square meters out of approximately ten thousand for the entire extension, though other historical displays would clearly incorporate Jewish material when appropriate.⁵⁶³ After years of careful negotiation over the structure of the museum, officials decided that the Jewish Department would have separate displays, but be spatially contiguous with the main historical exhibition. A section titled “Jews in Society” would be the transition between Jewish history and Berlin history, creating a sense of integration with the rest of the exhibition.⁵⁶⁴

For the competition committee, the task of integrating several different political and social pressures, as discussed in Chapter Two, was daunting. The pressure of acknowledging explicitly the Holocaust in the design, the concerns in offending Germans sensitive to continued public shame, and the need to acknowledge the history of the Allied air raids at the site of the extension placed an enormous memory burden on any potential design. In addition, the events of Bitburg and the *Historikerstreit* made the national and international stakes of the design high, since the extension could not be perceived as, in any way, attempting to assuage or shirk German

⁵⁶² Cierpiatowski and Keil, “Ergebnisprotokoll,” 1-8.

⁵⁶³ Rolf Bothe to Volker Hassemer, 10 November 1988, in Weinland and Winkler, *Das Jüdische Museum*, 288.

⁵⁶⁴ Rolf Bothe, “Ein eigenständiges Jüdisches Museum,” 226-33.

collective guilt for the Holocaust. Furthermore, the extension must, given the small but growing Jewish population of the city, identify the Jewish diaspora as a major contributor to both the past and present cultural life of Berlin. Finally, the ideological politics of building in West Berlin required creating something that contrasted with the industrial pre-fabricated architecture of East Berlin, putting the relative development of the Western sector of the city on display. Though the grand mid-century plans to rebuild the city in pure architectural modernism had been abandoned in the late 1970s, the competition committee was charged with choosing a design that fit with the historic character of the neighborhood and would have a high value with regard to architectural style.⁵⁶⁵

On June 23, 1989, the committee announced a winner: Libeskind's *Between the Lines*. Referring to the design as "a quite extraordinary, completely autonomous solution" and "a profound response" to the competition brief, the choice was unusual in several respects.⁵⁶⁶ First, Daniel Libeskind, at that point, had never built a single building and doubts existed whether this extension could be built. Second, Libeskind felt the sense of integration outlined in competition documents seemed more like compartmentalization in adjacent spaces, prompting him to break with design protocol. As he described in his memoirs, "the requirement was for a separate extension that would house various departments; I would offer a design that would architecturally integrate Jewish history into Berlin's rich, multi-textured history and enable people, even encourage them, to feel what had happened."⁵⁶⁷ Finally, the design itself seemed to be so intricate as to "make its contents subordinate and insignificant."⁵⁶⁸ Most museums try to

⁵⁶⁵ Ibid, 36.

⁵⁶⁶ Competition jurists, quoted in Russell, "Project Diary," 76.

⁵⁶⁷ Libeskind, *Breaking Ground*, 82.

⁵⁶⁸ Rolf Bothe, quoted in Young, "Daniel Libeskind," 13.

neutralize architectural space; Libeskind's design had so drastically inverted the figure-ground relationship that effective curating might prove difficult.

Considered as a heterotopia, Libeskind's design meets the six criteria provided by Foucault. The design is a "crisis heterotopia," sites for groups undergoing some form of transition or disappearance, since it responded to an exigency regarding the absence of Jewish cultural visibility in the Berlin Museum. It had a culturally determined function at this particular moment, providing relief for the Berlin Museum's space problems. Two main juxtapositions of seemingly incompatible space existed in Libeskind's design: its contrast with the Collegienhaus symbolized the distinct, yet overlapping identifications of German and Jew, while the two lines comprising the above-ground portion of the museum extension itself (the void line and the zigzagging exhibition space) evoked the interplay between the concepts of presence and absence more generally. Moreover, in contrast with the "stunde null" in the political narrative of West Germany, Libeskind suggested that time ended, not began, with the Holocaust and the destruction of Germany in World War II – his design would "reconnect Berlin to its own history which must never be forgotten."⁵⁶⁹ Furthermore, visitors would enter the extension through the Collegienhaus via an underground passage, establishing an unusual right of entry into the space. Finally, the extension would relate to adjacent city spaces in a way that compensated for the lost knowledge of Berlin's Jews. Libeskind mapped the addresses of prominent Jewish figures in the history of Berlin as part of the design process, using that map as an inspiration from which to produce the physical layout of the museum extension.

Libeskind's building design negotiated the myriad of conflicting sensibilities about Jewish memory in Berlin and Germany by making the history of Berlin's Jewish community

⁵⁶⁹ Libeskind, *Gedenkbuch: Berlin*.

consubstantial with the broader history of Berlin. He “thought that the museum...should be accessible, let’s say imaginatively and metaphysically, to citizens of the past and of the future, a place for all citizens of Berlin to confirm their common heritage.”⁵⁷⁰ Libeskind did not mean that these histories would be entirely reduced to the same thing, but instead, following Burke, that they would be “both joined and separate, at once a distinct substance and consubstantial with another.”⁵⁷¹ In contrast with the superficial concern over spatial contiguity of displays previously described as an integrative solution by Berlin Museum officials, Libeskind offered a more significant spatial and spiritual integration of the histories of Jews and non-Jews in Berlin.

To accomplish this objective, his design deployed three significant rhetorical maneuvers. First, it imagined a sophisticated physical integration of museum spaces, allowing viewers to feel and perform the connection between histories. In the juxtaposition of buildings, the zinc-clad surfaces and erratic angles of the extension above ground would contrast with the Collegienhaus, while the underground passage would suggest a fundamental connection below the surface that only the museum visitor could encounter. As such, the visitor is positioned as a peripatetic archeologist, rediscovering lost connections between two distinctive, yet overlapping and intertwined cultures.⁵⁷² In addition, the entwinement of lines in the above-ground portion of his extension evokes the sense of two paths that, while distinct, cross at several points of their historical progression. In both the symbolism of the structure and in the movement of people through exhibits, visitors would be left with a sense of substantial commonality between Berlin and Jewish culture – apparent juxtaposition melds into inseparable connection.

⁵⁷⁰ Libeskind, “Between the Lines” *Research in Phenomenology*, 84.

⁵⁷¹ Burke, *Rhetoric of Motives*, 21.

⁵⁷² Isenberg, “Reading,” 155-79.

