Religion and memory: the importance of monuments in preserving historical identity

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ABSTRACT

This piece of work describes how negative historical events have influenced history to date through commemoration and remembrance. This study takes a text-based approach to research and uses the grounded theory approach to the topic. This is because the specific procedures for data collection and analysis are flexible and allow a degree of latitude within limits. The thesis approaches the subject of memory and monuments from theological, philosophical and architectural perspectives. First the underlying historical reasons, starting positions and the course of the annihilation of the Armenian Christians and later the extermination of the European Jews are presented. They explain that a change in thinking within the global community had to take place in order to prevent further catastrophes. This change in thinking has led to the development of human rights and the creation of memorial sites and memorials that are part of the cultures of remembrance, as well as a variety of ideas and concepts that can be summarised in the collective term ‘remembrance cultures’. In particular, in Chapters Five to Ten the Tsitsernakaberd memorial sites in Armenia and Yad Vashem in Israel are analysed and juxtaposed. Both are rooted in the tradition of a biblical and theological base category of remembrance and have a sense of identifying character. The focus is on Tsitsernakaberd, as this memorial site is still relatively unknown. This work will show to what extent historical and political cultures of remembrance are compatible with a biblical theological base category and the secular concepts of the theories of memory.

Key words

Commemoration, monuments, memorial site, history, religion, cultural memory, collective memory, remembrance cultures, Holocaust, Tsitsernakaberd, Yad Vashem, Christianity, Judaism, martyrs.
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DEDICATION

To my husband Norbert W. Kirsch and to my son Levin and his wife Justine and my grandchild Rahel and to my son Marvin Nathanael as well as my parents Wolfgang and Paula Dittberner.
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CHAPTER ONE

OVERVIEW

1.1 Title

Religion and memory: the importance of monuments in preserving historical identity

1.2 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview and an approach of this study. First of all the background and the problem statement will be explained. It leads to different questions and to the central theoretical statement in section 1.5. The main aim of this thesis and the objectives will be examined in this chapter in section 1.6. Section 1.7 deals with the methodological basis and should lead to the results of this study. Finally, unless otherwise stated, all the translations from German, Greek, and Hebrew are made by the author of this thesis.

1.3 Background

The twentieth century cannot be sufficiently comprehended without a consideration of the events and the ideological content of the nineteenth century. In contrast to the “short twentieth century,” the preceding nineteenth century is referred to as the “long century,” already commencing with the French Revolution in 1787 and ultimately culminating in World War I (WWI) in 1914, the “great seminal catastrophe.” The British Marxist historian Eric Hobsbawm (1917–2012) divides the nineteenth century into three different ages, for example, with the French Revolution ushering in an era of metamorphosis (1789–1848). Furthermore, he defines the periods subsequent to 1849 respectively as the Age of Capitalism and Industrialisation (1848–1875) and the Age of
Imperialism (1875–1914), (Hobsbawm, 1995:21). Under these conditions, the ideological seeds of the nineteenth century would germinate and facilitate the rise of National Socialism and Communist regimes. It must be noted, thereby, that WWI represents the commencement or the entry of the twentieth century, and the end of this epoch is the end of the East-West conflict (Cold War 1947–1989), as metaphorically and vividly depicted by the fall of the Berlin Wall (1989). The term “short century” was originally coined by the economic historian Ivan T. Berend (1930) and has been made popular through the historian Hobsbawm in his work The Age of Extremes (1994:11, 17). Among authors subscribing to this classification are Haffner, 1997; Hobsbawm, 1995; Diner, 1999; Kolko, 1999; Mazower, 1999; Jeismann, 2000; Nonn, 2007; Mann, 2008; Koselleck, 2013; Herbert, 2014. Especially Hobsbawm’s publication deems this phenomenon to be the result of an extreme century defined by social unrest and the concomitant circumstances of human suffering of a particularly morally reprehensible nature. Thereby, the time frame of this thesis extends beyond the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, focussing geographically on the memorial sites in Armenia and Israel as well as highlighting the historical background as to how the genocide of Armenians and European Jews could have occurred and what actually transpired during the course of these horrible events.

The history of the twentieth century is decisively affected by the disaster and tragedy of two world wars and unprecedented crimes such as the Armenian genocides (Aghet) and the Holocaust (Shoah). The seminal catastrophe (the first genocide conducted against the Armenians) can be interpreted as a door opener for one of the darkest epochs in history. The conflict between religion and the former policy by völkisches thinking, which included racial ideology and extreme nationalism, led to ethnic tensions and to genocides perpetrated on ethnic groups, such as Christian minorities and later European
Jews. There have been numerous studies focussing on WWI and the first genocide as well as the conflict between religion and extreme ethno-nationalist thinking. These studies include the works of Wippermann, 1998; Kuhn, 2004; Poewe, 2006; Hexham, 2011; Hexham and Poewe, 2014; Stangeland, 2013; Kruimeich, 2015; Hesemann, 2015. Some aspects in these works address racial ideologies and the conflict between religion and policy. The manner in which religious and political ideologies tackle history (such as what happened under the Young Turks and National Socialism) will be explained in the next chapters. This topic is reminiscent of Orwell’s (1903–1950) concerns in his classic novel 1984: “He who controls the past, controls the future. And he who controls the present, the past” (Orwell, 2008:298). Orwell points out the principles behind the expansion of State and religious power in order to take control of the historical past and to reinterpret history again with the aim of shaping the future in a direction that gives the appearance of freedom. Moreover, Orwell notes that totalitarian systems and parties work on adapting the past to the present. To keep resistance at bay, manipulative structures are secretly created which always run according to the same patterns. In this regard, his opinions parallel those of Karl Marx (1818–1883) who sees history in interpretation of the philosophers (Marx, 1845; cf. Berger, 2005:54-55). However, Orwell’s work is as current as ever, because he focussed not merely on totalitarian systems per se, but also on supposedly liberal democracies. In particular he warns that power systems, even in their liberal aspirations, are not unlike wolves in sheep’s clothing, intent on reinterpreting history to present political aims, all the while presenting themselves as freedom-loving, but in fact totalitarian to the core (Orwell, 2008). Nevertheless, the goal is to reshape and suppress these different power interests.

The phobia of possible future repetitions became a process of reflection. This was reflected in changes to education, training, and research in schools and universities. At
the same time, public memorials and monuments were erected under the banner “Lest we forget.” The overall goal was to involve the population by perceiving, remembering and commemorating. Thus, it became a transformational process intended to raise a new awareness of a process and facilitated a coming to terms with the past and purification to ensure the will for peace (Assmann, 2018:35–37). In short, reflection is important in understanding the process of coming to terms with the past in the areas of politics, culture, and in religion, and will be discussed in Chapter Three with the topic “Process of coming to terms with one’s past in West Germany.” Indeed, Germany has become the test case with regard to the process of coming to terms with one’s past instead of continuing the cycle of revenge and hate (Frei, 2005:69).

In Chapter Four, the theories and functions of the memorial culture are presented in order to prepare the various aspects for the central theme and to incorporate the results of the investigations into the research. This modern and new theory occurred in both democratic Jewish and Christian circles after the wars of the twentieth century. At the same time, the educational work and the process of coming to terms with the past was embedded in various societies through a new world politics and ideological theory orientated around human rights (Dolinger, 2016:ix). Access to knowledge by virtue of coming to terms with historical events became a priority and, over time, created new educational methods, training departments and areas of expertise. In turn, it spawned a flood of scientific literature and documentation. In retrospect, it must be said that remembering, learning and commemorating these tragic events has developed into a successful discipline and shown positive effects in dealing with history. The literature has been instrumental in contributing to the valuable cultural-scientific practices of remembrance (Erll, 2011:173).
Research and contributions from cultural-scientific, historical, sociological and theological studies, which arose across disciplines from the university environment, have contributed in greater depth. Under the collective term “culture of remembrance,” historical memory research has become a trans-disciplinary topic and has grown into a megacategory. The questions arising here concern how a culture of remembrance in utilizing theoretical methods can prevent atrocities and genocide in the future, and they examine the extent to which historiography as a learning tool is able to remodel societies. All of these theoretical and diverse foundations of memory research cannot be included in this research as a focus, for they are simply too many and too complex. A few basics of memory theories can be read as background information in Appendix One.

Various authors express theological, Christian and Jewish points of view and critically set themselves apart from abstract remembrance and commemoration. Their views are not much appreciated in public, especially from academic persons with a secular mindset, because they offer a very different kind of commemoration and remembrance for the purpose of building up identity in Jewish and Christian nations. Of particular importance in western Christian societies is Memoria passionis, by Johann Baptist Metz (1928). It is a particularly provocative work. Johann Baptist Metz, a Catholic theologian, examines the perception of the world on an anamnetic basis (Metz, 2006:227–235). In his view remembrance is dangerous, because in faith, Christians practise the memoria passionis, mortis et resurrectionis Jesu Christi and believing in his love they identify it with the son of God who gave Himself to the oppressed and to the outcasts with the liberating power of unconditional love (Metz, 2006:238, 251). This memory of hope of an unconditional love contradicts the contemporary cultural amnesia that has developed into an abstract cultural idea of primary Hellenistic origin over times
(Metz, 2006:239). The danger is that the biblical memory culture, the history of the Passion recedes in favour of the prevailing cultural amnesia. Metz stresses that the anamnestic constitution in the Spirit of Christianity has much more deeper roots and is not equal with historical or traditional memory culture. As an alternative to a secular, universal commemoration and remembrance culture, he takes a stand against merciless oblivion and provides, unapologetically, the experience of suffering from a biblical-theological perspective.

Monuments and memorial sites in public spaces are significant topics in this work. Such sites fulfil their functions as visible stabilisers and supporters of a negative culture of remembrance. Chapters Five to Ten present and analyse the Tsitsernakaberd and Yad Vashem memorial sites. The aim of the presentation is to avoid the burial of the remembrance of the crimes of the twentieth century, but instead to punctuate power in public space to remember the dead and to prevent the forgetting of the past. Menkovic, in her studies, has already investigated the question of which socio-political and political science functions monuments and memorial sites can fulfil and what lessons are to be derived from them. Therefore, in appreciation of her extensive research in relation to power signs, the results of her studies on the fundamental issues and the presentations of problems will be incorporated into this thesis as factual information. At the same time, borders between public and private remembrance cannot always be sharply demarcated, such as, for example, with tombs and memorials for the dead. This kind of remembrance is not mere commemoration with empty rites but is based on reverence, the solemn and the sacred, and finds its expression in sacral architecture (Kulenkampff, 1991:29). The Tsitsernakaberd and Yad Vashem memorial sites not only display political, culturally analytical and aesthetic signs of remembrance but also are deeply rooted in theological and Jewish thinking.
1.4 Problem Statement

What do we learn about religion from the memorial sites of Tsitsernakaberd and Yad Vashem? Although the architectural language and aesthetics seem to convey post-modern and abstract ideas, is there an implicit religious and theological sub-stratum? But what can traditional religions offer the visitor instead of culturally and analytically secular memory theories?

The multi-faceted functions of memorial sites and monuments of necessity, that is, by their very existence, offer many interpretations in order that they may be instrumentalised. As aesthetic creations and as national secular negative sites of remembrance that legitimise themselves in the legal and political sense, monuments are also supporters and stabilisers of political or ideological ideas. As such they serve the purpose of providing factual information, but they also function to remind the viewer (or visitor) of the presence of the numinous (Otto, 1963:79–80). As a result they give comfort and hope because of their link to eschatological teaching on the ultimate destiny of individuals and peoples. The idea of the numinous is most clearly defined in the memorial site of Tsitsernakaberd.

This leads us to the following questions: while the Holocaust, the murder in its monstrous dimension of European Jews, has become a paradigm for all mass crime, in comparison, the genocide of the Armenians remains in human history as the first little-known genocide in the twentieth century. The Tsitsernakaberd memorial site in Yerevan, Armenia is not only unknown but also “literally” totally overlooked in reality. This aspect makes yet another problem visible, namely that there are no significant accounts or discussions of the Tsitsernakaberd memorial site. All we really have are a few short leaflets written in Armenian and in Russian.
Here some may object that the Second Anglo-Boer War was “the first genocide” of the twentieth century and there is no doubt that the killing of Afrikaners was a tragic event. It is also true that after the end of the war the British embarked on a program of cultural genocide. Nevertheless, whether the tragic deaths of Afrikaner women and children were deliberately planned or the accidental result of a brutal policy is a matter of dispute. On the other hand there is no doubt that the Armenian genocide was a planned genocide from the outset.

Therefore, this thesis contributes to closing a gap in both the literature and popular knowledge. It draws attention to this important memorial site by bringing to light the history of what for many are unknown events together with reflections on their theoretical and aesthetic contents. Another purpose of this thesis is to commemorate the first deliberately planned genocide of the twentieth century as a “door opener” that included persecution and martyrdom for Armenian Christians and other Christian minorities.

To this day, Armenian Christians are struggling to gain recognition for this genocide to escape from isolation and from victim status. The genocide denials vehemently articulated by Turkey, and the repressions and distortions on the part of the perpetrators, are still serious blockages for a normal relationship between both nations. Again, there is a wound that cannot heal on account of lack of information, pain and unwillingness as well as permanent silence.

Armenia is not only isolated in a territorial sense and internationally, but there is also a gap in research with respect to the personal processing of the past in families and in
Armenian society, given that there is hardly any literature to acquire and read about it. In particular, current findings in the research of transmission of traumas to succeeding generations (Bergmann, 1995:28–29; Kellermann, 2009), which may be a necessity for the Armenian overcoming of the past, have not yet been addressed. Because of the long period of silence and death of contemporary witnesses, unprocessed events, such as family secrets, subside under the surface and are difficult to recognise and understand as symptoms. They are difficult to heal because the distinction is no longer possible between one’s own past and the ancestral past. The Armenians find comfort, refuge and solace in the memorial site, Tsitsernakaberd, and in their biblical and theological holy writings, as they commemorate with grief and suffering the loss of their family members.

Therefore, an exploration of the memorial site as a visible sign and proof is important because it provides an incentive to derive information from the staging of mourning through rituals and ceremonies that reveal deeper cultural layers and longings of the Armenian nation. The memorial site is therefore not merely seen as a medium and an expression of liturgical and sacral staging of ecclesiastical and political power, for it reveals the very heart and the very soul of the Armenian nation through the identification of myth, symbolism and religion.

A comparison with the Yad Vashem memorial site may therefore encourage further investigation into the effects of traumatic events in succeeding generations in order to move forward in overcoming the past and in healing. Dealing with grief as a collective social experience was initially painful for the Israeli society, but ultimately salutary in the process of coming to terms with the past. Collective memory in culture and religion are essential to the process of coming to terms with one’s past. It is not only an
historical and a political affair (Boschki, 2011). In the future I hope to do similar research on Afrikaner memorial sites and their importance in history and today.

The questions arising and addressed here in this work concern the strengths and the weaknesses in the process of coming to terms with the past in religious, historical and philosophical contexts. Thereby, the theological views examined will be reviewed with regard to the basic category of remembrance. The extent to which monuments and memorial sites facilitate the supporting of theological and secular views will also be investigated. Currently, efforts are being made in this regard along the path of historical and sociological information. How is this information being interpreted? What measures are appropriate for atonement and reconciliation? These are among the issues to be explored.

Further questions must be asked, for example, as to the architectural features of the memorial site and the theological and ideological contents intended to be expressed. The two memorial sites will be juxtaposed in this investigation, so another question concerns what functions they have in relation to national identity and representation in public space and as a visible culture of remembrance. How do they differ, and how is collective commemoration celebrated and socially perceived? What contribution can memorial sites make in terms of collective overcoming of the past, and what role do their traditional religions play in each case?

1.5 Central Theoretical Argument

The central theoretical argument of this thesis is that monuments in the context of collective memory can be shown to promote religious and theological beliefs and practices while reinforcing a sense of identity through history and architecture.
Both Tsitsernakaberd and Yad Vashem as memorial sites are reminiscent of the dead of twentieth-century genocides. They are important supports and pillars of a modern universal memory culture within their respective nations.

The second significant memorial site examined in this thesis is the Holocaust Memorial Yad Vashem, which is the best known and arguably most important of all memorials of this kind. It resulted from the turmoil of the post-war period of the Second World War and the emergence and constitution of the state of Israel, in which Yad Vashem always played an integral part. In fact, this memorial is a major pillar supporting the State of Israel and gives it legitimacy. Indeed this memorial has grown over time and the related exhibition has been continuously expanded. Yad Vashem is an impressive memorial complex and a huge one with a variety of subjects, departments, educational and research centres, as well as sculptures and monuments from the countries of the world.

The exhibition explores Jewish life in politics, culture and religion, in the past and future. Data banks and archives contain more than 60 million pages of documentation, not including photographs. All of this data is available online. Yad Vashem is a national treasure, demonstrating both the pride of Israel’s heroism and also the shame of its persecution (Young, 2002:272, 275). Much has been researched about Yad Vashem and a vast literature already exists. My aim in this respect is to explore Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial as a national sanctuary with their abstract shapes and contours, but at the same time it shows, behind the abstract features of Zionism, the religiously practised and pursued Jewish national movement that calls for the re-establishment of a Jewish homeland in the territory of Israel. Both memorial sites must receive this degree of attention in my working hypothesis, given that their respective creators have played
down religious symbolism. Indeed, this is the reason why in fact so much religious symbolism appears in it.

1.6 Aims and Objectives

Given the previous argument, my working hypothesis makes that assumption because the creators of the memorial monuments discussed in this thesis have played down religious symbolism. Indeed, this is the reason why in fact so much religious symbolism appears in an implicit rather than explicit form. This must be proven in the course of the thesis.

A further goal of this thesis is to bring forth the evidence for the argument that in the memorial site of Yad Vashem and the memorial site of Tsitsernakaberd a postmodern, universal architecture can be detected that favours abstract policies of remembrance with the intention of promoting the rise of a global universal world order that supports ideological ideas, orientated to humanistic thinking, such as human rights as moral statutes in general. But the roots of these elements go back to traditional religions without the offer of reconciliation and forgiveness in a theological sense. Traditional and proven values are separated from the roots and replaced by an abstract culture of remembrance, which is used for a different purpose. This must be explained. Nevertheless, the focus on this topic demonstrates the extent to which biblical and theological elements are hidden behind the memorial sites in Tsitsernakaberd and Yad Vashem to build up identity in their nations.

The specific objectives of this thesis are as follows: The thesis is based on a systematic classification and should initially provide a historical overview in the first two chapters. Forms of various memorial cultures will be explained in the fourth chapter in order to
then investigate the Tsitsernakaberd and Yad Vashem memorial sites in the fifth and sixth chapters. The conclusions are contained in the seventh chapter.

1.7 Research Methods

The instrumental case study is an appropriate tool for this study and is suitable for completion or enlargement. For that reason, it highlights in detail the structure and some specific techniques, which inform the reader, when a holistic investigation is needed (Feagin, Orum, Sjoberg, 1991).

This study takes a traditional approach to research, which means that as far as possible the subject matter is approached without a clear bias or preconceived conclusions. In more modern, particularly American terms, it takes a grounded theory approach to the topic, which is similar to that of British social anthropology (Evans-Pritchard, 1951; 1981). In the process it uses both instrumental case studies and rhetorical analysis.

As noted, the basic qualitative approach for this dissertation will be grounded theory (Corbin, Strauss, 1990). This is because the specific “procedures for data collection and analysis used are flexible and allow a degree of latitude within limits“ (Corbin, Strauss, 1990:6). The grounded theory researcher must know the system of these procedures and associated canons for their study. First of all is data collection and analysis, and in working with the conceptualization of data, “categories must be developed and related” (Corbin, Strauss, 1990:7). Sampling “proceeds not in terms of drawing samples of specific groups of individuals, units time, and so on, but in terms of concepts, their properties, dimensions, and variations” (Corbin, Strauss, 1990:8).
Analysis is important, and to compare and to contrast assists the researcher in guarding against bias (Corbin, Strauss, 1990:9). One of the reasons why this kind of approach is preferred is that using a grounded theory approach we can draw on data collection procedures, such as interviews and observations, as well as other sources such as government documents, video tapes, artefacts, newspapers, letters and books. Each of these sources can be coded when appropriate in the same way (Glaser, Strauss, 1990:5). At the same time, this research design focuses on archival collections and analysis of data from text-based primary and secondary sources.

The methodological basis of the investigation is inter-disciplinary and involves a variety of fields and mental approaches. On the one hand, the perspectives are related to contemporary and historical political disciplines as well as art historical and aesthetic disciplines in form and content. On the other hand, they contain semantic as well as theological-hermeneutical and psychological analysis perspectives. All of these ways of reviewing matters do not create disturbing opposites but can be integrated and harmonised together or side by side. As a result, the research area had to be limited and this presented a real challenge. The topics of the Holocaust and the culture of remembrance could therefore only be investigated on the surface. Valuable research and remarkable analyses are to read on these topics in the various works of Young (2002), Aleida and Jan Assmann (1999, 1993), Erll (2011), Gudehus (2010) and others; worth mentioning are the theoretical foundations in political science studies by Reinhard Koselleck (1994) as well as Peter Reichel (1995).

Further foundations from the fields of theology and religious studies have been drawn upon, for example, the works by Willy Schottroff, (1967) in *Gedenken im Alten Orient und im Alten Testament* (Commemorations in the Ancient East and Old Testament),...
Johann Baptist Metz in *Memoria Passionis* (2006) as a fundamental category for political religion, Markschies & Wolf (2010) *Erinnerungsorte des Christentums*, which translates as “Places of Remembrance for Christianity,” Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi (1988) in *Zachor: Remember!* Their analyses and interpretations from biblical and theological points of view (in particular, the thesis of a basic category of remembrance) have all inspired a different way of thinking from that of the secular culture of remembrance.

The extent to which a theory can be sustained and socially integrated without the actual core and the background knowledge of a transcendent greatness already indicates cracks in the overall structure. All that remains are the visible artefacts and formations in monuments and memorial sites that convey legitimacy and identity. This approach occupies the main part of the investigation. Research on the Tsitsernakaberd and Yad Vashem memorial sites is primarily based on literature, text analysis, translations (especially Armenian and Russian texts) and data collection and secondarily based on image interpretation and visual inspection as well as material from informants. In addition, various archives were consulted not only virtually but also on site. In one case, the investigation and field research resulted in an interview pertaining to the construction of the Tsitsernakaberd memorial site.
CHAPTER TWO
THE TRAGEDY OF THE 1915 ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

2.1 Introduction

The focus of this chapter is on the horrific tragedy of the Armenian genocide in 1915. In a subsequent chapter, the significance of the Armenian Genocide Memorial Complex Tsitsernakaberd in Yerevan is discussed. It is an impressive monument dedicated to honouring those Armenians who perished in the first genocide of the twentieth century. At the monument these victims are revered as martyrs and even saints.

The chapter explores how identity can be preserved despite the lingering legacy of genocide, and examines the Armenian people in the context of their historical and theological roots. For some observers, Armenia represents the epitome of the tragic story, and its history and that of its people is seen as comparable to that of the Jews. Accordingly, the following chapter will discuss the history and the causes of the Holocaust under National Socialism. Indeed, a similar pattern can be recognised in which religion and political ideologies clash, resulting in grave consequences including the extermination of millions of people.

2.2 Armenia Today

Armenia is a mountainous landlocked country in the southern part of the Caucasus in Western Asia. It is the smallest of the republics situated in the South of the Caucasus, with a land area of about 30,000 square kilometres divided into eleven provinces (marz), (Quiring, 2009:82; see also Ramming–Leupold, 2017:4). Its neighbours are Georgia to the north, Turkey to the west, Azerbaijan (as well as the primarily Armenian
exclave Nagorno-Karabakh) to the East, Iran to the south-east and the Azerbaijani exclave of Nachichev to the south. The ancient land of Armenia stretched to the foot of Mount Ararat; according to Dum-Tragut’s description, ancient Armenia “stretched from the southern slopes of the Caucasus in the north to the Caspian Sea in the east, from the shores of Lake Urmia in modern-day Iran to the Cilician plains between Syria and Eastern Anatolia, bounded by the mighty Taurus Mountains to the west” (Dum-Tragut, 2014:19; see also Ohandjanian, 1989:17–19). Today, the small Republic of Armenia does not seem able to build upon its people’s past glory and is a relatively minuscule territory in a region dominated by its neighbours (Dum-Tragut, 2014:19).

In addition, Armenia is geographically located between Europe and Asia, which makes it a country wedged between the Occident and the Orient. As such, it is a country located between Christianity and Islam, making it a buffer zone between the strategic interests of hostile superpowers. The Silk Route once ran through Armenia, thus turning the country into an important hub for business and culture in ancient times (Dum-Tragut, 2014:19). At present, its culture, accounts of its origin, and its present status are challenged by the surrounding neighbours. As a result, there can be no comprehensively
celebrated Armenian culture, and even its history is the subject of repeated reinterpretations, despite the existence of archaeological evidence from different epochs (Ordukhanyan, 2015:11–12). Indeed, little is known about the culture and history of this country in the outside world and it can be metaphorically regarded as a Sleeping Beauty (Lal, 2017). This is because it seems as if it has been plunged into a deep slumber, with its rich history and vast potential waiting to be rediscovered and awakened.

As of 2017, Armenia had a population of 3.2 million people, making it slightly smaller than the population of Germany’s capital city Berlin (about 3.5 million people according to a 2016 census, Die kleine Berlin-Statistik 2016). The capital of the Republic of Armenia is the modern city of Yerevan with a population of about 1.1 million (Dum-Tragut, 2014:18). It is the largest city in Armenia and is home to the impressive Urartian fortress Erebuni. Yerevan is one of the oldest cities in the world. The Erebuni fortress was built by King Argishti I in 782 BC. The founding documents, a cuneiform tablet or map, was excavated on the Arin-Berd hill on the south-east outskirt of Yerevan in 1950 (Ramming-Leupold, 2017:21).

Just outside Yerevan, and built on a hill opposite Mount Ararat, is the Tsitsernakaberd Memorial Complex, the centre of the annual commemoration of the Armenian genocide. The huge loss of 1.5 million nationals created an unfillable void in the ancient land of Armenia. The loss of the Western Armenian territories as well as the events of the genocide of the Armenians still weigh heavily on this nation and continue to plague Armenian society to this day (Movsisyan, 2016:39). This distressing fact is deeply rooted in the memory and remembrance culture of the nation. Details and comprehensive studies on the memorial site will be described, discussed, and analysed in separate chapters.
The fate of the Armenian people is, as mentioned above, similar to that of the Jews with their traumatic experiences in Europe, and this deep wound, for various reasons, has not been able to heal itself. On the contrary, this country has almost fallen into oblivion and remains paralysed by the traumatic massacres and genocide perpetrated against its people in the early twentieth century. This genocide, “the mother of modern genocides”, (Hesemann, 2015:19), saw 1.5 million Armenians murdered by the Ottoman Turks, an act which almost completely annihilated the Armenian people. These events still cast long shadows on the people who live there. Most historians agree that this event was a genocide, which makes Turkey’s consistent denial of these events all the more disturbing. As noted in my literature review, there have been various studies focussing on the Armenian genocide; for example, the works of Lepsius, 1916; Akcam, 1996; Akcam, 2006/2007; Dadrian, 1999; Dabag, 2002; Hosfeld, 2005; Huberta von Voss, 2005; Barth, 2006; Naimark, 2009; Dadrian, 2011; Wegner, 2011; Krumeich, 2015; Gottschlich, 2015; Hesemann, 2015; Stangeland, 2013. Unfortunately, there are many research studies and think tanks which deny the Armenian genocide and reject the historical facts as false accusations and propaganda. These views are prevalent in works from Özgünul, 2006; Lewy, 2009; McCarty et al., 2005. In recent years, this denial has extended to the legal prosecution and thus persecution of anyone who dares to criticise the official line, and this makes further research into the events that much more difficult and risky (Stangeland, 2013; Barth, 2006:62).

2.2.1 History and Fate of the Armenians

Foreign domination, destruction, and persecution are common threads throughout the past three millennia. From the Artaxiad dynasty, it was Tigranes II, alias Tigranes the Great (95-55 BC), who established a vast Armenian empire from the Caucasus to
Palestine (Syria and Lebanon) and Cappadocia (Cilicia, Ancient Mesopotamia) and up to the Caspian Sea (Ramming-Leupold, 2017:7; see also Huberta von Voss, 2005:15; Dum-Tragut, 2014:55). This era, referred to as the Classical Age, was characterised by great territorial extension. Urban development, architecture, art, and culture were in full blossom (Dum-Tragut, 2014:55).

The desire for territorial expansion sparked conflicts with the Romans. Increasingly under pressure, Tigranes II was compelled by the Romans to renounce most of his conquests and to join forces with Rome against the Parthian empire (Bauer, 1977:55, 60). Already in 55-34 BC, the son of Tigranes II ruled under Roman supremacy, and Armenia became a Roman protectorate in 20 BC and was divided between the Romans and the Parthians. In this time of severe distress, a new royal family, the Arsacids, was established in Armenia. The Arsacids were able to maintain their reign for five centuries (Bauer, 1977:62). Moreover, significant events in the history of Armenia took place within their era. The presence of Christian missionaries and the acceptance of Christianity as a state religion by Tiridates III (301) fall into this period (Ohandjanian, 1989:18).

The first official division of Armenia between Persia and Rome was implemented at the end of the fourth century, with the Persians receiving the lion’s share of the area. Then, however, disputes with the Persians arose. These conflicts were marked by the aftertaste of a religious war, and a concerted effort was made to impose the Zoroastrian religion on the Armenians (Dabag, 1996:178). With regard to this epoch, Schmidt (1990) emphasises the consequences of the Armenian-Persian disputes. In 451, the Council of Chalcedon, the fourth of the major ecumenical councils of the early Church, was held. It is recognized as authoritative by the Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and most
Protestant churches. The Armenian Church, however, rejected the decrees of Chalcedon, over the nature of the deity of Christ (Ritter, 2007:251–252). Technically, it embraces a view known as Miaphysitism, which emphasises the unity of Christ’s nature without defining it quite as sharply as was done at the Council of Chalcedon (Isakhanyan, 2012:51). The reaction of the Roman Catholics and Orthodox was initially to accuse them of Monophysitism and therefore heresy. Over time, however, these churches have come to see the Armenians as essentially orthodox although disagreement continues about how to describe the nature of Christ as both God and man. As a result the Armenian Church ultimately separated itself from both the Roman Catholic and the Greek Orthodox Church in 554 AD.

Accordingly, they distanced themselves from Byzantium, which was the centre of Greek Orthodoxy (Schmidt, 1990:108). At the same time, as Dum-Tragut argues, theologians and historians such as Agathangelos (fifth century) drafted official doctrines of the Armenian Church. Agathangelos wrote *History of the Armenians or history and life of Saint Gregory the Great*, and Moses Khorenatzi wrote his monumental historic work *History of Great Armenia* (Dum-Tragut, 2014:87).

A second division of Armenia between Persia and the Byzantine Empire took place in the year 591. Again, most of the Armenian territory was passed on to the Roman Empire (Huberta von Voss, 2005:390). During the sixth and seventh centuries, Arab masses occupied, plundered, subjugated, and destroyed Armenia, until 702, the year in which a revolt against Arab and Umayyad oppression was stopped (Bauer, 1977:107). Under Ashot Bagratuni (820–890), the Grand Prince of Armenia and the Christian part of Albania, later Azerbaijan, Armenia experienced peaceful times, and indigenous cultural characteristics were able to unfold again, with Christian motifs gaining
prominence; one famous example is the popularity of the cross stone (*khachkar*), (Bauer, 1977:110–111).

![Khachkar, Chor Virap, Photo taken by Jutta Kirsch, 2017.](image)

The entire country was, and remains, dotted with masonry work and delicate stone embroidery. Ashot Bagratuni also united areas of Armenia to the extent that, at the beginning of the tenth century, various small kingdoms such as Vaspurakan could be founded in Western Armenia or Taron, Sjunik and Artsakh in Eastern Armenia (Dum-Tragut, 2014:55). Under his descendant Aschot III (690–762), the capital Ani became the city of a thousand churches. The Bagratuni dynasty ruled until the year 1045 (Bauer, 1977:112–114).

In the wake of these developments, however, waves of devastation by the Seljuq dynasty (Turkish Sunni Muslims, 1071) followed, and Armenia was essentially devoured by the Turks (Berens, 2016:110–111). From 1081 to 1375, some individual independent Armenian principalities still managed to survive, such as the small
kingdom of Cilicia, the so-called Little Armenia. An invasion of the Mongols under Genghis Khan (1237) followed, then the Mamluks of Egypt conquered the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia (Sedlmair, 2012:162). Parallel to these military conquests and the on-going destruction of the Armenian empire, the birth of the Armenian diaspora took place.

This was also the era when European crusades were coming to an end (Europeans participated in the Crusades, but they were fought in what is now Turkey and Palestine). Constantinople was conquered in 1453, and the Byzantine Empire came to an end consolidating the rule of the Ottomans and the Ottoman Empire. Thus, most former Byzantine territories came under the rule of Sultan Mehmed II (Hombach, 2016:156–159; Faroqhi, 2006:13). Many Armenians had participated in the crusades to defend their Christian faith and support their fellow believers in Byzantium and Western Europe. Many now resettled in European cities as diaspora Armenians, particularly in France and Switzerland (Quiring, 2009:95–97).

In the sixteenth century violent clashes erupted between the Persians and Ottomans for control of Armenian territories (Faroqhi, 2006:36-37). In the midst of the bloody conflicts 300,000 Armenians were deported to Isfahan (Persia) and others to Afghanistan under Shah Abbas I (1571–1629). Abbas I made Persia a unified Shiite state, leaving behind a bloody trail in the Turco-Persian wars, which occurred on Armenian soil. As a radical Shiite he subjugated the Sunni-influenced areas of Persia. In the western settlement areas of Cilicia, Syria and Eastern Anatolia, which the Ottomans ruled, there was a large Armenian diaspora, who also fought against the Shiite Persians (Bauer, 1977:147; Faroqhi, 2006:64; Ohandjanian 1989:18). The unrest and religious wars of the seventeenth century led to a massive Armenian resistance movement and
revolt under David Bek (died 1728) in the first half of the eighteenth century against the
Islamic rulers. The Armenians were oppressed and fought against the Muslim rule in
Karabakh and in Sjunikh (Holding, 2014:19).

Under Nicholas I of Russia (1796–1855), the Russians invaded Alexandropol, Yerevan
and Etchmiadzin in 1828, occupying Armenian territory that had been conquered by the
Ottomans. The Armenians welcomed the Russians as Christian neighbours and placed
all their hopes on their friends, but later they were disappointed by the Tsar’s political
decisions and actions, when he claimed territories conquered by Persia. In the Treaty of
Adrianople in 1829 Armenian territories fell to Russia. In the 1828 Treaty of
Turkmenchay (a suburb of Mianeh in the province of East Azerbaijan) the border
between Russia and Persia was drawn along the river Arax and the Ararat, thus limiting
Persian power. This was followed by Russian-Ottoman conflicts, which were waged on
Armenian territory. In the Treaty of Berlin (1878), Armenia was officially divided
between the Ottoman Empire and Russia with European agreement, placing special

It has to be noted that after the fall of the Cilician kingdom in 1375 the history of
Armenia as an occupied territory ruled by its conquerors began and Armenia as an
independent state ended. This cycle of conquest and subjection to foreign rule continued
until the Armenian genocide of the twentieth century, from which only a small number
of Armenians survived (Movisisyan, 2016:38). This genocide did not remain concealed,
nor did the participation of the Germans and tacit approval by the Kaiserrreich.
Consequently, as early as the 24th of May 1915, the Entente Powers accused Turkey of
crimes against humanity, (Schaefgen, 2010:53).
Nevertheless, by manipulating the facts in May 1915 the Young Turks asserted that the Armenians were under Turkish “protection” (Akcam, 1996; Schaefgen, 2010:53). Therefore, the gruesome extermination through displacement, deportation and assassination happened before the eyes of the world, even though it was well known and documented (Lepsius, 1916; Sarafian, 2011). After the genocide there were no further efforts from the Turkish side to legally, juridically, and historically revisit the past and deal with the burden of the genocide. In fact, a further division of Anatolia under Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk, 1881–1938) was the bitter result, which he aggressively enforced in March 1923 (Gottschalk, 2012:157; Schaefgen, 2010:56).