Second, Libeskind reached beyond physical connection, articulating a spiritual and emotional link between Jews and non-Jews in Berlin. The two lines comprising the above ground portions of the extension connote both the linked fates of Germans and Jews and the juxtaposition of presence and absence as abstract metaphors for human loss.⁵⁷³ Libeskind, negotiating a way to make the architecture symbolic of all the different forms of devastation experienced within the city during World War II, all of which would be on display in the museum, made them visible and tangible in the form of a generic, polysemic void running through the center of the museum extension.⁵⁷⁴ The spiritual connections between various histories are distilled into the same symbolic form.

The physical and the emotional registers of identification were at the forefront of the design process, providing further confirmation of the importance Libeskind gave these first two rhetorical moves. Using “an irrational set of lines” connecting the addresses of prominent Jews in the history of Berlin as a starting point for his design, the building condensed an otherwise scattered knowledge of Jewish influence on Berlin culture into the museum structure.⁵⁷⁵ He writes:

I went about trying to find out the addresses of Berliners like Kleist, Heine, Rahel Varnhagen, E. T. A. Hoffman, and Mies van der Rohe, but also of more contemporary Berliners like Schönberg, Paul Celan, Walter Benjamin...I then tried to make a connection between those who were the carriers of the spiritual entity of Berlin as an emblem, and I ended up with a hexagonal set of lines.⁵⁷⁶

Libeskind’s hexagonal figure required an older mode of knowing, the city map, upon which to plot it. While the map serves as a physical resource, it is limited; it misses the “spirit” of Berlin, which Libeskind identifies with its Jewish cultural icons. By overlaying city space with the

⁵⁷³ Libeskind, *Gedenkbuch: Berlin*.

⁵⁷⁴ For a discussion of presence and absence as properties of architecture, see Eisenman, “Architecture,” 176-81.

⁵⁷⁵ Libeskind, “Between the Lines,” *Research in Phenomenology*, 82.

⁵⁷⁶ *Ibid*, 83.

matrix of connections between Jewish Berliners as a design inspiration, Libeskind melded the physical and the spiritual, Jews and Berliners, into a single substance embodied in the extension structure.⁵⁷⁷

Finally, Libeskind's design was framed as a symbolic opposition to the politics of cultural separation between Jews and Germans, a politics which finds its extreme expression in the events of the Holocaust. In his 2004 memoirs, he recounts how the phrase "Jüdische Abteilung" (Jewish Department) struck him as inappropriate term for the project. "It was the *very phrase* used by Adolf Eichmann... It was the Jüdische Abteilung der Gestapo that had the responsibility for carrying out the 'Final Solution'."⁵⁷⁸ Whether or not Libeskind provides a fair characterization of the intent of the competition committee, he was very sensitive to the relationship between the rhetoric of cultural division and the attempted eradication of Europe's Jewish population. Libeskind's decision to keep the spaces of the extension fluid and flexible provides a powerful rejoinder. "The museum ensemble is thus always on the verge of *Becoming* – no longer suggestive of a final solution."⁵⁷⁹ In essence, the physical and spiritual integration of Jewish and German history outlined in the various aspects of Libeskind's design constituted a compelling repudiation of the violent cultural politics of division that had dominated early twentieth century Germany.

From this vantage point, Libeskind's rhetorical strategy bears remarkable similarity to Kenneth Burke's description of identification as a form of consubstantiality. Libeskind was

⁵⁷⁷ "The 'doing' that is made possible by the arrangement of lines of making sense both marks a point of their positive deployment and, in opening up a virtual space or anticipatory structure, 'renders [those lines or force relations] fragile,' 'mak[ing] it possible to thwart them.'" Biesecker, "Michel Foucault," 356. Heterotopias operate as a "virtual space or anticipatory structure" that makes available a new way of thinking about the relationship between spaces, inverts the value of knowledge between old and new lines of making sense, and consequently, opens up possibilities for human action.

⁵⁷⁸ Libeskind, *Breaking Ground*, 79.

⁵⁷⁹ Libeskind, *Gedenkbuch: Berlin*.

required to negotiate several different memory objectives produced by a problematic historical relationship between a dominant German culture and its diasporic Jewish counterpart. His solution was to design a building that articulated these two identities as inextricably intertwined in history, though certainly not identical with each other, so that the history of one necessarily included the history of the other. While addressing the need to confront a German-perpetrated human tragedy, Libeskind's extension design created pathways for empathy among Germans and Jews alike, painting their histories, their sufferings, and ultimately their futures, as connected in a substantial way. As James Young argued, "on peeling away each layer from the one under it, jurors found that the project's deeper concept came into startling relief. It was almost as if the true dilemma at the heart of their project was not apparent to them until revealed in Libeskind's design."⁵⁸⁰

Such an inventive synthesis of the tensions in Berlin's memory culture did not last long. The Berlin Wall opened on November 9, 1989, with German reunification occurring less than a year later. The passage of even this short amount of time would place enormous challenges in Libeskind's yet-to-be-built extension, which, as this essay argues, eventually required the creation of another heterotopian space within it.

7.2 BERLIN, GLOBALIZED

In February 2005, I visited Libeskind's finished product, what had become the Jewish Museum Berlin. At that time, the building had been open to the public for nearly six years, with

⁵⁸⁰ Young, "Daniel Libeskind," 13. The reception of the design in West Berlin papers was similarly positive. Jan Draeger, "Zick-Zack-Bau für jüdische Geschichte," *Berliner Morgenpost*, June 27, 1989; and Jaeger, "Ein Chance."

exhibitions inside for four (the first two years the museum opened empty for visitors to appreciate the architecture). As part of a multilingual advertising campaign that began in 2002, the museum created billboards and postcards with surreal images (such as a coconut split in half to reveal a grapefruit interior or a toothpaste tube with a caterpillar being squeezed out onto a toothbrush) accompanied by the words “Nicht das, was Sie erwarten” (not what you expect).⁵⁸¹ Indeed, the advertising campaign understates the case. What was designed to hold a restaurant, office space, and the Jewish Museum Department for the Berlin Museum had become a main attraction funded by the city, private donations, and the national government. The Collegienhaus, which previously hosted the main exhibition for the (West) Berlin Museum, became a coat room, gift shop, office space, and restaurant for the Jewish Museum Berlin. How the times had changed; the extension became the main building, while the original museum played the part of an extended appendage.