Material reparations, repatriation of those Armenians still alive, and recognition of genocide were an issue from the Allied side following the end of the First World War (Schaefgen, 2010:56–57). There was a repressive silence about the Armenian genocide, and the genocide was generally attributed to the wartime conditions and the “unfortunate circumstances under the veil of martial law”, as well as the genocidal policies of the Young Turks, or the Itahad ve Terakki (Hosfeld, 2015:13). This was a Nationalist Movement opposed to Ottoman rule led by Talaat Pasha, Enver Pasha, Jemal Pasha (Otto, Völker, 2012:136–137; Baum, 2015:38). It was headed by the Committee for Unification and Progress or CUP. This was very threatening, because Atatürk (Mustafa Kemal), the founder of the Turkish Republic, was himself one of the passionate perpetrators (Gottschalk, 2012:155; Armenian Institute Genocide Museum, Panel 49; Akcam, 1996:124–125; Schaller, 2004: 115).

In addition, in the Treaty of Lausanne of 1923/1924, the sovereignty of the new, modern, republican and Nationalist Turkey was established, granting a general amnesty, which also included the genocide, but the conditions were favourable to Atatürk and the
Turks (Grulich, 2015). In the Treaty of Sèvres (1920) the victorious powers after WWI had promised to the Armenians their own state, but in the Treaty of Lausanne they were not even mentioned. The Armenians no longer appeared in any treaties (Grulich, 2015; Schaefgen, 2010:56, cf. Naimark, 2009:71; Akcam, 1996:120). With the Treaty of Lausanne in 1924, Armenia had to relinquish territories to Turkey, because of the manipulation of Ataturk, and it remained just a small spot on the map. Moreover, it was integrated into and influenced by the political ideology of the Soviet Union (Gottschalk, 2012:149; 157; Naimark, 2009:72–73).

Furthermore, the Republic of Armenia was seized by the Soviet Bolsheviks and finally annexed to the Soviet Union (1922). The bitter consequences of the Urkatastrophe (seminal catastrophe) with the Armenian genocide in 1915 at the beginning of the twentieth century, including the Stalinist cleansing and violent Soviet oppression of the Christian Armenian Church, as well as the takeover of what remained of Armenia into the Transcaucasia Socialist Soviet Republic, left their marks (Denscher, 2014:78-79, see also Isakhanyan, 2012:12). After more than 70 years of communist rule, Armenia was able to leave the confederation of states in September 1991 after the disintegration of the Soviet Union. Only then did Armenia become a free and independent republic (Ramming–Leupold, 2017:248–249).

2.3 The Armenian Views of the Cause and Impact of the Genocide

Winston Churchill (1874–1965), Prime Minister and Minister of Defence of the United Kingdom, briefly summarized the problem of the Armenian situation when he stated: “At the moment the Great War began, Armenia, divided between Russia and Turkey, repressed by force or actual massacre, had no defence but secret societies and no
weapons but intrigue and assassination. The War drew upon them a new train of evils” (Churchill, 2015:423 in Isoyan, 2015).

His statement makes it clear that the atrocities did not happen in secret but were observed and known by the international community. The precursors of annihilation as a solution to the Armenian question were already predictable under the rule of Abdul Hamid II, the Red Sultan (1842–1918). Under his command there were massacres among the Armenians (1876) by Muslims under the call of the muezzins, who called Muslim worshipers to prayer. At least 80,000 Armenians were downright slaughtered, although some authors, like Stangeland, believe the correct number is around 300,000 (Stangeland, 2013:32). In 1877, the Red Sultan was already at war against Russia (Otto & Völker, 2012:136–138) making the Hamidian massacres a prelude to the later genocide of the Armenians.

Adalian (2015) gives an interpretation of the objective aim of the slaughter under the rule of Abdul Hamid II. Yet all we really know is that Abdul Hamid II prepared and ordered the massacres of Armenians between 1894 and 1896. The terror started with the killings in Sasun in 1894 and moved towards the Armenians in Constantinople in 1895. It also spread “across the empire to places as far apart as Trebizond, Urfa, Erzerum, and Sivas. Estimates of the dead alone range from 100,000 to 300,000. Armenian towns, villages, and neighbourhoods were sacked by organized mobs or by Kurdish bands” (Adalian, 2015:15).

These events, including a comprehensive analysis of the events leading up to the Hamitic massacres under Abdul Hamid II, have still not been investigated thoroughly by scholars examining the existing sources. This is due to the lack of cooperation by
Turkish authorities, who refuse to make material in the archives available. Nevertheless, some historical details unearthed do yield information as to the course of the events.

In 1895, during the Armenian demonstration in Constantinople, violent conflicts occurred between the Armenians and the police, after Islamic counter protesters murdered numerous Armenians. The historian Yavuz explains:

The 1895 massacres of Christians in the Ottoman Empire happened in many places. In Edessa (today Sanliurfa), out of 60,000 inhabitants, 13,000 were Armenians. Muslims prayed surahs from the Koran before slaughtering the Armenians, whose hands and feet were tied. During the massacre that the Armenian missionary Corinna Shattuck witnessed and called “Holocaust”, 1,200 to 3,000 men fell victim to carnage on Christmas Day. Afterwards, 3,000 Armenians – sprayed with kerosene – were burned in the large city church. Jews had to carry out the macabre task of taking the corpses to mass graves outside the town. In all, 646 villages were converted to Islam by force, 328 churches turned into mosques and 77 monasteries were destroyed (Yavuz, 2003:53; see also Baum, 2015:90).

The total number of the dead who were massacred on the spot in the Hamitic massacres from 1894 to 1896, or who died as a result of the massacres within three years, is estimated at approximately 300,000 Armenians, according to the research of Stangeland. Unfortunately, the Hamitic pogroms have not been researched in great detail.

Still, the question remains: why was it deemed necessary to kill the Armenian population? In agreement with other scholars, Adalian offers a short explanation: “The first intention was to repress with violence all Armenian groups entertaining hope of bringing about change in the Ottoman system” in supporting the reforms of the CUPs.
The second was the fear of an Armenian effort of emancipation, and the third intention was “to undermine the economic well-being of the Armenians whose social progress had invited the ire of the Turkish populace loyal to the regime.” The fourth intention was the “damaging of the vestigial demographic concentrations in the historic Armenian provinces by physically destroying enormous numbers of people.” The fifth was to demonstrate the power of his (Abdul Hamid’s) autocracy and the readiness of his government to go beyond any law, to resort to force for any act of tyranny, and to stabilize and strengthen his regime. The sixth point was to show the European Powers the internal strength of his regency and his preparedness “to victimize populations the Powers sought to protect” (Adalian, 2015:15).

After the fall of Abdul Hamid II, the Young Turks (1909) came to power and carried on the atrocities of annihilation initiated under Abdul Hamid II (see Lepsius, 1916; Naimark, 2009; Meißner, 2010; Hofman, 2002; Stangeland, 2013; Hosfeld, 2015; Baum, 2015; Pears, 2015:9–117).

2.3.1 The Regime of the Young Turks

In 1894 and 1896 Young Turkish troops were already involved in the previous massacres and pillaging against the Armenian population. Posters of Muslims called on them to kill Christians (Bauer, 1977:148). We can see that there was later in 1909 a methodical plan with massacres, targeting first the Armenian soldiers and secondly the intellectuals, although the reasons for this approach are not clear. Before analysing the massacres, it is important to understand the situation.

The Armenian catastrophe (Aghet) can be explained by the loss of Ottoman territories in the Balkans in 1912/13. The Christian population had reacted against Muslim
intolerance. The displacement of hundreds of thousands of Muslims in the Ottoman Empire produced deep bitterness and anger among the Young Turks, the Itahad. There were also the raids and massacres in Urfa (1895) which earlier, through Abdul Hamid’s II’s policy, encouraged them to slaughter the Armenians while quoting verses from the Koran like Sura 9, 122 (123) (Henning, 1960:200; Taner Akcam, 1996:25–26, Ohandjanian, 1989:43–45). Jakob Künzler, (1999) who had witnessed the whole event, stated that between the shootings he could hear the vociferous Lililil calls of Arabic women supporting their husbands in the slaughtering of Christians (Künzler, 1999:13). (Lililil is a special shrill exclamation in Arab tradition, by which women verbally set a sound in a high tone for special events.)

The Sultan Abdul Hamid II attributed all of the negative developments in the Ottoman Empire to the Armenians, given that the latter had supported reforms and had sought to establish and deepen connections with European powers. When they rebelled against the double tax imposed by the Turks and Kurds, it resulted in the massacre in the Sassoun region (1894/95). Historians have different estimations about the events of Sassoun, but there is a consensus that the second massacre in Adana in 1909 served as a precedent for the later genocide (Barth, 2006:64; Hosfeld, 2015:71).

In Stangeland’s view, the genocide of the Armenians was an integral part of the young Turks’ policy of a radical ethnic cleansing of the country (Stangeland, 2013:87). Between 1913 and 1924, they succeeded in reducing the Christian population within the borders of Turkey from 4.5 million to 400,000 (Yonan, 1989; Naimark, 2009:40–42).

The accession to power by the Itahad, or the Young Turks, came about as an opposition movement against the old Ottoman system. It involved adopting a series of reforms to
introduce a national rebirth in accordance with Pan-Turanism, which was a nationalist ideology addressing all Turks from Anatolia to Central Asia. Astourian emphasizes that in “most cases of racial and ethnic polarization they also dehumanise the antagonists and prepare the ground for collective slaughter” of non-Turks such as the Armenians (Astourian, 1999: 31).

Furthermore, he explains that the “emergence of Turkism, the ideology of Turkish nationalism, led to a shift from ethno-religious racism to a more biological version of it, for Turkism was based upon the concept of race” (Astourian, 2013:32). The chief ideologues who shaped Turkism and Pan-Turkism were Yusuf Akchura or Akchuraoghlu (1876–1935), Moiz Cohen, alias Munis Tekin Alp or Tekinalp (1883–1961) and Ziya Gökalp (1876–1924). All of them were members of the Central Committee, or CUP, of the Itahad ve Terakki and at first they kept themselves ideologically pure by rejecting parts of Osmanism and parts of Islamism (Akcam, 1996:29; cf. Astourian, 1999:31–32). In the early stages, the party’s slogan was the French ideal, using the terms Freedom, Justice, Equality, and Fraternity, and its ideas were welcomed by all revolutionary committees.

Their religion was the nation, and was only marginally related to Islam, until the Young Turkish nationalism became radicalised shortly before the outbreak of the First World War through pseudo-religious programs (Naimark, 2009:38–39; Akcam, 1996:38; Dabag, 1996:201, 207; Barth, 2006:65; Astourian, 1999 in Richard G. Hovannisian [ed.], 1999). At the same time, Armenians were demonized and marked as “avaricious greedy people”, while the emergence of Turkism, an ideological Turkish nationalism, led to a shift of ethno-religious racism and to the development of an exclusive Turkish identity among ethnic Turks (Astourian, 1999:31).
In expounding the same idea, but in a more in-depth manner, Stangeland comes to the conclusion that this represented the “Geburtsstunde der rassisch biologischen Forschung und damit zur Rassentheorie,” namely the “birth of racially biological research and thus of racial theories” (Stangeland, 2013:301). He explains that there was a general interest in ethnographic studies in this time, particularly in Great Britain, with an interest in racial characteristics that differentiate human beings into racial categories according to their basic features, the colour of the skin, the form of the head and human faculties, (Stangeland, 2013:301-302). Unfortunately, nationalism and biological race theories do tend to proceed hand-in-hand.

Nevertheless, after the defeat of the Turks in the battle against the Russians at a place called Sarikamish in Transcaucasia, Russia (December 1914), the triumvirate decided the enemy must come from within their own environment living within the state, and the situation for the Armenians was threatening (Baum, 2015:42, cf. Ohandjianian, 1989:86; Akcam, 1996:39).

### 2.4 Annihilation and Deportation of the Armenians

The annihilation of Armenians began with Armenian soldiers serving in the Turkish army. The Ottoman military carried out the first phase of the genocide, dated to February 1915 (Adalian, 2015:19). Armenians of military age wore uniforms of the Ottoman armed forces. More than tens of thousands were drafted into service. In a secret plot against the Armenians, the men were selected and became one of the initial groups from the Armenian population to be executed. Disarmed and forced into labour battalions, the Armenian soldiers became the first victims of the mass execution.
The second phase started on the night of the 24th to the 25th of April 1915. Several hundred Armenian intellectuals, scholars, artists, politicians, and lawyers were arrested in Constantinople and other cities of the Ottoman Empire. They were kidnapped and killed by the Itahad regime. Prior to this, there had been an escalation period “characterized by discrimination, exclusion and massacres” (Schaefgen, 2010:35). In the assessment made by Taner Akcam (1996), more than 2,345 Armenians were killed in a few days. Many of the people arrested were hanged in public places (Akcam, 1996:52).

Prisons were converted into torture chambers, and none of the victims could have imagined the agony awaiting them, nor the sadistic pleasure of their killers (Adalian, 2015:19). After the Armenian soldiers were disarmed and either executed or killed by the harsh conditions of the labour battalions, and after the murder of the Armenian elite, the deportations of women and children began. Taner Akcam wrote in his work, A shameful Act:

The Armenian deportations began in February 1915 as a local war measure in Cilicia…. The Armenians of Döertyol should be sent off to Osmaniye, Adana and Ceyhan. This was followed in March by an operation aimed at the population of Zeytun, a town in Cilicia. After the Zeytun and Döertyol incidents, in April, the entire Cukurova region (the areas around Adana and Maras) began to be systematically emptied. The destination for resettlement were, again, inner Anatolia and Der Zor (Akcam, 2006/2007:153–154).

The third phase consisted of the deportations of most of the remaining Armenian population in May 1915, mainly women and children. The deportations as well as the expulsions of the Armenians from Western Anatolia and Thrace began in the eastern Anatolian provinces. The Armenians were moved westward along the Euphrates River, and the population of Anatolia was moved eastward to the Euphrates. From there, the
deportation route for deportees was directed towards Syria and Mesopotamia (Adalian, 2015:20). These deportations are divided into two temporal phases in the genocide research. The first phase lasted from May to October 1915, the second phase from February to November 1916.

In addition, Johannes Lepsius wrote a detailed report on three different locations in three successive periods of times. His written lists are the most current proof of the approach of the Ottoman Empire with the content of the atrocities against the Armenians during the Great War (Lepsius, 1916).

It can be also seen that Akcam identifies deportations of Armenian people earlier than some other scholars in genocide studies. Furthermore, Stangeland reports that according to the temporal phases no organized massacres took place between October 1915 and February 1916, but many Armenians died during these months in the concentration camps. The massacres during the first phase were committed in all the East Anatolian Wilajetians (administrative units in the Ottoman Empire), according to the Stangeland research, and victims were mainly men and boys between 11 and 65 years. The massacres of the second phase were committed in what is Syria today. The victims were mainly women and children, since most men had already been murdered in 1915 (Stangeland, 2013:17).

Stangeland also explains that there are detailed reports of the first phase, but no detailed reports on genocide during the second phase. The reason for this is that the massacres were carried out in remote desert regions, and the atrocities could no longer be recorded because of the miserable conditions under which death occurred. It should be added, too, that the pictures by Armin T. Wegner, medical officer, document these events in his
work *Die Austreibung des armenischen Volkes in die Wüste* (2011), which translates as “The Expulsion of the Armenian Population into the Desert.”

Research on unrecorded massacres of the Armenians in the Caucasus and Baku, which can be added to the third phase in genocide research, is on-going. It covers the year 1918 and points to a pattern that began after the revolt and the Adana massacre in 1909 as well as in February, March and April 1915 in Zeytun, Dörtyol, Istanbul. A strategic deportations in certain “problem” regions took place (Akcam, 2007/2007:156). The destination for resettlement were, again, inner Anatolia and Der Zor” (Akcam, 2006/2007:154). After the Deportations had already taken place in Cicilia and Syrian, when Armenian men were singled out in order to be separately slaughtered, shot, hung, or drowned. Women, children, and old people in abandoned districts, deserts, and mountain ranges died because of exhaustion. The paths of the deportation route in June 1915, especially in the Ercinzan area, were littered with dead bodies, where 20,000 to 25,000 people were thrown into the Kemach Gorge in the City and administration region near the river Euphrates (Schaefgen, 2010:49-50, see also Hosfeld, 2015:11).

During the deportations, slaughtering by special organisations of criminals and Kurds at every place where Armenians were located was part of the cruel daily grind, and lastly, at the end of the deportation routes, the survivors were driven into concentration camps set up as killing centres like Ras-ul-Ain, Rakka and Der Zor. Interestingly, these are places where Islamic State terror groups are located today.

Schaefgen confirms the statements of Akcam, Adalian and Baum as well as reports on the starting point of the deportations and their atrocities during the event. Deportees were not given water or food and were subjected to abuse, rape and kidnapping. Many
women avoided their fate by committing suicide (Schäfgen, 2010 and Hosfeld, 2015:11). More than a thousand reports and records in German, Austrian and Hungarian archives document the inhumane conditions during the deportations. There was no such thing as a geographic target, according to Stangeland and Hosfeld, but a genocidal target: namely the death of the deportees (Stangeland, 2013:19; Hosfeld, 2015:186).

Such atrocities were accompanied by the forced imposition of Islamic and Turkish culture, a measure that resulted in the destruction of Armenian Church infrastructure, while Armenian Church buildings were transformed into mosques. Raphael Lemkin has highlighted religious reasons for the genocide and made this clear in the following statement: “In Turkey, more than 1,200,000 Armenians were put to death for no other reason than they were Christians” (according to Lemkin as cited in Schaller, Boyadjyan et al., 2004:260).

In this regard, Stangeland conspicuously argues that the cultural destruction was more merciless than the actions taken in the Holocaust against East European Jewish culture. As for the question as to why the world stood by while the Armenians had to suffer through the massacres and deportations, Hosfeld declares that in 1915 the Armenian people had practically become stateless after the nationalist Young Turk government came to power. Hitler later repeated and implemented these barbarically criminal acts as part of the “final solution” for what he identified as the “Jewish problem” (See Karen Andersen, Ein Volk auf der Schlachtbank (2014), which translates literally as “a people on the slaughter field”).

2.5 The German Role in the Armenian Conflict
It cannot be denied that there are historical parallels between the National Socialist extermination policy towards the Jewish population, namely the Holocaust, and the Ottoman Empire’s extermination policy for the Christian Armenians, namely the Armenian genocide (Armenocide) (Hesemann, 2015:19). Both perpetrating nations, the Ottoman Empire and Germany under the Nazi regime, destroyed millions of human beings. Yet, reactions to this systematic destruction and the approaches to dealing with these traumatic pasts are completely different for these two cases. A “final solution” described as the “Armenian and Syrian question” was secretly decided, and can be seen as a cynical overture by the Committee on Unity and Progress (CUP) in mid-February 1915 to kill and to destroy all Armenian Christians (Nuri be Shea, 2017).

The Armenian genocide needs to be brought into context, analogously, with the later Nazi extermination policy towards Jews (Hesemann, 2015:18). The Holocaust happened by means of the “Wannsee Konferenz” (1942), which Reinhard Heydrich prepared under strict confidentiality. In this case, it was not about the Christians, but about the Jews. The destruction of hundreds of Christian monasteries and ecclesiastical institutions in Western Armenia can be compared with the “Kristallnacht” of November 1938 when synagogues were burnt down (Holborn, 1971:556; cf. Neville, 1999:33-34). Similar measures were taken to destroy the Jewish intellectual elite, as happened to Armenian intellectuals in Constantinople when academics, clergymen and businessmen as well as physicians and lawyers were arrested and killed (Hosfeld, 2015:22, cf. Adalian, 2015:15). This targeted extermination of the Armenian Christians in 1915–1916 was a catastrophe, or in Armenian language Aghet, that took place at the beginning of the twentieth century. More than 1.5 million Armenians were cruelly murdered, and only a small number were able to save themselves by fleeing into
neighbouring countries or retreat to the Armenian highlands (Dum-Tragut, 2014:58; Bauer, 1977:149).

### 2.5.1 The German Empire Supports Jihad

What did the German Empire and the Germans know about the annihilation of the Armenians during the First World War? The question is not moot. Turkey fought on the side of Germany. As far as Armenia is concerned, it should be remembered that, in this regard, the German Empire under William II (1859–1941) could have done all in its power to prevent, or at least stop, the genocide because of this German-Turkish coalition and the reliance of the Turks on German assistance in the war. Sadly, German involvement in the genocide of the Armenians can only be described as one of concealment and non-disclosure in order to protect economic and other interests (Schwanitz, 2004:29–30).

Reports of a lively diplomatic exchange with the Ottoman Empire by the German Foreign Office provide a wealth of information about the crimes resulting from events during the First World War. These documents show deportation orders for Armenians issued by the Prussian general Colmar Freiherr von der Goltz (Baum, 2015:77, Dadrian 1996:115; Schwanitz, 2004:45–59). Extensive correspondence between Berlin and the various ambassadors Wangenheim, Pallavicini, Gottlieb von Jagow and Roessler shows that they knew about the genocide (Merenics, 2015; Isoyan, 2015).

In *Die Lage des Armenischen Volkes in der Türkei, 1916*, which translates as “Report on the Situation of the Armenian People in Turkey”, the theologian Johannes Lepsius published information on the misery of the Armenian population under the Ottoman rule. Imperial German censorship had the book confiscated, since an official instruction
for a pledge of secrecy had been imposed regarding the atrocities towards the
Armenians. In a press conference held on 7th October 1915, German journalists were
silenced in order not to jeopardise friendly relations with Turkey (Ohandjianian,
1999:176-177; cf. Hosfeld, 2015:19). Rather, it was claimed that the Turks were in a
serious conflict with the Armenians, and while the massacres were not disclosed to the
German population, German soldiers posed for photographs with Turkish soldiers “in
front of the corpses of beheaded Armenians”.

![German Soldiers and Turkish Soldiers in front of beheaded Armenians.](image)

Even Jakob Künzler (1871-1949), who barely survived the Armenian tragedy, described
how the shock caused by the pogroms in 1895 resulted in indignation in many European
countries and America and how the Sultan had been called a bloodthirsty, Islamic
barbarian and a Turk of brutal and inhumane proportions. On the other hand, Imperial
German propaganda launched a counter-offensive and defamed the Armenians as a
degenerate race and the Jews of the Orient, who initiated insidious conspiracies and
acted against the Turkish people (Künzler, 1999:11).
A few years earlier, the imperial propaganda had presented the German population with false reports and erroneous messages, thus setting the course for German co-responsibility. It is a matter of academic debate whether the motifs and motivations were primarily economic in relation to the Baghdad railway. Fritz Fischer’s publication, *Griff nach der Weltmacht* (1961), created an unprecedented controversy within the German historical elite. After a painstaking analysis of the files at the national archives, he came to the conclusion that the Imperial Government’s war objective under Theobald von Bethmann-Hollweg and under the imperial sovereignty of the Empire was to gain world supremacy and to weaken the British and the Commonwealth, as well as to keep the Turks on their side to the bitter end (Merenics, 2015: 54).

This quest for world domination appeared to be attainable by setting the Muslim population in Africa, the Middle East and Central and Southern Asia against the British Empire and France through revolution and chaos. The enmity between England and Germany had reached its climax on both sides. Since Turkey needed the support of all Muslims to win the war, a concept was developed and presented to the Emperor by Max Freiherr von Oppenheim (1860-1946), connoisseur of the Orient of his time, aiming to destabilise Britain and the entire Islamic world. This is described in his work *Denkschrift betreffend die Revolutionierung der Islamischen Gebiete unserer Feinde, 1914* (The Revolutionisation of the Islamic Territories of our Enemies, 1914) (Oppenheim, n.d; Schwanitz, 2004:28-59). This involved justifying a holy war (jihad) against Christian enemies, such as Russia, Great Britain, and France under German imperial rule (Lüdke, 2005:32–33).

An article by Elke Linda Buchholz in the newspaper *Der Tagesspiegel* on 26th January 2011, with the title *Max von Oppenheim. Der Bankiersohn und die Wüste; Der Aufruf*
zum Heiligen Krieg kam aus Berlin: El Dschihad, which translates as “Max von Oppenheim. The son of a Financier in the desert. The Call for a Holy War came from Berlin: El–Jihad” draws attention to the ongoing debate about this topic.

In Oppenheim’s work Denkschrift Betreffend die Revolutionierung der Islamischen Gebiete unserer Feinde 1914 und 1940, which translates as “How to Revolutionise the Islamic Areas of Our Enemies, 1914 and 1940”, he set out his plans for Pan-Islamic propaganda in a memorandum in 1914 (Lüdke, 2005:115). In Oppenheim’s view there were two factors essential to the success of German propaganda in the Muslim-populated areas controlled by Germany’s enemies: “First, that the proclamation of jihad by the sultan-calip was to be spread into all parts of the Muslim world; second Ottoman internal cohesion was to be preserved to allow the Ottoman Empire to concentrate its military power on fighting external, not internal enemies” (Lüdke, 2005:115). A qualified jihad using propaganda to support his idea needed a strong organisation, and centralized institutions in Istanbul and in Berlin. For this, a new department was set up at the Foreign Office in Berlin, the “Nachrichtenstelle für den Orient” (NFO, Intelligence Office for the East), in September 1914 (Lüdke, 2005:116). The NFO produced leaflets and propaganda pamphlets, newspapers and a camp magazine (Lagerzeitung) called Al-Dschihad or El Dschihad (Matthiesen, 2006).

Buchholz describes how Al-Dschihad stood resplendent in large letters during the First World War on a printed sheet. This German Postille (devalued magazine, newspaper or leaflets) was first aimed at encouraging Islamic prisoners of war, but pursued far-reaching aims, which had devastating effects on the Christian minority throughout the Ottoman Empire (Lüdke, 2005:121, 140). Using the Islamic doctrine of jihad as a means of war under Emperor William II, who declared himself the patron of all
Muslims in Damascus (1898), was likely intended as a move against the British Empire (Schaefgen, 2006:200).

Oppenheim’s idea was to use Pan–Islamization as an effective weapon by proclaiming a *Holy War* to revolutionise the Islamic world. From this planning office, the aim was to encourage Muslim peoples to revolt (Ohandjanian, 1989:83). In addition, over 70 offices existed all over the Ottoman Empire to promote these ideas. These branches “were located in the largest local buildings and contained propaganda material in the forms of books, brochures, newspaper, leaflets, and large placards depicting the crowned heads of Turkey, Austria-Hungary, Germany and later Bulgaria” (Lüdke, 2005:132). The propaganda leaflets were printed in Arabic and various local languages, as well as comic-style flyers for those who were illiterate (Buchholz, 2011).

![Image of jihad articulated in German language](image)

After the jihad strategy was made known, criticism followed from the allied Austro-Hungarian ambassador Pallavicini, who pointed out the fanatical religious sentiments of
the Islamic population and drew attention to the fact that a fatwa had already been proclaimed in Mecca, Constantinople, and Jerusalem, where all Muslims were obliged to kill the Russians, English, and French, and other Christians as enemies of Islam (Ohandjanian, 1989:83; Lüdke, 2005). This proclamation of *jihad* made Christians a target for the Muslims and, thereby, they became unprotected game (Lüdke, 2005:140).

### 2.5.2 German’s Confused Policy of Positioning Today

Recently, there has been a demand for recognition of the Armenian genocide and restoration of justice, instead of silence and the continuation of the victim status of Armenians. The German Bundestag (Parliament) has hesitantly recognized the genocide despite massive intimidation and disparagement by the Turkish president and his supporters.

On the 16th of April 2015, the Berlin newspaper *Der Tagesspiegel* reported on the dispute over the concept of genocide in the Bundestag resolution proposal. Numerous members of the Bundestag classified the Armenian genocide as a human rights crime by the Ottoman Empire. The Foreign Ministry and the Chancellery asserted that the term “genocide” must be avoided. This was criticized by the deputies of the Bundestag with the request to face the truth and to declare the Armenian catastrophe as genocide. Furthermore, there were criticisms from various members of the Bundestag, who pointed out that it is not sufficient “to use the term genocide only in the explanatory statement of the resolution proposal” (Cordula Eubel et al., 2015). In June 2016 a large majority of the Bundestag decided to classify the mass killings of the Armenians through the Ottomans as a genocide (Document 18/8613, Deutscher Bundestag, 2019).
Nevertheless, Turkey sees this as an international conspiracy against its country and the Integration Council in Germany (which has the task of bringing together people from different cultures and religions) continues to deny genocide (Fokus, 2016, June 9). A further article with the topic “Armenien Resolution: Bundestag bezeichnet Gräuel an den Armeniern als Völkermord”, which translates as “Armenia Resolution: Bundestag refers to the atrocities against the Armenians as genocide” appeared in Zeit online (Sasan Abdi-Herrle, 2016). What these articles show is the growing tension about this issue in Germany and, as a result of German actions, Turkey.

From these examples it is obvious that there is a fight between different opinions, but there has been a change of thinking in German society and politics, which has come about very slowly. While the memory of the atrocities has become part of the Armenian identity, Germany in particular continues to find it difficult to accept responsibility for this historical fact. To date, the Chancellor has not clearly taken a position on the Armenian mass murder. She avoids the term “genocide”; instead, she respects the
parliament’s resolution as a political, but not legally binding declaration (DW, 2018, August 24).

2.5.3 Summary of the Issue surrounding the Armenian Genocide
On the basis of these developments, one cannot deny that the German Empire took an active part in annihilating the Armenians because of its military ties and commitments to its allies. This complicity is not limited to moral guilt through passive behaviour and silence or tolerating deportations and massacres. There were individual cases of active participation of high-ranking military officials who agreed to the deportations and gave orders that assisted them. All in all, they witnessed a cruel annihilation of the Armenian people. However, that was not all; the targeted control of information in press censorship was present as well, in order to deceive their own German population and to obscure the seemingly diabolic genius of politically exploiting the *jihad*. Nonetheless, on the basis of the burden of proof, a hesitant rethinking has slowly taken place in recent years. As a connoisseur and “silence supporter” of the Armenian genocide, Germany is finding it difficult to take responsibility for its past historical actions, nevertheless it is slowly doing so.

2.6 Primal Religion and Christianity in Armenia

Before Christianity evolved into a state religion, Armenia was a pagan country, with pre-Christian testimonies and artefacts in the form of *dragon-stele*, stonemasons and cult and sacrificial sites having been excavated in the Ararat Valley (Mezamor). In ancient Armenia, a special worship of the sun and the moon was practised, and sacrifices were made with offerings to the gods in the forests, waters and mountains (Movsisyan, 2013:9–12). The construction of pagan temples and sanctuaries was
widespread. Ancient Armenian literature and mythology describes dragons or serpents (*vishaps*) as stone monsters with fish-like characteristics used in worship for a fertility cult spread in many provinces of historical Armenia, like Gegharkunik, Aragatsotn, Tayk and others (Burney & Lang, 1975:437). In addition, Mithraism, a pagan Persian religion, was also widely spread all over the Empire during the first through third centuries, as well as neo–Platonism, Hellenistic culture and Jewish Messianism. The old Armenian religion and worship was influenced by Persian pagan beliefs, and the Assyrian religion had an influence on the religious views as well. The names of their gods, for example, have Persian and Assyrian origins: Vahagn, (Vahagn the Dragon Reaper, or in Christianity Saint George the Dragon Slayer), Tir or Tiur (God of wisdom, rhetoric and written language, culture, science) considered as the Greek gods Apollo and Hermes and the Persian Zoroastrian god Tishtrya, and Aramazd, identified as creator god, derived from the Zoroastrian deity Ahura Mazda, and others (Burney & Lang, 1972:428). That notwithstanding, the main gods in ancient Armenia and in the kingdom of Ararat (Urartu) were the triumvirate of Khaldi, Teisheba and Shivini (Movsisyan, 2016:24).

In summary, it can be said that the early ancient Armenian worldview included ideas and features of primal religions in worshipping the universe, spirits and nature, an animistic worship of nature, particularly a specific dedication to the sun and the moon, and was very syncretistic.

### 2.6.1 The History of Christianity in Armenia

Several significant factors were instrumental in creating fertile grounds for establishing and spreading Christianity in Armenia. There was the geopolitical situation of the Roman Empire in terms of culture, language and infrastructure. Different nations and
Religions were synthesised previously, when Alexander of Macedonia conquered Asia and Greek thus became the language of communication. Philosophy appears to have come close to becoming a religion among the educated elite, but it proved incapable of satisfying the spiritual needs of the people (Wolf–Crome, 1985:128, 130).

In this historical hour in the first century, Christian missionary activities began in Edessa through the apostles Thaddaeus and Bartholomew. These were among the 72 disciples mentioned in Luke’s Gospel. In particular, Thaddaeus has come to be identified with the Jewish-Christian missionary Addai, who (according to 1 Apoc. Jak. 36:15–24 and the Doctrina Addai) had preached the gospel in Edessa and in Mesopotamian Adiabene (Eckhard J. Schnabel, 2002:871).

He was the first to preach the gospel in this region and died as a martyr around 107 AD in historical Armenia in the province of Artas in today’s Iran (Isakhanyan 2012:15). The Armenian Church reveres Thaddeus and Bartholomew as the first evangelists to the country and founding apostles of the Armenian Church early in the second century of the Christian era. Therefore, the Armenian Church commemorates these saints and the twelve apostles of Jesus on special feast days. Before Christianity became a state religion in Armenia, a large number of the faithful and religious communities had already been founded by the end of the first century, mostly around Mount Ararat. The first Christian people also built numerous churches and monasteries. The Cathedral in Etchmiadzin was built in 303 AD on the basis of a vision of Saint George, and is one of the oldest churches in the world. This new doctrine, which was directed against class differences, promised social improvement in the society of that time (Schnabel, 2002:1492).
When Tiridates III was named King of Armenia by Roman Emperor Diocletian, a persecutor of Christians, there were massive persecutions of Christian Armenians. Many legends exist about the conversion of King Tiridates III by Gregory. In the year 301, Tiridates III officially declared Christianity to be the state religion. Gregory became the head (Catholicos) of the Armenian Apostolic Church and was given the name the Illuminator (Dum-Tragut, 2014:79). Pagan religious centres and altars around the land were destroyed and priests were told to convert to Christianity. Nevertheless, in Bauer’s view (1977:64–65) some pagan traditions did manage to enter into the mix and have survived. One example of this is the temple of Garni. The Temple of Garni was a place for sun worship and was destroyed by an earthquake in 1679 BC and rebuilt as a ruin site in 1976 BC (Bauer, 1977:65).

The conversion of Armenia resulted in the loss of archaic and Urartian cultural treasures. It also led surrounding peoples to persecute the Armenians for their new religion, which in turn led to further destruction. The Armenians remained faithful to their Christian faith, which, in turn, preserved their culture from assimilation. The ongoing clashes with the Persians in the East and the Romans in the West in the year 451 are also worth mentioning. This conflict was a trial that Christians in the kingdom of Armenia called Aghet, meaning “a catastrophe”. In this struggle for their faith, they would first win the battle against the Persians (Dabag, 1996:178). It is important to mention that Armenia became the first Christian state in the world. Twelve years later, Emperor Constantine issued the edict of tolerance for the Christian religion in the Eastern Roman Empire (Ramming-Leupold, 2017:55).