One of the most striking changes has been in the organization of exhibitions. The competition committee had a plan for the space in 1989, with areas devoted to: Religion, Community, Jews in Society 1750-1870, and Jews in Society 1870-1945, the latter two serving as intermediary exhibitions between the Jewish collection and the main German history collection.⁵⁸² The 2001 opening of the Jewish Museum Berlin had a different display plan that remains intact today. A chronological main exhibition covers two millennia of German-Jewish history in most of the above-ground portion of the museum. The below-ground axes are designed to focus on Jewish-German experience during National Socialism. The axis of continuity spans

⁵⁸¹ Peter Chametzky, “Not What We Expected: The Jewish Museum Berlin in Practice,” *Museum and Society* 6 (2008): 216. Advertisements were produced in five different languages: German, English, Hebrew, Russian, and Turkish. Helene Stolzenberg, “Case Study: The Jewish Museum Berlin. Can a Jewish Museum NOT be a Holocaust Memorial?” (unpublished manuscript, Department of Arts Administration, Indiana University, 2003), p. 23, Accession No: XIV Stolz 68, Research Library, Jewish Museum Berlin.

⁵⁸² *Competition for an Extension*, 68-69.

the entire basement and connects the lower level the beginning of the main exhibition. The axis of exile contains a series of exhibits documenting the lives of those that emigrated from Germany during the Third Reich, and culminates with an outdoor garden/installation art piece designed to give visitors the bodily sensation of feeling uprooted. The axis of Holocaust also tells personal stories of those murdered in concentration camps, punctuated at the end with the “Holocaust Tower,” a hollowed concrete pillar confining visitors with little light and only dull aural traces of city life outside.⁵⁸³

On the first floor, reserved for special exhibitions, the curators of the museum made a particularly interesting decision. At the back of the exhibition area to the left, the museum opens into the “Memory Void,” the rear piece of the mostly inaccessible void line running through the museum. In the Memory Void, bare concrete walls run the height of the museum. The chamber is enclosed, but indirect light illuminates it. In the original extension plan, this space would not be open to the public.

Upon entering the Memory Void in February 2005, I encountered Menashe Kadishman’s art installation *Shalechet* along with this description in both German and English:

Menashe Kadishman’s installation *Shalechet* is first a memorial to the Holocaust. But he reaches beyond this and dedicates it to all innocent victims of violence and war. He requests that visitors walk upon the work. The title *Fallen Leaves* raises suggestions both of negative predestination and of hope for new life in the upcoming spring.⁵⁸⁴

Along the floor, one finds over 10,000 faces cut from heavy, circular iron plates. As one art critic described it, “The round and oval head shapes, half as large as life, are flame-cut out of two to eight centimeter sheet steel; the molten metal hardens on the outer surrounds and inner edges –

⁵⁸³ Stiftung Jüdisches Museum Berlin, *Discovering the Jewish Museum Berlin* (Berlin: Jüdisches Museum Berlin, 2001).

⁵⁸⁴ I visited the Jewish Museum Berlin again in September 2009, and by that time, the curators changed the description of the installation slightly, no longer explicitly inviting visitors to walk upon Kadishman’s work. However, after asking a museum employee stationed in the room, I learned that visitors are still allowed to do so.

mouth, nose and eyes. Dross and rust enliven the shape and change it all the time.”⁵⁸⁵ The changing of the faces over time mimics the turning of leaves, fusing the “organic and the industrial, sculpture and painting.”⁵⁸⁶

The Memory Void with *Shalechet*, much like the rest of the museum, meets all six of Foucault’s characteristics of a heterotopia. The space and the installation respond to a particular form of crisis: the mismatch between the museum’s content and its global audience. The display of *Shalechet* performs an important cultural function: affirming the vitality of contemporary Jewish culture.⁵⁸⁷ This space juxtaposes and integrates several otherwise incompatible narratives, either carried by individual viewers or articulated by the rest of the museum’s displays, through the anonymity of the faces, or “leaves,” strewn across the floor. Furthermore, time shifts in the Memory Void from a linear narrative to a cyclical, seasonal time that evokes the eternal return of death and regeneration. Moreover, viewers are asked to participate in the installation as part of the rite of entrance. Finally, as the description provided by the curators suggests, the space changes how the rest of the museum space relates to each other, displacing the particularity of the German-Jewish historical narrative and their respective tensions as *the overarching message* conveyed to the visitor; those displays instead provide an example for a larger concern about the perils of cultural intolerance.

The spatial changes that culminated in the placing of *Shalechet* into the center of the museum’s architecture use a strategy of identification known as “dialectical-rhetorical transcendence.” In contrast to Libeskind’s reliance upon consubstantiality in his extension

⁵⁸⁵ Ulrich Schneider, “Shalechet (Fallen Leaves) 1997-1999,” in *Menashe Kadishman: Shalechet; Haupter und Opfer*, ed. Maïke Sternberg and Harlow Tigue (Milano, Italy: Charta, 1999), 35.

⁵⁸⁶ Arturo Schwarz, “Menashe Kadishman,” in Sternberg and Tigue, *Menashe Kadishman*, 21.

⁵⁸⁷ Tom Freudenheim, speaking while still designing the museum displays, made it clear that the museum was interested in incorporating the work of contemporary Jewish artists. Tom Freudenheim, “Berlin’s New Jewish Museum,” *PAJ: A Journal of Performance and Art* 22, no. 2 (2000): 44.

design, the political, social, and cultural transformations that took place during planning, construction, and curation of Libeskind's building created an entirely different rhetorical situation. With Berlin's burgeoning tourist industry and the international recognition garnered for Libeskind's architectural work, it could no longer be expected that the majority of viewers would self-identify as either German or Jewish, and as such, the museum curators had to think through another way to make the history of Germany's Jewish population meaningful to a diverse audience. As described in Zappan's reading of Burke's works, dialectical-rhetorical transcendence is for precisely this situation, it "aim[s] at identification in its larger and more complex sense as transcendence—a 'cooperative competition' that has the potential to bring together multiple and conflicting assertions in generalizations that are larger and richer than any one of them alone."⁵⁸⁸ Dialectical-rhetorical transcendence becomes an intermediary between mere consubstantial identification and Burke's striving toward a utopian "pure persuasion" (in which human social identification transcends all partisan interest) – a method of overcoming the particularity of parochial cultural interests through symbolic generalizations that create analogies of history, experience, or belief between distinct peoples.⁵⁸⁹

Three main functions of Menashe Kadishman's *Shalechet* orchestrate this style of identification. First, Kadishman's installation produces a rhetorical slippage between the Holocaust, understood as a particularly German and Jewish historical phenomenon, and a more generic understanding of perpetrator and victim relations. The installation description provided by the Jewish Museum Berlin for visitors is quite deliberate on this issue. Kadishman dedicates it first to a particular event, the Holocaust, but then also dedicates it to all victims of violence and war. While at a first glance, the description might seem to trivialize the Holocaust, similar to

⁵⁸⁸ Zappan, "Kenneth Burke," 295.