Following the collapse of the Byzantine Empire in fourteenth century, the Armenians had no state of their own and the Armenian Church assumed this function by becoming
a bearer of national and cultural identity. In this way Christianity deeply penetrated Armenian culture.

2.6.2 Mother Church Etchmiadzin

The story of Armenia’s patron saint, Gregory the Illuminator, tells how he had a vision, in which Jesus came down from heaven with a golden hammer and showed where the cathedral had to be built. This is important for understanding the location of the place of “sanctified soil” and the construction of the cathedral as well as its place in Armenian spirituality.

In the fourth century the patriarch gave the Church the name holy Etchmiadzin, located in the city of Vagharshapat (“illustrated by light”), “the place of the Descent of the Only Begotten”, not constructed by earthly minds (Dum-Tragut, 2014:172–173). Etchmiadzin was built between 301 and 303, after the adoption to Christianity as a state religion. It is the first cathedral in ancient Armenia and the oldest cathedral in the world. The architectural composition can be found in churches in medieval Europe. The cathedral of Etchmiadzin is a symbol of the Armenian Church and the faith of the Armenians and was often simply defined as “Universal Church” or the “First Church”. It means the church is universal and Christian – also national and Armenian (Isakhanyan, 2012:14).

The Cathedral stands on the site of a pagan temple, which Armenians see as an expression of their conversion from paganism to Christianity. The holy seat of the Catholicos, the supreme head of the Armenian Church was placed in Vagharshapat, which is also known as Etchmiadzin. As main shrine of Christian Armenians, Etchmiadzin has become important in religion, culture and politics throughout the
history of the Armenian people (Ramming–Leupold, 2017:72–73, 81). As a result of the campaigns of conquest by the Persians and their attempt to impose Zoroastrianism with its cult of fire inside the Church, and later the struggle against the Mongol and Mamuluk invasions, Etchmiadzin Cathedral was portrayed “as a woman in mourning, contemplating her former splendour and exhorting her children to return to their homeland” (Elliot, 1924).

This sounds similar to the Jewish longing for their homeland. The seat of the Catholicos was transferred to Dvin in 484 and remained there for a long time. Nevertheless, as a Mother Church and headquarters of pilgrimage, Etchmiadzin was the heart of the Armenian nation through centuries, through persecution, warfare, massacre and genocide and brought the Armenians together as a source of strength. The importance of the cathedral is as essential to their sense of ethnic identity as it is to its function as a representation of the Armenian spiritual experience (Denscher, 2004:64–65).

Hranouch Kharatyan a social anthropologist and ethnologist from the University of Yerevan, identifies Armenian Christianity with over 1,700 years of Christian history as a part of Armenians’ ethnic rather than religious identity. This fact must be explained and raises questions (Kharatyan, n.d.). Kharatyan points out the importance of the Church in Armenia. Even if church and state are legally separate in the Republic of Armenia, the Armenian government has great respect for the historical mission of the Armenian Church. The Armenian priest Isakhanyan describes this when he writes:

The Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church, which is an inseparable part of the universal Christian Church, is a religious organisation with a national character. The concepts of nationality and universality fit into one another, in that universality is simultaneously connected to Christianity, i.e., the Armenian
Apostolic Orthodox Church is meant as a shelter of piety for the individual and society, and at the same time is interpreted nationally as Armenian. It is national and Armenian, “a Christian spirit in Armenian attire” (Isakhanyan, 2012:14).

Within the Armenian Church, there are numerous festivals and days of remembrance for the saints. These days of remembrance are divided into three groups: the biblical saints such as the prophets, disciples, and evangelists; the saints of all confessions throughout Christendom, like Athanasius and other ancient Church fathers; as well as the saints of the Armenian people such as Tiridates III, Mesrop Maschtot, Holy Sahak, and Moses of Khornatzi. This view of the Armenian Church as a part of Armenian ethnic identity is based on the Armenian interpretation of Holy Scripture and their traditions. It is also present and revealed in the liturgy of the Lord’s Supper as a central point of remembrance. The *memoria* as a central point of remembrance in the liturgy shapes a religious, cultural, and national conglomerate of collective memory with the result that it unites the people in the Armenian Church and society. An important statement of the Armenians is: “We are Christians and Armenians.” In other words, they emphasise that their identity is first Christian and secondly Armenian (Isakhanyan, 2012:14). This attitude goes back to the beginning, when Christian missionaries spread out to Asia Minor and defended their faith as martyrs and saints.

In summary, the majority of Armenians at the present time, irrespective of their religious attitudes, see in the Armenian Church an important organisation for the building and preservation of Armenian identity in nationality and culture. This is why many Armenians identify with their origin as a Christian Armenian ethnic group due to their Christian affiliation. They are proud to be the first nation to have accepted Christianity, and have paid a high price throughout their history, many dying as martyrs for Christ (Isakhanyan, 2012:36–37, 100, 156, 157). Today, the Armenian Apostolic
Church is affiliated with the Oriental Orthodox Churches. The head office is located in Etchmiadzin. At the head of the Church is the Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of all Armenians. In the view of Isakhanyan the Armenian Apostolic Church is very democratic and gives the laity an important role in decision-making within the Church (Isakhanyan, 2012:37).

Nevertheless, a distinction must be made between the Armenian Apostolic Church and the Roman Catholic Church, because the Armenian Church developed a universal national culture, which was able to connect it to the Armenian identity of the people because of a common history of great sacrifice and martyrdom. In agreement with Bauer and Isakhanyan, this idea remains dominant in the heart of the Armenian population. Their real identity is not in the formation of the nation nor the formation of ethnic groups. It is in the spirit of Christianity clothed in national Armenian uniform. Furthermore, this special relationship between ethnicity and religion shapes their identity created by the introduction of Christianity and their tremendous martyrdom. This is why the visible signs and symbols of the cross-stones (khachkar) bear an important identifying message.

2.6.3 Bible Translation and Christian Culture in Armenia

The first great Armenian literary achievement was the translation of the Bible in the fifth century. The monk Mesrop Mashtot (361–440 AD) was the inventor of the Armenian alphabet. The text of the Bible was translated from Assyrian and revised using the Septuagint. Ramming-Leupold emphasises that the translation work done by the students of Mesrop, who also worked to translate Syriac and Greek literature, had its inspiration in sermons and liturgies as well as theological disputes in various works (Ramming-Leupold, 2017:60).
As a result they produced a very complex and poetic Armenian Christian literature and linguistic culture. It has to be noted that Mesrop Mashtot’s project enjoyed the patronage of King Vramshapuh (died 417) and Catholicos Sahak Partev (338–439) (Bostroem, 1983). As a result Armenia had its own unique alphabet and a beautiful language, (Bostroem, 1983:189). The Matenadaran Library in Yerevan contains more than 28,000 manuscripts dating to the fifth century, and as Bauer, Ramming-Leupold and Dum-Tragut explain, more than 50,000–100,000 valuable documents and manuscripts were placed there for safekeeping (Wolf–Crome, 1985:128–129; Bauer, 1977:160; Ramming-Leupold, 2017:62).

Many ancient Christian sources were copied from the Greek and transmitted from one generation to the next by scribes in numerous Armenian monastery scriptoria. Education was cultivated in Armenia in monastic academies. As a result many works by Greek authors believed to have been lost in the original came to Europe in early Old Armenian translations (Ramming-Leupold, 2017:60-61; cf. also Wolf-CROME, 1985:128-129). It is surprising that despite these very important contributions to Asian and European knowledge and developments, Armenia is mostly overlooked or unknown for these accomplishments.

With the invention of the alphabet by Mesrop Mashtot at the beginning of the fifth century and the translation of the Bible in 540 AD, Armenia had a far more advanced culture than most European kingdoms at that time and Mesrop’s poetry and classical prayers are still preserved (Bostroem, 1983:7–8). His literary work, consisting of theological and scientific writings, was barely known until the thirteenth century, and there was general ignorance about the history and culture of Armenia in Central Europe.
This can be seen by the fact that there are hardly any Armenian works translated into Western languages. In addition, the armed conflicts with surrounding peoples have continuously threatened to destroy Armenian culture and crush their Christian faith, but through their devotion to the study of scripture they survived (Eggenstein-Harutunian, 2012:15–16).

Nevertheless, there would have been no Armenian-Christian culture without the invention of the Armenian alphabet. A great number of theological and religious texts would not have been preserved in Armenian, such as the writings of the Cappadocian fathers and the later Church Fathers, such as Saint Gregory of Nazianus (330), who wrote many prayers and laments about the struggles of life. In addition, there are the writings and works of Saint Grigor Magistros (990–1058), an Armenian prince who paraphrased the Bible in rhyme, Saint Basil the Great (330–379) (Catholicos) as well as Gregory of Nyssa (335–394), his brother (Ritter, 2007:194-195).

Gregory of Nyssa’s thought, in particular, brought together Christian and Platonic ideas. He is regarded as a Christian philosophical thinker of his time. Not to be forgotten are the works of Grigor Narekatzi (948–1003), who lived as a monk and intensively studied Greek science and Armenian literature. His outstanding work of medieval lyric poetry is The Book of Sadness, recently translated into English (Hachatorian, 2007).

Not to be forgotten are other outstanding medieval authors, including Nerses Shnorhali (1102–1173) from the twelfth century and Frik (1230–1310) who rebelled against injustice in the world, as described by author and philosopher Mkhitdar Gosh (1130–1213). Gosh himself wrote an important book on civil and criminal law. He was also a thinker and a priest (Aslanyan, 1971:66–67).
Given these achievement it is all the more disturbing that Turks are trying to destroy this cultural heritage by burning old monasteries, as already denounced by Stangeland (Stangeland, 2013:32–34).

In summary, the Armenian people created their Armenian Christian culture through the centuries, accompanied by poetry, art, song, and spiritual works. They defended it with great sacrifice and created an Armenian culture of remembrance through the Holy Scriptures as well as an Armenian-Apostolic tradition. In this, the Armenian people followed the pattern of a Jewish culture of remembrance by recounting their stories and their traditions and writing them down for the next generation. Even in the midst of persecution, melancholy, and suffering, they have never ceased to pass on this culture. They believed in their right to self-determination and identity and did not doubt the efficacy of their prayers for freedom. They protested in their Christian literature against foreign yokes, and suffering could not destroy their love of life, their faith, or their Christian identity. As Asylanyan and others affirm, literature, music, painting, philosophy, medicine and other arts flourished creatively from the tenth through the thirteenth centuries.

2.7 Was the Armenian Genocide really a Genocide?

Was the mass murder of Armenians a genocide or only unfortunate circumstances? Although some people try to deny all talk of genocide, there seems to be no doubt that the murder of the Armenians and Jews in the twentieth century was not the result of “unfortunate circumstances”. The historian Boris Barth (1961), in his monograph Genozid: Völkermord im 20. Jahrhundert (2006), which translates as Genocide in the
Twentieth Century, highlights the fact that a genocide of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire had been proven to be credible on the basis of publicly available historical facts. In view of the abundance of documents and records from a wide range of very different sources, this event can be undoubtedly classified as a genocide (Barth, 2006:62).

In making this case it must be recognized that the adoption of the term “genocide” by scholars has had a significant effect on the way scholars, politicians and the public view the extermination of Armenians. In other words, the term “genocide” provides a powerful interpretative framework for understanding these tragic events. The term “genocide” was first used by Raphael Lemkin (1900–1959) a Polish-Jewish lawyer, in his book The Axis Rule in Occupied Europe (1944). It was created by combining the Greek word genos, meaning “tribe, race, people” and the Latin caedere, to kill, which creates the suffix “cide”. Hence, the term “genocide” means to kill a whole people (Barth, 2006:8).

This new concept created by Lemkin was published for the first time on 18th October 1945 in official documents of the indictment in the Nuremberg Trials (Barth, 2006:8; cf. Schabas, 2003). The definition and typology of genocide distinguishes it from various other atrocities. The most accepted definition is explained in the United Nations Conventions of 1948 and classified as 1) institutional genocide, 2) utilitarian genocide, and 3) monopolistic and ideological genocide (Smith, 1987:16, 24, 25). The United Nations General Assembly recognizes that genocide is a crime and belongs under international law. Therefore, the civilized world must condemn and prevent it as far as possible while punishing the perpetrators (Fremuth, 2015:66; Benz, 2006:56). As a result, Lemkin’s idea was accepted into international law in 1946.
Gregory H. Stanton, President of Genocide Watch, declares that genocide is a process and can be classified in eight categories. He points out, that all stages continue to operate throughout the process: 1) Classification: All cultures have categories to distinguish people into “us and them” by ethnicity, race, religion, or nationality. 2) Symbolization: We give names or symbols to classify people. 3) Dehumanization: By which we deny humanity to other people. One group denies the humanity of the other group. 4) Organization: By state power or the military. 5) Polarization: Extremists drive the groups apart. 6) Preparation: Victims are identified and separated out because of their ethnic and religious identity. 7) Extermination: It begins and quickly becomes the mass killing legally called “genocide”. 8) Denial: The eighth stage that always follows a genocide (Stanton, 1998).

Despite the growing international awareness of genocide, the memory of the Armenian genocide by the Ottoman Turks is rejected by the modern Turkish State, raising painful questions about both modern Turkey and Turkish history. As stated earlier, today the mere mention of the word “genocide” in connection with the events of 1915/16 in Turkey leads to prosecution under Article 301 of the Turkish Criminal Code and is seen as insulting and denigrating Turkish identity (Leggewie, 2011:103–104).

This makes it very difficult to break through the veil of silence and to conduct an evaluation and rehabilitation of the chain of events from a historical point of view. In order to ensure that “crimes against humanity” do not violate the basic rules of coexistence among human communities, a mouthpiece to combat attempts to hide the facts and deny historical truth, along with a clear definition of “genocide”, which we have, is required. Further, the term “humanity” needs to be translated correctly in terms of the context and meaning of genocide. This is because genocide is a form of crime
against specific ethnic, religious and political groups, who become victims of monstrous and inhuman methods of annihilation. As such, genocide is a crime against the whole of humanity (Barth 2006:44).

2.8 Conclusion

The twentieth century began with the Armenian genocide by the Ottoman Empire. In the view of Hesemann, this was “the Mother of genocide”. The aim of Ottoman and Republican Turkey, which replaced them, was to eradicate the historical, physical, economic and cultural existence of the Armenians. The atrocities and fanatical killings became possible through an unfortunate combination of Turkish nationalism, an exclusive ideology of Turkism and Pan-Turkism “married” to a form of Islamic religious fundamentalism. The concept of Turkish political nationalism must be defined in terms of race, language and tradition which, when combined, prepared the ground for the collective slaughter of Armenians, and was inspired by a fantasy of power related to ideas about national redemption or salvation as a guiding ideology (Astourian, 1999:39–40).

This genocide did not remain hidden, nor did the participation of the Germans in it. Yet, the fate of the Armenians has been increasingly forgotten. Today, the Turkish Government and society make no effort to legally, juridically, or historically revisit the past and deal with the burden of the genocide. Instead the genocide is vehemently disputed, denied, and declared by them to be “collateral damage” as a result of the First World War. As a result, official Turkish Government propaganda maintains, “There has never been a genocide of the Armenian Christian population” (Dadrian, 1999:1-2).
Instead of apologizing and accepting responsibility for these atrocities, the present Turkish government tries to cover its tracks with arrogance and national pride. This denial reaches beyond the borders of Turkey as the long arm of nationalist Turkey stretches into European nations and targets its critics. This was recently demonstrated by Interpol in the case of the arrest of the German-Turkish writer Doğan Akhanli (born 1960) in Spain. He has published books about the Armenian Genocide, and during in his holiday in Spain the Turkish Special Forces arrested him, because of his criticism of the Turkish Government. Furthermore, the old pattern of aggression is being repeated again in the present conflict of the Kurds with the same weapons from the German armaments industry.
CHAPTER THREE
THE HOLOCAUST, CAUSE AND IMPACT OF NATIONAL SOCIALISM IN GERMANY

3.1 Introduction

With the benefit of historical insight, and being conscious of the moral challenges involved in comparing two major incidents of human suffering with each other, it would be remiss not to expressly acknowledge the underlying intent to condemn both and indeed all forms of genocide with the utmost harshness, regardless of how they might appear to differ in terms of their specific circumstances.

As for the rise of National Socialism, the painful memories of defeat in the First World War were instrumentalised to support policies in favour of first discriminating against and then attempting to exterminate European Jews. Their ideologies were also adapted to the present in order to return in the most horrifying and perverted form. It was initiated with what appeared to be nominally harmful steps, leading apparently to some discomfort and exclusion. Notwithstanding this grave underestimation of the situation, the measures implemented increasingly led to bans, ghettoization, deportations and ultimately extermination.

3.2 National Socialism as an Ideology and Pseudo-Religion

After Adolf Hitler (1889–1945) was elected as Chancellor of the German Reich in 1933, the Nazi party’s anti-Semitism became a central doctrine of the German Reich. Party functionaries were consistently negative about Jews when making public
statements. Wilhelm Marr’s (1819–1904) anti-Semitic screed, Der Sieg des Judenthums über das Germanenthum (1880), which translates as “The Victory of Jewry over the German People”, appeared in 1879. Since then there was a continuous development of anti-Semitism among the intellectual elite in Germany. The traditional mistrust and prejudice against Jews, identified by many historians as anti-Judaism (Eyck, 2011:167-184), was transformed into anti-Semitism that focused on the elimination of Jewish influences and the removal of Jews from German society (Broder, 2011:9; Tarach, 2011).

In particular, Alfred Rosenberg (1893–1946), the chief ideologue of the National Socialist German Workers’ Party, NSDAP, popularly known as “the Nazis”, was shaped by these anti-Semitic teachings and theories, and promoted them. Rosenberg succeeded in creating a unified racial theory with ideas such as a Rassenseele (race-soul or psyche) and a blood-based religion, which combined anti-Semitic ideas into a political and quasi-spiritual faith system (Rosenberg, 1930:2, 692, 699).

Rosenberg’s language sounds ridiculous today, for example, his talk about “the Blood” of different races. Nevertheless, it is important and frightening to note that it is not very different from many contemporary statements about genetics. If all of the mentions of “blood” in his publications are revised to read “genetics” or a related term, they sound somewhat more acceptable and convincing. Therefore, one needs to be very careful and not to simply dismiss his writings as the rantings of a mad man. They were dangerous then – and they remain dangerous today.

His particular contribution to Nazism was the proposal not only of a new ethics, but also of a new religion: a “religion of the blood” was needed to anchor National Socialism in the German people. He explained this as “eines germanischen Christentums für
nordisch-rassisch bestimmte Völker“, literally “A Germanic Christianity for Nordic, racially favoured peoples“ which was needed to replace Christianity as we know it (Rosenberg, 1930:114).

This new religion had no intention whatsoever of promoting or practising the key Christian concepts of charity and mercy, and it did not respect the authority of the Holy Scriptures or what Martin Luther referred to as sola scriptura. Nor had Rosenberg or his religion any intention of sparing the Jews or their culture and religion. Concepts such as sin, guilt and forgiveness were an abomination to the Nazis (Hesemann, 2012:237). In their view, these notions represented a Begleiterscheinung physischer Bastardisierung, which translates as a “side-effect of physical bastardisation” (Rosenberg, 1930:71, 686; Hesemann, 2012:237). As a result, there was no longer any need for moral, ethical, or humane principles, and these very potent theories opened the gates for unfettered cruelty and brutality.

Retrospectively, it should be noted, indeed emphasised, that both Rosenberg’s Der Mythus des 20. Jahrhunderts (1930), which translates as “The Myth of the Twentieth Century”, and Hitler’s Mein Kampf (1940) left no doubt as to how they would proceed to segregate peoples they deemed “artfremd”, that is, deviant, foreign to the species, or “sub-human,” as well as those they considered “unsuitable” or incapable of living a Nordic way of life (Hesemann, 2012:236–238). In particular, their ideology required Jewish blood to be declared inferior in comparison to that of the German “master race”, and the mixing of the races was a mortal sin (Hitler, 1940:1–2). Jewishness came to be defined exclusively in racial terms and not as membership in a religious community. Once again, facts were ignored or distorted to align with policies intent upon the ostracisation and ultimately the annihilation of the Jews, as vividly demonstrated by the Holocaust and Auschwitz.
Hitler utilised blasphemous, vitriolic vocabulary to proclaim his intentions. He noted: “So glaube ich heute im Sinne des allmächtigen Schöpfers zu handeln, Indem ich mich des Juden erwehre” (Hitler, 1940:70). This translates as “I believe that I am acting as the almighty Creator had intended: by defending myself against the Jew.” Theologian Rainer Bucher argues that these words represent clear evidence of his decision to commit genocide. Bucher points out that not only did Hitler’s rhetoric against the Jews intensify over time, but he used the language of confession and religious doctrines borrowed from Christianity with a “schlauen Mischung von Heuchelei und Geschäft unter Ausnutzung der menschlichen Anklammerung”, which translates as an “incredibly clever blend of hypocrisy and enterprise that exploits the human propensity for clinging to established practice” (Bucher, 2008:49).

Bucher and Hesemann argue that Christianity was not an option for Hitler and that he believed the Church would be broken down by the “modern science of National Socialism”. Hitler intended not only the annihilation of the Jews, but also wanted to see Christianity gradually wither away. His aim was to eliminate faith and belief in the Christian God, which he saw as a legacy of Judaism. Instead, he intended to establish a “modern science of Nationalism”, that would eliminate all moral boundaries in human ethics (Bucher, 2008:50, 153; cf. Hesemann, 2012:241).

Despite his vehement criticism of Christianity, Hitler viewed religion as a useful tool in his attempt to redefine all things Jewish in racial terms. This allowed him to blame the Jews for any and all exploitation, oppression, and social misfortune in the world. He dehumanised Jews by calling them “minderwertig, widernatürlich und als Parasit” which translates as “inferior, perverted and a parasite”. The Jews, he argued, needed to be made to answer quickly and thoroughly, because they were able to destroy humans

As Maier explains in his article *Religionsähnliche Elemente in totalitären Systemen*, (“Aspects of totalitarian systems similar to religion”), these examples show that the combination of politics and religion can gain power over the minds of people (Maier, 2004:167). Further, Maier outlines the way in which the National Socialist ideology exploited Christianity. Indeed, Christianity, as a religion, as a pre-existing institution replete with rituals, was instrumentalised for the purposes of power politics and Nazism. A state can only become totalitarian if state and religion become one through a clear denial of Christianity. This is accomplished by only using parts of the Holy Scriptures, liturgy and tradition that support the state.

This happened under National Socialist rule (Maier, 2004:161–163). In addition, reinterpretations of religious symbolism took place to give them a totalitarian meaning, “to conceal a fundamental legitimacy deficit” in the Nazi movement (Adam, 2004:177). The anthropologist Karla Poewe explains that National Socialists preferred to speak about their “worldview” rather than ideology. This was because they saw it as embracing far more aspects of life than an ideology, which is an intellectual construct. A worldview on the other hand includes the whole of one’s life. She characterises the National Socialist worldview as a Hydra, a multi-headed serpent from Greek mythology. Its neck consists of three vertebrae: Volk, Volksgemeinschaft and Führer [people, national community and Führer] ... Its various heads represented variations of the National Socialist worldview that were controlled and propagated by the movement’s predominant ideologues in charge of diverse offices (Ämter) (Poewe, 2006:6).
Poewe points out that the body of the National Socialist belief system and daily practice epitomised movement. She clearly identifies the tremendously seductive mix of National Socialist political ideology with Catholic and other Christian terminology, ritual practices, and activities. Hitler, Rosenberg, and Joseph Goebbels (1897–1945) merged these and other everyday ways of living and talking into what they encouraged people to think of as a distinct National Socialist lifestyle, which was identified as their worldview.

What Poewe says supports the arguments of Bärsch in his book *Der junge Goebbels: Erlösung und Vernichtung* (1995) that such ideas and practices did not lead to the worship of God or of Christ, but instead to the adoration of the *Führer* (Poewe, 2006:7; Bärsch, 1995:85). Similarly, Franz Werfel, in a lecture given in 1946, summarizes both Communism and National Socialism as power systems before defining them as anti-religious and quasi-religious movements developed during a nihilistic epoch by people who rejected the transcendent in terms of both beliefs and practice (Werfel, 1946:84, cited by Maier, 2004:165).

### 3.3 The History of the Holocaust

The clear, unequivocal message of this propaganda policy should have led people to expect the attacks, exclusion, and harassment that began to crop up in the weeks and months after Hitler’s seizure of power. The arrests of Jews would increase, even prior to their deportation to the forced-labour and extermination camps (Arendt, 1986:907–943). The sad fact is that the National Socialists did this systematically and with precision. These crimes remain to this day the darkest spots in German history, especially the atrocities against humanity and the extermination of the Jews. Moreover, despite the official culture of remembrance as anchored in the conscience of the Federal Republic
of Germany, the Holocaust and Auschwitz still tend to be addressed briefly and rarely by ordinary citizens.

The term Holocaust itself comes from the Greek *holos* meaning “whole” and the Greek *kaustos* meaning “burnt”. Joined together they form the Greek word *holokaustein*, meaning a wholly burnt offering, referring to ancient religious rites involving animal sacrifices (Wüstenhagen, 2018; Marutyan, 2014:54). In this way the term Holocaust came to be associated with politically motivated mass murders that are said to have begun at the beginning of the twentieth century. That was when British authors publicly criticised the pogroms waged against Ottoman Christians by Abdul Hamid II, the Red Sultan (Baum, 2015:18). Since then the term has become synonymous in the English-speaking world for the specific events associated with the German extermination of the Jews during the Second World War (Kaminski, 1990:34–37). It only entered into common use in 1979 after the US television series *Holocaust* (1978) was broadcast on German television (WDR/ARD). At that time, it replaced the use of Auschwitz as a synonym for the crimes committed against Europe’s Jews before and during the war (Frei, 2005:37).

The diffuse religious theories that shaped Hitler’s worldview were soon put into practice. A few weeks after Hitler’s election in 1933, the first eighty concentration camps were set up, although, except for Dachau, they were all subsequently shut down in order to create an extremely precise, well-organized and effective administrative machine or network to run the next generation of camps. These included Sachsenhausen, Buchenwald, Flossenbürg, Mauthausen, Neuengamme, and Ravensbrück (Harran et al., 2010:19, 124 –125). Concentration camps as such were not a German invention, as some have claimed. Such internment camps already existed in
the nineteenth century. The Spanish used them in Cuba in 1896. Three years later the
British used them in South Africa during the Second Anglo-Boer War, 1899-1902
(Spies, 1977; Giliomee, 2006: xv; 254-267, 358, 381, 432). Much later the idea of
collection camps as death camps penetrated the world’s consciousness as a result of
their use by the Nazis in both Germany and German occupied parts of Europe.
Subsequently, the term “concentration camp” became synonymous with the genocide of
the Jews. Mass murder in such an industrialised, cruel, and systematic form, it is
argued, had never been seen before in human history (Kaminski, 1990:34–35).

After the outbreak of World War II and German victories in Eastern Europe, additional
camps were built in Poland and other occupied countries. The Third Reich was
aggressively pursuing world power and Lebensraum (room to expand), and Poland
became the German laboratory for racially motivated policies of extermination. This
was because Poland had the highest Jewish population in Europe before the war, so it
was perhaps not surprising that so many of the camps there served to exterminate the
thousands upon thousands of people inhumanely, who had been systematically deported

The question is: why did all of Germany’s Jews not leave in time, when new regulations
and rules were enacted on an almost daily basis that only led to their humiliation and
exclusion? The only explanation appears to be that the Jews felt secure and integrated
and assimilated in German society. Initially German Jews remained calm and were
convinced “that Nazism was merely a manifestation of restless right-wing power”
(Neville, 1999:22). In other parts of Europe, particularly Eastern Europe, the speed of
the Wehrmacht, and their occupation of increasingly large areas of Europe, gave the
Jews who lived there no time to escape.
Neville points out that while the Jewish population imagined themselves to be safe, the German population was concerned about the effects of anti-Jewish legislation (Neville, 1999:23–24). Yet, all of a sudden, there was a need to prove one’s Aryan identity. An extensive network of bureaucratic institutions was quickly erected to administer this centrepiece of the National Socialists’ racial ideology. In particular, so-called “black folders” and family trees from church archives were highly coveted evidence in a society being reorganised on racial grounds. These records, from church archives, contained meticulous records of every Jewish convert to Protestantism in Germany since the sixteenth century.

The American historian Deborah Hertz (b. 1949) reports the sadness and inner heaviness she felt as she opened these folders in the church archives in Berlin for her research because these carefully preserved documents were carefully examined, recorded, and used by the genealogical bureaucracy of the Nazi regime to identify and condemn people as Jews even if for many generations they had regarded themselves as German Christians (Hertz, 2010:9, 17–19).

The Nazis did their work step-by-step even as the Jewish population of Germany was lulled into a false sense of security, especially on the basis of their patriotic participation alongside their countrymen in the First World War. From the time the first professional bans against Jewish doctors, lawyers, and merchants were decreed, it was evident that Jewish members of the intellectual elite were already in the focus of the National Socialists (Neville, 1999:23–24). Here, too, there are parallels to the Armenian genocide by the Ottoman Turks waged some twenty years earlier (Akcam, 1996:52). When the Nuremberg Laws took effect on 15 September 1935, defining who was and who was not
a Jew, the Jews lost nearly all of their legal and political rights. The Nuremberg Laws marked the high point of the German Jews’ loss of their rights and identity as German citizens (Neville, 1999:26–27).

When the German diplomat Ernst von Rath (1909–1938) was assassinated in Paris on 7 November 1938 by Herschel Grynszpan (1921–1942 or 1945), a Polish Jew, just seventeen years of age, persecution and harassment of German Jews followed on the night of 9–10 November 1938. Nazi propaganda called this a spontaneous “Outbreak of the People’s Wrath”. Subsequently it became known as Kristallnacht or the night of broken glass. It marked the beginning of a turning point in the Nazi state’s policy that inexorably moved the Nazi state to begin developing a “final solution” of the Jewish question (Wippermann, 1989:114). This pogrom saw Nazi thugs and sympathisers taking to the streets to plunder some 7,000 Jewish businesses, desecrate Jewish cemeteries, and set hundreds of Jewish synagogues on fire across Germany. That night, 91 people were killed. In addition, 30,000 men were deported to the concentration camps in Dachau, Buchenwald, and Sachsenhausen (Harran, et al. 2010:144–145).

When the “final solution” of the Jewish question was decided on 20 January 1942 in a villa on Berlin’s Wannsee, the term “final solution” was at best a euphemism for what was intended to be the total annihilation of Europe’s Jews. This “final solution” has gone down in history as the final step in the racist, anti-Semitic programme in Germany and German-occupied Europe between 1941–1945 (Wippermann, 1989:118; Holborn, 1971:605–606). It started with the construction of additional concentration camps and several extermination camps in Poland. In October 1942, Heinrich Himmler (1900–1945), the head of the SS, ordered all European Jews to be deported to the Auschwitz and Majdanek extermination camps (Harran et al., 2010: 368–369).
Deportation had become an instrument of genocide (Dörner, 2010:104). In particular, Auschwitz functioned as both a concentration camp, which provided workers for forced labour, and an extermination camp. It had three main camps as well as 39 secondary and external camps and became the largest industrial mass-killing facility of all time. Gas chambers using the pesticide Zyklon B were devised to make the killing of the Jews more efficient, a draconian decision which accelerated the mass killings. The gas chambers were used for this purpose from June 1942 at Auschwitz-Birkenau, Chelmno, Belzec, Sobibor, Majdanek, Treblinka, and other places of horror (Wippermann, 1989:120). At least 1.1 million were murdered in Auschwitz. A total of at least 6 million other people identified by the Nazis as Jews died in various concentration camps and execution sites, either in the gas chambers, from being shot, or from cold and starvation (Wippermann, 1989:120; cf. Holborn, 1971:606).

Auschwitz has become synonymous with the unimaginable suffering and genocide unleashed by the National Socialist regime. Hilberg points out in his work that Auschwitz also represents a uniquely systematic and perfected murder of millions according to plans coldly and meticulously drawn up by various National Socialist ministries in Hitler’s regime (Hilberg, 1990:72).

Despite the evidence, it took a long time for Auschwitz to become a part of the public discussion in post-war West Germany. When the American television series Holocaust aired in Germany in 1979, it helped the subsequent generations to begin asking questions in search for answers about what their parents and grandparents had done under the Nazi regime (Frei, 2005:37). It was only after German reunification in 1990 that a common Day of Remembrance to admit and recognize the atrocities committed
by the National Socialist was established on 27 January 1996 at the suggestion of Roman Herzog (1934–2017), who at the time was the German President.

Before reunification the two German political systems had addressed the Nazi past quite differently. The date 27 January was chosen because it was the anniversary of the day the Red Army entered Auschwitz-Birkenau. In 2005, the United Nations declared 27 January to be an international Day of Remembrance. More than 46 nations have signed commitments to the remembrance of the victims of the Holocaust as an important component of a universal memory culture, in *The Stockholm Declaration* (Seiter, 2017:28; Schoder, 2012; Report of the Secretary-General, 2008).

In summary, it must be noted that National Socialism was initially a political movement with a religious undertone, a dynamic that rejected Christianity, which (following General Ludendorff) it identified as a form of “Jewish Imperialism” (Hexham, 2011; Hexham and Poewe, 2011:287; Hexham, 2014:30; Poewe, 2006). These religious elements, involving a ritual mixture of Christian liturgy and folkloristic tradition, illustrating a conglomerate of power connected with religion and cult, were bundled with sacred doctrine and the justification of political action. What it did was to instrumentalise and radicalise National Socialist terror while presenting the Christian faith as essentially irrelevant and unable to solve the problems facing the German nation because Christianity was rooted in Judaism.

### 3.3.1 The Process of Coming to Terms with one’s Past in the Soviet Zone of Divided Germany

After the end of the Second World War in Europe and the unconditional surrender of the Third Reich on 7/8 May 1945, Germany was first divided into four occupied zones
and placed under the administration of the Allied Powers USA, Great Britain, France and the former Soviet Union (Giebel, 2014:42–49). The dramatic defeat of Germany and the loss of the central identifying figure, Hitler, put an end to the National Socialist dream, resulting in an abrupt confrontation with a new reality. Twelve years of Nazi dictatorship in Germany had taken their disastrous toll (Arendt, 1993:23–26; Knabe, 2009:15-18). The Soviet Administrative Authority established the former German Democratic Republic (GDR) in 1949 with the aim of creating a communist state according to the Soviet society model and through education to create a new human being according to a socialist communist ideology (Mähler, 2009:31; cf. Flemming, 2000:4–6). The transformation began immediately with cruel cleansing and reprisals of ideological dissidents (Buchwald, 2005:20–23).

As early as 1945, the Soviet Union began work on building three monumental memorials in prominent locations in Berlin and many smaller ones throughout the territories they controlled. The three main monuments were the Soviet Memorial in Tiergarten, the Soviet War Memorial in Treptow-Berlin and the Soviet War Memorial (tomb) in Schönholz-Berlin. All three were partly built as burial grounds to honour fallen Soviet soldiers. Critically, these war memorials served to celebrate the victories and triumphs of the Red Army while at the same time setting East Germany apart from, and in their view superior to, the Federal Republic of Germany, which was established by the Western Allies. They also served to cement Soviet communistic occupation of Eastern Germany and legitimate the newly founded communist state. Köpstein provides context to these monuments by explaining that Soviet monuments were also erected in at least eleven Polish cities in the summer of 1945 (Köpstein, 2006:11,13,15). Her argument in this regard can also be seen as an unabashed conformation of Soviet imperialistic purpose and effort.
The martial form language and heroic style exhibited in these impressive and intimidating monuments incorporated classical architectural and artistic elements that point to expansion and subjugation, and served as a demonstration of Soviet political and military power (Spieker, 1981:123,139). Zanker explains the ideological form language and stylistic elements as well as the overtones of a religious cult in terms of ancient classic architecture that centred on fallen heroes. As such they reflect the archaic temples of glory that contained victory symbols and are like ancient pagan burial grounds located in nature (Zanker, 2009:27–28, 107). On the other hand, Köpstein criticises scholarly conceptions of the architecture that label it as “militaristic” as well as classifications of these monuments as honorary “Stalinist architecture”, seeing both interpretations as a devaluation of their significance (Köpstein, 2006:202–203).