⁵⁸⁹ Ibid, 295-97.

some participants in the *Historikerstreit* of the 1980s, a more subtle reading would argue that the installation “doubles” its memorial function while maintaining the singularity of the experience of the Holocaust as a devastating event in German-Jewish relations worthy of primary consideration (thus the language of “first a memorial to the Holocaust”).⁵⁹⁰ The other victims of violence and war are given secondary consideration in his work and are not named by the artist or the curators. Furthermore, in contrast to the detail of the Jewish-German historical narrative provided in the rest of the museum, the steel-cut faces in Kadishman’s work are anonymous; they lack even enough individuation to make up a particular class or character type, making them a polysemic symbol of any possible victim. In essence, *Shalechet* both affirms the specificity of Holocaust memory and sets the ground for its transcendence with other histories. Holocaust history is not effaced, but it provides an extreme example to think through other possible analogous narratives of violence for the museum visitor.⁵⁹¹

Given the unwillingness to supply the particular histories that become the secondary topic of *Shalechet*, Kadishman makes a second brilliant rhetorical gesture: the solicitation of viewer activity in the artwork to complete its meaning. “Of course, the way that *Shalechet* is installed involves the observer as an active culprit who is obliged to walk over the heads,” opines art critic Ulrich Schneider.⁵⁹² The visitor is placed in a compromising position, stepping upon these anonymous faces seemingly in pain, as if actively participating in the perpetration of violence. As one does so, the faces shift beneath one’s feet, producing a reverberating metal-on-metal sound reminiscent of forced labor camps. For an international audience with no direct historical

⁵⁹⁰ Some commentators notice only this primary purpose. See Helen Bain, “World Within Journey from Te Papa to Berlin,” *Dominion* (Wellington, NZ), September 27, 2001; Phyllis Meras, “Ever a Berlin Presence,” *Washington Times*, September 21, 2002; and Derek Scally, “Deconstructing History,” *Irish Times*, September 11, 2001.

⁵⁹¹ Marc Scheps, “Falling Leaves as Dialogue,” in Sternberg and Tighe, *Menashe Kadishman*, 51-53.

⁵⁹² Schneider, “Shalechet,” 35.

link with the Holocaust, being placed in this position would be inappropriate if given only the primary dedication (or it would dedifferentiate the roles of active perpetrators and those from other countries that did little to stop the extermination of European Jews). But with this secondary audience in mind, the broader invocation of “violence” allows the visitor to include their own memory supplement to the artwork based on the particularity of her or his own cultural background. The anonymity of the faces provides the unremembered foundation (the literal ground upon which one stands) of one’s existence; it invokes the suffering that somehow makes the privilege of one’s life possible.⁵⁹³ Anecdotal evidence from both interviews conducted by the museum staff and from W. Michael Blumenthal’s interaction with visitors suggests that this call to participate as a perpetrator had a powerful impact on patrons of the museum.⁵⁹⁴

Finally, the figuration of time in Kadishman’s installation furthers the artwork’s call for memorial transcendence, linking violence of past, present and future into a single aesthetic form. Both the main exhibition and the basement place anti-Semitic violence in the past, though a consistent and recurring theme in German-Jewish relations. The regenerative rhetoric of time in the Memory Void, evoked through the naturalistic metaphors of “leaves” and seasonal cycles, is not necessarily inconsistent with the surrounding space, but the act of walking upon the “leaves” changes the temporal relationship the viewer has to violence. Rather than recovering the horrors of the past, the viewer becomes part of a continuation of violence in the present. As Schwarz argues, “what we are actually asked to do is not merely to walk on a carpet of metallic human leaves, but to walk out of the question ‘where were we when all this happened?’”⁵⁹⁵ Through

⁵⁹³ Arturo Schwarz, “Shalechet,” in Sternberg and Tigue, *Menashe Kadishman*, 45.

⁵⁹⁴ Christiane Birkert, interviews with visitors of Jewish Museum Berlin, 2002, Accession. No. 1.9.Kontr 108 Bd. 2, Research Library, Jewish Museum Berlin; and Tracy Sullivan, “Noted Architect of Jewish Museum Berlin Discusses the Meaning Behind his Thought-Provoking Design,” *Jewish Ledger*, May 2002, 18-19.

⁵⁹⁵ Schwarz, “Shalechet,” 45.

allusions to seasonal death and regeneration, *Shalechet* suggests that cultural violence, of which the Holocaust provides a powerful extreme example, is a recurring theme in human relations; all visitors must address their role in the perpetuation of such conditions.

Distinct from Libeskind's consubstantiality of Jewish and German history in Berlin, particularly his response to the politics of cultural separation embodied by the Holocaust, Kadishman's installation works according to a different logic of identification based upon dialectical-rhetorical transcendence. Such a strategy was necessitated by the inability of consubstantiality to work for an international audience. It would be both out of character and shallow to try to convince visitors that they are all part of a "global village," thus making the incredibly specific history of the new Jewish Museum Berlin somehow a consubstantial part of all histories. The curators explicitly recognized that the international press received by the architect and Berlin's burgeoning tourist industry would create a diverse set of viewing publics for the museum, but that the specific history told by the museum would be insufficient to hold visitor interest in the exhibits.⁵⁹⁶ Moreover, international audiences would be necessary to create a stable visitor base for the museum after the initial local public interest inevitably waned.⁵⁹⁷ The challenge of engaging viewers would prove difficult; entirely effacing the particularity of history and place for this museum would do a disservice to its primary mission, but not reaching out to international audiences interested in Libeskind's building would alienate another base of patrons. Ken Gorbey (head curator) described this struggle, noting an eventual multiplication of the Jewish Museum Berlin's stated missions after audience testing and display concepts were

⁵⁹⁶ Freudenheim, "Berlin's New Jewish Museum," 39-40.