Nevertheless, these monuments inarguably bear all the characteristics of Stalinist construction and monumental styles that were favoured by totalitarian systems with their undertones of religion even in officially atheist states. As in the Third Reich, Fascist Italy, the Soviet Union and its newly created German Democratic Republic used elements of religious ritual and belief to create an overarching political religion (Raith, 1997:19; Richter, 2013:158-161; Schäfers, 2006:68). These forms of military, political, and cultural expansion, like the currency reform and blockade of the Western Zones, led to containment strategies on the part of the US and a break between the victorious Allies. Political tensions grew out of ideological differences and led the Western powers to break with the Soviets and go their own way. This developed into the frozen relations of the Cold War, ultimately leading to the division of Germany in 1949 (Le Quintrec, Geiss, 2006:48–54; Mähler, 2009:36; Winkler, 2015:599–600).
On 7th October 1949, the German Democratic Republic (GDR) was founded in the Soviet-occupied zone. Under the sign of anti-fascism, deep-rooted transformations in politics, society, and the economy, which were based on the communist Soviet Union, were undertaken. Land reforms, expropriations, and comprehensive State planning were introduced according to the Soviet Stalinist model (Gienger, 2014:23). The founding myth of this new state was “the myth of German liberation, of innocent workers and peasants formerly oppressed by the yoke of Nazism from which they were eventually released by the glorious Red Army” (Fulbrook, 2008:24–29). Thus, anti-fascism became the central element of the national self-image. Apart from the political legitimacy of anti-fascism, the cult of Stalin became a “substitute religion” and the confession of it was the deciding test for a career and an administrative or academic position in the GDR. The formula “Learning victory from the Soviet Union” stifled all liberal and democratic aspirations, as well as learning and reworking processes (Mähler, 2009:59).

Instead of cultivating a moral ethos as pursued in the Federal Republic of Germany (BRD), and instead of advancing a critical review of the National Socialist regime, the hero-worshipping of the Communist fighters took place. The terms “Fascism” and “fascist” became labels used as tools for arbitrary denunciations of unwelcome opponents (Knabe, 2009:266–269; cf. Mähler, 2009:59). In addition, anti-fascism became a legitimation ideology that was not aimed at a concrete discussion of the past, but rather served as a justification for ideological and social transformations carried out by the Socialist State, and in this way it avoided all responsibility for National Socialism and serious engagement with the German past. Thus, all German responsibility for the Nazi past remained forgotten and the Holocaust and its Jewish
victims were ignored or subordinated to the project memorialising the glorious deeds of Communist freedom fighters (Reuschenbach, 2015).

Reuschenbach emphasises that, although large national memorials and monuments were created on the site of former concentration camps like Buchenwald, Sachsenhausen, and Ravensbrück, they primarily served to commemorate communist resistance to the Nazis. In these ways the GDR had produced its own memorial culture, and its history was instrumentalised to legitimise its power. Not only did it deny the responsibility of Germans for the National Socialist crimes by exonerating groups like “the workers” and by blaming the anti-communist bourgeois elite for these crimes, it also fought against the Federal Republic as the inheritor of Fascism. In this way it stirred up a whole generation in Western Germany against their parents, the war generation, who were dubbed Fascist regardless of what they actually did. The relationship of the GDR with the Jewish victims of Nazism was always tense (Kirchner, 1991:31). As a result it is possible to see in the GDR aspects of totalitarian systems and pseudo-religions that combined politics and religion to gain power over people’s minds (Maier 2004:167).

With the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the German reunification in 1990, the GDR and its ideological justification of anti-fascism were buried. The new government of reunified Germany faced many problems, including the establishment of a common German history. This meant finding ways to come to terms with Germany’s past and the legacy of both Nazism and communist rule in the East (Assmann, 2018:37–38).

The construction of a Holocaust memorial in Berlin that included a large museum helped bridge ideological differences that involved both the burden of memory and the loss of memory. With the reunification, after forty years of imposed separation, a shift
to a common memorial culture was both sought and needed. Nevertheless, in the search for a new identity, a common reference point from the past was sought, and found in the concept of the rupture of civilisation, *Zivilisationsbruch* (Diner, 1988:9–10). Thus, the Holocaust memorial and the memorial site must be regarded as a point of crystallisation for a new memorial culture, which embraces the historical responsibility of the reunited Germany. After reunification, the idea of reconciling the past and repairing damaged human dignity through Christian principles did not have a place and was no longer an option according to secular thinkers, so deep-rooted was the development of the secular agenda of both societies (Boschki, 2011).

### 3.3.2 The Process of Coming to Terms with the Past in Former West–Germany

Shocked and shaken by National Socialist crimes, an awareness arose that a world order had to be established, influenced and authorised by human rights, based on a model and system that recognized “good and evil, or rather, innocence and guilt” (Frei, 2005:67–69; Schoder, 2014:299–300). In fact, the presence in politics of talk about human rights, which were formulated as early as the beginning of the seventeenth century as the core of a genuinely modern natural law, began after the end of the Second World War and was used as a precedent in the Nuremberg Trials. As a result it became part of the post-war process of catharsis (Menke, Pollmann, 2007:12–17; Levy & Sznaider, 2001:68).

For the first time in history an international authority was created which, at least in its intent, systematically implemented the principles of international law in place of revenge, hatred and retaliation (Frei, 2005:68-69). For this reason, the city of Nuremberg was and is still a symbol of peace, international reconciliation and human rights to this day.
The artwork “Way of Human Rights”, created by the Israeli artist Dani Karavan (b.1930), is symbolic of this status. It is a walkable monument with columns on which the thirty articles of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, issued in 1948, have been engraved. The monument consists of a gate and twenty-seven columns of white concrete as well as two slabs and a columnar oak. Each article is written and engraved in German and in one other language and can be seen as a tool of identity in the new Human Rights Philosophy of the United Nations, commonly known as the UN (Schmidt, Windsheimer, 2014:36–37).

![Way of Human Rights, Nuremberg (Photo by Jutta Kirsch, 2018)](image)

The UN now rests on four central pillars: peace, security, development and human rights. Human rights in particular have become recognised statutes and have taken their place in civil-religious modernity as a civil creed (Fremuth, 2015:135–136; cf. Seiter, 2017:14). The Holocaust is the event that led to the adoption of the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in 1948 (Levy & Sznайдer, 2001:184). The Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) committed itself to accounting for
the past and coming to terms with the Holocaust as a fracture in civilisation. This was done in accordance with democratic principles and with regard for human rights; as a result of the agreement it includes terms of education, re-education, demilitarization and democratization (Assmann, 2018:35).

At almost the same time, still within the time frame of 1948/1949, the various fathers of the FRG’s constitution urged the “creation of a democratic Basic Law” as the basis of the state. In this the idea of personal freedom is secured and placed above all other aspects of the state to prevent totalitarian actions by the state (Maunz/Dürig, 2018, 84. Auflage, Article 18; Sachs, 1996). In naming it the Grundgesetz (GG) at first, its provisional nature prior to reunification was to be emphasised. The Allies’ terms were dictated in the Frankfurt Documents, and formed the basis for the foundation of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) (Dülffer, 2004:18–19; Rieß, 1995:7; Brunold, (n.d.)).

According to historian Lutz Niethammer, the capitulation of Nazi Germany and the creation of two German states, the Federal Republic, or West Germany, and the Democratic Republic, or Communist East Germany, as well as the partition itself, marked the most complex stages of German post-war history (Niethammer, 1990; Frei, 2005).

Norbert Frei identifies four phases in dealing with the Nazi past. The first phase was marked by political cleansing and de-nazification as well as efforts to ‘re-educate’ the German people towards the rule of law. This includes the Nuremberg trials (1945–1949), which are to be seen as the first steps towards universalization of the Holocaust; however, in comparison to contemporary scholarship, in the post-war period the
Holocaust played hardly any role at all (Frei, 2005:60). The second phase is identified as the politics of the past, which Frei describes, critically, as the “over-and-done-with mentality” (Schlussstrich-Mentalität). This “politics of the past” phase was mainly localised to the FRG in the 1950s (Frei, 2005:30). Levy and Sznajder emphasise that the privatisation of Holocaust remembrance was “in line with the future-oriented public dictum of the reconstruction era in the 1950s – not limited to West Germany, it also affected Israel and the USA” (Levy & Sznajder, 2001:77).

Frei labels the third phrase as the phase of overcoming the past. It lasted more than two decades and re-examined historical, ethical and social questions. Almost simultaneously, legal proceedings were being heard in Jerusalem, with things like the Eichmann trial of 1961, as well as the Frankfurt Auschwitz trials of 1963–1965 (Frei, 2005:26, 35).

This public confrontation with National Socialism also led to an increasing awareness of the question of culpability in the case of the mass murder of the Jewish people, which Karl Jasper divides into four categories and elaborates upon in his book *Die Schuldfrage. 1946 – Ein Beitrag zur deutschen Frage* (The Question of German Guilt). Even in this phase, the past was already stirring. Approaches to education gained great importance, and the locations of erstwhile concentration camps became memorial sites, conceived of as traumatised spaces, while at the same time education through memorials became established and institutionalised as a subdiscipline of pedagogy.

Following Aleida Assmann’s suggestion, Frei describes the fourth phase as the phase of preserving the past, which continues to this day. It is worth mentioning that in Germany the Holocaust did not come into the spotlight until the 1980s, spurred on by the
American television programme *Holocaust: The Story of the Family Weiss* (1979). This series intensified preoccupation with the central crime against European Jewry, and as a consequence became formative of the discourse of disclosure (Frei, 2005:37). Numerous publications and documentaries appeared in the press and other media, and discussions, presentations and questions concerning the Holocaust called out for answers.

### 3.4 The Blind Loyalty to Hitler’s Religion, Transmission of Emotional Heritage

After the defeat of World War I, the Germans had a massive problem with their self-esteem, economic problems, and numerous other issues, as communists and right-wing groups fought for control of the state. This set the stage for blind loyalty to Hitler and the Nazi Party with its reign of terror and murder of the Jews. After the defeat and collapse of the Nazi regime and unmasking of its atrocities by the victorious Allies, a huge vacuum was created which could no longer be filled by fantasies of omnipotence (Brunner, n.d:169–194).

Consequently, after World War II, the intellectual life of Germany was damaged and the facts were convincingly whitewashed by rebuilding the country. Collective guilt and remorse was overlooked, and not recognised as a normal emotional need, which offered an opportunity for atonement. Initially the atrocities of the Nazi regime were forgotten and suppressed. The loss of Hitler’s propaganda, which provided a guiding influence for many people, festered beneath the surface. Thus, instead of its influence and impact being exposed and Germans being freed from its influence through acknowledgement of
guilt, everything was repressed (Mitscherlich, 1967:33). People were of course shocked in response to a violated ideal, and felt shame, but nothing was resolved.

In summary, as Juelich (1992) observes, the repression of the Jews was a consequence of the process of downgrading of the Jews before the Nazis came to power. As a result, Germans with low self-esteem could enhance their status in cooperation with the spirit of National Socialism and destroy the Jewish community to create an imagined Germanic community based on the fictitious idea of a German spirit that they were told was rooted in German history (Juelich, 1992:68). This view supports Poewe’s argument of a multiheaded Hydra. The Christian denominations were also silent, having also been guilty of betraying the biblical image of God and his forgiveness.

Kerstenberg (1995) agrees with this point of view and makes the following argument:

Given the seduction perpetrated by the Nazis, the initial reaction to this could only lead to silence because it went straight to the central sense (Getroffen-Sein) of self-worth (Selbstwert) and to give free rein to the mechanisms of repression in order to avoid being swallowed up in shame and guilt, ultimately leading one to decide that everything is merely illusory (Trugbild) (Kerstenberg, 1995:16, my translation).

As a result, it is clear that after World War II Germans were very confused and simply tried to forget all that had happened. Mourning without loss is impossible, and silence due to repression is a problem, as Mitscherlich, referring to Freud, has successfully argued (Mitscherlich, 1967:24). These scholars are rightly concerned, because the mechanism of repression, from a psychoanalytic perspective, results in a “split process such as adaptation from disappointment, relativisation, denial, and projection” which must be reconsidered in the context of sociological and psychological analysis.
The initial question as to why the Germans cannot mourn takes us back to the past where we find that National Socialism did not allow the mourning of one’s own dead. Instead, they were to be honoured and glorified as heroes who had died first and foremost for the Führer and then, only secondarily, for the Fatherland (Mitscherlich, 1967:29–31). They did this instead of being courageous enough to take a stand against deportation, persecution, and murder of the Jews. Bergmann, who spent decades doing psychological analyses of the perpetrators and the victims of the Holocaust, interpreted the behaviour of the Germans as a result of Nazi Denkarbeit (mental work) according to Gieseke (Bergmann, 1995:266, cf. Gieseke, 1999:20).

In Doris Bergen’s view, Mitscherlich’s definition of mourning as an individual psychic process is problematic because there are so many different circumstances at play. She points out that “in post-war Germany four widespread defence mechanisms blocked mourning of the Nazi past: denial, isolation, transformation into the opposite, and above all, ... withdrawal of interest and effect” (Bergen, 2000:178). Her argument focused on the eastern part of Germany. But recently, when the terrorist attack of 19th December 2016 happened in Berlin, it could be seen that there was a widespread inability among Germans to mourn even when the victims were fellow Germans.

3.4.1 Transmission of Emotional Heritage through Perpetration

The German concealment of guilt and failure to grieve the loss had consequences for the next generation who were too young during the Nazi era to participate in political life or who were born in the post-war era. The guiding intellectual force behind the complex psychoanalytic research into this was Sigmund Freud (1856–1939). In his
work *Totem and Taboo* (1913), he explains the term *Gefühlsersbschaft* (transmission of emotional heritage) and proposes a speculative cultural analysis. Freud stresses that parts of experiences from the previous generation, consciously or unconsciously, are projected onto the offspring and thus generation-based behaviour and reactions are created (Freud, 1913; 2014:753–754). This idea of emotional heritage also inspired Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900) and gave an important thought-provoking impulse in his work. He wrote, “*Was der Vater schwieg, das kommt im Sohne zum Reden und oft fand ich den Sohn als des Vaters entblößtes Gewissen*” (Nietzsche, 2012:435), which translates as “what the father did not say was spoken of by the son, and often I found the son to be an exposed secret of the father.” Nietzsche speaks primarily of a memory of the will, which includes individual promises and obligations. But it also means that the innermost secrets of the fathers come unconsciously to light in the behaviour of the next generations as the transmission of emotional heritage. It emphasizes the compulsive character, the consolidation of the memory into the “inner self.”

This focus on the cross-generational after-effects of the post-war failure to accept guilt for the past intensifies in the face of right-wing extremism and anti-Semitism, re-emerging in recent years, as scholars seek to identify the causes. The reasons for the emergence of paranoid ideologies currently rearing their heads need to be identified (Lohl, 2008:158, 163). Their appearance suggests that they have always existed beneath the surface. This is a topic of considerable contemporary interest and shows the need to close the gaps in the studies of the German generations (Lohl, 2008).

Anita Eckstaed in her *Nationalsozialismus in der Zweiten Generation* (1989) allows for the possibility that the paranoia of National Socialism towards Jews could be passed on to the third and fourth generations due to the earlier generation’s failure to come to
terms with their complicity. She argues that this trans-generational shifting of responsibility creates conditions of bondage for post-World War II Germany. To describe this she coins the term *Hörigkeitsverhältnis*, which means “self-syntonic object manipulation”, to describe the way the burden of guilt is passed on from one generation to the next (Eckstaedt, 1989:304). This passing on is made possible by denying both personal inner and historical outer realities. Thus the identity of Germans turns into a relationship of bondage to the past. The next generation is ‘made pregnant’ with the desire of the parent to avoid all thought about past crimes and German guilt (Eckstaedt, 1989:323).

A large number of studies have been conducted and published expressing different opinions on post-war behaviour of perpetrators that create a psychoanalytic inheritance for all younger Germans. Silence and denial of the facts were experienced by the children of the perpetrators and other Germans who simply survived the Third Reich. As a result, a psychoanalytic/genetic inheritance full of shadows turned the relationship of all young Germans with their parents into a psychological problem burdened with guilt (Durban, 2009; Moré, 2013:1–34).

Understanding how concealed guilt can impact the next generation has become urgently important, even imperative, given the ongoing social and psychological problems involved. In contemporary Germany, the ability to deal with such guilt can be seen as a failure. The descendants of the perpetrators feel shame and guilt for what their parents, and now even grandparents, did or failed to do. This is one of the reasons, according to various scholars, for the German inability to mourn or even begin to come to terms with certain parts of history with regard to the conflict between the atrocities of the
Holocaust and German national identity. These symptoms demand attention and need to become the focus of new studies (Eckstaedt, 1989; Kerstenberg, 1995). As a result, much current research focuses on such topics as shame, guilt and inability to mourn, as well as the effects of National Socialism on anti-Semitism and aggressive nationalism.

3.4.2 The Trauma of Holocaust Survivors

The German-American psychiatrist and psychoanalyst William G. Niederland (1904–1993) spent years working for the German consulate in New York examining the claims for reparations filed by many traumatised survivors of Nazi persecution (Niederland, 1980). He came up with the term survivor guilt syndrome to describe their symptoms and describes the immense and complex psychopathological effects of such trauma in his article “Clinical Observations on the Survivors’ Syndrome: Symposium on Psychic Traumatization through Social Catastrophe” (1968), which translates in German language Folgen der Verfolgung: Das Überlebenden-Syndrom, Seelenmord (1980).

Niederland presents a wealth of symptoms, which he observed in thousands of victims, including anxiety, chronic depression, and depressive phenomena such as languor, emptiness, and the feeling of being weighed down. He also saw perceptual and memory disorders, isolation, withdrawal and psychosomatic complaints. Many still suffered conditions similar to those seen in prisoners, such as apathy and hopelessness, sleep disorders, and nightmares replaying scenes of horror and other events. Survivors suffered from a fear of renewed persecution, social retreat, isolation, and a sense of insecurity in all human relationships and contacts. They felt vulnerable and completely at the mercy of others, at risk of being killed, and fearful of dying; some were delusional (Niederland, 1980; Kellermann, 2009:27).
Such extreme burdens pave the way for mental illness and are now often spoken of in the same breath as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), but this is considered distinct from Survivor-guilt syndrome, also identified as Holocaust-Syndrome (Kellermann, 2009:13, 29, 37). Kellermann goes on to describe the difference between this syndrome and PTSD as follows: “Complicated bereavement and grief with depressive features is a related, but separate, clinical manifestation of Holocaust trauma frequently observed in survivors” (Kellermann, 2009:41).

Symptomatically, according to Kellermann, survivor guilt syndrome is marked by a demoralising central symptom of guilt. He emphasises that fear and guilt were characteristic of survivor guilt syndrome. Their lives were crushed, destroyed, and collapsed. In the following years, an international research network began to publish handbooks and other literature that helped increase awareness of the emotional and psychopathological effects of Holocaust trauma. The survivors were given space to discuss their fears and their experiences. They can now tell their stories and come to terms with the past. This is not only helpful for them, but also for their descendants (Kerstenberg, 1995:10-11, 30, 31). As a result, the attention accorded to the psychological problems of Holocaust survivors has opened new fields of research previously ignored by most psychiatrists and psychoanalysts (Bergmann, Jucovy, Kerstenberg, 1995).

Importantly, the second generation of Holocaust survivors, consisting of the children of those who survived, but who were not directly exposed to Nazi persecution themselves, still show behaviours and symptoms similar to, albeit less intense than, those of their
parents. These observations have raised many questions (Bubis, 1997:198–199).

Various psychologists and analysts have come up with four models for the transmission of negative family traumas. Kellermann included these “four major theoretical approaches to understanding trauma transmission” in a model and presented and analysed it in his book *Holocaust Trauma, Psychological Effects and Treatment* (2009).

Kellermann divides the Holocaust trauma into four categories: 1) psychodynamic; 2) sociocultural; 3) family systems; and 4) biological models of transmission (Kellermann, 2009:76-77). He uses this model to explain how a mediating agent is required for the transmission to take place. In his view, the psychoanalytic theory, the unconscious is in itself “highly infectious” and there are various transmission factors at the interpersonal level in the theory of psychodynamics that are responsible for “intergenerational transmission” (Kellermann, 2009:77). He also points out that Freud already spoke of this intergenerational transmission in 1913, so this is not something alien to psychoanalytic theory. With regard to Holocaust transmission, the children of survivors would exhibit disturbing patterns of behaviour:

> A child then becomes a reservoir for the unwanted, troublesome parts of an older generation. Because the elders have influenced a child, the child absorbs their wishes and expectations and is driven to act on them. It becomes the child’s task to mourn, to reserve the humiliation and feelings of helplessness pertaining to the trauma of his forebears (Volkan, 1997:43, as cited in Kellermann, 2009:78).

In concurrence with various authors and analysts, “the transmission of Holocaust traumatization through an unconscious process of identification leads to a failure in achieving self-object differentiation” (Kellermann, 2009:79). As an unconscious organized principle conveyed by parents to the children, this massive psychic trauma is internalized by the children (Kogan, 1995:26).
In summary, drawing upon Kellerman’s viewpoint, these four theories of trauma transmission may be identified as unconsciously repressed and dislocated emotions caused by deficient and inadequate parenting, narcissistic parenting, and a “predisposition to the etiology of a person’s illness”. In addition, these findings are mainly limited to psychotherapeutic studies and explain the phenomena of intergenerational relationships. This suggests that the way our fathers and mothers treated us will be reflected in how we treat ourselves and our descendants.

Once again, the family background and relationships are powerful factors in the transfer of properties and characteristics. They shape our personality and are decisive in dealing with successes, defeats and challenges in general. The challenges regarding our moral and ethical behaviour are not excluded and must not be eliminated. The theological significance of this for Christians in that Exodus 20:4–5 refers to generational sequences and generational transmission as follows: “punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to thousands who love me” (NIV, 1978). This is often a forgotten reality which people unfamiliar with the Bible know nothing about. However, it speaks very powerfully to anyone who wants to come to terms with the reality of the Holocaust and the ongoing guilt of the children of the perpetrator nation and of the survivors who were persecuted.
CHAPTER FOUR
THEOLOGY, REFLECTION, MEMORY AND MEMORIALS

4.1  Introduction

Since the early 1980s memory studies have exploded, creating numerous theories and concepts for explaining and coping with complex and often painful issues. The Holocaust in particular contributed to the development of cultures of remembrance. At the same time, the study of history in connection with memory research is a challenge. It highlights gaps in the research and shows that in the discussion of memory discourse, culture and history are particularly controversial topics, central and yet contentious. Erll (2011) and Assmann (1999a, 2013) confirm the challenge in their monographs and attempt to explain the phenomenon of history as memory and history in memory, they also puzzle about how a universal culture of memory can establish itself in Germany and all over the world. It starts from individual experience and establishes itself publicly, in the collective memory of nations.

As with historical literature, memory research is highly diverse and divided into different forms of memory with their discipline-specific approaches and interdisciplinary networks. During the development of a memory culture in the German society some scholars criticise what they see as a “memory boom” that has resulted in dragging up memories of the past that create acute pain for many people (Assmann, 2013:60; cf. Knigge, 2010, 2013, 2016; Jureit, Schneider, 2010:22). At the same time Cornelißen argues, that:
Cultures of remembrance are to be understood as a formal generic concept for all conceivable forms of conscious memory of historical events, personalities and processes, whether of an aesthetic, political or cognitive nature (Cornelißen, 2012).

What this implies is that we cannot escape our memories or the memories of people around us. Even if not done in a conscious way, our parents, grandparents, other relatives, and friends have memories that impact their lives, the lives of others, and our own lives. Therefore, we need to recognize that while memory studies are a relatively new field we cannot avoid them. Therefore, this work concentrates on cultural memory and its representation in two major memorial sites. Further information about memory studies, its theorists, and the state of the art are found in Appendix One.

4.2 Assmann’s Communicative and Cultural Memory

Jan Assmann (1992) coined the term “cultural memory” to help people in German-speaking countries come to terms with and reflect on the past. His work is based on Maurice Halbwachs’ theories and writings about collective memory (Halbwachs, 1966; Halbwachs, 1967; Halbwachs, 2003). In general, for Assmann, collective memory is a term that encompasses communicative and cultural memory (Assmann, 1992:50).

Assmann describes the collective communicative form of memory and delimits it with his cultural memory designation. For him, communicative memory encompasses everyday communication and concerns memories relating to the “recent past” shared with contemporaries. In the order of precedence, communicative memory is thus subordinate to collective memory (Assmann, 1992:50-51).
Similarly, Erll sees a quantitative difference between communicative memory, which is based on everyday communication, and cultural memory, which is also based on symbolic cultural objectivations (Erll, 2011:30). Assmann discusses this idea in great detail in his work *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis* (1992) which translates as “The Culture of Memory.” He highlights that the typical case of communicative memory is generational memory based on a common past, “growing historically” with the memory of a group “it arises in time and passes with it” (Assmann, 1992:50). When contemporary witnesses have died, the living testimony also expires and must give way to a new memory (Assmann, 1992:50).

Assmann makes it clear once again that this space of memory, formed solely by personally guaranteed and communicated experience, corresponds with biblical references to the third and fourth generation found in Exodus 20:5, which deals with the reduction of guilt over time. He then locates communicative memory in the field of oral history (*Zeitzeugenberichte*), a branch of historical research, and describes it as “history of everyday life” and “history from below” (Assmann, 1992:51).

Despite criticism within cultural and sociological research, in terms of quality and as remembering the past and as interpreted, Assmann argues that communicative memory is changeable in content and can be problematic. Furthermore, he points out that the investigations of oral history show that living memories do not go back more than 80 years. After more than eighty years, the living memory comes to an end because of the passing away of contemporary witnesses, and instead of their narratives (oral history), dates in textbooks, the myths of origin and monuments take their place as official transmission, separated by a floating gap (Assmann, 1992:51). Accordingly, he distinguishes between personal (i.e., communicative) and cultural memory, which
interact with and yet and differ from each other. The American psychoanalyst and sociologist Jeffrey Prager calls this type of complex interaction of memory “embodied” and “embedded” memory (Prager, 1998).

Jan and Aleida Assmann have mainly focused on two memory frameworks, the communicative memory and the cultural memory, and point out that the contents, forms, media, temporal structure and carriers of cultural memory are fundamentally and decisively different from a communicative memory. It can also be said that everything that has meaning and significance in a culture and corresponds to the common horizon of a culture’s experience can be classified under the term cultural memory. Seen in this light, monuments are an important way of storing information, in that because of their “durability they contain codes that determine their significations” (Posner, 1991:66; cf. Jan Assmann, 1992:56; cf. Skalenmodell; Erll, 2011:31; Landwehr & Stockhorst, 2004:258).

4.2.1 Assmann’s Analysis and how Cultural Memory works

While Halbwachs focused on a social short-term memory with his concept of collective memory, Assmann took his thoughts further and focused on the larger and unlimited periods hidden in the historical depths, based entirely on reconstruction, exploring, analysing and interpreting the past (Fauser, 2003:127). For Assmann, cultural memory is the memory that is kept alive through cultural formation and institutionalised communication. Compared to communicative memory, cultural memory involves established objectivations, as Erll describes, “mit hochgradig gestiftete und zeremonialisierte, v.a. in der kulturellen Zeitdimension des Festes vergegenwärtigte Erinnerung” (Erll, 2011:31), which translates as “with highly endowed and
ceremonialised visual memory, especially in the cultural time dimension of the festival”.

She goes on to point out that one of the most important characteristics of cultural memory is that it is far from everyday life and has survived the contemporary witnesses because it is anchored in externalised memories (Erl, 2011:31; Assmann, 1992:52; Gudehus, 2010:93). Menkovic also describes cultural memory as follows: “als Sammelbegriff für das Wissen, das im spezifischen Interaktionsrahmen einer Gesellschaft Handeln und Erleben steuert und von Generation zu Generation zur wiederholten Einübung und Einweisung ansteht” (Menkovic, 1999:19; Assmann, 1992:9) which translates, “as a collective term for the knowledge that controls action and experience in a society’s specific framework of interaction and is slated for repeated practice and instruction from generation to generation”. Thus, cultural memory can extend into the mythical prehistory of a culture and can be preserved and passed on over long periods of time through the contents of various culturally conditioned media and institutions (Assmann, 1992:53). Landwehr builds on Assmann’s analysis, and emphasises that the media and institutions have a dual function: on the one hand they pass on the meaning and significance of the past in retrospect (the retrospective dimension), and on the other hand they provide posterity with focused assistance with respect to meaning and significance (the prospective dimension) (Landwehr & Stockhorst, 2004:259).

The central characteristics describing cultural memory can be designated as follows, from Assmann’s work in Kultur und Gedächtnis (1988):
1) **Concretion of identity** or group specificity. Cultural memory preserves the pool of knowledge of a group, which draws an awareness of its unity and individuality from this pool. It identifies itself both negatively and positively as “that is us” or “that is our opposite”, thus deriving its identity (Assmann, 1988:13).

2) **Reconstructivity** – as cultural memory it is retrospective. Only that which remains from the past is preserved and, as per Halbwachs, “which society can reconstruct in every era with its present frame of reference” (Assmann, 1988:13). Cultural memory exists in two modes: “firstly in the mode of potentiality as an archive, as a total horizon of accumulated texts, images, patterns of action, and secondly in the mode of actuality, as the store of objective meaning updated and perspectivised from a particular present” (updated from the present) (Assmann, 1988:13).

3) **Formation** – the objectivation or crystallisation of communicated meaning and collectively shared knowledge is a precondition of its heredity. This durability and formation is not only based on one medium, e.g., writing; images and ritual forms also function in this sense. Assmann refers to a trinity of linguistic, pictorial, and ritual formation in accordance with the Greek mysteries (*legomenon, dromenon, deiknynemon*) (Assmann, 1988:14; Assmann, 1992: 37; Erll, 2011:31; Landwehr & Stockhorst, 2004:260).

4) **Organisation** – the institutional safeguarding of communication, for example, a) ceremonialisation of communication situations and b) specialisation of carriers of cultural memory (Assmann, 1988:14).
5) There are carriers with clear value perspectives, and there is a relevance gradient, hence there are important and unimportant symbols, which are analysed according to function. This obligatory character has two aspects, formatively and normatively (Assmann, 1988:14; Menkovic, 1999:19).

6) Reflexivity – Cultural memory is reflexive in a threefold sense: a) praxis-reflexive in proverbs, rules of life, ethnological theories, rites (e.g., sacrificial rites that all interpret the praxis of hunting); b) self-reflective: refers to itself in the sense of interpretation, exclusion, reinterpretation, criticism, censorship, control, outdoing and hypoleptic reception; c) it is reflective of the self-image: it reflects the self-image of the group in the sense of “self-thematisation of the social system” (Assmann, 1988:13–14).

Assmann shows that the characteristics of cultural memory and emphasis are present in every society and culture, in every era, as an actual store of memories. He describes these as “reusable texts, images and rites that must be carefully nurtured and maintained in order to stabilise and convey a self-image, thereby preserving a collective knowledge of the past in the group’s consciousness of unity and individuality” (Assmann, 1988:15). This store includes central media of cultural memory, such as orality and literacy. Furthermore, Assmann distinguishes between the ritual coherence of oral cultures and the textual coherence of writing-oriented cultures (Erll, 2011:32–33; Assmann, 1992:142–143).

In summary, Assmann stresses that in recent decades the “concept of tradition is no longer sufficient for adequately grasping the secret of transmission” (Assmann, 2007:45). For him, the term is merely a procedure, a cultural technique, “without
reference to the motivating forces, interests and needs that motivate this uninterrupted work of handing on and incorporating” (Assmann, 2007:45).

Nevertheless, from Assmann’s point of view, there is something sacred in cultural memory. He states: “Das kulturelle Gedächtnis verbreitet und reproduziert unter den Mitgliedern einer Gruppe zugleich mit einer bestimmten Weltansicht ein Bewußtsein von Einheit, Eigenheit und Zusammengehörigkeit. Dazu bedient es sich durchaus nicht nur sprachlicher Objektivationen und Symbolisierungen” (Assmann, 2007:53) which translates, “cultural memory spreads and reproduces among the members of a group a consciousness of unity, peculiarity, and a belonging together, united by a shared world view. In doing so it uses linguistic abstractions and symbolization”. Furthermore, Assmann shows that when rites and texts play a major role, these functions appear in two contexts; which he calls “formative and normative” texts. These along with rites he identifies using the term cultural texts. In his view, normative texts here are proverbs, rules of the game and laws. They serve the formation of judgements, the finding of justice and decision and provide orientation and knowledge for right actions (Assmann, 2007:53). The formative texts, such as tribal myths, heroic songs, genealogies, serve for self-definition and identity confirmation. They communicate knowledge by telling a common lived story. These cultural narratives, so Assmann’s explanation, make societies visible and reveal something about what they are and where they want to go. In other words, if one society bases its self-image on a canon of sacred scriptures, the other society refers to a basic set of ritual acts, and a third society is based on a stylistic defined design of art and architecture, so the past, perspectives of value, and identificatory appropriations will be evident (Assmann, 1988:16).
This is the reason for example why Jewish people who preserved traditional Jewish values and ethics from the holy scripture were able to survive in the diaspora, because of their cultural text and constant remembrance of slavery in Egypt and the entry into the Promised Land.

Fauser sees this as an example of how memory is made, tradition established, and memory methodically created. This goes along with a fundamental transformation of religion (Fauser, 2003:127). Today as a result, many ethnic Jews do not want to be regarded as Jews, but as Israelis (Leuner, 1969:72). Nevertheless, the “Jewish people know their God through His deeds in history even when they do not believe in God” (Livnat, 2002). Therefore, with their history and with the knowledge of God in whom they may not believe, is still so much Jewish religion contained in their tradition and integrated into everyday Jewish life, than in the case with non-Jews living in Christian societies.

4.3 Cultural Mnemonics as an Educational Memory in Judaism

In the fifth book of Moses, known to Christians as the Book of Deuteronomy, a transition from the lived to the learned tradition can be traced, in which all elements of a cultural mnemonic technique are depicted in the memory texts given. The transformation of an oral religion into a book religion made the Jewish people a people of the book (scripture) and transformed the binding memory already described into another form of educational memory (Fauser, 2003:127; Assmann, 1992:214).

This educational memory found in Deuteronomy has been brought to the surface by Assmann as a paradigm of cultural mnemonic techniques. He emphasises that
Deuteronomy in particular contains seven different processes of culturally shaped memories and that the importance of cultural memory was internalised very early in the people of Israel, which went far beyond their identity and history. Without identity there is no history, which is why Judaism can still be said to be characterised by a unique memory-centred combination of historical understanding and religion. This connection is the essence that Josef Hayim Yerushalmi (1988) aims at, because this form of historiography has proven itself over thousands of years as a foundation for meaning and not just as a method (Yerushalmi, 1988:12, 20; cf. Stäblein, 2004:59; Greve, 1997:72).

Yerushalmi emphasises the discrepancy between modern historiography as a method and the Jewish memory community as an orientation-forming memory and phenomenon of profound interpretations, which was written down in history over several thousand years. In his view he prefers the sense of history and he is concerned with the meaning of history and the memory of the past, which is by no means the same as modern historiography (Yerushalmi, 1988:27).