⁵⁹⁷ Visitor statistics from the Jewish Museum Berlin bear out this necessity. During 2001 and 2002, 943,927 people visited the museum. Of those, twenty six percent came from other countries. Stiftung Jüdisches Museum Berlin, *Annual Report 2001-2002*, 44; 46. From the 707,000 visitors 2005 and 2006, fifty seven percent came from other countries. Stiftung Jüdisches Museum Berlin, *Annual Report 2005-2006*, 34-35.

completed. It not only sought to document German-Jewish history, it would “emphasize the benefits of harmonious interaction between various ethnic, cultural, religious, or religious groups” and would “call attention to the high cost to all of intolerance.”⁵⁹⁸ To conjoin these various goals, the curators made a smaller heterotopia within an already heterotopic museum space. Kadishman’s *Shalechet* does not specify the competing specific histories that are to be part of its transcendence, but his installation piece and its placement within the museum does provide an open-ended framework for individual visitors to see the displays in the Jewish Museum Berlin’s main exhibition as a representative anecdote for genocides across time and place.⁵⁹⁹ Placing *Shalechet* in a special exhibition area immediately preceding the visitor’s ascent to the main exhibition functions as a preparatory statement for the museum’s global audience: the history seen may not be one’s own, but does have analogical connections to conditions in other parts of the world, and as such, one ought to view the museum’s exhibition as a sort of object lesson for understanding how other diasporas around the globe both effect and are effected by their dominant culture.

7.3 CONCLUSION

Using Michel Foucault’s concept of heterotopia to feature the agency of spatial rhetoric through the passage of time, this essay has argued that the Jewish Museum Berlin, as currently curated, is best viewed as a doubled heterotopia. In so doing, the case study both highlights an exemplary

⁵⁹⁸ Ken Gorbey, “The Making of the Museum: Highest Demands from the Very Beginning,” in Stiftung Jüdisches Museum Berlin, *Annual Report 2001-2002*, 24.

⁵⁹⁹ Robert Stein’s review provides evidence of the message’s success in both his commentary on *Shalechet* and his closing lines about the museum. Stein, “Berlin Jewish Museum,” 92-3.

contemporary instance of the dynamism of spatial rhetoric as a vehicle for reading the transformation of cultural values and provides a corrective to previous scholarship that overlooked Foucault's insistence on the temporal contingency of heterotopian spaces. Between Daniel Libeskind's 1989 proposed extension to the Berlin Museum and its fully-curated opening in 2001, the cultural, social, political, and economic landscape in Berlin, as well as the rest of Germany, changed so drastically as to require significant revisions in the building's use. The resulting "doubling" of its spatial rhetoric is not merely accommodating; the second heterotopia *re-frames* the way in which the first ought to be seen and the potential ways in which viewers make the content relevant to their own context of experience. The uniqueness of this case should not detract from its value to researchers. Temporal transformations likely will affect all heterotopian spaces, and other forms of enduring rhetorical discourse also likely will have to confront this issue. Supplementing previous scholarship with a sense of a space's growth and transformation *in time* emphasizes the rhetorical work of heterotopias; their dialogue with surrounding values must either shift to meet the challenges of culture or they risk becoming antiquated relics of a previous generation.

In addition, treating the Jewish Museum Berlin as a doubled heterotopia parses the different strategies of identification at work in each and their utility for particular museum audiences. In the case of the Jewish Museum Berlin's development, the international attention garnered by Daniel Libeskind's architecture created a diverse audience for the museum, but it also produced a severe rhetorical challenge: how could an international audience not heavily versed or invested in the intricacies of the Jewish Diaspora's 2000 year development in Germany internalize the stories of the museum and make them part of their own lives? The placement of Menashe Kadishman's *Shalechet* in the museum's void line is a response to this challenge.

Identification as consubstantiality works well for a local and national audience that can and ought to see Jewish history as united in substance with German history writ large, and as a result, was deployed in most of the museum displays and architectural vision. The strategy of dialectical-rhetorical transcendence, as outlined by Zappan, at work in *Shalechet* makes a different rhetorical move, arguing not that the museum's historical displays ought to be consubstantial with the viewer's own history, but instead they should be seen as a lesson in intolerance, violence, and diasporic perseverance in which the viewer can find potential analogies in their particular cultural background.

The latter strategy of identification has particular importance for those scholars interested in the study of communication in the context of globalization. If, as Raka Shome and Radha S. Hegde argue, "the notions of identity and culture become problematized in globalization in ways that both open up new directions for communication and that invite a rethinking of contemporary ones," dialectical-rhetorical transcendence is a useful addition to rhetoric's current inventory of methods for promoting audience identification in a globalized world.⁶⁰⁰ It moves beyond identification based in consubstantiality and toward an abstraction of commonalities across identity categories, which are often based on local or national affiliations.⁶⁰¹ As such, this case study shows how dialectical-rhetorical transcendence can serve as a useful concept in future research, but perhaps also an increasingly important rhetorical strategy in our globalized contemporary environment.

Two related objections could be made to the concept of a doubled heterotopia. First, one might argue that heterotopias, being concerned with juxtaposition and accommodation of

⁶⁰⁰ Shome and Hegde, "Culture," 173-74.

⁶⁰¹ Stephen B. Crofts Wiley, "Rethinking Nationality in the Context of Globalization," *Communication Theory* 14 (2004): 78-96.

otherwise dissimilar cultural elements within a space, are treated as singular for a reason, and that different elements this essay highlighted in the Jewish Museum Berlin are only part of a singular heterotopia. Second, one could argue that the concept of spatial doubling, applied in this way, lends itself to an uncontrollable multiplication in the diversity of spaces, similar to Phaedra Pezzullo's exploration of counterpublics in practice.⁶⁰² Though both objections have some merit, the concerns are lessened if the reader recalls that the concept of heterotopia is designed to highlight particular functions of space for researchers. For the former objection, juxtaposition and accommodation are indeed important heterotopian functions, but are not exhaustive of others such as suspension, inversion or neutralization. In this case, the doubled heterotopia of Menashe Kadishman's *Shalechet* suspends the logic of identification at work in the rest of the museum in favor of another more appropriate to a broader audience, even if only temporarily. As such, treating this space as a doubled heterotopia reveals something unique to researchers about the spatial rhetoric of the Jewish Museum Berlin. With the latter objection, the risk of multiplication also offers the opportunity for potential research innovations and ought to be judged case-by-case based upon research utility. In this essay, the doubled heterotopia is not valued as a concept for its own sake, but instead because it highlights the dynamism of spatial rhetoric, it illustrates the need to attend more closely to time's passage in the study of heterotopian spaces, and it helps to isolate different strategies of identification at work in the museum.