Recognizing this, Yerushalmi is concerned that secularisation, the Haskala (the Jewish Enlightenment) of the nineteenth century, and the rise of modern Jewish historiography have already been accompanied by a decline in Jewish memory (Yerushalmi, 1988:89, 91). The Hebrew Bible particularly clearly illustrates the break between historiography and memory. It should be noted that no other religion is as closely connected with the memory of the past, and living it through its traditions, as Judaism.

While the Jews have a long established memory culture, the Shoah has become the driving force that has entered and now shapes Jewish consciousness. It is the modern
cement between Jewish memory and history. What this means for modern Israel and what influence the Shoah currently asserts in Jewish identity is still under discussion, as can be seen in the memorial site Yad Vashem. In the course of the diaspora, collective memory has therefore functioned in accordance with the model of biblical experiences of divine activity in history. Therefore, Yerushalmi argues that modern Jewish historiography, in terms of published history, can never replace Jewish memory (Yerushalmi, 1988:108).

4.3.1 Eight Different Methods of Culturally Shaped Memory in Deuteronomy

With these discussions in mind it is worth reviewing the different ways traditional Jewish memory was created and maintained in terms of instructions given in the Book of Deuteronomy. We can analyse this in terms of eight distinct methods.

1) Raising awareness, heeding and inscribing in one’s own heart. “These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts…” (Deuteronomy 6:6; see also chapters 11 and 18). This is the prelude to a Jewish culturally shaped memory.

2) Organized and regular education and transmission to the following generations through communication, everywhere and in all ways (Joshua 1:8; Deuteronomy 6:7; cf. 11:19–20).

3) The provision of visible identity markers. That is, for Jews, visible marks on the forehead, body markings, and for men circumcision (Deuteronomy 6:8–9; cf. 11:21).
4) The use of symbols of limitation such as inscription on the doorpost, biblical injunctions and rabbinc interpretations that set limits on what one can think and do. For example, Jews are told in Exodus 20:12-17 to honour their parents, not to covet or commit adultery (Vries, 2003:160).

5) Poetry in a song as codification, written in records to install and ignite historical memory from the scripture (Assmann, 2007:32).

   Now write down for yourselves this song and teach it to the Israelites and have them sing it, so that it may be a witness from me against them. When I have brought them into the land flowing with milk and honey, the land I promised on oath to their forefathers, and when they eat their fill and thrive, they will turn to other gods and worship them, rejecting me and breaking my covenant. And when many disasters and difficulties come upon them, this song will testify against them, because it will not be forgotten by their descendants (Deuteronomy, 31:19–21).

6) The celebration of festivals of collective memory – three great assembly and pilgrimage festivals: Passover, Shavuot and Sukkot. Passover is the festival in memory of the Exodus from Egypt. The children of Israel celebrate the Exodus from Egyptian slavery and recall the importance of continuing the fight for freedom in every generation (Deuteronomy 16:1–7; Kolatch, 2011:222). Shavuot or the wheat/grain harvest, also referred to in the Talmud as Azeret, is closely linked to the Passover and known as the Feast of Weeks, Chag ha-Schawuot, or the Feast of the First Fruits, Chag ha-Bikurim (Kolatch, 2011:254). Shavuot is also considered as the end of the Passover time (Deuteronomy 16:12; Kolatsch, 2011:257). The Sukkot festival is like Passover and Shavuot was originally an agricultural feast. The most important symbol of this feast is the sukkah, a lodge with leaves, so that the feast is often referred to as the Feast of Tabernacles. The Israelites remember the dwelling situation during their desert walk

7) Storage and publication means that the law was written on chalked stones for eternal memory and visible for the people in Israel. In Deuteronomy 27:2–4 it is written as follows:

When you have crossed the Jordan into the land the Lord your God is giving you, set up some large stones and coat them with plaster. Write on them all the words of this law … and when you have crossed the Jordan, set up these stones on Mount Ebal, as I command you today, and coat them with plaster.

8) Canonisation of the text of the treaty (Torah) as the basis for “literal compliance.” The duty of literal compliance is expressed in the repeated injunction “to add nothing and to take nothing away” (Assmann, 1992:218–221). Assmann emphasises here that this is a matter of ultimate, extreme obligation, and that the flow of tradition comes to a halt here (Jan and Aleida Assmann, 1987; cf. Assmann, 2007:30–32).

From this discussion we see that the Pentateuch, particularly the Book of Deuteronomy, explains and codifies a transformation from a lived tradition to a learned tradition and cultural memory. The transition of eyewitnesses and living memory of the desert generation into Israel’s cultural memory is based on an extremely elaborate mnemonic technique. Israel is constituted as a learning and remembrance community and this is still a central aspect of Jewish identity today because of its writing, which has learning and education as its focus. The story is remembered (zkr) and the commandments kept or guarded (shamar) because faith means remembering (Assmann, 2007:33). But what is behind this “memory learning”, which has become so central for Jewish religious teaching and learning processes? What is behind this Jewish model of remembrance and
commemoration, which as a religious discipline can be described as learning in the tradition of the Bible, as a category of memory par excellence?

4.3.2 Memory and Remembrance in zkr as a Basic Category in the Hebrew Bible

The meaning of the basic Hebrew term zkr (זָכַר) can be described as “to remember, think of, make known, name”. It covers a wide field of meaning in common Semitic usage. The theologian Willy Schottroff examined the etymology of the word stem zkr throughout the Semitic linguistic group in his dissertation Gedenken im Alten Orient und im Alten Testament, Die Wurzel Zàkar im semitischen Sprachkreis, (1967). In the first part of his dissertation he worked out that, in comparison to other Semitic languages, the word stem zkr follows a non-uniform use in various literary genres. However, this also means that there is a common word stem, but etymologically different applications are possible.

In the second part of his elaboration and analysis, Schottroff identifies the basic stem zkr in the Old Testament, i.e., “a reminder as to what starts from man in the narrative, legal, cult law, prophetic, cult lyric and wisdom passages of biblical literature” (Schottroff, 1967:110) and his diagnosis is that the basic stem zkr can also be transferred to God. He divides this human memory of the events of the past into four points:

1) He identifies zkr, “to remember,” in the narrative. In this kind of remembrance he recognises the essence of remembrance, i.e., the memory captures what from the past is significant for the present in order to stimulate appropriate action or promote behaviour.
2) *zkr* “to remember” in Deuteronomy describes the memory events of the past. Schottroff emphasises that, compared to the first point, the subject of memory here is not fundamentally free as in the narrative. Memory is mainly placed on an object that was summarised in “Israel’s historical salvation traditions of *Yahweh-amphiktyony* as in the canonical creed of salvation history, cultivated in the cult, and based on the Pentateuch in outline” (Schottroff, 1967:118). Two statements are implicit here: on the one hand, for remembrance it is admonished that *zkr* is in consecutive perfection and in the imperative form, and on the other hand, it is used to remember a motif of a historical salvation tradition, such as Passover, and this is usually given in connection with a commandment.

Here, too, there is a clear structure: “commandment–admonishment” for remembrance/renewed inculcation of the commandments, as written in Deuteronomy 5:12-15 and 15:12–15. This fact shows that there is a close connection between a “commandment–admonishment” and a “remembrance–admonishment”. This involves insight into the sense of the commandment, which should result in carrying out a practical goal (Schottroff, 1967:120).

3) He then points out that *zkr* in the Psalms involves the praise of God as the Lord of history. This can be seen in Psalm 78:40-43, a psalm of history, as well as in Psalm 106:7. These are examples of praising speech, or hymnal praise, and reminders of God’s miracles as a human response of trust in God’s saving activity in history. This, he argues, is pointed out to those who are praying through the very practice of prayer, thus reminding them that they can find help for their plight.
4) In the context of remembrance in prophetic literature, in contrast to the historical reports, *zkr* finds expression within the schematic historical view in the sequence of “divine help–human disobedience–divine punishment–human devotion” (Schottroff, 1967:132-136). It is expressed in a complaint in which Yahweh calls for a declaratory procedure and a reference to the recognition of achievements, the present action and contemporary facts of action, and the fact of election, by declaring himself as Lord of the future in a context of salvation history. Schottroff refers here to interpretations by Dtjes, which point to traditions of salvation history, especially Isaiah 43:18 and Isaiah 46:9 and the biblical prophetic statements, as creative remembrance preserved as vital in the context of salvation history despite the prophecies of judgment (Schottroff, 1967:135).

The Old Testament therefore knows *zkr* both as designation of an interpersonal behaviour and as human relation to God (Schottroff 1967:181–182). The widespread use of the verb designates the personal reference. God’s expressed designation of the *zkr* as a verb in the Old Testament is constructed in three ways: “1) *zkr* with the accusative of the person, 2) *zkr* with the person, 3) *zkr* with the person and accusative of the subject matter” (Schottroff, 1967:112, 183).

The first two constructions of *zkr* that Schottroff explains here are not attributed in an intellectual relation of God to his followers in terms of content, and they are not remembrance in the sense of a mental relation to spatially or temporally distant persons and objects. In this case, it is much more about attributing and observing an actual action and reception by God of humans via His actions of blessing and salvation (Schottroff, 1967:183). The verb *zkr* is presented here in relation to God’s act of salvation that emanates from Him in answering a prayer, “remembering Yahweh” by a
remembrance or commemoration of God, as in Ezekiel 14:13-15; Genesis 8:1; 1 Samuel 1:19; Genesis 30:22; Psalm 115:12, bringing about a change of situation (Schottroff, 1967:186–187).

With the third designation of the basic stem of $zkr$, the connection of Yahweh with the fathers expresses itself in the fact that Israel’s disobedient behaviour had provoked the wrath of God, but they may still be spared because of the promises God made to Abraham and other fathers of faith. Schottroff reveals a reference in Genesis 32:13, in which Moses intercedes and refers to those who have already died and to his deeds. He sees an extension in the construction of $zkr$ with an appeal to Yahweh to remember the promises in favour of the patriarchs. Schottroff summarises that the basic stem $zkr$, as a relationship of God with humanity, does not just describe an intellectual aspect, but is also an active response to humans by the deity, who recognises need and brings about a change through blessing and salvation.

$Zkr$ is not only described as a term for God’s relationship with human beings, but the term $zkr$ is also used as a contrast to the turning away from God and the distance from Yahweh. Schottroff gives an example: “Von den Toten gilt, dass es für sie kein Gedenken Yahweh’s gibt” (Schottroff, 1967:201) which translates that “for the dead there is no remembrance of Yahwe” and on the other hand, the turning away of Yahweh in anger is regarded as non-memory (Schottroff, 1967:201).

The term $zkr$ has yet another meaning, in that God reacts to the requests of individuals or of his people and in remembrance of them, he brings a change in the situation of need, which is to be justified by Yahweh’s distance. A commemoration of God that calls on him not to ignore his promises, although the need is due to Yahweh’s self-
inflicted distance, indicates Yahweh’s intimate relationship with Israel (Schottroff, 1967:200–201).

As a second important point on the subject of “God’s declared zkr” Schottroff points to a community concept, which he divides into three categories: 1) God’s declared zkr with object, 2) promise-oriented zkr, 3) Yahweh’s consideration of grace and mercy.

Schottroff states that the first category applies when zkr cannot be limited to a personal reference. Here, he speaks about keeping the covenant between God and man, and such as his covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Exodus, 2:24) or as the covenant with ancestors (Leviticus, 26:45). This is also expressed in federal and contractual relationships as a community concept reserved exclusively for God. It is irrelevant whether the human being is responsible for observance of the covenant or breaks this covenant by acting against it. It is not the covenant with the ancestors that is meant here, but a covenant to which God Himself refers in His present actions. Even if the covenant has been suspended by human guilt, it is said from God’s side that He takes up this covenant again in a positive sense and makes the earlier covenant contemporary again (Schottroff, 1967:206). He therefore created signs of the covenant, such as the rainbow, whereby the mere sight of it aims at preserving commemoration oriented toward the covenant relationship (Schottroff, 1967:211).

Category two is when zkr is assessed as Yahweh’s given promise of a deed still to be fulfilled, as provided in the plan of salvation, as a plea and trust motif to which the praying person refers. The praying person cannot rely on good deeds or innocence, but only on Yahweh’s promises. The word zkr can be translated in this context as “let him fulfil the given word which he has provided” (Schottroff, 1967:213).
Category three exists when Yahweh takes community-related action, and the community-related action itself brings about grace and mercy. The commemoration of grace and mercy and fidelity has the immediate consequence for the community that divine help becomes evident in the world. The word \( zkr \) therefore refers here to community-related behaviour.

It should be noted here that the will of God is not to be understood as an abstract demanding Torah, but as the experience of and involvement in God’s truth, and corresponds to the help experienced from God. Commemoration “therefore makes community fidelity and merciful, loving devotion of Deity to man contemporary” (Schottroff, 1967:217).

In addition, \( zkr \) sometimes refers to commemoration of the good deeds of people. Reference is made to Nehemiah, who expects merciful action from God and that his pious deeds will be rewarded. The governor’s fear of God guides this behaviour, and social action appears here as a religious deed (Schottroff, 1967:221).

A central reference to the idea of remembrance and commemoration is to be found in Deuteronomy, which, as Schottroff notes in agreement with Childs (Childs, 1962:23), extends to the present day as a Jewish tradition of salvation history. A fixed scheme can be derived using these examples, especially with the emphasis of \( zkr \) in the imperative in Deuteronomy 16:12; 15:15; 24:18; and 5:15, where \( zkr \) is an urgent request to remember the past acts of God in history. Through remembrance, the historical past and the future are transported to the present, so that remembering bridges time periods.
simultaneously (Schottroff 1967:114). It is possible to achieve this in the Hebrew language.

In this usage the peculiarity of the Hebrew conception of time compared to the Greek mind expresses itself. In contrast to the strong spatial Greco-European thinking, the Hebrew concept of time is independent of time periods; it is determined by time rhythms. The theologian Thorleif Boman (1844–1909) has analysed and interpreted these contrasts and the problems contained therein in his monograph, *Das hebräische Denken im Vergleich mit dem Griechischen* (1959) and has itemised how these ideas differ (Boman, 1952:104, 116, 128; Greve, 1997:119; Wolff, 1973:69–72).

In any case, it can be said that commonalities in the two ways of thinking may reveal peculiarities, in that Greek thought is seen as within existence/being, while the Hebrew experience is in terms of hearing and feeling. The seat of memory is the heart in the Hebrew tradition (see Greve, 1997:119; Wolff, 1973:69–72).

In summary, the works of Willy Schottroff and the lexical studies of Brevard Childs’ *Memory and Tradition in Israel* (1962) are important works on this subject, and their research results have laid foundations and analysed principles in relation to the linguistic meaning of *zkr*. Their insights have encouraged the discovery of further scholarly findings. This focus was mainly on a lexicalisation of the term rather than on the historiographical and content-related ideological disputes of ancient times. In particular, in the first chapter Schottroff not only listed and analysed *zkr* in a taxonomic model of linguistic stems throughout the Semitic area, but identified this verb as a language root and as a basic word of the Jewish self-image.
From biblical times to the present, *zkr* has been practised as an urgent injunction toward commemoration, and in rituals, festivals, and Old Testament ceremonies. We can see here a model of how commandment – the admonishment to remember – has been practised to reinvigorate the commandments and to preserve the identity of Jewish culture over thousands of years via a learning and educational memory.

It can be seen that in a modification of the biblical model, *zkr* as a basic category of memory, as a universal and secular form, has found its way into a social, cultural and educational concept with regard to commemoration of the Holocaust in Germany. These educational concepts, with their various interpretative patterns as educational measures, are mainly based on social, political, and philosophical theories of memory.

A focus on religious education, which in Judaism and Christianity has an especially close relation to memory and commemoration, is hardly mentioned and not obviously taken into consideration. This is to be regarded as a shortcoming, since many theories have been taken out of context, or taken from central theological teachings of the Jewish and Christian religions and reinterpreted without respecting the foundations. This brings Yerushalmi to mind, who is concerned with Jewish memory and who understands historiography merely as a method, while ignoring the sense and meaning of Jewish history. According to Yerushalmi, the idea of a history of meaning can be supported insofar as a historiography also needs a clear orientation just as memory theories need critical reflections (Yerushalmi, 1988:27–28).

4.4 Remembrance and Memory in Christianity
In previous sections we dealt with remembrance and memory in Judaism and the influence which remembrance and memory have had on Jewish religion, culture and history. In Christianity, a similar condition exits, only to a lesser extent, and is confined to specific areas. The Hebrew term ṣēker can be identified in Christianity as memoria. The Greek term is mnêmē and can be traced back to the philosopher Plato (427-345 BC). Plato considered memoria to be a gift from Mnemosyne, the goddess of memory (Preller, 1881; Dommermeth-Gudrich, 2016:177). In his work Philebus (Apelt, 2004) a fictitious dialogue between Socrates and Plato takes place, in which Plato points out that memory is no longer an individual part or discipline of the soul, but rather it is the soul itself. This statement reminds us of the Hebrew term leb (heart) (Wolff, 1973:73).

Remembrance and memory are not present as a base category only in Judaism, but they are found in Christianity too. As a religion of revelation and one of the Abrahamic religions, Christianity maintains a theme of “heilsame Erinnerung”, or “healing reminder”, as Knobloch points out (Hecht, 2004:6). Furthermore, on this subject, the theologians Markschies & Wolf have published a comprehensive work entitled, Erinnerungsorte des Christentums, (2010), which translates as “places of remembrance in Christianity”.

This monograph provides different interpretations of Christian places and locations of remembrance. As theologians they emphasize the healing in memory (heilsame Erinnerung) in a Christian sense, which has continued on from the Jewish tradition. Markschies and Wolf comment on the updated and progressive history of memory. The volume is divided into three parts. The first part describes seven central places and locations of Christendom, such as Rome, Constantinople, Wittenberg, Geneva, Sinai and other places of the Old Testament, together with places associated with the ministry
of Jesus, such as Bethlehem and Jerusalem. All these sites are considered as identity points of the great Christian denominations (Markschies & Wolf, 2010:25, 31, 89, 107, 139).

The second part deals with actual geographical places and events of Christian collective memory. These places are labeled as “tridentine” because they celebrate the Holy Mass according to the Roman rite, which can be traced back to the Council of Trent (1545–1563) (Wassilowsky, 2010:395). This part includes places such as Altoetting, Assisi, Bethel, Canossa, Dresden, Cologne, Regensburg and Taize (Markschies & Wolf, 2010:25; Weitlauff, 2010:174–175; Köpf, 2010:193; Benad, 2010:210–211; Weinfurter, 2010:226–227; Roth & Billig, 2010:241–242; Müller, 2010:281–285; Albrecht, 2010:381–383). It must be recognized that these places are not all associated with the original story of Christianity.

The third part deals with the religious practice of the Christian faith as an event that can be experienced in symbols, texts, institutions, individuals and groups. In this part, the main focus is on elements such as popular piety, the relationship between Church and State, as well as an in-depth discussion on Christian rituals. Among other things, several themes are developed from the Bible, such as caritas, which translates as charity and beneficence. This is then explained in terms of welfare and social work, family, celebrations in the Church and the Church calendar, all of which draw on and promote a culture of remembrance (Markschies & Wolf, 2010:415ff). The examples discussed in this work draw on the western Christian tradition, particularly that of the Roman Catholic Church. This is helpful because Catholicism is close to the liturgy in the Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church, therefore these examples provide a larger framework for understanding the place of memory in Armenian society.
Recognizing these practices within Christian traditions leads back to an appreciation of the relationship of Christianity to Judaism. As Dorn emphasises, whoever wants to understand Christian faith needs to first accept and appreciate the influence which Judaism has had on Christianity (Dorn, 2016).

Christianity and the gospel it proclaims are rooted in Jewish religious beliefs, history and practices if for no other reason than that Jesus was a Jew. The Jewish New Testament scholar David Flusser, (1917–2000) describes Christianity as a Jewish religion with reference to the Jews and Jewish groups as well as to Christianity and Christian groups (Flusser, 1988; 1989). Rabbi Leo Baeck, (1873–1956) also sees Christianity firmly grounded in a Jewish view of history (Baeck, 1938).

4.4.1 Christianity and Liturgy

The theologian Bettina Naumann (1964) points out that memories are strengthened in special times when they are associated with particular locations. In her view, the annual feasts, especially the Passover in Judaism, have the same significance as the remembrance of the central events in the life of Jesus. These are the memory of the Last Supper, crucifixion and resurrection, which are recalled on a regular basis through participation in communion or, in the Roman Catholic and Orthodox traditions, the mass. She emphasizes that this celebration brings alive the memory of the Last Supper, which in turn evokes the memory of Jesus’ life and work, which are embedded in the liturgical readings used in churches and Christian communities (Naumann, 2013:19–21).
Furthermore, she points out that every liturgical celebration is focused on the person of Jesus as realised in the present. Here, remembrance as recollection makes the life and work of Jesus relevant to the lives of believers in the here and now. In this way memory of a long-past event can influence lives and make a major impact on the way Christians see their own past, creating hope for the future.

She then argues that these events inform believers about the legacy of God’s work in the history of Israel that continues in His saving acts in the person of Jesus Christ and the creation of the Christian Church. At the same time she points out that this model originated in Judaism as expressed by the Jewish term *zkr* (Naumann, 2013:14).

In her second chapter Naumann argues that holy places and what she calls the liturgical spaces serve as visible symbols of Christian faith and practice in churches. These sacred places and spaces arise wherever faith can be practised and expressed in communion, baptism, preaching, confession and prayer, celebration and ceremonies (Naumann, 2013:59–63).

What this does is connect ecclesiastical systems with visible expressions of the history of salvation embedded in Christian architecture and monuments. Thus church buildings as a form of Christian identity and cultural memory enable us to understand the Armenian memorial site as a Christian object and brings a theological dimension to our understanding of it (Naumann, 2013:66–73).

In support of Naumann’s work is Gudrun Mawick’s fundamental work “Basisinfo Gottesdienst. Ein Leitfaden für Neugierige” (2014), which translates as “Basic information Church Service: A guide for the Curious”. She concentrates on the basic
elements of the evangelical church service. Her aim is to reconnect with Christians who have already had experiences with Christian faith. She states in her introduction that every human being has a desire to be a liturgical being and this desire is immanent in people and it is given from God (Mawick, 2014:10–13; 15–18). She emphasises, with biblical texts, that all life is a service, which includes liturgical actions. One of her examples is seen in the Last Supper with the experience of taste and she compares these experiences with the Jewish religion. Her work focuses on the social conditioning of each human being and explains the importance of the practice of remembering and renewing of rituals and festivals in connection to the events, issues and stories of Jesus of Nazareth (Mawick, 2014:53–54).

In her work she begins with the Church calendar year from the first day of Advent to Pentecost and connects these feasts with the milestones in the life of Jesus. She shows how these milestones are integrated into the liturgical year. In the following unnumbered chapters, she introduces the way of Christian life, which provides basic structures in church service, worship and other rituals, and she gives advice regarding the way in which Christians are able to succeed.

In summary, Mawick gives an intense and comprehensive teaching in celebration, thankfulness and in the Lord’s Supper in relation to the Holy Scripture, with several biblical texts. She emphasizes the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper as a central point of remembrance in Christianity. In contrast to Naumann she puts her focus on liturgical principles and processes and how they work, and does not concentrate so much on analyzing symbolic liturgy, history and architecture. She is more interested in religion and divine revelation as well as educational deeds embedded in a social Christian frame.
However, both sources compliment each other despite their varying points of view. Naumann and Marwick both refer to the Jewish religion and they interpret Christian liturgy as a medium of cultural memory. Central words in Christian worship remembrance are: “Do this in remembrance of me” (Luke 22:19; 1 Corinthians 11:24) and it is also linked to memory zkr, in the Jewish Passover in Deuteronomy 12.

The essential difference between Judaism and Christianity is in the message of salvation and deeds of Jesus Christ in his suffering, his death and resurrection. In Acts 2:42 it is written how the early Christians cultivated their collective memory after the death and resurrection of Christ in their meetings by reading the scripture, breaking bread and praying together.

In summary, a fundamental biblical instruction is given as an imperative command to the Jewish people as part of the Passover – Zakhor (Remember!). This instruction to remember guaranteed the survival and strengthened the faith of the Jewish people. Within Christianity the biblical model in the New Testament is incorporated into the Christian Eucharist and in the “Hochgebet” (the anaphora, part of the eucharistic prayer and Great Thanksgiving in Christian liturgy). Jesus commanded his disciples, “Do this in remembrance of me” (Luke 22:19b). It can be stated that remembrance in the imperative is not just an idea that the mind recalls. Remembrance has its core meaning in a Christian sense of memory founded on the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ of Nazareth (Arens, 2008:24–25; 1 Corinthians 11:23–26). In faith, Christians perform the memoria passionis mortis et resurrectionis Jesu Christi and in faith they remember the testament of love through Christ, who laid down all his glory and devoted himself to the outcasts and sinners with liberating power and unconditional love (Arens, 2008:25).
In summary, it seems the Christian message of remembrance and memory is very poor in content, but the faith in the core message of the *memoria passionis mortis et resurrectionis Jesu Christi* opens dimensions for forgiveness and restoration and does not deny the past, the feelings, the time and justice.

### 4.5 Function of Memory in Profane Monuments and Memorials

In the case of cultural memory, Assmann identifies a “radicality” in relation between the three components, which she interprets as “carrier, milieu and support on transferable and traditional cultural objectifications such as symbols, artefacts, media and practices and their institutions”, and replaces humans as mortal individuals and ensures long-term validity and permanence through “transferability” (Assmann, 2006:33). She also interprets that the milieu is the group itself, which identifies itself through symbols and is subject to constant renewal and change. The supports are the specific individuals who acquire these symbols and deal with them. Furthermore, Assmann expressly emphasises that individual memory will pass away through communication in the group, and through linguistic exchange and discourse; therefore, symbols and signs provide memories and enduring support that remains for generations, thus preserving and making history visible (Assmann, 2006:34–35).

Collective memory over time, as in a commemoration constructed in groups, is a topic of interdisciplinary interest (Erll, 2011:1–2). Accordingly, not only individuals but also societies have a memory in their group, time, and space references (Reichel, 1995:18). Nevertheless, institutions and bodies do not have an individual or biological memory, and anthropological dispositions are missing. Rather, institutions and bodies such as
nations, states, churches or companies must construct a memory and use memorial signs and symbols, texts, images, rites and practices, places and monuments to acquire an identity at the same time (Assmann 2006:35). This is a critical point in a study on identity and cultural memory.

In addition, symbols and rituals are to be emphasised as cultural objectification; they are used in crisis-like memories, as extreme values of human experiences, and as transformed forms for dealing with crises (Schneider, 2004:123-124). These are often underestimated and Warburg therefore described them as *pathos formulas*, a cultural medium that creates a distancing from extreme experiences. Schneider emphasises that Warburg’s understanding of symbols is interesting in three aspects: firstly, symbols are cultural objects of crisis memory and the result of social interaction. Secondly, the symbol is always historically shaped, i.e., the symbol preserves the history of a memory that begins with fear and chaos and ends with the *thought space* that ensures prudence. Thirdly, “symbol formation is the reaction to an extreme experience – an encounter with the extraordinary, with the sacred, whether it reveals itself more as *tremendum* or as *fascinans*” (Otto, 1963:14–15; Schneider, 2004:124).

This classification provides a vague indication of why symbols can make sense in extreme cases beyond everyday life. It can be said that a collective memory as a community of solidarity in relation to Auschwitz is not only a theoretical concept, but becomes tangible in the same time in the construction of memorial signs and symbols. As a concept, they are visible all over the world. In particular, the monument is a manifestation and medium of cultural memory when individual memory has expired. As cultural formation, and a fixed point of cultural memory, they pass on certain content
about time and space and furthermore convey their messages (Assmann, 1988:12; Spielmann, 1989:110).

4.5.1 The Monument

For further clarification of the term “monument” Reuße (1995) offers a historical review and sees a development and change as well as clarification in the designation and meaning of the term. There are not only architectural and sculptural works in monuments in memory of stately and public persons, but in extension to the simple monument several designations were added over time. These include industrial monuments, natural monuments, spiritual monuments in churches and cathedrals as well as memorial places, and among others, ground monuments, such as Stolpersteine (a specific ground monument in Germany) or monuments cast into the ground, such as der Riss (which translates “the Tear”, a monument that memorialises the terrorist attack in 2016 in Berlin).

Hans-Ernst Mittig in particular has made a general definition of the monument. According to his interpretation, it is “a work of art erected in public and intended for the duration of time, reminiscent of persons or events and intended to derive from the memory and historically justify a claim of its authors, a teaching or an appeal to society” (Mittig, 1985:52; Reuße, 1995:16). In addition to this, Spielmann identifies the monument as a manifestation of cultural memory and at the same time as a manifestation of historical consciousness, insofar as it was “the result of a communication process of conflictual understanding about the interpretation of history“ (Spielmann, 1990:45; Reuße, 1995:16). Reuße stands out in the redefinition of the term’s content that it is no longer about aesthetic attributes, but rather interpreted from a
historical and sociological point of view and used as proof of a certain conception of
history. Furthermore, particular importance is attached to the fact that prerequisites must
be present and the monument must have “a claim to a special mode of transmission ... an above-average storage period, i.e., a permanent presence of the sign as the specific to the monument” (Reuße, 1995:16). Factors such as material and location also play a central role and it should be decodable for the general public (Reuße, 1995:17-18). Schäfers also uses the term “decodability” (Schäfers, 2006:45).

Reuße examines monuments that are “non-figurative”, monuments that have no figure, but refer only to empirical realities and cannot be described as sociological or functional. These so-called architectural monuments, which set long-term signs through quantitative size, simplicity and hardness of the material, are defined as geometric primary forms. They appear in pyramids, obelisks and blocks and will occupy us intensively in the description of the memorials of Tsitsernakberd and Yad Vashem. These architectural forms go back to antiquity and are called neoclassical architecture (Reuße, 1995:45). In particular, the doctrine of Vitruvius, grandfather of architectural theories and founder of the Vitruvian triad, defines all technical matters of construction, the choice and the materials of the building site and the architectural beauty, such as the order of columns, proportioning, and decoration, according to which certain forms are assigned to the Roman gods (Evers & Thoenes, 2003:6).

Evers emphasises that the triple purpose of architecture as strength, comfort and beauty dates back to the eighteenth century and that only after the nineteenth century did modernity increasingly bring technical, social and extra-aesthetic criteria to bear on architecture (Evers, 2003:7). While architectural sociology investigates built-in function, dimension, material and form, collective memory, according to Halbwachs, is
another interesting field of research in the context of social theory. Thematically, as “architecture in society”, new specific approaches as well as empirical and methodological approaches are to be developed that should lead to new results (Fischer & Delitz, 2009:13-14).

Nevertheless, the description and theoretical access to symbolic forms of expression in Germany, which serve to form a national collective identity, seem to be subject to a somewhat different and more difficult analysis compared to other nations. German history as displayed in the monuments differs from that of other countries because history is different. German history is “fragmented, enriching but also confusing” and disturbing in comparison to the European countries which, as strong central powers, confidently present their history as a national narrative over centuries (MacGregor, 2015:28–29).

The numerous differentiations and classifications in the development of the monument are not only manifold but also do not allow a definite and exact definition (Menkovic, 1999:10). Nevertheless, three main features are identified in the theory of the monument, which are general and based on the characteristics already mentioned above. Menkovic sees these three main characteristics as permanence, publicity (through which the monuments obtain their actual effect), and the expression of a generalising symbolism through which the past is simplified and legibly represented. In her description, Menkovic refers to Mittig and Plagemann, as well as Spielmann, who describes the monument as a function of public debate and static interpretation of the past and is intended to shed light on a social awareness at the time of its construction (Mittig & Plagemann (ed.), 1972; Spielmann, 1989:110–113).
Menkovic mainly examined the political monuments that had previously articulated their claims to power in the form of dynastic or ruling monuments with representative characteristics. These characteristics can also be seen in the neighbouring nations before new types of monuments developed. She explains that political and military power merged in the dynastic monuments before they lost their significance in the nineteenth century. Figures of the “anonymous fighter – in the style of statues of the general – were created, for the military cult of the Führer was replaced and transferred to the cult of a citizen in uniform” (Menkovic, 1999:10–11).

This development was particularly evident in nineteenth century. Meinhold Lurz, (1985: 81–91) and Wippermann (2010) also point out that parallels can be observed between the onset of the monument boom in the nineteenth century and the renewed current monument boom, which he strongly criticises in that it changes the terminology and meaning of the monument in Germany and also outside of Germany, but which has been implemented in Germany excessively (Wippermann 2010:10). Assmann & Harth (1991) also share these observations. Furthermore, on the basis of the political and cultural development of the German nation, Wippermann illustrates how the monuments can be classified historically according to their form and political function as they express “a German cultural nation, a blood nation, a state nation and a war nation” (Wippermann, 2010:10). Menkovic, Spielmann and Wippermann describe the different phases of the nation and locate the different manifestations of the monuments there.

Menkovic in particular summarises the variety of terms and their meaning in monument policy and lists a number of monument types, such as the war monument, hero monument, war monument, victory mark, memorial, war tomb, and hero cemetery
(Menkovic, 1999:11). She explains that victory monuments were spoken of in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, heroic monuments in the years 1914–1945, and monuments from 1945 onwards: “In the 1950s, the terms Kriegerdenkmal (war memorial) and Ehrenmal (memorial) were replaced by the terms Kriegsopfermal (war memorial) and Mahnmal (memorial)” (Menkovic, 1999:11–12). All these different types of monuments are present and equally described in all nations.

In her view, these memorials serve the memory of the dead and should have a dignified character through their design. The viewer and the installation site should stimulate reflection through inner courtyards, halls, and enclosed groves. Especially the memorial of the Bundeswehr in Berlin, erected as a memorial in 2008, differs from traditional war memorials by the names projected on the wall at the exit of the Cella (Room of Silence) to the soldiers who died “in the exercise of their official duties”, instead of names carved in stone, as was customary in war memorials. Hero worship should be avoided; instead, the transience of life and the individuality of death should be emphasised. (Bundesministerium für Verteidigung, 2009:31, 39).

The war memorial as a traditional form of monument is the most common, both nationally and internationally, with the themes of victory and glorification of war, while the memorials (as a warning to future generations) remind communities of suffering and sacrifice (Menkovic, 1999:11). Memorials in Germany are abstract monuments that remind us of National Socialism and the Second World War, intended as a warning to future generations, but presently they are also recognised throughout Europe as universal signs. A so-called cosmopolitan approach has been established. For these reasons, the objects of the monument and its function have changed. Social collective memory in the political and social context of National Socialism has found its
expression in the universal manifestation of the memorial, which arose directly in the post-war period and as a result of a multi-layered development from the social discourse of memory and remembrance. According to Volp (1989), “memorials are signs and indicate an interdependence of duties behind all artistic activities” (Volp, 1989:21). The motif and location of the memorial are extremely important because it is a symbol in itself; a memorial is defined as a subgenre of a monument reminiscent of collective blows of fate (Volp, 1989:23).

In summary, scholars agree that the monument is used and classified as a symbol of political-historical debate. In all nation states symbols can be identified, such as flags, hymns, myths and national monuments. There are differences between static-traditional symbols and dynamic-revolutionary symbols (Menkovic, 1999:14-15). According to this, political-cultural signs do not work in isolation but in combination within the sign system. They fulfil the functions of identification, legitimation, anticipation, interpretation, and information. The monument needs ritual reception to be able to exist and remain. According to Speitkamp, the monument cannot be defined as an object, but can only be interpreted in public by its function (Speitkamp, 1997:6-7). This has already been explained in detail. The Brandenburg State Office for Monument Preservation and Archaeological State Museum (Brandenburgisches Landesamt für Denkmalpflege und Archäologisches Landesmuseum) interprets the term Monument as follows: “Monuments include everything so important for historical, scientific, technical, artistic, urban planning or folkloristic reasons that it must be preserved for the public” (Frank, 2018). Existing monuments are precisely listed.

In terms of content, monuments also deal with conflicts over historical events. These conflicts that are attached to monuments, symbols, signs are transported to the public,
and concern the supremacy of interpretations over collective memory (Pallaver, 2013:27). In this field of tension between emotions and cognitive confrontation, according to Pallaver, a constant process of change takes place through different influences, so that the interpretation of historical events is in constant flux.

4.5.2 The Memorial Site

The memorial is to be distinguished from the monument in that it commemorates the dead and tragic events. For Al-Taie, “Memorial sites are media of remembrance and are located at historical sites at which the event immediately took place” (Al-Taie, 2012:92). Memorial sites, monuments and memorials interact with their social environment. Menkovic finds the definition difficult and inconclusive, arguing “memorial sites are spatial, monuments are plastic objects within memorial sites” (Menkovic, 1999:11). For Gudehus, a conceptual separation between monuments and memorial sites is not clear; “monuments are an aesthetically designed representation of the past, while memorial sites are consciously visited to deal with the represented past” (Gudehus, 2010:177). For him, the memorial is also an institution at the “authentic site of a past event with historical relics” and “contextualising information possibilities such as exhibitions or educational offers” as well as media libraries and archives (Gudehus, 2010:177; see also Reichel, 1995; Nickolai & Schwendemann, 2013; Pampel, 2007).

Memorials in the narrower sense are places that remind us directly of the historical events at these places and make possible educational offers to visitors through a museum, an archive or the care of groups (Neirich, 2000:22). Furthermore, a new type of memorial site has developed; these are primarily places of reflection and reminder, but also places of information and enlightenment (Lehrke, 1988:19). Their diversity
enables memorials to answer different questions at different places and thus make a considerable contribution to the appropriation of history. These may be authentic or traumatic places where “exemplary achievements or exemplary suffering were made” (Assmann, 1999a:328). Auschwitz in particular, as a complexly traumatic place, is unable to express how much guilt and trauma occurred there.

Aleida Assmann emphasises the importance and the mystery of the places for memory. She identifies and defines various places such as: “Sacred places, the presence of the numinous, places of memory where something significant happened, the genius loci at which the voices of the past can be heard and finally the scene or crime scene that records the evidence of a crime, a person or a life for subsequent witnesses. These places of memory guarantee and concretise memory. They have no memory of their own, but depend on human rites, interests and interpretations” (Assmann, 1999b:59).

In addition, historical sites convey local memory or faith, a kind of magical power that Assmann describes as antaeic magic that unfolds in direct contact with the places and is based on their authenticity. The name derives from the mythical giant Antaeus, who in connection with the earth mother Gaea constantly received new strength (Assmann, 1999:337, 339; cf. Assmann, 2002:203).

Furthermore, Assmann defines death camps as memorial sites where forms of ritual commemoration develop. They are places for the survivors, relatives and descendants of the victims where all traces are covered up by the destruction. At this level of remembrance, the groups and their identities distinguish themselves. According to Assmann, it is not only about the separation of victims and perpetrators; the most diverse groups of victims also differ (Assmann, 1999b:77). For Assmann, death camps
are also *numinous places* where there is an absolute absence, in the sense that the violence of this absence, whose traces can no longer be traced, can no longer be caught up by any memory or thought and can be experienced sensually as “places of emptiness” (Assmann, 1999b:77).

Memorial sites are also places of historical political education. Pampel (2007) agrees that the term “memorial” (as a warning to future generations) is not a clearly defined technical term and often does not distinguish between memorial sites, monuments and memorials.

Nevertheless, he tries to narrow down and formulate the concept of a memorial site in a more concrete and clear way. First of all in his view, the memorial site includes an activity, namely that of remembrance, which is bound to a special place or to a site” (Pampel, 2007:25). These memorials are characterised by the fact that they are located in places that are connected to events or persons in a special way. In agreement with Assmann, Pampel also explains that memorials have an aura that can be articulated with the words “Here it took place”, because they are the authentic sites of the event (Pampel, 2007:25). This is one important distinction between memorial sites and the museum. Pampel explains that memorials are a warning to future generations and important institutions, because of their symbolic significance and their material representation of cultural memory among the places of memory or generally among places of remembrance (Pampel, 2007:32).

In particular, Nora’s definition of *Lieux de mémoire* (places of memory) in relation to a cultural memory is often misinterpreted, due to a memory that has “condensed, embodied or crystallised to a special degree” (Nora, 2005:8–11; Nora, 1990:7). Nora
describes all places that in some way gave historical testimony, whereby he wanted a place to be understood in all meanings of the word. These could be memorials, buildings and building complexes, celebrations, festivals and emblems, rituals and museums and they do not commit itself to a decisive feature. It is crucial that they all act as vehicles that have a symbolic effect on the conceptual world of history, especially in relation to national France (Nora 1990:7). Thus, according to Nora, the memorial site is a place of remembrance and according to Yates a mnemonic with loci and imagenes (Yates, 1990:11).

Memorials can also be part of a political self-representation and also crystallisation points of the collective memory of nation states. The national warning and memorial sites of the former GDR were important instruments of state anti-fascism. They set out the events and persons to be remembered in public memory and commemoration and exploited collective and national memory for their political legitimacy. After reunification, revisions of the national memorials and memorial sites were necessary (Reuschenbach, 2015. In the course of the discussion on history and memory, especially after the end of the East-West conflict, it was not only possible to differentiate between different terms such as memory culture, memory and remembrance, negative memory, cosmopolitan memory, and collective memory, but new terms were also formulated in the area of “formed memory” and functions that cannot always be clearly defined, such as, for example, place of memory, traumatic place, place of the numinous and place of remembrance, to name but a few.

It was only in the early 1980s that the construction of memorials began in Germany. The Holocaust memorials conceptually brought together the West and East after 1990. A nationalisation of negative memorials was adopted (Assmann, 2006:218–219). In
general, all the victims of war are remembered. This nationalisation of negative commemoration is unique both historically and internationally. Uhl had already perceived this positively and emphasised a sense of interdependence that has established itself in theory and practice as something special. Many memorials related to National Socialism were once former concentration camps. These sites have become mouthpieces for horror and learning places for future generations; in Knigge’s view they interpret a negative memory. There have been a number of studies focusing on this topic in the work of Knigge, 2010; Reichel, 1995; Lehrke, 1988; Matz, 1993; Heesch & Braun 2003; Kappel, 2010; Neirich, 2000.

4.6 Conclusion

Memorial sites and monuments are distinct, although monuments support the meaning of memorial sites. We have also seen that monuments function variously as aesthetic signs, something to honour the dead, to warn future generations, and to educate the public.
CHAPTER FIVE

THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE MEMORIAL COMPLEX

TSITSERNAKABERD

5.1 Introduction

The Tsitsernakaberd memorial complex was built on the hill of the same name, west of and outside the city of Yerevan, as a memorial and symbolic burial site for between one and a half and two million Armenians who have no known graves. It is also a national place of remembrance. For the Armenians, Christianity is not just a religious option, but also part of their identity. This was discussed earlier in Chapter Two where it was pointed out that Christianity in Armenia has been the cornerstone of Armenian history since 301 AD.

At the outside it is important to note that virtually nothing has been written about this impressive complex in English or any other European language. Therefore, all the sources are in Armenian and Russian. What is described here, therefore, comes from the author’s own observations, translations from Armenian sources provided by helpers, and descriptions and other comments made in English or German by informants who were themselves Armenians. These comments are sometimes factual explanations of aspects of the memorial site and at other times, as is clear from the context, an account of the personal reaction of the informant and/or other visitors to the complex.

The memorial or cenotaph to the Armenian tragedy (Aghet) along with a tomb for the Armenians, who have no graves, is not the actual scene of the crimes, and yet it is a highly charged place with extraordinary symbolism in “Metz Yeghern” the great calamity (Marutyan, 2014:54). The Armenian term Yeghern means the destroying event
– through persecution and expulsion since the fifth century. As such, it is a communal and political act of remembrance (Marutyan, 2014:54; cf. Dabag, 2002:50).

In addition to a place of collective remembrance, Tsitsernakaberd is also a place of documentation, research, and learning, according to modern international scholarly methods. Furthermore, it is a place that not only opposes the forgetting of the Aghet, which means an act of the foreigner that penetrates into the interior and destroys, but it is also a place that attracts international attention for political recognition of the genocide (Dabag, 2002:50). Importantly, it is mainly a place for national lamentation and mourning by relatives and descendants whose deceased family members have no graves. This is particularly important because almost every Armenian family lost relatives in the genocide. The scenes of the crimes are on what is today Turkish territory, in East Anatolia and other areas that in the past were the former West Armenia (Hesemann, 2015:11–12).

The memorial is on the Tsitsernakaberd hill. This is significant because of Armenian legends and fairy tales. In fact, archaeological excavations revealed the remains of a possible fortress and temple from the early Bronze Age and the late Middle Ages (Demoyan, 2017).

The name Tsitsernakaberd means swallow’s fortress in English and according to ancient legend, this name is used in connection with the goddess Astghik (Greek Aphrodite), the goddess of love and beauty. Astghik is represented as a swallow, or in other translations a dove, because this place was home to many swallows that served the goddess as messengers, in order to convey messages to her lover or husband Vahagn (Kurkjian, 1958:30; Bauer, 1977:52–53).
This plateau became increasingly desolate over time and had fallen into disuse before it attracted attention and was chosen as the site of a memorial. Demoyan described the site as “finally no-man’s land, absolutely deserted … a shooting range here and a place for grazing animals” (Demoyan, 2017). After closer examination of several options, this uninhabited area outside Yerevan above the Hrasdan River with a view of Mount Ararat proved to be extraordinarily suitable for the memorial complex.

In the same time this memorial is set in a naturally exposed place, already visible from a distance and symbolizes the interaction of humanity and nature, with nature as a symbol of the homeland, that conveys timelessness and immortality. Situated in the outskirts of Yerevan, it is a destination for excursions and a pilgrim’s path, making the landscape itself into a memorial.

Further, as a location “under the eyes of the great and holy Mount Ararat” the memorial can be identified as an experiential space with an experiential path, and is comparable to a path of suffering like the Stations of the Cross or Passion of Christ. As the site of the memorial, the Ararat plays a very important role. Already in ancient literature the great Ararat (Masis) is described as a “mountain, which the sun walks on, and as the highest mountain of the universe, under which evil forces dwell” (Movisisyan, 2013:43).

In the earliest Armenian beliefs, Masis (Ararat) is not only associated with Noah’s Ark, but is also interpreted as a world mountain and a sacred mountain that maintained the

1The expression “under the eyes” is how Armenians speak about the site.
system of the universe after creation (Movisiyan, 2013:43). Furthermore, it is not only a world mountain, but also a pyramid and foundation of the world, the location of the house that God built and that human feet may not tread upon. At this point, the significance of choosing this location becomes somewhat comprehensible, in that it is reflected in the geometric forms of the memorial.

5.2 The Site and Space of Remembrance, Resistance against Forgetting

When what is today Armenia became the Union Republic of the Soviet Union (ArSSR) in 1922, collective commemoration of the Armenian genocide became almost impossible. The Stalinist tyranny pursued everything that might appear to contradict or question the ideology of Marxist-Leninism. Thus, the concept of an Armenian Christian Yeghern commemoration stood in contrast to heroic Soviet victory rhetoric and, as a deviant “ideology”, was treated with suspicion and seen as highly dangerous. Moreover, according to current research, the Soviet regime adopted quasi-religious systems with their own cults and rituals based on the model of the Orthodox Church and created and prescribed its own political religion, which became societally established (Beljakova et al., 2016:75).

But contrary to any political taboo, the memories of mass murders, deportations and the loss of territories were ubiquitous and deeply ingrained in the personal and social memory of Armenians and became part of a Yeghern identity. An invisible force smouldered in secret, which could unfold over decades in the remnants of the Armenians, providing a hidden foundation for social and collective memory.
Other factors play an important role in why the Armenian tragedy could not simply be forgotten and repressed. An important aspect was the political injustice, the international deceit, the abandonment by Christian nations, along with the brazen denial of the aggressor, which the remnants of the Armenian people found hard to deal with. This historical fact and unpunished debt obligation was burned into the souls and bones of the survivors of the massacres.

In addition, there were the personal traumatic events during the deportation with the loss of relatives. These are characteristic of the Holocaust Survivor Syndrome, which was only later scientifically diagnosed and identified (Adalian, 2015:24–25). Their fate is similar to that of the Jewish people in Europe, but took place decades earlier. These memories could not simply be discarded or repressed and then forgotten. The symptoms of the survivors expressed themselves as psychological terror and in flashbacks that entered into the present, not allowing them to live an even halfway normal life (Kellermann, 2009:107-108).

Another important aspect of “not being able to forget” is hardly observed in research: the missing graves. The absence of graves of the murdered Armenians was hardly bearable in the imagination of survivors, because every trace of the existence of two million Armenians seemed to have been extinguished with their death. Elisabeth Fendl (2006) explains that “not having a grave” is an all-too-frequent traumatic experience, which finds little space in the collective work of memory and mourning. The loss and death of a loved one who has no grave is serious and threatening (Fendl, 2006:82). How is a person to process the death of a loved one, whose place and cause of death disappears as a nameless nothing that enters into a vacuum?
Every human being, even in death, is understood as a remembered person, and an external sign is the burial, a parting that includes separation and pain for the bereaved that requires processing (Liebsch and Rüsen, 2001:49). If these needs and circumstances remain unfulfilled, so that parting and separation are not possible, they are left behind as an open wound and this is not without consequences (Fendl, 2006:82). As a concentration camp survivor, Ruth Klüger says that if there is no grave, mourning has no end (Klüger, 1992:9).

Also working against this repression of memories are the stories and eyewitness accounts of the Armenian survivors who escaped the massacres as told to their descendants, who still live in the diaspora today. These stories and accounts provide indications, documents and letters as traceable evidence for counteracting forgetfulness. In addition, there are the impressions and experiences of diplomats and ambassadors who commented on the political situation in their many personal letters. Missionaries and people working on site in hospitals and orphanages reported on the terrible events in the Middle East. They published and worked in secret, while the remaining Armenians in the country, then under Soviet rule, no longer had opportunities to protest the injustice and had to keep silent (Merenics, 2015; Lepsius, 1916).

5.3 What makes Tsitsernakaberd to a Special place?

Every year thousands of Armenians from all over the world go to Tsitsernakaberd on 24 April to commemorate the innocent victims of the genocide, some of whom remained missing anonymously in the deserts of Mesopotamia and who did not receive any graves. On this special day Armenians make a pilgrimage together to the Tsitsernakaberd memorial complex and bond in national and ethnic unity in their
mourning rituals. The events are vehemently maintained and celebrated as something imperishable and unforgettable (Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute, 2017).

The imperishable was linked to the miraculous as a profession of faith. The Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church brought human relics from the Mesopotamian desert site of Deir ez-Zor, named the Armenian Auschwitz, and affirmed their burial ad sanctos (Sörries, 2009:33–34), which representatively and collectively presents and confirms the special characteristic of this site for all murdered Armenians, on account of their martyrdom (Darieva, 2008:102).

This is nothing unusual, as the Armenians see themselves as Christians and are proud to be the first nation to turn to Christianity, always defending their creed and seeing themselves as being members of a martyrs’ church. In this sense, as an expression of collective unity the site of Tsitsernakaberd is not only a burial place but also a holy site and contact zone, according to Assmann, in memory of their martyrs. The symbol is meant to express the trauma of the relatives, and collectively that of the entire people, along with the violent death of the martyrs, because the core of memory in Christianity is the memory of the suffering, death and resurrection of Christ (Bergjan & Näf, 2014:26).

Johannes Baptist Metz (2006), a catholic priest and scholar, states that Christian faith articulates the memoria passionis, mortis et resurrectionis of Jesus Christ, and as eschatological truth it is a creed in our personal and political engagement and in atrocious situations (Metz, 2006:238). Therefore, the collective sorrow and grieving in the form of a spiritual remembrance of the dead is comparable to the aura, or special atmosphere of sacredness, found in places of worship and sacred sites. The Passion of
Christ is at the centre of biblical history and must be elucidated again and again in connection with the history of human suffering (Metz, 2006:251). Metz’s idea of forgiveness as an intrinsic aspect is necessary instead of a cultural memorial ideology. In this context, Metz emphasises that the *memoria passionis* opposes and is incompatible with any “abstract obligation to unify” with a “dictate of totalitarian universalism” (Metz, 2006:251).

As a sacred site, Tsitsernakaberd is also an auratic space (Assmann, 1999), becoming *numinous* via spatially oriented spirituality. Rudolf Otto (1869–1937) located this spatial spirituality in feeling as *mysterium tremendum* (Otto, 1963:13). He emphasises that the experience of an almighty God underlies all true religion. He calls this experience *Kreaturgefühl* (creature-feeling). For him, this *Kreaturgefühl* consists of “experiencing a specific constitution, a creatureliness that refers to an object other than me.” The object triggers this creature feeling, and he calls it the *numinous* (Otto, 1963:10).

For Otto, however, it is the experience with the “entirely other” (“the thateron, the anyad, the alienum, the aliud valde, the foreign and alienating”), the divine, the ultimate, which eludes conceptualisation and therefore it fills the mind and the soul with “*Gottes-schrecken oder heiliger Schauer*”, the awe that Augustine calls the *Aliud vale* (Otto, 1963:16, 31). This emotionality before the *numinous* contained in *Kreaturgefühl* (creature-feeling) can be identified as only one of several aspects that have significance, both in sociocultural terms and in religious actions (Otto, 1963:10–11). He describes the numinous as the actual core of all religions.
Nevertheless, here in this case and as a special characteristic, the collective memory in Armenia is underpinned in both directions. On the one hand in the social, cultural and historical field with symbolic forms and ceremonies, and on the other hand it approaches its religion, which is preferentially Christian.

Therefore, special sites have to be analysed and classified in a double sense. On the one hand they are memorial complexes, sites of documentation, and on the other hand they are sacred sites and cemeteries. Who is the victim and who is the perpetrator has generally already been clarified with documentation due to the collection of evidence, but holy sites or sacred sites are difficult to describe, as we see in Metz’s statement that the founding history of Christianity should not be taken as simple founding myths, but as “historically intermingled narratives” (Metz, 2006:251).

These arguments offer an initial overview. But how may the phenomenon of the holy site with martyr worship be construed in this context, and what are the particular taboos that we designate as the contact zone as per Assmann? They describe the peculiar connection between proximity and distance in sites that become auratic because one “seeks a direct contact with the past” (Assmann, 1996:25). Assmann sees it as “the magical” that is inherent in and attributed to these sites of memory and describes it as contact zones. However, this explanation cannot simply be transferred over to a theological understanding without explanation. Remembrance of the life and Passion of Jesus Christ two thousand years ago, as recorded in the historical biblical narrative, is transferred over, by a pattern of identification, to the story of mankind’s suffering, which must be explained again and again in the sense of a grand narrative and presently summoned into consciousness within memoria in the faith (Metz, 2006:251).
Metz emphasises that if a culture does not want to fall into amnesia, it must establish a narrative culture for a humane identity and shaping of life in view of a coalition of those presently living and those who are “deceased, forgotten, sacrificed and defeated” (Metz, 2006:240–241). This may be a correct starting point for sharpening awareness in identification with the Passion of Jesus Christ, as well as the stories of those who have walked the way of suffering. They offer more than a narrative everyday speech; in this context they are wisdom and truth and part of a Christian creed (Metz, 2006:251).

This narrative culture can be observed throughout Christendom as a specific expression of all Christian denominations, not just in martyr worship. The reliquary cult, the liturgy, the saints’ feasts in the annual cycle, the patrocinia, sacred buildings and their embedding in the urban landscape, places of pilgrimage, customs, art and literature and naming, et cetera, should be mentioned here. All these actions, ideas and tools serve the communication between God and humanity in sites that contain memories connected with His presence (Bergjan & Näf, 2014:177).

As already explained, pagan or secular sites also have the need for sacred space and spiritual experiences. In their secular and pagan variations, these symbolic forms reveal an unmistakable proximity to the religious realm, as Assmann already explained. These phenomena can only be seen as basic human needs that are deeply rooted in humanity. Therefore, sacred sites are associated with the presence of a numinous being or miraculous sources of power, compared to the sites memorialising symbols or memories of a significant past occurrence or event (Assmann, 1999b:64).

5.4 Place for National and Political Memory
The Tsitsernakaberd memorial complex is not only a tomb and a holy site, but also a site of collective and national memory. According to Jay Winter (2012), “Museums are the cathedrals of the twenty-first century” and a family phenomenon in search of a generational family history that can be touched and walked through in a memorial site (as cited in Seiffert, 2012). To describe museums or places of remembrance as cathedrals therefore evokes an aura of the transcendental, as sacred space and a site of worship. It recalls the common suffering in which family history is told, mourned and integrated into history and where transcendent and secular borders are fluid. In this respect, the victim replaces a traditional heroic narrative, and memory is provided with a moral impetus (Seiffert, 2012).

The past is not the passing of time, especially in secular terms. The past of a society is made cultural, and the nature and selection of the respective objects are influenced by politically motivated memory strategies, which are expressed within politics in symbolism and in the meaning and concept (Reichel, 1995:26). Symbolism and reality, in turn, can be subdivided according to the need for symbols, the functions of symbolic politics and the forms of symbolic politics, such as legitimation, the conveyance of meaning and credibility. All political concepts follow these guidelines (Bizeul, 2009: 209–215; Edelmann, 1990).

Under the Soviet regime, the Armenian memorial ceremony was embedded in the Soviet model of political remembrance and conformed to socialist ideology. Armenia’s declaration of independence from the USSR drastically changed the order of meaning in the politics of remembrance. The construction of the new museum at the beginning of the twenty-first century brought a break in the memory politics of the Soviet Yeghern,
from a silent and abstract form of remembrance to a new public and noisy staging that includes political labelling (Darieva, 2008:99).

As a political signal, historical research and strategies for coming to terms with and overcoming the trauma are now a part of the new agenda. Political signals and messages are being sent out against denial, aggression and a renewed planned annihilation of neighbouring nations and the international world. By dealing with the past in communication and thematising its history in public space via the museum with competent pedagogy, they have left the Soviet model of political remembrance far behind. The individual and social memory has developed into a public collective memory (Erll, 2011:16–17; Halbwachs, 1967:32).

In terms of content, the memory clings with its emotionality to the memorial days with a mourning that is collectively expressed, as well as to an “authenticity” of the site of remembrance via truth based on a reworking within historical science. This remembers the events with documentation, oral history and analysis, and appeals to justice, which is still denied because of Turkey’s adamant refusal to admit that the genocide happened and to take responsibility as the perpetrator nation. Menkovic emphatically comments that memory clings to places, and history to events (Menkovic, 1996:20–21). This site of Tsitsernakaberd contains all the functions of a political memory culture too, which stands for an identity, representation, knowledge, explanation and interpretation towards legitimation and rehabilitation.

Dealing with pain and grief in Soviet Armenia initially became a silent commemoration, outside of the public arena. One reason for the silence was to avoid the aggression and violence of the Stalinist regime (Beljakova et al., 2016:101–102). Another reason was
because the spiritual centres of the Armenian Apostolic Church had already been confiscated, and they were symbolic confirmations of Armenian identity (Beljakova et al., 2016:102).

Fifty years had to pass in the country before the coup for liberation could take place (1965) and the veil of silence could be lifted. This as yet unhealed wound split open on the fiftieth anniversary of the Genocide. As a result, on 24 April 1965, more than 200,000 people gathered in Yerevan, then under Soviet rule, for a protest rally. They demanded recognition of the crimes, the repatriation of their annexed land, and the construction of a memorial (Voss, 2005:396; Adalian, 2015:34; Khanumyan & Avetisyan, 2017). This was a dangerous and highly political undertaking, as such protests rarely occurred without bloody consequences under Soviet rule. The example of a similar event in East Berlin in 1953 puts this in context. It was the first mass rally and popular uprising under Soviet rule, which was quickly and bloodily suppressed at the cost of the lives of 34 people (Ciesla et al., 2013).

That this period under Stalinist rule has not been sufficiently analyzed is clear from the fact that very little literature on the matter is accessible for research purposes. Therefore much of this period lies in darkness. Further research on this topic is needed, though it may prove challenging.

The protest on 24 April 1965 became a loud outcry against the Armenian Aghet (Genocide) and was able to raise political attention without bloodshed. It then led to the construction of the monument. Amongst other things, this can be attributed to Moscow’s “thawed politics” under former Soviet Premier Nikita Khruschev (1894–1971) who ruled the Soviet Union from 1953–1964 (Darieva, 2008:96; Schattenberg,
2014:4–7). These developments, were solidified in the 1960s, were due to the diplomatic skills of Yakov Zarobyan (1908–1980), the first Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Armenia (Khanumyan & Avetisyan, 2017).

At the suggestion of the members of the Union of Architects under the spokesman, Rafael Israelyan, Yakov Zarobyan formulated a petition for a Genocide Memorial on the 50th anniversary of the Genocide (Kalashyan, n.d.:15; Balyan, 2009:10–11; Khanumyan & Avetisyan, 2017). On 13 December 1964 he wrote that the mass extermination and deportation of the Armenians “was the mass execution of the genocidal policy by the governing Turkish criminal gang” (Khanumyan & Avetisyan, 2017). The petition for a Genocide Memorial can be found in the description of the Tsitsernakaberd Museum exhibition.

Khanumyan and Avetisyan claim that Zarobyan changed the name of the monument to a monument dedicated to the Armenian martyrs sacrificed in WWI (Khanumyan & Avetisyan, 2017). This special designation of “Armenian martyrs” does not come from Zarobyan’s petition of 13 December 1964 and cannot be proven by a translation. Either this term “martyrs” was used as a synonym for “victims” or there are still other sources which document this change of name.

Nevertheless, the commemoration of the martyrs in WWI now became acceptable and politically legitimate, since a new quasi-religious system with its own cults, rituals and holy places had developed under Communism and established itself as a political belief system according to the Soviet model. The fallen soldiers for the Patriotic War were glorious but nevertheless anonymous and buried as victims and heroic martyrs in mass graves. Hildebrandt adds in his interpretation that a recourse was made to the forms,
rituals and liturgies of the Russian Orthodox religion in order to “keep the people in line” and because a quasi-religious replacement for the communist system was the only option (Hildebrandt, 1996:240).

Zarobyan’s petition was approved by the Council of Ministers of Soviet Armenia (SSR) on 15 February 1965 and contained a resolution entitled “Building a Monument to Perpetuate the Memory of the Victims of 1915 Yeghern” (Armenian Genocide Museum, Permanent Exhibition, with the topic *The Construction of the Monument*). The confirmation of the petition to build the Memorial can be read as a text supplement at the end of this work (see Appendix Three, Application and Resolution pages one and two for further details).

Following these developments Zarobyan, who held political office from 1960–1966, was suddenly and without explanation removed from office on the 5th of February and moved to another position. This may have been because of his failure to intervene against the protest movement in Yerevan but we do not know for sure. In any event he was moved to another position (Khanumyan & Avetisyan, 2017). Huberta von Voss points out that at the time the party and head of government of the Soviet Republic of Armenia was entirely replaced as a result of a decision taken in Moscow (Voss, 2005:396). Nevertheless, through Zarobyan’s diplomatic skills, he was the protagonist and actual pioneer who opposed a political taboo surrounding the Armenian Genocide and jarred the Soviet apparatus’s political, power-obsessed administrative self-image. He was the figure who made the construction of the monument on the Tsitsernakaberd Hill possible.
5.5 The Architectural Competition

The Armenian people had demanded a memorial as an official burial place for the victims of the Genocide and the Soviet leadership had agreed. In order not to harm the friendly international relations of the USSR, it was necessary to consider an appropriate form and a rhetoric that was unobjectionable from a foreign policy point of view (Balyan, 2009:9).

Leading architects, as well as the Armenian State Institute (*HayPet Project*), were instructed to design and develop ideas, collect and produce architectural drawings reminiscent of the Genocide in terms of content and, in addition, to develop a further thought for the future (Kalashyan, n.d.:15).

The summarised guidelines were that the architects should represent the past in the designs, take up the present, and have a regard for the future. The new Armenia should rise like a phoenix from the ashes because of its self-sacrifice, which had already been made at the time of the Genocide, and be resurrected in the process of a re-birth into
new life. The symbol of the phoenix as a firebird is represented with striking frequency, not only in the designs of the architectural competition where it is represented twice, but also in the Bible. The meaning of the symbol is aptly illustrate in the Book of Job from the Old Testament: “I shall die in my nest, and I shall multiply my days as the phoenix” (Job 29:18; Schmidt, 2007:96–97). As a metaphorical illustration, this content of the statement lies as a deep meaning and fundamental principle in this new project, which should define the direction of the new Armenia. The elaborated specifications were not easy to fulfil, since up to that time historiographical research on genocide had hardly existed. Materials and documents had initially to be collected (Kalashyan, n.d:15).

Nevertheless, this was Armenia’s largest and most significant project of the twentieth century. Major Armenian architects, artists and sculptors participated and were encouraged to make proposals by the President of the USSR Council of Ministers, Anton Kochinyans. Names include:

- K. Hakobyan; Sargs Gurzadyan; Macabe Manvelyan; Arthur Tarkhanyan; Sashur Kalashyan as well as his fellow student Hracha Poghosyan and other architects from various institutes such as Rafael Israeliian; Jim Torosyan; Phenix Darbinyan; Spartak Kneteghtsyan and many others (Kalashyan, n.d:15).

According to Kalashyan, Kochinyans noted that two versions of a memorial already circulated, such as the planting of 1.5 million trees and a design for a monument (Kalashyan, n.d:15). It is clear once again that all authors should not only have in mind the tragedy of fifty years ago in terms of content, expression and interpretation but also the unification and repatriation of the lost regions of Armenia and a new beginning. On 17 March 1965, the Armenian SSR Council of Ministers published in the main newspapers the decision to build a monument, and on 25 March the Armenian architectural competition was opened and the start date published (Kalashyan, n.d:16).
Of the seventy-eight architectural designs, all of which had to be submitted within a short period, many authors of the designs were not documented by name. A thirteen-member jury analysed the works submitted for selection, with Aghababyan the Chairperson of the jury (Balyan, 2009:14, 21). Four works were favoured and were awarded the contract. They were honoured and celebrated.

This can be observed from Minute Number 1 of 10 May 1965 in the archives. The following details are clear and can be deduced from this Minute: the number of members of the Jury, general information from Jury Secretary L. Babayan, the seventy-eight designs for the competition, and nine designs that did not meet the requirements of the competition rules and were therefore removed in advance. Meanwhile, sixty-nine designs were able to officially participate in the competition. After an initial open vote, according to Minute Number 2 of 17 May 1965, eight works made it into the next round:

- N 12 “Karmir Tsagik” (Red Flower)
- N 16 “Krak” (Fire)
- N 22 “Goganj” (Bell)
- N 42 “Zhair” (Rock)
- N 45 “Pyunik” (Phoenix)
- N 47 “Mush” (Mush)
- N 52 “ASSR droshak” (Flag of ASSR)
- N 63 “Pyunik” (Phoenix)

(Balyan, 2009:14, 21, 24)

The main criticism that can be inferred from the Minute is that, in principle, none of the submitted designs completely met the requirements of the architectural competition.
(Balyan, 2009:24). Nevertheless, four works from the eight designs were examined and published and awarded prizes as winners of the competition (Balyan, 2009:25, 27–28).

These four award-winning designs were:

1. N 52 “ASSR droshak” (Flag of the Armenian SSR) - A. Tarkhanyan and S. Kalashyan, architects.
2. N 63 “Pynik” (Phoenix) - F. Darbinyan, architect and G. Churabyan, sculptor.
4. N 47 “Mush” (a town that was historically Armenian) - R. Israelyan, architect and Haruthunyan, sculptor.

After the selection process was completed, the four award-winning designs were implemented with minor changes and brought together as a unified design to form a monumental symbol of the Yeghern memorial. The first prize went to the design “Armenian ASSR droshak” by the architects, A. Tarkhanyan and S. Kalashyan. Kalashyan reports that they chose a principle of three-dimensional composition to integrate the whole theme.

Arthur Tarkhanyan

Sashur Kalashyan,

Pictures from Kalashyan, n.d:15.
These men were awarded the contract to build the monument and asked to make a few changes that were suggested to them (Kalashyan, n.d:16).

5.6 Developments of the Model

Models of the original version of the memorial as outlined at the initial stage of the competition. Architects A. Tarkhanyan, S. Kalashyan, H. Poghosyan, Sculptor V. Khachatryan (Yerevan, 1965).

The Competition version of the model in 1965:
The final design

Miniature and work project, Monument and proportional construction 1965 (Kalashyan, n.d:16).

The project received its final approval after submission to Nikita Zarobyan and construction could begin (Kalashyan, n.d:17).

5.7 The Construction of the Monument

Armenia is called the Land of Stones and it has used its potential to develop a remarkable tradition in sculpture and architecture (Dum-Tragut, 2014:93–93). Excavated fortress cities and temples provide information on an impressive knowledge in the use of mathematics and geometry as well as the use of sacred numbers in constructing sacred buildings as well as secular architecture and buildings in secular locations. In such places complex systems were applied, such as rectangular squares,
circles, polygons with intersecting patterns. Armenians have always believed that symbols contain supernatural powers, which are expressed in architecture, astronomy and sacred art (Avetisyan, 2018).

In addition, a large number of churches and monasteries visibly provide information about architectural masterpieces that reveal a high degree of knowledge, calculations and competence in construction and manufacturing from as early as 301 AD (Ramming-Leupold, 2017:81). These masterpieces include architectural forms such as the Basilica with three aisles, the Trichonos, and the Tetrakonchos (Dum-Traghut, 2014:94-95). The ground plan is based on the Greek cross, the centre crowned with an octagonal or a six-pointed-star or round small drum attachment above the square crossing. The roof resembles a pyramid and overall the whole construction appears compact and stocky as well as solid against vibrations (Avetisyan, 2018).

The six-pointed-star in the floor (Avetisyan, 2018).

Architecture with mathematical precision with straight lines connecting the columns and the six-pointed-star in the floor of Armenian Medieval Churches (Avetisyan, 2018).
These geometric “Circles, Triangles and Squares are arranged in harmonious perfection … and were brought into a hierarchical order ... the triadic unity of duality in one” (Nazaryan, 2018). For example, the following diagrams show the way geometry helped in the design and construction of church buildings:

The above diagrams represent “The Equilibrium of Harmony and Symmetry” where one sees “cones of power” representing the union of male and female forces (Nazaryan, 2018).

Nazaryan describes further that churches and cathedrals were erected with conical domes and towers with cardinal points or equinoxes in this triadic unity. Furthermore, “others were oriented to the sunrise of the saints for whom they were named, … so that at the vernal equinox the great doors can be thrown open at sunrise and the sunrays passing through the nave will illuminate the high altar” (Nazaryan, 2018).
Nevertheless, balance, proportions, and geometric units of measurement, lines, materials and a hierarchical order have been known for thousands of years and can also be traced precisely in the construction of the Tabernacle and the Temple of Solomon. The ancient oriental view of the earthly temple as an image of the heavenly and cosmic temple is undisputed in the general interpretation of the Temple concept (Beale, 2011:100–101). An indication of this type of thinking can be found in the Psalms in the Old Testament: “And he built his sanctuary like high palaces, like the earth which he hath established for ever” (Psalm 78:96). From this it can be concluded that earthly temples were believed to correspond to the heavenly Temple, from where dominion over the universe originates. The idea behind this, and in agreement with Nazaryan, has always been to express order and harmony and balance from the universe in a sacred geometry, which unites itself with numbers, forms into a harmonious whole, and merges humanity with the cosmic, the universe.