⁶⁰² Pezzullo, "Resisting," 361.

8.0 CONCLUDING REMARKS

So, what then, are we to make of the Jewish Museum Berlin? How are we to judge it? On what grounds can we make such claims? While answering such questions would certainly render some sense of finality on the matter and might satisfy a reader, it has been the contention of this study that such questions ought to be set aside in favor of seeing the process of the museum's development from a more organic and culturally bound perspective. In an undated set of lecture notes about the symbolism of classical columns, Daniel Libeskind presumably meant to instruct his students (likely Cranbrook) about the necessary linking between architecture and the cultural imaginary. He concluded:

Let us therefore remember that in order to understand architecture, it is not enough to remember formulae from the past – emptied of all meaning; the overwhelming lesson is the realization that architecture cannot exist (or communicate) without a context or historical referent – for it is this very referent in which is contained the entire tissue of symbolic forms generated by a collective memory.⁶⁰³

In essence, to understand the design orders of classical columns, one must bring to life the stories, beliefs, and sensibilities that bring them into existence and understand how the architecture was part of the imaginative life of that society. In much the same way, this study has sought to shift the questions away from aesthetic or theoretical judgment of the Jewish Museum Berlin (or the architecture) and instead think through its use value for contemporary German

⁶⁰³ Libeskind, “The Origin of the Orders” (No Date), in Daniel Libeskind Papers 920061, Box 30, Folder 3.

society – how it is connected to the imagined collective selves of those who have a stake in its continued existence and development.

Each chapter attempted to relate episodes in the development of the Jewish Museum Berlin to conceptual insights of rhetoric and related disciplines. Chapter Two discussed the trauma of cultural fragmentation as a key conceptual background for the design competition to extend the (West) Berlin museum. Daniel Libeskind’s rhetoric of hope for a “common vision” in his extension project proposal provided a provocative corrective to that perceived cultural trauma – particularly the absence of the Jewish community. However, that common vision also included addressing perceived cultural fragmentation in the architecture, such that the committee was persuaded by what his architectural proposal seemed to illuminate about Berlin’s past and potential future.

Chapter Three compared Daniel Libeskind’s public design discussion in the December 1989 Hannover speech to the known available design materials. The chapter concluded that his four design inspirations for the museum – the addresses of prominent Berlin Jews, Schönberg’s *Moses und Aron*, the *Gedenkbuch*, and Walter Benjamin’s *Einbahnstrasse* – provided more of a narrative and ethical orientation for his architectural work than actual design elements in his proposal. The lineaments of the museum, I suggest, ought better to be understood as an open-ended symbol of future hope rather than simply a combination of the four design inspirations transposed directly into a built form.

Chapter Four examined the shifting rhetoric of the extension project around the summer 1991 potential cancellation of the Libeskind building. The German public, not yet fully reformed, began to imagine the Jewish Museum as more of an independent entity than a subset of a larger city museum. That understanding developed from both the international pressure against

cancellation and from the domestic discourse surrounding the most appropriate way to display Jewish history. The notable absence of the East German public also suggested that the Berlin public, still in transition from reunification, had not fully developed into a singular entity.

Mutation in the purpose and framing of the museum continued in the discussions of Chapter Five. The various interested parties involved in the museum's development experienced multiple, conflicting double binds tied around the meaning and desirability of an "integrated" Jewish history museum. The Jewish community was concerned about the notion of integration and its impact on cultural autonomy. The Berlin Museum and city government was also subjected to a double bind related to the proper treatment of minority groups in a multicultural society. The double binds created significant conflict, resulting in the firing of Amnon Barzel. However, those double binds eventually were dissolved by Michael Blumenthal's brilliant reformulation of the notion of an "integrated model" of Jewish historical displays.

As the Libeskind building was finished and the Jewish Museum started to become a reality, Chapter Six explored the rhetorical foundations of architectural genres. Difficulty with the *Memorial for the Murdered Jews of Europe* competition and the acrimony over the curation of the Libeskind building caused some to suggest that the latter ought to become Germany's national Holocaust Memorial. Museum designers, including Daniel Libeskind, sought to reestablish the Jewish Museum Berlin building as a generic hybrid, part monument and part museum, which could satisfy multiple needs of the local, national and global community. As the chapter notes, both the building's public popularity and its dissatisfying nature for critics are borne of this intentional, hybrid formulation.

Fittingly, Chapter Seven extended that thought, showing how the final product of the Jewish Museum Berlin functioned as a doubled heterotopia. Using Michel Foucault's

contribution to spatial rhetoric, the chapter documented the extent to which the internal symbolism of the museum had changed to fit the needs of its contemporary audiences (local, national, and international). In essence, the museum's heterotopic double balanced the specific history of the Jewish community with a larger message of tolerance geared toward a much wider audience. The transformation over time illustrates to scholars the different forms of identification necessary to document in the age of globalization.

In each chapter, this study sought to treat theoretical and conceptual insights of the various "episodes" in the museum's development as separate – the generic controversies of Chapter Six are highlighted because they mattered at that moment. Nonetheless, in addition to the specific conceptual arguments made in each chapter, the study has also tried to pull a single narrative thread through all of them: the consistency of the rhetoric of anticipatory illumination. While none of the interlocutors in these various discussions use the term "anticipatory illumination" explicitly, I have argued that Ernst Bloch's conception of that term – that a work of art can contain a latent image of a more hopeful and just set of social and political relations – is a useful umbrella term under which to organize those various symbolic appeals. While the rhetoric of a present absence (i.e. a cultural lack) at first was a conceptual drive force that called forth Libeskind's architectural design as a hopeful, future-oriented counterbalance, later iterations of the arguments tried instead to fill in the content of the buildings supposed "illuminated" image of future relations. As Chapter Seven's discussion of the museum's doubled heterotopia illustrates, the eventual framing of the Jewish Museum Berlin as a provocation to think about multicultural tolerance in a globalized world became as important, if not more so, than the building's original characterization as a condensed symbol of Jewish cultural absence in Berlin. In essence, the rhetoric of the building shifted away from being a partial atonement for cultural violence in

Berlin to being an international symbol of the importance of multicultural tolerance, while at each turn, interlocuters argued that the building itself called forth each of those images – as if one could see an appropriate and just future through the building’s design.