Thus, not only holy places can be named but also holy numbers, which arise from geometry and turn buildings into holy objects. Examples are temples and buildings built to worship the sun in Mesopotamia, Armenia, and Egypt, sanctuaries in Babylon, and also in Christian churches and Islamic mosques, which align their entrances towards
sunrise and thus incorporate the cosmic realm into visible geometric objects (Ney, 2018).

In Johannes Kepler’s *Harmonices mundi libri V*, which translates into English as *Five Books on World Harmony* (1619), two focal points are recorded in his axiomatically constructed works: on the one hand, the Platonic Body as a rough approximation of the shape of the world (*forma mundi*) and the aesthetic “principle of harmonies,” which allows the cosmological blueprint to be deciphered in the first instance. Kepler explains the geometry of polygons, which can be constructed as a mathematical basis. In relation to the architectural and figurative geometry, he investigated the congruence of the “harmonious figures” (Bialas, 1999:822f). A closer formulation of these principles can be found in the five books of Kepler’s work.

In addition, in the architectural history of sculpture and painting, the Golden Section was preferred as a ratio (Ney, 2018). It is also called the Divine Mathematics in architecture and nature (Spiekermann, 2016; Beinert, 2016; Beutelspacher, 2016). The concept of the harmony of the whole composition is still the basis of every construction and technique today, this including the relationship to structure and proportion up to the individual parts (Bialas, 1999). The Golden Section shows the ratio of two dimensions that run particularly harmoniously to each other.

The *Yeghern* Genocide Memorial was conceived in the style of Soviet modernism and is subject to the Armenian tradition of the aesthetic principle, in the relationship of structure to proportion in harmony. The technique of proportional construction was used to design the memorial. Based on the above descriptions and with the kind permission of Sashur Kalashyan, the architect of the Tsitsernakaberd Monument and Memorial as
well as the Museum, the layout and design will be presented as a geometric model that he provided for research work on the victims of the 1915 Armenian Genocide (Kalashyan, n.d.).

The starting model for the architectural layout of the memorial is the external diameter at the base of the Mausoleum. It is used to build a 12-sided twinned pyramid in which the upper diameter measures exactly half of the lower one.

Then a triple diagonal projection marks the length of the platform, as well as the reference points of the spear end the mourning wall.

In the final construction the distance between the spear base after the centre of the Mausoleum is used for the height of the spear itself (Kalashyan, n.d.).

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In summary, it should be noted that in this case technique and proportions are in mathematical, harmonious synchrony with geometrical dimensions. This monumental art and technique are applied in public spaces, especially for complex historical events, in order to bring about a visual interaction through forms and expression. In order to relate the structure and totality of the elements, design knowledge is required to understand the effects from proportions, dimensions, contrasts and hierarchies. The visual approach and the stylistic means, along with the philosophy behind the design, demonstrate the importance of the connection between interpretation and event. The architectural competition has clearly brought this to the fore.
CHAPTER SIX
AN ANALYSIS OF THE MONUMENT AND MEMORIAL OF TSITSERNAKABERD

6.1 Introduction
The whole memorial project consists of three main elements and a museum, which together constitute mediums and supports for shaping ideas and intentions in the representation of the event. The abstract symbolism of the modern Soviet architecture does not convey traditional visual signs and does not reveal the tragedy of the genocide. There has been criticism that the cultural ethnic signs and symbols are missing in the overall design of the main monument. Darieva already recognises in it a place of “generalised and cosmopolitan remembrance” of the victims of violence and the political struggle against fascism, along with the regenerative power of Armenian life amidst the commitment to Soviet Armenian patriotism (Darieva, 2008:93, 97). An analysis of the monument and the overall project should show to what extent this applies here.

The memorial can be accessed via two entrances. One is via the lower parking lot, where the entrances to the Armenian Genocide Research Institute have there premises, offices, libraries, and archives.
The other, above the complex, is another access route called Memory Avenue, that leads past the traditional khachkars and the planted trees to commemorate the victims of the genocide and leads straight to the official entrance portal. Both access routes to the memorial complex converge in front of the entrance portal and merge into a cross formation to indicate access to the museum, or for walking directly to the mausoleum on the central mourning and pilgrimage route to the east.
The ensemble of Tsitsernakaberd, with its various architectural designs and constructions, reflects social upheavals and processes that clearly represent past and modern history. Here we can distinguish between the old and new aesthetics in architecture, as well as developments in society and politics, mirroring this changing process.

A central part in the old aesthetics is evidenced in the main mausoleum constructions, next to the 40-metre-high monolithic, divided spire or obelisk, and on the left side parallel to the spire/obelisk is the wall that was later allocated there, the Wall of Memory. The new aesthetics can be perceived in the modern museum, which has been set in the Tsitsernakaberd hills, and must be described as a clear break between the two epochs of the past and present in the history of Armenia.

6.2 The Basic Structure

As a whole, the composition has a geometric basic structure with traditional numerical coding and architecture. Within this basic structure the mausoleum and spire/obelisk rise from a basalt-paved area surrounded by lawns. This surface or plateau is designated as stylobate (Balyan, 2009). The stylobate dominates as an architecturally important component in the overall ensemble. The base area of the stylobate is a total of 4500 square metres (52 x 87) (Balyan, 2009:39). The stylobate is also called a lying basalt gravestone and is dedicated to the victims who died in the Syrian desert and have no graves.
Lawns and bushes surround the entire complex. Two narrow staircases lead down on the right and left to a path that runs around the complex. A third staircase is located on the front face of the plateau facing towards the East and is an impressive 10 metres wide object, strictly in line with the central volume of the mausoleum (Balyan, 2009:39).

One can imagine that the rays of the sun traverse the stairs at sunrise in order to reach the sanctuary, as has already been shown in the sacred geometry and in the sunset amplitude. Under the stylobate there are underground rooms accessible by stairs, which are designed as technical and service rooms. From there you can hear the melodies and sounds of Komitas and Yekmalyan, as well as Armenian choirs. As already mentioned, the stylobate is reverently designated as an extended surface gravestone (Demoyan, 2017).

### 6.3 The Mausoleum
Rising from this stylobate is a pyramidal construction with truncated pylons (basalt pillars), which face each other as twelve triangles, according to the classical east-west orientation. Why twelve pylons and why basalt rock? There is little information regarding the symbolism of the pylons, but a lot of speculation. It is speculatively assumed that the 12 pylons refer to the 12 regions of Armenia, while Demoyan contradicts this in “AGBU WebTalk” stressing that there are 15 regions in Armenia. Dum-Tragut (2014) determined that there are only eleven provinces for today’s Armenia and does not include in her view the areas of Armenia lost to Turkey. Speculatively, the twelve pylons can be assigned to the twelve lost areas of western Armenia or some consideration can be placed in a biblical context. Interpretatively, the twelve gates would then symbolise the heavenly holy city of Jerusalem: “It had a great, high wall with twelve gates, and with twelve angels at the gate” (Revelation 21:12).

However, a very simple answer to this question provides information about the twelve pylons. According to the architect Sashur Kalashyan it can be said that this pyramidal construction with the twelve pylons expresses an aesthetic principle of harmony with a mathematical calculation (Sashur Kalashyan, in the interview in Yerevan in September 2017). These twelve pylons or pyramid stumps carry a message within them, and for cultural and religious reasons it would be obvious to call them khachkars. These slabs are figures of mourning and the “eternal flame inside of the tomb took on the meaning of a collective grave.” They remind Darieva of the Soviet star (Darieva, 2008:97). In addition, the pylons form a closed circle and separate, like a curtain, the material world from the spiritual world, and the exterior from the interior.
As broad stelae, they rise up to the heavens and lean towards the eternal flame. The pylons’ outer surfaces are inclined at an angle of 45 degrees and the inner surface inclination angle is 60 degrees. These stelae are visibly bowed, which is interpreted as expressing humble reverence for the victims (Balyan, 2009:39).

Photo of the inner circle, taken by Jutta Kirsch, 2017 with permission.
Why was basalt rock used? Basalt rock was already used in archaic times and is volcanic rock that is mainly found in the Armenian highlands. It is a porous material, but extremely long-lasting, resistant and durable. In keeping with a land of stones, basalt and tuff were extracted and used for the construction and cladding of structures. The Tsitsernakaberd construction was built from this material, because it corresponds with the Armenian tradition (Dum-Traghut, 2014:25).

The lower diameter of the mausoleum’s base is 30 metres. Starting from the stylobate, the height of the pylons is 7.5 metres and the diameter of the upper ring, that of the oculus, is 15 metres, i.e., half the diameter of the base (see Appendix Two, personal sketches by Sashur Kalashyan).

As already mentioned, the forms of the pylons are equated with the khachkar. Demoyan points out in this respect that the “only symbolism with the genocide is the diameter inside and is the number 15 meters. It is the symbolism of the genocide in the year of 1915” (Demoyan, 2017).

Every year on 24 April, liturgical and commemorative ceremonies are held to commemorate victims of the genocide. Via the procession to the tomb and the laying of wreaths and flowers at the eternal flame, the site becomes a contact zone and a place of remembrance as per Pierre Nora’s “lieux de mémorie”, as well as a sacred site connected with the presence of a numinous being for commemorating the Christian martyrs. In this event, connected with liturgies and ceremonies, the native Armenians become emotionally and spiritually unified with the Diaspora Armenians, forming a social and collective memory symbolically, because of the common historical past – a Christian Armenian national “construction” with a common identity (Informant A).
In the middle of the mausoleum room, separated from the visible reality by pylons, the inner base of the mausoleum is effectively and unevenly lowered towards the centre. This stylistic form of expression and the strict design of the room convey a reference to the afterlife. Stairs lead downwards between the pylons, and when leaving the inner base they lead upwards to the plateau. The stair construction downwards causes the visitor to bow before entering the inner base.

Above this stylised crypt or base, the sky opens through the circular arrangement of the pylons. This opening to the sky can be called an oculus. The oculus (an eye) is described in Psalm 25:15 as follows: “My eyes are upon the Lord”, and it is a prayer that channels sorrow into the heavenly beyond.

![Photo of the circular arrangement, an oculus, taken by Jutta Kirsch, 2017 with permission.](image)

The sun, moon and stars as natural phenomena also cast their rays and their shining light over the bowed stelae, watching over and attending to the immeasurable suffering and pain, the “Mets Yeghern”, or Great Yegern, which must never be forgotten (Balyan, 2009:39–40). According to Balyan (2009:52), “the grey basalt pillars carry the heavens”
as a supernatural reality, and the bowing of the pillars towards the base’s centre, together with the sounds of Komitas and melodies of Armenian choirs, represent the visible earthly in the form of sacred architecture, like that of a cathedral. The object, structure and the melodies and sounds convey an overwhelming sacred moment like that within a cathedral, reminding us of the otherworldly present, that of the transcendent, and of a site for the numinosum as genius loci with a sense of the presence of divinity and with an aura of reverence and humility that makes the martyrs appear holy and immortal (Assmann, 1999:59, 62–63; cf. Hess, 2013:98). The anthropologists Humphrey and Vitebsky (2002) argue that sacred architecture throughout the world is an expression of the human desire to recreate the universe with the aid of geometry and structures (Humphrey & Vitebsky, 2002:10).

6.4  The Rosette and the Eternal Flame

In the middle of the pyramid there is a mighty stone ring, a ring of rays made of bronze. Like the rays of a sun, the lines run conically (shaped like a cone) upwards towards another inner ring from which the eternal flame blazes, as fed from underground (Balyan, 2009:39–40). This ring of rays can also be interpreted as a nimbus (halo), which only surrounds martyrs and saints, but also reminds one of the “Soviet star like Soviet Tombs of the Unknown Soldiers” (Darieva, 2008:97; Chapeaurage, 2012:21–23).
The flame blazing in the middle is supplied with gas via pipelines at a depth of one metre (Balyan, 2009:40). Day and night, it reminds us of the martyrs’ suffering and pain. In the eschatological context, their souls are before the face of God for all time.

Light and fire have different cultural interpretations: on the one hand they can be interpreted as the hearth fire (Hestia), a symbol for the homeland, and on the other hand
as symbols for the power and might of various gods, e.g., Zeus, Vaghn, Mithras, Hephaestus (Burney & Lang, 1975:431-432).

But what seems more obvious is an interpretation from the biblical context. In this special context we find the eternal light or the eternal flame in the Old Testament already in the Tabernacle, a constantly burning light (Leviticus 24:1-4). It symbolised the revelation and presence of God. We also encounter images in the Old Testament in which God shone through a pillar of fire at night to the people of Israel, as well as the burning bush that did not burn and which aroused the curiosity of Moses (Assmann, 1999:62–63).

Fire is considered sacred, and it purifies and renews as well as illuminates. As a renewing force, the flame is a means of rebirth leading to higher stages (Becker, 1992:87, 228). In the image of a phoenix that rises from the ashes and has become a symbol for light and immortality, this is Christ who appears in the morning of a new world of God as the true sun god, awakening the dead to eternal life (Schmidt, 2007:99). The apostle Paul writes to the Corinthians that “the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable and the mortal with immortality” and that death no longer has power (I Corinthians 15:53–54). Martyrs are seen as holy throughout Christendom because their public confession of Christ reflects Christ in a special way via their execution (Markschies, 2012:118).

6.5 Martyrs as the Special Dead

The concept of martyrdom is central to the Christian faith, through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. He is the central victim and the dramatic salvation figure,
as described in 2 Corinthians 5:21: “God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.” Therefore, Christians who suffer persecution and violent death are identified with Jesus and are also viewed as martyrs, or the special dead (Brown, 1991:44, see also Andresen & Ritter, 1993:17–18). The impact of martyrs, and memories of them, have been important elements in the process of moving Christianity from a minority to a majority religion (Bergjan & Näf, 2014:76). Bergjan and Näf emphasise that martyrdom was central in the creation of a Christian identity. There is no Christian church that was not and is not at the same time a martyr’s church (Bergjan & Näf, 2014:76–77). For this reason, no church is so exposed to persecution as that of Asian Christianity, because of their significant experience of persecution and violent death, as we already mentioned in Chapter Two.

In contrast to the ancient cult of heroes, the death of the martyrs was a “baptism of blood” for entry into the heaven beyond (Andresen & Ritter, 1993:17). Heroes, on the other hand, were celebrated in life as well as death and received fame after their departure from the living. But there are parallels between the ancient hero cult and the Christian martyr cult, for in the Hellenistic and Roman times it was customary to idealise the dead and worship them in some form through a public cult (Brown, 1991:17). Brown sees just a small fusion in the practice of venerating saints through the motifs of the older hero cult. According to ancient convictions, fame and honour brought mortals closer to the immortal gods, thus making them immortal (Thiele–Dohrmann, 2000:15).

Nevertheless, something seems to be missing in the pagan beliefs, something that arose with the Christians. Brown explains this, because the martyrs died as human beings who enjoyed intimacy with God. Their intimate familiarity with God was the conditio sine
qua non (an indispensable condition) that gave them their ability to intercede for and to protect their fellow mortals. The martyr is the friend of God. He is an intercessor in a way, that the hero could never have been (Brown, 1991:18). This view is more represented in the Catholic Churches and Orthodox Churches. In Protestant dogma, Christ is a mediator and intercessor for the faithful.

According to Orthodox Christian ideas, a martyr can operate on a completely different level, which a hero cannot achieve. For the heroes it is a matter of acquiring and securing fame through heroic deeds during their lifetimes. In Orthodox Christianity, on the other hand, the grave, the remembrance of the dead, and the liturgical ritual were therefore placed in a completely different structure of relationship, namely between God, the dead and the living (Brown, 1991:18). Therefore, on the basis of this argumentation it is not appropriate to call the Christian martyr cult a continuing and prolonged hero cult, because it differs significantly. It must be noted that commemorative remembrance and practices in Armenia are preferentially Christian, and public remembrance of the dead has been and is strongly influenced by the Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church. Their attitude to death is accompanied by the hope of a resurrection of the dead. The Christian Church as a whole believes that death is not the end of life but only an interruption. Death ends the pilgrimage on earth and marks the departure to Christ (Isakhanyan, 2012:166).

Compared to the Western Church, where public commemoration of the dead is a less important ritual, it is very significant in Armenian Christian worship. Nevertheless, burial of the dead, worship of the dead and commemoration of the dead are described as quasi-religious and as a cultural factor. Assmann describes remembrance of the dead as a “paradigmatic case” of cultural memory, which was already “differentiated in modern
times”. She identifies three forms of reference to the past, which she locates in cultural memory, namely “remembrance of the dead, posthumous fame, and historical memory” (Assmann, 1999:18, 35). This idea would resemble that of an ancient remembrance of the dead and is close to a pagan mindset.

With reference to the cult of martyrs, who repressed the family forms of the cult in the fourth century, such as celebrations of the funeral, feedings, and libations, Eschebach has identified three essential features, which have had parallels to the present form of commemoration since the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Firstly, “this form of veneration of the dead includes the dual intension of memory and appreciation on the one hand, and on the other hand the training and preparation for future action” (Eschebach, 2005:37; Jan Assmann, 1999:60–63). Thus, states Eschebach, “the death of the martyr unfolds normative power, and ethical premises for action can be derived” (Eschebach, 2005:37). Secondly, the remains of the martyrs are manifestations of the saint, and relics are therefore best suited for establishing sacred sites. This idea of establishing sacred sites using human remains continues to the present day, therefore ashes (urns), human bones and earth from graves, battlefields and execution sites are moved to new and different sites. The presence (consecration) of relics certifies sacred sites and thus they do not need to be authentic memorial sites. This is the reason why sacred sites and realms do not need to be local authentic places of atrocities in order to become sacred. As a third point, Eschebach introduces the phenomenon of pilgrimage, a mode of remembering the dead, which seems to be the most appropriate for addressing the mass killing of the twentieth century (Eschebach, 2005:37–38).

When in September 2013 the Synod of Bishops of the Armenian Church wrote a resolution of principle in Etchmiadzin to collectively canonise the 1.5 million Armenian
genocide victims, the religious dimension of the genocide was confirmed. From the church’s point of view, Armenians died because they were Christians and specifically martyrs (Catholic Press Agency, 2015, April, 11). The ceremony took place on April 23 at the Armenian Apostolic Church in Etchmiadzin. With the first canonisation since the eighteenth century, led by Catholicos Karekin II, the 24th of April was dedicated as Martyrs’ Day (Kathpress, 2015, April 11).

6.6 Memorial Spire, the Top Tower

A further element in the overall composition of the Tsitsernakaberd memorial leads from the mausoleum to a two-part structure, which has the appearance of a spear and rises high into the sky. This pointed tower – many sources call it an obelisk – is made of stainless steel. The visible part of this tower is 44 meters high and is equipped with a service room accessible underground (Kalashyan, 2017).

Photo of the Armenian Reborn Tower, taken by Jutta Kirsch, 2017 with permission.
In ancient Egypt, the pointed tower in the style of an obelisk was a symbol of Ra, the sun god. The sunlight was reflected at the pyramid-shaped top of the rectangular, upward-tapering monument and they mostly stood in front of the entrances to temples and tombs. They also served astronomical purposes as monumental sundials and determined times and periods by forming shadows like a clock hand (Maibaum, 1999).

The memorial spire is divided into two parts and is an idiosyncratic and special construction. It appears gigantic, having an absolute power and dynamism, like a pointed needle piercing the sky and storming upwards (Balyan, 2009:40). It has an almost threatening effect on the viewer, challenging as well as dynamic. But the deeper sense behind this abstract pillar is clear and ingenious, representing the strong and aspiring will of the Armenian people, which has risen from the ashes of genocide into a new reborn life. It illustrates a plant or a tree whose seed sprouts from the earth and strives towards the sun. As a biological process during the plant’s growth, buds, flowers and leaves form, which sprout as a normal process and from their own order of nature, thus passing through several growth stages.

This is also an interpretation of the two-part pointed tower whose parts nestle against each other as a unit. The thought behind it conveys that flowers or plants can also sprout from graves, with all their biological plant properties. It is also representative of new life like a plant growing up from a grave. In this metaphor, concepts such as rebirth and resurrection are illustrated in an order of creation and dedicated to their future purpose (Demoyan, 2017). In an article from the Armenian Genocide Institute, the stele is described “as a memorial soaring into the sky ... the symbol of survival and spiritual rebirth of the Armenian People” (Informant A).
There are two light sources inside the memorial complex: the light of the eternal flame in the mausoleum, and the bright night illumination of the top tower or spire, which is part of the overall illumination of the city of Yerevan (Balyan, 2009:40).

6.7 The Wall of Memory, Commemoration Wall

The commemorative wall on the left side parallel to the spire did not take on its own meaning until much later. Visually, the eye is now directed from the horizontal to the vertical. As already described, the height, length and orientation are coordinated in a decisive and harmonious way.

The Wall of Memory is a hundred-metre-long wall with a height of about three metres, which was added to the pre-existing monument. Up to the beginning of 1990, the memorial consisted of two objects and a screen. This follows the pattern of the mausoleum or memorial hall and the memorial spire *The Reborn Armenia*. The main difference is that the wall was initially built linearly in 1967 for purely technical reasons. During the building process it became necessary to create a dividing line from

Mother Armenia reborn from the Ashes of the Genocide by Nazaryan 2018.
the rest of the urban landscape in order not to divert visitors’ attention to the modern residential buildings that were being constructed in the area (Kalashyan, n.d.:16; Informant A).

It was not until thirty years later that the basalt wall, in addition to its architectural and aesthetic form, acquired a moral and political significance. It was deliberately kept functional in order not to distract from the content and depth. Sculptures were therefore omitted. The explanation given is that the wall, as a monument, should visibly “accompany” the pilgrimage to the mausoleum in order to walk the path of sadness through tragedy again and to internalise the tragedy.

Only inscriptions in the Armenian language were engraved into the hundred-metre-long basalt wall. It was “erected in 1968 on the left side (for technical reasons) and received a fundamental new moral meaning, now functioning as a mourning wall” (Darieva, 2008:101). It received a new determination after the independence. The Armenians call the wall, “the mourning wall, looking out on Mount Ararat, the Road of Golgotha” (Darieva, 2008:101). The engraved names of the towns and villages are the places where the victims came from and the places where the massacres took place. Topography of mass extermination was engraved in stone, as a geographical line, and in 1996 it was brought to collective commemorative memory (Darieva, 2008:101).
In total there are 52 towns and villages engraved in the memorial wall, and between the names Armenian icons have been engraved and immortalised as symbols in *The Wheel of Eternity, Crosses and Flowers of Life*. These icons are interesting insofar as they are found throughout the world in large numbers in architecture, monuments, artefacts, churches, khachkars, and as pagan but also Christian signs and symbols of eternity. Used in this context, they unite and demonstrate the religious and cultural thinking of Armenians in Armenia. There are ornaments called *Arevakhach*, so-called Armenian signs of eternity, expressing goodness and kindness, as well as the sun of life, fire, fertility and birth, and progress and development (Avetisyan, 2018).

*As Arevakhach* they are especially venerated in Armenia, and since the Middle Ages they have been associated with Christ, who is identified as the sun of justice (Heller, 1998:180; Matthew 17:2; Revelation 1:16b).
The following names of towns and villages are listed here. One walks symbolically from Constantinople, today’s Istanbul, to the desert Deir ez–Zor and Adapazari. During this “pilgrimage,” walking along the hundred-metre-long wall, the visitor or pilgrim becomes very aware of the dramatic extent of the deportations, death marches, and massacres. Names of cities and villages engraved in the stone:

Constantinopel; Kotyaion; Smyrna; Nicomedia; Brusa; Panderma; Angora (Angara); Yozgat; Kayseri; Trapizon; Sassun; Ordu; Sepastia-Sivas; Tokat; Amasya; Gyurun; Garahisar; Zeytun; Sis; Adana; Marash; Hadjin; Antep; Urfa; Birecik; Musa Dagh; Kharberd; Arapgir; Sanjak; Malatya; Agin; Erzurum; Erzincan; Khnus; Baberd; Kasagh; Derdjan; Bayezid; Sasan; Bitlis; Mush; Hizan; Sgerd; Diyarbakir; Balu; Arghana; Van; Manazkert; Baskale; Satax; Deir Ez Zoar; Adapazari.

Some of the places listed are no longer traceable and have been totally eradicated from modern maps. They have either been renamed as another act of destruction and cultural genocide or they have become desolate because of ethnic cleansing.

The back of the wall was given another function. In the Columbarium eleven small containers with urns with ashes and earth were ceremonially reburied in individual niches or glass boxes by prominent advocates of the Armenian people who protested against the genocide (Darieva, 2008:103).

As “newly discovered ancestors” these are the prominent people from Europe and the USA who condemned the genocide of the Armenians. In remembrance for them as adopted people the Armenians took soil from their graves and put it into small niches into the mourning wall following an orthodox Armenian funeral ceremony. This reburial took place at the Tsitsernakaberd memorial site (Darieva, 2008:102-103). This is unusual insofar as the form of the new burial in the Armenian national pantheon has led to a rebalancing of Armenian thinking. Darieva recognises in this that the cultural heritage has been broken and that an “escape from inclusion” has occurred through rebalancing to escape from an overall construction of dependencies and exclusive
national thinking. The aim is therefore to focus on and approach a universal and global culture of commemoration and remembrance in accordance with European models (Darieva, 2008:103). She emphasises that “this process of converting the local and ethnic notion of tragedy into global loss through the transfer of soil from remote cemeteries in Europe, the United States, or the Middle East involved ceremonies of domestication at the arrival of the newly discovered “ancestors” (Darieva, 2008:103). It can be seen that the Soviet model of commemoration according to the Soviet Union’s foundation myth has transformed into a global morality or cosmopolitan culture of remembrance, as discussed by Levy and Sznaider (2001), inspired by the memory of the Holocaust according to the European pattern.

With regard to the prominent advocates whose urns were buried in the Commemoration Wall, they are named in the following order, which symbolically runs from East to West, from the mausoleum to the museum:

Fridtjof Nansen (10.10.1861 – 13.05.1930); Benedictus pp.XV (1854 – 1922); Giacomo Gorrini (12.11. 1859 – 1950); Anatole France (16.04. 1844 – 12.10. 1924); James Bryce (10.05. 1838 – 22.01. 1922); Johannes Lepsius (15.12.1858 – 03.02. 1926); Franz Werfel (10.09. 1890 – 26.08 1945); Armin Wegner (16.10. 1886 – 1978); Henry Morgenthau (26.04. 1856 – 1946); Hedwig Büll (23.01. 1887 – 03.10. 1981); Fayez EL Husseyn (1883 – 1968); Karen Jeppe (01. July 1876 – 1935); Jakob Künzler (1871 – 1949); Bodil Catharina Biorn (1871 – 1960); Maria Jacobsen (1882 – 1960); Alma Johansson (1880 – 1974); Clara Barton (1821 – 1912).
Furthermore, along the memorial wall we find three graves of fallen Armenians from the war with Azerbaijan, who were buried on the site of the memorial.

### 6.8 Construction for the Armenian People

During the construction of the memorial, members of the Armenian population were on site every day. They came by bus or on foot from the surrounding villages and towns and volunteered their help (Kalashyan, n.d.:19).

Photo of the Road to Golgotha, mourning wall with urns, taken by Jutta Kirsch, 2017 with permission.

Archive photo of the initial construction provided by Kalashyan, n.d.:16.
They had fought to preserve a monument for their relatives and wanted to be part of this construction process. It was not “decreed” from above, but rather “granted” from above with the main motivation coming from the grassroots, for this monument should not only constitute a part of their identity by their actively putting their hands on it, but it became a visible legitimation to be “allowed to be” a future nation and to emerge from the genocide like a phoenix reborn from the ashes.

The official opening ceremony took place on 29 November 1967. The monument complex became accessible to the general population, even though it was not yet completely finished (Kalashyan, n.d.:19–20).

6.9 Soviet Modernism or a Soviet War Memorial?

Critics classify the architecture of the memorial as a typical Soviet war memorial. The form, expression and design of the monument corresponded to Soviet monumental architecture. Critics argue that there is a lack of traditional Armenian symbols and further find that the abstract symbolism is reminiscent of Soviet materialism, which denies any life after death. At first glance, abstraction and anonymity are indeed reminiscent of an anonymous victim – triumphalism was typical under Stalin. But what does sacrificial triumphalism mean according to the Stalinist model? Tsitsernakaberd reminds us of the victims of the genocide, yet not in a Soviet Stalinist rhetoric of a war memorial, which cannot exist in view of the Armenian Christians who died as martyrs.

After closer examination of Soviet architecture under Stalin, there was one development that could unfold. This was mainly used for ideological and propagandistic purposes, so that an independent, supercharged Stalinist neoclassicism could emerge. Such
architecture, “Kitsch and death”, often used death as a symbol and a way for securing the regime, as well as a “tradition-creating fossilisation” (Raith, 1997:198) with a mobilising increase in sensation (aura), which on the one hand expresses harmony and transfiguration and on the other includes security and the will to die and the will to destroy (Raith, 1997:198). This may be symbolically synonymous with “bread and games” in the Roman Empire of the time.

According to Wirth (2004) the formal language of a realism shaped by neoclassicism sometimes reaches into the “kitschy and idealising... Genre and motifs are realised in gigantic monumentality”. Furthermore, the “ideological dogmatism is reflected in the struggle of an exaggerated body language of the figures and mask-like expressions of the faces” (Wirth, 2004:87). These forms of expression and contents in the architecture of heroism in antique classicism are mainly developed in nations that prefer a political religion, in accordance with genre and motive. They are demonstrated in Germany under Hitler, in the USSR under Stalin, and in Italy under Mussolini, as well as in many other totalitarian states. In totalitarian systems such as fascism and Stalinism, manipulation of space and construction for political imperialist purposes was the goal and an important instrument of the state (Spieker, 1981:136–137).

During the Second World War under Stalin (1941–1945), the architectural style changed from the “confectioner’s style” to a patriotic architecture that served exclusively propagandist purposes and was shown in Roman classicism as a pose for victory and triumph (Chmelnizki, 2004:142). An architecture of victim triumphalism increasingly emerged, which tended towards archaic models and could be found in burial mounds, stepped pyramids, Egyptian tombs, wooden cemetery churches, and was known for being abstract and anonymous (Evers, 1939:5).
The reason why these architectural styles were favoured had to do with the ideology of Marxism-Leninism. Because anonymity and the repression of death had to give way to the metaphors of victory, an ideological cult around the political ideals of the fallen heroes was not of interest, but the Soviet victories counted as liberation campaigns (Fibich, 1992:148). The “fallen soldier suffers a lonely death and in the mass of the military formation (of stone) he is integrated and so it had happened” (Fibich, 1992:148). In order not to run the risk of undermining these ideals, architects preferred archaic styles that expressed greatness, domination and victories. One can already see here that in the Tsitsernakaberd memorial a completely different ideological orientation can be recognised.

After Stalin’s death, the ideological ban was lifted and new principles were promoted in Soviet architecture. In the meantime, Wolodin wrote a basic programme for the new architecture, which he detailed as follows:

The socialist ideological content is a red thread that runs through all the characteristics of our style... Truthfulness and noble simplicity are its most important characteristics... On these grounds, a new monumentality quickly infiltrates. Among the main style features the harmony of the building, a feeling of lightness and airiness of form ... are preferred ... (Wolodin, 1959:46 in Chmelnizki, 2004:220).

A paradigm shift took place in Soviet architecture that evolved from Wolodin’s theoretical foundations. The paradigm shift took place in a Soviet functionalist modern age. In this political and cultural upheaval, the Armenian protest movement fell and the subsequent construction of the monument Yeghern, which was given a Soviet functionalist style of modernism according to Wolodin’s specifications, nevertheless
expressed “Armenian characteristics” in the design and well-thought-out masonry technique of the superb architecture.

It is evident that this monument has a modern Soviet monumental style. In accordance with Reuße (1995) the monument cannot necessarily be viewed as an aesthetic sculptural object with various artistic attributes and designs; if this were to be the case, they would distract from the actual content. On the contrary, the monument is a benchmark for a collective and cultural conception of history. It demonstrates a special mode of communication that creates a lasting effect, which is understood by the Armenian community as a result of permanent presence. In its non-figurativeness with regard to a sculpture, the memorial/cenotaph is a timeless symbol through its size and simplicity and the hardness of the material and its use of geometric shapes (Reuße, 1995:45). These shapes are not typically Stalinist Russian shapes but have been known since ancient times in Mesopotamia and Egypt. They were an expression of the religious and political life of the time in which they were created, but have an emotional impact that lasts throughout time and is recognizable by most people.

6.10 The Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute

As we have already noted, monuments and memorial sites serve an important public pedagogical function and build up identity. The same is true of museums, which support cultural memory as well as having a public education function. Therefore, a museum was added to the monument and memorial on Tsitsernakaberd Hill. The Armenian Genocide Museum was built in 1995 to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the genocide and includes a “Research Center within the Armenian National Academy of Science” (Khanumyan & Avetisyan, 2017).
The Armenian Genocide Museum can be reached via two entrances. As part of the memorial complex and as a cultural place of learning, in comparison to other international memorial complexes the museum is in no way inferior in aesthetic, technical, documentary, artistic and pedagogical terms.

The museum complex has developed in terms of a historical and cultural place of learning, with its own concepts and approaches with respect to pedagogical content for historical-political education and for coming to terms with the past. The thematic challenges include building bridges with information and interaction to address the past, which neither forgets nor denies, and expects justice in terms of international recognition of the genocide denied by today’s Turkey. The memorial site commemorates, by its symbolic content, the events of which people say, *memorandum est* – “it must be remembered.” As a result, the museum conveys important cultural results for a collective memory via its traditional tasks of collecting, preserving information, continuous research, exhibitions and “material cultural assets” (Lehrke, 1988:58).

Meanwhile, the memorial complex performs its pedagogical tasks in term of a general reorientation and contribution to Armenian life and society. Since 1980, a worldwide field of pedagogical work was institutionalised under the term “museum pedagogics”, which is benefiting all international memorial complexes. To this end, visual materials such as photos, models, films, sound recordings, monitors with touchscreens, etc. are used for illustration and presented in a clearly accessible manner. The relationship between space and information in architecture, the division of the spaces, and
cataloguing the thematic classification of exhibits, which are chronologically arranged in a ranked order, can be discerned as a clear overall picture.

Different conditions are expected to be experienced here in this memorial complex, in contrast to historical museums. Memorial complexes are “rooted in the emphatic endeavour of preserving the memory of injustice and suffering and to utilise that didactically” to derive actions from it (Kößler 2015:70). Thus, the memorial complex is a place of historical learning with relics in the display cases, like a museum, but also like a cemetery, and in the figurative sense as per Eschebach, an “authentic place”, but also a monument and memorial. As a memory museum, which is explicitly conceived as a place of memory, Tsitsernakaberd keeps memory alive and, as per Pierre Nora, links to a lived milieu of memory via storytelling (Kößler, 2015:77).

The Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute (1995) was designed and built thirty years after the construction of the monument/memorial (1965) by the architects Sashur Kalashyan and Lyudmila Mkrtchyan, and the sculptor F. Arakelyan. According to Darieva, it is dedicated to the murdered intellectuals in Istanbul, then Constantinople, and the murdered Armenians on the occasion of the 80th anniversary of their death (Darieva, 2008:100). The document with the decision to build a museum made by the Government of the Republic of Armenia on March 7, 1995 in Yerevan, can be viewed in the exhibition itself (See Appendix three, page 1 and 2 for further details). The entire setting to the outside is interesting, whereby to the right of the memorial complex the cultural centre has been erected with a design that is modelled on a winged phoenix rising from the ashes of death, “as an eternal flame of life and immortality”, and on the symbol of the cosmic wheel, and serves as a further architectural contribution and fixed point for a thematic extension (Nazaryan, 2018).
6.11 The Entrance Portal

The inscription carved in stone on the entrance portal says 1915, in Armenian and Latin numerals, and the six-pointed star, like a Jewish star of David, the symbol of Jewish identity and Judaism, commemorates the year of the Armenian genocide tragedy. Plain and solid in concrete, the huge square block with a reference to the tragedy of 1915 stands out from the flat overall baseline of the site like an upright gravestone in comparison to the stylobate, which is to be described as a horizontal gravestone. The massive concrete crossbeams are stepped stabilizers that run down deep into the earth’s interior and, parallel to and in synchrony with the stairs, point the way to the wrought-iron entrance gate. The entire ensemble of the entrance portal can be symbolically encountered as an entrance to the earth’s interior, like a crypt or grotto.