Each of levels of insight, the micro level of the chapter and the macro level of the entire study, provide useful starting points for further investigation of the various treated concepts, and, on occasion, add to our previous understandings of the subject matter. Before delving further into my concluding remarks regarding some of the lasting insights of this study, I think it is important to take a step back and frame the development of the dissertation project as it relates to research orientation and the subject position of the researcher.

8.1 A NOTE REGARDING RESEARCH ORIENTATION

The process of researching and writing this study has proven to be a difficult, emotionally draining one. I began this scholarly path ten years ago, but I had little idea at the outset that I would dedicate so much of my scholarly energy studying a museum several thousand miles from my home. In February of 2005, I visited the Jewish Museum Berlin at the recommendation of a friend, mentor, and later advisor, Dr. Brian Lain. My visit was part of a trip for a class entitled “Cold War Rhetoric” taught by the late Dr. John Gossett (also a dear friend) at the University of North Texas. This museum visit was not directly related to the course content, but the design of the museum, particularly its use of oblique architecture, stuck with me several months after my visit. I had originally planned to include the “Garden of Exile” in a Master’s thesis study on memorial forms (paired with the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the Galveston County Vietnam Memorial), but the unwieldy nature of that research proposal necessitated cutting it

from the final product. It was a series of conversations with Dr. Terry Smith and Dr. Lester Olson soon after my matriculation in the fall of 2006 that rekindled my interest with the Jewish Museum Berlin and forced me to think of it as fertile ground for an extended study.

As I leapt into gathering the secondary research literature, particularly the scholarly literature, on the Jewish Museum Berlin, I began to form a few basic research assumptions that guided the project. First, any adequate account of the Jewish Museum Berlin could not simply focus on the design intentions – or professed intentions – of Daniel Libeskind. So much of the English language secondary work has been dedicated to talking about the brilliance of the Jewish Museum Berlin as a work of architectural design. While I also am enthralled with Daniel Libeskind’s work, my experience of the museum was also informed by the cultural context, the interactive displays, and by the installation art (“Shalechet”) at the center of the museum. So much of the architectural literature has disparaged the interior design as detracting from the architecture, and, while I understand the concern from a certain perspective, I personally felt more committed to studying the museum as it is rather than lamenting what it is not but could potentially be.

Second, the Jewish Museum Berlin exists to serve a set of needs for its constituents, and those needs may not fit the interests of scholars or aesthetic theorists. I came to this realization the hard way. I was called out at a conference by a German scholar in the spring of 2007 for being blind to the obvious use value of the museum for local constituents. According to that scholar, a lot of the high-minded theoretical takes I had about the museum design missed the boat – the museum was designed to be accessible to children. After a little conversation and quite a bit of reflection over the next several months, I took that admonition to heart. In conducting this study, one thing I have tried very carefully not to do is to impose too much of my own view

of what the museum should be on my research results. I have been conscientious of the fact that the museum, more than being a work of art, has to meet the needs of the community and has to be inviting to its target populations. While it is certainly important to note that not all interested parties are fully satisfied, I have tried to treat that outcome as an intentional decision with some ill effects rather than an unforgivable oversight of those charged with running the museum.

Third, the museum itself is not a stable object of study, but instead a project constantly undergoing transformation. Early iterations of this project tried to treat the Jewish Museum Berlin as something that moved seamlessly from design to final product. However, as I pursued other scholarship, I noticed that the title of the project and descriptions of its purpose varied considerably, yet few seemed openly to acknowledge these discrepancies. Delving further into the primary literature, it became clear that grasping the overarching concept of Libeskind building project would be something similar to trying to catch a greased football – every time I thought I could pin down what the project was, it seemed to slip through my fingers. Ultimately, the instability of a clear, coherent vision across time became less a burden and more of an inspiration for a research trajectory; the study treats the design's seeming instability as an opportunity for continued rhetorical invention. It is my hope that the resulting work will add valuable information to already existing research on the Jewish Museum Berlin by seeing the process of continued rhetorical negotiation of the project's meaning as both central to this final outcome and to the life of publicly funded art and architecture projects more generally.

Finally, beyond my interest as a researcher to understand how the Jewish Museum Berlin came to be what it is today, my voice has been crafted as a result of my reticence to participate in hasty judgment of societies and communities in which I do not reside. Far too often, American researchers will try to speak authoritatively on issues outside of their society as if they knew

what would have been best for that society. This is particularly true when dealing with Germany, perhaps due to the triumphalist narrative propagated about World War II, it seems American audiences feel empowered to quickly rush to judgment about the collective guilt, feelings, or behaviors of Germans with only a cursory understanding of the issues involved (as did happen with some of the international media coverage cited throughout the chapters). In saying this, I am not suggesting that international voices should simply be quiet or stay out of German affairs, but rather that they should participate with full disclosure of their own interests and should proceed with a certain level of sensitivity regarding how the societies in question may respond to external commentary. As for myself, being a life-long Causasian American male without Jewish heritage and having only a distant familial connection to Germany, it seemed appropriate to try to give interlocuters in the controversy the benefit of the doubt regarding the sincerity and reasonability of their varying interests and public arguments.

Of course, all research is only a partial view of the research object, selectively filtered by the researcher; I cannot avoid all judgments. I have made some judgments that perhaps others would not make, or I have decided to be too sympathetic to characters in this study that others may feel are undeserving of it. However, in attempting to suspend judgment on the process of public deliberation as much as I have, I believe that I have been able to more appropriately render a description of the process of rhetorical negotiation at work in Berlin over this project between 1988 and 2002. Moreover, to the extent that I have rendered judgments, I have tried to do so in a reserved way, suggesting that perhaps certain participants in the conversation would be perceived poorly based upon their framing of issues, or that their claims did not match the best available public evidence to which I had access. In so doing, I have tried to craft provisional

judgments that leave room for dispute, rather than drawing too many conclusions from my personal intuitions without adequate proof to back them.

Looking back upon the beginning of my relationship with this museum a decade ago and the assumptions that guided me in the production of this study, I hope that my work has been able to do justice to various competing voices involved in producing the Jewish Museum Berlin. My interest has been trying to understand the project on its terms, rather than trying to impose a theoretical perspective upon the material. That being said, like any good touchstone text, the complexities of the situation have evoked several conceptual parallels and have spoken back to many of the theoretical constructs employed in contemporary communication studies and related fields. As the study concludes, I take the opportunity to reflect on the broader implications of the study for understanding the rhetoric surrounding public art and architecture projects.

8.2 POINTING TOWARD THE FUTURE

On September 25, 2007, the Jewish Museum Berlin opened a glass courtyard in the back of the Collegienhaus. Also designed by Libeskind, the courtyard, which can seat up to five hundred people, was necessary to deal with high visitor traffic and increased demand to host cultural events on the property. Supported by white steel beams that look like branches, the image of the *sukkah*, or tree shelter, is important in the Jewish tradition, symbolizing the flight from Egypt and hope for the future.⁶⁰⁴ In what must seem like an unusual twist, the same architect that designed a building that confronted the decimation of Jewish culture in Berlin later built a further

⁶⁰⁴ Layla Dawson, "Heart of Glass," *Architectural Review*, November 2007, 26-27.

extension to it that symbolized hope for the future and made necessary by the growing demand for Jewish cultural events. The Jewish Museum Berlin, far from commemorating a loss, now seems to function as a gathering place for Berlin's burgeoning Jewish community, most of whom have come from the former Soviet Bloc.⁶⁰⁵ Since the opening in 2002, the visitor demographics have also begun to shift, with less non-Jewish Germans attending, but an increase in visitor traffic from non-German tourists.

The latest addition to the Jewish Museum Berlin changed the symbolic landscape of the Jewish Museum Berlin building complex. But, as this study demonstrates, the glass courtyard is only one of a number of symbolic transformations the museum has undergone. In some cases, as with this addition and with the straightening of the walls, the transformations were about changing physical (or projected physical) space. Others were related to the organization of space, such as the decision to make the Collegienhaus a secondary building for the museum and the numerous changes to the curatorial plan for the Libesking building. These continued transformations are a necessary part of keeping the institution relevant to its evolving audiences and missions, even at the expense of a rather impressive and successful design proposal submitted by world-renowned architect Daniel Libeskind.

While this study does make a case for carefully examining the development of visual and material rhetorics, to note that space is continually reorganized and reimagined to meet the needs of the current society (or constituencies within it) is not a profound finding per se. Most buildings, memorials, speeches, and written texts that have remained relevant for any significant length of time have been reused with an eye toward the present and the future. However, this

⁶⁰⁵ An estimated one hundred thousand Jews from the former Soviet Union fled to Germany, most concentrated in cities such as Berlin, Frankfurt, and Munich. Carol Williams, "Germany as a Haven for Fleeing Jews," *Jerusalem Post*, February 16, 1999.

study does make two significant contributions. First, it makes the case for seeing rhetorical artifacts less as a permanent object and more as converging point for a field of discursive and symbolic forces continually defining and redefining the artifact. In so doing, this essay is not trying to argue that the Libeskind building or that the Jewish Museum Berlin lack clear material reality. Instead, the study shows that the process of making a symbol is never fully finished, even after the physical thing has been produced. What the museum means and how it is to be used were still open questions, one in which the architect was only one authoritative voice among many (Amnon Barzel, W. Michael Blumenthal, etc.) concerning the proper meaning and vision of what became the Jewish Museum Berlin.

Second, and perhaps more importantly, this study has suggested that an overarching argumentative appeal continued to drive the project forward, even as the particular content of it changed. The prevailing arguments in the multiple eruptions of public and institutional controversy concerning the competitive selection, development, continued funding, and eventual use of Libeskind's building design seemed to follow a familiar pattern. Regardless of the particular wording offered by defenders of the project, Libeskind's design was treated as an aesthetic harbinger of a better, more inclusive future, however vague or ill-defined those proclamations seemed to be.

Furthermore, what is curious about these various appeals that I argue fall under the rubric of "anticipatory illumination" is that they often are accepted without much specific detail or justification. As Chapter 3 demonstrates, under close scrutiny, it is hard to fully align Libeskind's purported bases for his building with the specific lineaments and of the museum design. Instead, they are probably best understood as inspiring narratives or exercises that loosely guide the hand of the designer in creating the "final" proposal, which is again changed on

multiple occasions by various inspired interlocuters claiming to have glimpsed a vision of what future image the building design illuminates. While I do point this out to suggest that such a set of arguments might seem curious, perhaps even poorly justified, to a cultural outsider, I would also strongly argue that readers ought to reserve judgment and instead respect just how unique and powerful these appeals to anticipatory illumination can be within this particular cultural context.

When one evokes the concept of anticipatory illumination (in its various particular iterations), one is making an argumentative claim in which the support or grounds are confirmed through individual vision, feeling, or affect, not logical demonstration. The introductory discussion on the concept of anticipatory illumination in Chapter 1 suggested that Bloch had synthesized this idea (and his closely related three volume treatise on hope) from broad swaths of both the German and Jewish cultural imaginaries. He provided an organizing term for what seemed like an ubiquitous, though unnamed, function in art and literature.

If we can take Bloch's work at its word, it should be unsurprising that appeals to an illuminated image of a more hospitable future in Libeskind's building design were largely taken at face value – German and Jewish people alike would be familiar with the appeal and largely accept it as a commonplace of aesthetic argument without further verbal elaboration. The effectiveness of the rhetorical appeal relies entirely upon the audience's ability to either share the vision (feeling, affect, etc.) with the interlocutor or to trust that interlocuter's insights without examination of the evidence. With regard to the latter, the institutional ethos of the particular advocate might matter in building trust, but the public might also accord trust to a narrative that they *want* to believe is true, or that confirms with a desirable image of their collective selves. In particular, the Jewish Museum Berlin's framing as an international museum of tolerance would

be particularly appealing to a city, and a society, trying to project a tolerant, cosmopolitan image to the world. This is the unique power of the rhetoric of anticipatory illumination: a society can see the image it wants to see in the work of art – a collective projection of its best possible self – but yet the society can say that it is not imagined, but already latent in the work of art; society just works to make that image a reality. It is an appeal so powerful, perhaps, that a city can spend tens of millions of dollars funding a building without a defined use in the middle of a financial crisis, then functionally give that building away to a semi-private foundation before it even opens to the public. Much like his commentary on the orders of classical columns that opened this chapter, the brilliance of Daniel Libeskind's work was not embedded in its formal qualities of his design expertise; the Jewish Museum Berlin works because it has allowed people to imagine it as an integral part of German-Jewish cultural mythos that fits the desired image of a 21st century Berlin.

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