Photo of the museum’s entrance portal with inscription, taken by Jutta Kirsch, 2017 with permission.

The museum building was constructed directly into the south-western part of the memorial complex, into the Tsitsernakaberd hill and rock, and fulfils its function as an
underground object. The roof is kept flat even up to the monument/memorial and is covered with concrete roof tiles. The view to the West intentionally faces the mighty Mount Ararat and is overwhelming.

A symbolic connection from the aesthetics of the original monument to the new aesthetics of the museum is associated with the number 15. The upper fifteen-metre diameter of the mausoleum was symbolically associated with the number fifteen, to recall the events of the genocide in 1915. This historical date was referenced again, introduced at the entrance portal as an important marker. Both the mausoleum and museum contain entry and exit portals with different interpretations that require explanation (Demoyan, 2017: AGU WebTalk).

![Image of the mausoleum]

The measurement of the mausoleum’s upper opening with S. Kalashyan and A. Tarkhanyan in 1968 (Kalashyan, n.d:18).

Nevertheless, one speaks not only of a caesura in the aesthetics of the architectural constructions of Tsitsernakaberd, but also of a caesura in Armenian social politics and memory culture in the Armenian nation.
6.12 Common Description of the Museum

The museum property comprises an area of 2,000 square metres and is constructed with three storeys. In the basement there is a courtyard, an outdoor gallery with twelve stone panels in which the words of Henry Morgenthau, Anatol Franc, Fritjof Nansen, Jak de Morgan, Valery Bryusof, and Fayez El Ghuseyn have been engraved, and the outdoor picture gallery, which publicly condemns the Armenian catastrophe (Informant A).

Furthermore, there is a map engraved in stone, another topographical memorial wall in the entrance hall wall, before the visitor enters the exhibition. This map carved in stone is 45 metres square and shows West Armenia with the places and sites of the massacres. This theme is introduced again within the exhibition on the “so-called path of deportations”.

The property also houses administrative, engineering and technical service offices, the Conference Hall along with the visitor information centre. Further rooms for the museum were refurbished and added during the renovation work in 2011 to 2015 in view of the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, including administrative parts such as libraries, archives and the conference hall (Khanumyan & Avetisyan, 2017).

The official opening ceremony of the newly designed exhibition at the new Armenian Genocide Museum took place on 21 April 2015, “with the participation of RA President Serij Sargsyan, members of the State Committee on Coordination of the events dedicated to the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, members of the Government and philanthropists of the museum” (Informant A). The current exhibition
in the museum was redesigned and coordinated by a state group of experts to celebrate
the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. This current exhibition is one of the
primary foci of this research work.

6.13 Outside Gallery and Atrium

Via the entrance, the visitor enters an atrium facing the outside gallery; they are on the
same level and are connected to each other.

![Photo of the map of the museum, taken by Jutta Kirsch, with permission](image)

The entrance hall is subdivided by archways and allows the visitor to see further rooms
on the right and left. On the right-hand side there is the way to the information centre
and on the left-hand side, the bookshop and an exhibition hall with an implied apse,
which surrounds the Tree of Life. The archways with their massive squat arches are
reminiscent of an Armenian basilica or of a castle. Overall, the entrance and exit are
higher than the side rooms, which are lowered to the right and left and can be reached
by stairs. Like a *bema* (raised sanctuary) the vestibule in the extension acts as a view
axis to the outside gallery (Dum-Traghut, 2014:97–99).
Automatically the gaze is drawn to a stone-chiselled, horizontal grave complex, which is an interruption of and partly connected with the outside gallery (outdoor patio). Behind a glass boundary, in the middle of the outside gallery (or outdoor patio, a half rotunda), there is a massive square, symbolic grave carved from stone and rounded off at the top, with an Armenian cross (Khachkar) set off as a corpus in the middle.

Photo of the Armenian Cross Khachkar of the outdoor patio, taken by Jutta Kirsch (2017) with permission.

The sculpture and the walls of the outdoor patio are fascinating and immediately capture the visitor’s attention. When the visitor approaches the entrance of the exhibition, it invites them to linger in this place to appreciate more fully the events in 1915. This view creates a very emotional moment and visitors feel prompted to join the “judges” – those whose names and words are inscribed on the surrounding stone panels – to enter the “courtroom” of the outdoor patio and join the judges in pronouncing judgment against the perpetrators. This is the reason why the entrance and exit are at once a unified architectural creation, or object, and therefore constructed as a bema (Informant B; Merenics, 2015).
Divided in the middle, the Armenian cross (*Khachkar*) lies on the ground, as a ground monument and earth-bound sculpture that must be interpreted for the observer. On the right side, chiselled particles and structures pile up, which are interpreted as chaos, fragility and impassability. These are like symbolic mountains and valleys, furrows and waters that cover the victims because they have no graves, but are resting in whatever location they died.

The left side has straight lines in a graphic order, like rays of light or like the wings of a phoenix, angel or saint, and are reminiscent of a sun’s rays. At the head of the cross on the left side there is an inscription in ancient Armenian, called *Grabar*, by Nerses Schnorhali, who is known in Armenia as Nerses the Graceful (1102–1172). A theologian and poet of that time, he wrote this text and accompanying music for this hymn: “O day-spring, sun of righteousness, shine forth with light for me! Treasure of mercy, let my soul thy hidden riches see” (Schnorhali, n.d., translated by Alice Stone Blackwell, 1917; Informant C).
This inscription, written in the fifth century and used in the ecclesiastical, theological, literary, poetry and epic linguistic and written forms, is positioned like a semi-circular nimbus around the left half of the cross. On the right side of the semicircle, we can see fissured irregularities in rectangular shapes, which look like graves, as semi-circular structures added to the circle. According to various statements, the left half is supposed to recall the medieval saints and Christian Armenia, and on the right to interpret the Armenian tragedy.

A deeper understanding reveals that the two parts of the cross can be summarized as illustrating chaos and harmony, as well as heavenly and earthly contradictions. On the one side there is sun, light, and order, and on the other side there is darkness and chaos. Life and death stand side by side in an endless struggle, but spiritual existence does not end with death.

There are other artfully carved sculptures in front of the glass pane in the interior, which is separated from the external cross formation, in the outdoor patio. On the right side there is a semi-circular bowl with Armenian characters and a stone-carved table with Armenian characters in front of the viewer. At the semi-circular bowl are words from Anania Schirakatsi engraved in stone: “Two suns – one has to dim out and the other second sun is shining” (Informant C).

On the left side there is a large flower carved in stone. It is not the famous Anmoruk – a forget-me-not – which is a symbol of the 100th anniversary of the genocide. It symbolizes the flower of life and can be explained as the plant that reaches out to the sun, interpreted as in the symbol of the Reborn Tower. The entire exhibition is
contained in this symbol of life while the colour design of the *Anmoruk* was added into the exhibition later (Informant B).
CHAPTER SEVEN

THE EXHIBITION OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE MUSEUM

7.1 Introduction

The contemporary Armenian Genocide Museum’s exhibition area covers 2400 square metres and has 12 halls, replacing the previous three halls. It contains more than 50 main topics that present current research results and methodological developments in the field of genocide studies in recent decades (Informant A; Informant B; Informant C).

The focus of this section of the thesis is on the way the Genocide Exhibition is carefully crafted to convey the reality of genocide to visitors. Because there is currently nothing in English that describes this in any detail, that is, beyond a few short sentences for the entire complex, the chapter goes into great detail. This is important because both the events of the genocide and the museum’s depiction of them are so little known.

What is striking about the museum is the way the Genocide Exhibition is structured to ensure that the visitor is affected by a number of different communication techniques that are combined to create the maximum impact. Thus, several different forms of aural and visual experiences are used to create an overall impression that is intended to be life changing and remain with the visitor until they die. Sights and sounds are used in conjunction with each other to bring people together in a way that draws on the depths of the Christian tradition and the experience of martyrdom.
The exhibition is constructed around a series of fifty-two main topics intended to recreate a memory in the mind of the visitor. Each of these topics is related to specific events, each with its own title, and is grounded in the history of Christian Armenia. To do this chronological presentations are used with display panels that include large-format photos with explanations, texts, and documentation, as well as small display cases with relics and monitors with touchscreens and multimedia.

Because some of the later topics serve to reinforce themes found in earlier ones in the description of them given here, we concentrate on the dominant themes and do not discuss those topics that serve to reinforce what was presented at an earlier stage. In practice, this means that the description given here concentrates on the first twenty-four topics and only briefly discusses the others.

Throughout the exhibit, in each presentation of a topic, light and darkness play a major role. Each presentation of a topic uses light and darkness to root the issue presented in the consciousness of the visitor. So too the colour of the Anmoruk, the forget-me-not, as a symbol commemorating the centenary of the genocide, is impregnated into the visitor’s memory. Thus bright violet stands for eternity and for the souls of the murdered in a liturgical sense, the dark centre of the blossom recalls the horrors of genocide, and the dark and black signify the involvement of the Ottoman Empire in the genocide (Korucu & Nalci, 2015).

Using scanned postcards on the touchscreen monitors, visitors learn about how the Armenian way of life and the richness of cultural accomplishments and developments in the Vilayets formed the backbone of the Ottoman Empire. Some examples of these are: educational institutions, hospitals and medical care, economics, schools and colleges,
settlements and quarters, churches and monasteries, families, festivities, rites and traditions. In these and other topics the experience of Armenians in terms of their long history of persecution and eventual genocide is brought alive for the visitor.

Another special technical feature that is used to recreate the Armenian experience is the use of large-format canvas, which illuminates Armenia’s historical, cultural, and social background. As the visitor approaches the screen, the volume of the sound steadily increases and both the visual image and the audio enter into a unified form of visual and aural communication with the observer, introducing the distinctive Armenian culture of that time.

In the process the visitor’s eyes act like sensors, intensively perceiving the pictures, photos, drawings and sculptures, along with the colours and light effects, with the result that they penetrate each individual’s innermost being through their feelings and the other senses (Böhme, 2017:167–168). In this way the information and data processed by the brain are designed to remain in the visitor’s memory (Bartling, 2018).

The power of the memorial to impact the visitor can be better understood by considering the power of pictures (Scholz, 2009:1–2). According to this idea, which reflects good pedagogical practice, colours, forms, and light effects in pictures, text and other utensils, can be used in teaching to help people remember things (Müller & Ruppert-Kelly, 2015:256–257). This technique is used in the exhibition, where the interior design is projected outwards in order to convey complicated chronological presentations in texts and documentation, and to illustrate connections compactly in the large diagrams that become memorable pictures alongside other pictures.
The opening topic of this exhibition is entitled *Armenians in the Ottoman Empire and Western Armenia*. It begins with a retelling of the historical story of the Armenian priest, Father Komitas Kyomyurdjian, who was sentenced to death by the Ottoman Grand Vizier Ali Pasha on the basis of an accusation against him. His life could only be saved if he would convert to Islam, but he refused to convert, and was hanged shortly thereafter on 5 November 1707. In this way the beginning of the exhibition focuses attention on the religious conflict between Christianity and Islam that has been fermenting and spilling over into violent persecution for centuries. In keeping with this theme the background colour of the first large presentation is in the colour of the *Anmoruk*, and as a bright but strong violet stands for eternity and the soul of the murdered priest.

Photo of the display about Komitas Kyomyurdjian, taken by Jutta Kirsch, 2017, AGMI, with permission.
This topic reminds the visitor how Armenians were persecuted throughout much of their history by foreign rulers who manipulated the desires of neighbouring tribes and peoples to extend their power. This led to the conquest and oppression of the Armenian people through various campaigns of conquest going back to the fall of the Armenian Cilician Kingdom in 1375 (Movsisyan, 2016:38). This was the time in history when Armenia’s existence as a sovereign power ended. As a result, the Armenians suffered a similar fate to that of the Jews under Roman rule over a thousand years earlier. Both peoples lost their independence and nationhood and the right to rule their own homeland.

In response to these defeats the Armenians, like the Jews, found refuge living in Diasporas in various nations and continents (Informant B). Then in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the suffering of Armenians intensified as they were ferociously oppressed under the Ottoman regime for being non-Islamic. This led to massacres and the eventual genocide of Armenians living under Turkish rule.

The second topic has the heading, *The World of Western Armenians and Service of the Deprived* and the third topic of the exhibition has the heading *Deprivation of Rights, Insecurity and Exploitation*. These exhibits provide the visitor with an overview of Western Armenia, its ways and achievements in the nineteenth century, before Armenians were deprived of their rights and fell victim to conspiracy theories leading to genocide. Pictures and excerpts are again utilised here, which could already be viewed via the touch-screen monitors, recalling them into the memory.

The fourth topic, *The Great Powers and the Emergence of the Armenian Question*, deals with international political upheavals as well as armed conflicts between the
Ottoman Empire and Russia (1877–1878), which ended with the defeat of the Ottoman Empire and the 3 March 1878 Treaty of San Stefano. The influence of Russia, which regarded itself as the protective power of the Christian Slavic population in the Balkans and in the Ottoman Empire, thus also triggered the “Armenian Question” (Movisiyan, 2016:39). Russia’s strategic interest in the Mediterranean region was limited by the major European powers and led to a revision of the San Stefano Treaty. “A congress was convened in Berlin (June – July 1878) to revise it; Article 61 of the Treaty of Berlin” (Ohandjanian, 1989:22–24; Geiss, 1978).

In this treaty, the Sublime Porte (the government of the Ottoman Empire) was obliged to immediately include and guarantee reforms to improve the situation of the Armenians and to give them security against attacks by Kurds and Circassians who fled as Muslims to West Armenia. The Ottoman agreed to the Treaty of Berlin but refused to implement the contract. According to the British historian A.J.P. Taylor, The Peace of San Stefano would have brought more stability to south-eastern Europe than the Berlin Treaty, which restored an unstable form of Ottoman rule (Taylor, 1954:253). In the meantime, Armenians had not only been exposed to the animosities of immediate neighbouring states but had also become the pawn in the hands of international interests and politics.

Throughout the exhibition the colour of the background changes in such a way as to emphasise the increasingly tense situation in which Armenians lived. By the time the visitor comes to the fourth topic the colour darkens to such an extent that the original clear purple has changed to a grim dark purple. These changing colours are symbolic of the changing international situation and internal political developments that create a darkening social situation. With the gift of hindsight, the visitor realizes that on the
horizon of world history the black clouds were already gathering, bringing war, destruction, and genocide in their wake.

*The Hamadian Massacres: The First Wave of Atrocities* forms the fifth and the sixth topics. These are shown in large-format pictures. The situation of the Armenians was growing very serious. The Sultan used the demonstration in the Sassoun region (1894) as an excuse for reprisals and persecution by the Turkish government and allowed looting and raids by Kurds that led to massacres of the Armenian population.

Thus, the Hamadian massacres of 1894–1896 were the first attempt to solve the “Armenian question” by annihilation. Expressive faces scarred by the horrors of the massacres of those who fled are depicted in large-format images. The background of the presentation in the exhibition is the darkest purple, which blends into a black background. It conveys the sense of a hopeless situation where people found no reason to expect anything good.

The seventh topic is *The Agony of the Ottoman Empire and the Armenians*. It deals with the decline of the Ottoman Empire when it became apparent that dark clouds were gathering. These included accusations of disloyalty, censorship, surveillance, and fear created by anti-Armenian propaganda. The existence of Armenians was depicted as a misfortune for the Turks across the Muslim and Turkish speaking world and in places like the Caucasus and Central Asia. Ideology, propaganda and slander already created what the Turks and their allies saw as “the Armenian question” (Informant B).

The deceitfulness of the Turks and their allies is the subject of the eighth topic, which has the heading *The Young Turk Revolution and the Armenians*. In it the visitor sees
how a revolution under apparent policies of liberalism and democracy took place through the political reform movement of the Young Turks. This brought about a transformation from the old Ottoman regime to a new progressive one that solidified into a despotic dictatorship contemptuous of individuals and human rights.

The Committee of Union and Progress, the CUP or Young Turks, declared a new social and political order supposedly based on the principles of the French Revolution (1789–1799) – the values of freedom, equality, and brotherhood. But the Armenian question was soon seen as a threat to the new order, resulting in the decision that it could only be solved by annihilating the Armenian population. The proclamation of good intentions turned into tyranny through “Turkification of the Empire in the internal policy and pan-Turkism in foreign policy” (Informant B).
The Turkish Revolution. This is found at the Armenian Genocide Museum (AGMI) and was photographed with permission.

The ninth theme of the exhibition is entitled *The Adana Holocaust* (1909). It shows how planned and structured the extermination of the Armenians actually was. The Turkish government distributed countless weapons and ammunition to members of the Turkish population and released hundreds of criminals from prison. Already at this time, after a coup in July 1908, the revolutionary movement was able to create the so-called *Itahad*. Under their watch, a provocative disparagement of Armenians could take place in the Turkish press. The aim was to encourage a revenge campaign. As part of this campaign the outsides of Armenian houses were marked with signs to identify Armenians who by definition were not Turks.
In the Adana area there were attacks and massacres over several days. The Armenians attempted to defend themselves against the armed mobs of local people who attacked them, but with high losses. The massacres spread to all districts in the Adana Vilayet, as far as the areas of the Aleppo Vilayet. The Armenians had to defend themselves and organized themselves in Hajin, Sis, Zeitun, Sheikh, Mourat, Dyortyol and other cities. More than 30,000 Armenians were killed. “Since numerous men, women and children were put to fire in the course of the Adana massacres, they are frequently referred to as the holocaust” (Marutyan, 2014:56). In representing the memory of these massacres, the colour of the background is purple, the colour of the Anmoruk, as a sign that the Armenians who died in the massacres of Adana were martyrs.

Topics ten and eleven of the exhibition contain large-format pictures that illustrate the preparation for the genocide under the titles of *In Preparation of the Genocide* and *The Ottoman Empire and WWII*. This preparation was based on a political decision of the Congress of the Itahad, who in 1911 adopted the Islamization of the population and forced Turkification. If this concept should fail, then the failure should be tied to the Christians and they should be completely destroyed.

Topic eleven is *The Ottoman Empire and WWII*. It explains how Germany and Austria-Hungary, as well as the Ottoman Empire as allies, opened a huge door within the Muslim world. In order to receive support from the population and win the war, a Holy War (*jihad*) was declared against the Christian countries and enemies such as Russia, England, and France. Muslim countries, and Muslims living in non-Muslim lands, were called upon to join the *jihad*. The result was devastating for the Christians living in lands ruled by Muslims or in neighbouring countries; these included Armenians, Greeks, Assyrians, and other Christians in Asia.
Propaganda leaflets calling on the Muslims of the Caucasus to participate in the Holy War against the Allies were widely distributed and Muslims were urged to arm themselves and their children and were called upon to attack and murder their non-Muslim neighbours. This propaganda had a devastating effect throughout the Middle East, parts of Europe and Asia (Lüdke, 2005:140).

7.3 **The Turn from Propaganda and Disparagement to Genocide**

The themes and titles of sections twelve and thirteen of the exhibition are *The Annihilation of the Armenian Soldiers of the Ottoman Army* and *The Destruction of Western Armenian National Elite*. They show that well before the actual Armenian genocide began the preparations had been completed and the limited destruction of
Armenian populations had been put into practice. The background of the pictures has black as the underlying image. This is intended to point to the imminent horrors of the Young Turks’ genocide.

Prior to the genocide over 60,000 Armenian men were drafted into military service. The military offensive on the Caucasian front against the Russians between December 1914 and January 1915 was a devastating defeat for the Turks, who blamed it on the Armenians. As a result, Armenian soldiers were disarmed and killed in February 1915. Others were disarmed, isolated, and placed in labour camps where they died in agony from hunger and exhaustion (Informant B).

After the first phase of disarmament and murder of the Armenian soldiers, the destruction of the businessmen and the political, educational, and cultural leaders of the Western Armenians gradually began (Adalian, 2015:19). It proceeded according to a prepared list and 235 intellectual Armenians were arrested in the early hours of April 24, 1915. The complete number could soon be put at more than 600 Armenians (Dum-Tragut, 2014:58). Prominent Armenians, such as the famous composer Komitas Vardapet (born Soghomon Soghomonyan, 1869–1935) and members of the Ottoman Parliament, writers and many other personalities, were arrested and only a handful survived the torture and deportations (Informant B). After the intellectual elite was destroyed, the Armenian population was deported, mainly old men, women and children.

One of the most moving images in the exhibition is the picture of the Armenians arrested in Zeytun. They stand bent, waiting for death under an archway. The
executioners, the Turkish officials, proudly and resolutely dominate the condemned people. After the photo was taken, the men were killed and burned alive.

Armenians of Zeytun brought to Marash to be executed. This image is found at the Armenian Genocide Museum and was photographed with permission.

The backgrounds of the pictures in the exhibition are again in black and have detached themselves from the earlier use of purple. In this subsequent image, the faces of men are depicted to the viewer as shadows whose lives are slowly fading away as a symbol of an impending death. These are the faces of national Armenian elites who disappeared and were brutally murdered. Yet their remains disappeared and are somewhere in unmarked graves as though they never existed. The way these pictures are used is an important tool designed as a way to let visitors “experience” the devastation of the genocide. The impression created is that the onlooker, who is actually a visitor to an exhibition, is actually an onlooker at the scene of the events portrayed and someone who themselves faces imminent death. It is chilling.
The fading faces of the disappeared elite 1915. This image is found at the Armenian Genocide Museum and was photographed with permission.

With the colour black a further event and a new chapter is opened with section fourteen with the title *Perpetrators of the Genocide: “Hierarchy of Murderers,”* which deals with death and violence due to the Ottoman tyranny. On the right side of the exhibition hall are portraits and names of men and women who were violently killed by the Ottoman police in criminal ways.

Portraits of the victims 1915, found at the Armenian Genocide Museum and photographed with permission.

On the left side of the hall are the perpetrators who made the decisions that led to the genocide.
Portraits of the perpetrators. This image is found at the Armenian Genocide Museum and was photographed by permission.

Victims and perpetrators face each other in this exhibition and look each other in the eye with a frightening presence and chilling reality.

There is an indissoluble tension in this juxtaposition. There is a conflict between injustice in killing for low and terrible motives, and the Armenian people’s right to life, freedom of religion, justice and a future. They have been murdered because they were Christians, as Raphael Lemkin expressed it (Schaller et al., 2004:260). In the view of the facts it must be said that the tension remains in the absence of atonement, for what has happened cannot be undone.

In addition, this tension in the juxtaposition of victims and perpetrators in the exhibition hall in the thirteenth topic reaches its peak in the person of Soghomon Soghomonyan as Komitas Vardapet (1863–1935). As saint, victim and eyewitness of the abomination, all eyes of the visitors are looking to him, who is portrayed as standing in the middle, larger than life and steadfast in anticipation of receiving answers. He is depicted as looking back on the terrible events he himself had seen and suffered. The intent of the exhibit is to show how he accuses and judges the perpetrators and even history itself, as
well as all those who stood by and did nothing then or afterwards. It almost seems as if
his glances wander along the line of sight to the beginnings and wrangle in silent
communication with the fate of the earlier eighteenth-century victim and saint, the priest
Komitas Kyomyurdiyan, with whom the exhibition begins. The intent of all of this is to
portray a sharing of the injustice over time that binds the Armenian people together and
with their God.

In fact, the memory of Komitas Vardapet meets the visitor at various places in the
memorial, whether through the sound of his voice or in the designation of objects. He
was a musicologist, teacher, and priest, and was arrested in Constantinople on 24 April
1915 along with the other Armenian intellectuals. He suffered arrest and deportation
and witnessed brutal assaults. What he had seen and experienced made him break (Informant B).

The final point in the exhibition hall is the beginning of the *Deportation of Civilians* in section fifteen. Having described the political development, which led to the Armenian genocide, the exhibition now describes the measures and methods used to annihilate the Armenian population. Through the architectural construction, the visitor enters the deportation path, which runs downwards and leads into the unknown. The downward path, equipped with glass walls, allows further retrospection of what has happened and invites further reflection.

### 7.4 The Massacres, Murder of Families, Deportations and the Destruction of Identity

The so-called “deportation path” leads to the sixteenth topic with the heading *Concentrations Camps in Syria*. But first the path goes down into the darkness, where women and children are presented through films on TV screens. The presentation shows how women and children suffered from exhaustion and were emancipated by hunger and torture and with torn clothes they are walking under the merciless sun crossing the desert into nowhere. They go to their deaths. These images prepare the visitor for the next stage of the genocide. It is mainly women, older men and children who are on the deportation trains.

The deportees who survived being massacred on the way are shown being driven into Syrian territory. The Syrian and Mesopotamian deserts were to be their last destination. Concentration camps were set up there and the destruction of the Armenians by
massacre or starvation was prepared. An information board in the exhibition under section sixteen gives information about various concentration camps. These include: Deir Ez-Zor, known as the main slaughterhouse, where 200,000 Armenians were killed; Ras UL AIN, where 70,000 Armenians were killed through hunger, epidemics and massacres; Meskene, where 3,000 orphans were horribly killed, being trampled under the hooves of horses. A total of more than 100,000 people were killed during the genocide. By 1915, 30,000 Armenians had been killed in Rakka and in 1916 about 4,035; In Bab a total of 80,000 Armenians died during the genocide (Informant B).

The visitor enters a room called the Hall of Silence, where there is an animated presentation that uses PowerPoint. Various images and faces are shown in large format, reflecting the horror and dread of the genocide in the young faces. These large format pictures were taken by Armin T. Wegner, who witnessed the expulsion of the Armenian people (Informant B).

Topic seventeen is Methods of Mass Killing. The term used to describe this is “The Culture of Violence” which was part of the Ottoman Empire’s actions against the Christian population. This exhibit draws attention to methods of destruction. “Long starving, thirst and epidemics also caused death. Bayonets, hammers, axes, sickles, spades, saws and the like were also used as killing tools” (Informant B, C).

The pictures shown here invoke more than words, raising feelings of consternation, anger, and fear. Many many questions about why this could happen makes one speechless and shows what people are capable of (Pampel, 2007). In this silence and powerlessness, the sounds of a church bell ring softly, almost inaudibly, almost comfortingy, admonishingly, and the voice of Komitas Vardapet, who himself
experienced the horror and the force and brutality of the genocide, points to another
reality. With a combination of spoken and sung Armenian words, it seems likely that
Komitas is singing a Mass for the murdered (Informant B).

What is characteristic of this part of the exhibition is that in the midst of it grey light
points illuminate the way, which contain comfort as well as the invitation to responsible
future action. In order for visitors to process the emotions evoked by what they have
seen, a small room with seating has been set up. Here audible examples by
contemporary witnesses who escaped the genocide are presented.

The significance of this confrontation with the genocide by contemporary witnesses has
been recognised in this exhibition. The Oral History movement from the 1980s has been
taken over here and is a guiding concept for memory and the processing of the
memories, and serves as a testimony to the times. In video contributions, contemporary
witnesses report on their traumatic events, but also on how it was possible to escape
from a living hell. These cultural memories can be experienced by the visitor too, as
moving reports back up what has already been seen and point to the fate of individual
witnesses who have escaped.

In addition to Armin T. Wegner’s photo collection on the right, the visitor can find out
details about this person under the heading “Armin Wegner: The Photographer of the
Genocide” which forms the eighteenth topic of the exhibit. As a German himself he
accuses the Germans of complicity in the Ottoman Empire. As confidants and
accomplices to the Armenian genocide, they kept silent and pursued their economic
interests.
Wegner served in Mesopotamia as an officer in the German sanitary service during WWI and photographed individual fates. He was not only an eyewitness to the crimes he had secretly committed, but was also a witness in the trial of the Armenian intellectual leader Talaat Pasha in 1921 (Hosfeld, 2005:7). He also wrote several articles such as *The Cry from Ararat* referring to the massacres at Smyrna under Atatürk.

Wegner saw later parallels in the Armenian genocide with the genocide of the Jews, and was legally punished for his open attitude under National Socialism. Here, too, the background of the presentation in the exhibition is black. Individuals at the risk of their lives, such as Wegner, emerge from the masses and condemn the genocide of the Armenians.

Another highlight of the exhibition is the tension-laden juxtaposition of Armin T. Wegner as an individual and German eyewitness, looking at the opposite left side, to the
German involvement, the soldiers and officers of the empire. Through this image, the German participation in the genocide is strongly condemned and remembered. As a German eyewitness, admonisher, and at the same time helper of the Armenian people, he confronts the machinations as well as the complicity of the Germans which became jointly responsible as allies of the Ottoman Empire.

The production of tension and aura as well as authenticity in this exhibition leaves many questions open. Here, too, accomplices and helpers face each other morally, as in the previous topics of the exhibition numbered twelve to fourteen, with headings Victim – Perpetrator. These topics are emotionally powerful and cause discomfort. Topics nineteen and twenty, under the heading Hidden Complicity: Germany and the Armenian Genocide, and the topic Crime against Humanity and Civilization document the attitude of the German officers who served under the Ottoman regime and their complicity in the genocide.

German Officers posing with sculls of the Armenians murdered in Hakim Khane, 1915, found at the Armenian Genocide Museum and photographed with friendly permission.
Furthermore, the deportations of the Armenians in cattle carriages, as later in Germany with the Jews, were carried out by the Berlin-Baghdad Railway built by the Germans in 1915. The extent to which Deutsche Bahn has dealt with its past has not been addressed to this day.

Another major theme in this exhibition is the extermination of families. In particular, women and children were the subject of inhuman treatment, campaigns, and hostilities during the atrocities. Under the rubric and title Women and Children as Victims of the Genocide, this forms topic twenty-one of the exhibit and consists of a large-format picture that recalls the educational achievements and upbringing of Armenian women before the massacres. It also demonstrates the extent of the extermination of women and children.

Alumni of the women’s department of Sahakian College, Konya 1910, found at the Armenian Genocide Museum and photographed with permission.

The above photograph of alumni of the women’s department of Sahakian College, Konia, in 1910 draws attention to this tragedy. Only the director of the college, Parandzem Palian, seated in the center, and a few alumni survived the genocide (Informant B).
Topic twenty-two, *Forced Conversation and Turkification*, shows what happened to the children who survived the massacres and deportations. Faded children’s faces are depicted in large format. We look at little children’s bloody feet and empty eyes, frail and emaciated bodies as a tiny collection in the exhibition of individual fates, which as a guide can reflect only a fraction of what is happening. The eyes of the little boy Mousheghik, tormented in Van, are opened wide by horror and violence; he “shows his hands cut after the crucifixion” as a means to force him to convert to Islam (Informant B).

The little boy Mousheghik: image found at the Armenian Genocide Museum and photographed with permission.
Forced Islamization became institutionalized. Ahmed Djemal Pasha, one of the leading ministers of the CUP and Young Turk administration, built orphanages in which the children were sorted out and forcibly Islamized (Meißner, 2010:215–216). It is summarized here and very clearly illustrated that every child carries a traumatic story in its soul. This must not be forgotten.

Topic twenty-three deals with Killing the Identity, showing that the kidnapping of young girls and women during deportations was not concealed. The girls were raped and brutally torn apart from their families, inspected, distributed, and forcibly taken away by the local Turks, Kurds and Arabs (Meißner, 2010:215). There they were Islamized and given Muslim names. Their bodies and faces were intensively marked with tattoos. Tattoos were used in the Middle East as a marker for a property. “They were often in the form of dots or small “x” marks which denoted a change in the woman’s life and her new ownership” (Informant B). These blue signs were for the Armenian women a profound stigma and humiliation. After the end of the First World War, dozens of international organizations and the Armenian Church helped women out of sexual slavery and servitude.
Topic twenty-four tells the remarkable story of Aurora (Arshaluys) Mardijanian. It is entitled “A Story of One Woman’s Fate”. She was an Armenian-American author, actress and survivor of the Armenian genocide. She witnessed the murder of her family and survived the massacres as a child. She walked 1400 miles as part of the deportations. During this time, she was kidnapped and sold on the slave market of Anatolia. Eventually she was able to escape and flee to Tbilisi, then to St. Petersburg and from there to Oslo and finally New York City with the help of the Near East Relief Organization. Her memoirs were written down with the title Ravished Armenia: The Story of Aurora Mardiganian, the Christian Girl who Survived the Great Massacres and later filmed in 1919.

The first New York performance of the silent film entitled Ravished Armenia took place on 16 February 1919. The film shows 16 young Armenian girls who were crucified or killed by impaling them on a stake. Through her life she was called the Armenian Joan of Arc by the press and was appointed spokeswoman for the victims of these horrors that had taken place in Turkey at that time. She was also a catalyst for humanitarian aid and The Movement for Armenia in America. After her death, in her honour the Aurora Prize of 100 LIVES was founded, which is awarded every year on 24 April in Yerevan.
for exceptional services to the preservation of humanitarian actions and aid. This foundation is named after her and presents her work at the end of the exhibition (Informant C).

Several exhibition rooms present the theme of the helpers. Here the rays of hope are performed in the midst of “hell” and on a white background. In particular, the Danish missionary Karen Jeppe helped at least 2,000 women and children to free themselves from Muslim imprisonment. Honours for these heroes, such as Jeppe, the Swiss missionary Jakob Künzler, Maria Jakobsen, Karen Maria Petersen, the US Ambassador Henry Morgenthau, Johannes Lepsius and others who helped orphans and widows are clearly described in the other exhibition topics numbered thirty-three to thirty-six.

Becoming like fathers and mothers to the orphans, these people made a decisive contribution to ensuring that the Armenian people were not wiped out. Not only did they actively help, but they also ensured that the atrocities and crimes were made public. They are the human guardian angels of the Armenians.

In the later topics, beginning with topic twenty-five, Resistance and Self-Defence, as well as in the large-format panel of topic twenty-six, The Witness of the Genocide, the dark shadows and themes of the backgrounds slowly turn towards the light. With their experiences, witnesses support the history of the Armenian genocide and remind the international community of the importance of acknowledging and mourning genocide. Finally, it should be mentioned here that some, but very few, individual Muslim voices condemned the brutal approach to the Armenians.
With topic number twenty-seven, *The World Reacts*, the exhibition focuses on the international community, with the question how did the world react to the genocide? With this question, the exhibition focuses on international reactions. Well-known political, religious and social personalities raised their voices against the inhuman violence against the Armenians. Fundraising was organized in USA, Russia, England, France and Nordic countries.

Nevertheless, a last genocidal attack by the Turks is described in topic twenty-eight, *The Republic in Peril*, which describes another shocking situation. After the Russians had withdrawn from the Caucasus because of the Russian revolutions, another offensive by the Turks followed on 30 January 1918. The Armenian civilian population were again massacred. Sardarpat was taken by them and Yerevan and Etchmiadzin were in danger. The Armenians started a counter offensive with all their strength and pushed the Turks back in several battles. Many stories entwine around this victory.

On 28 May 1918, the Armenian National Council declared Armenia an independent state and nation. Nevertheless, as topic twenty-nine points out, the independent nation hovered “*between war and peace*” (Informant B).

Topic thirty deals with the Turkish expansion efforts after the defeat and collapse of the Ottoman Empire. These are again shown as a warning. After the defeat the main members of the Young Turks who were responsible for the genocide were able to escape with the help of the Germans to Germany. A Turkish Court condemned them during their absence, but in exile they secretly prepared a new seizure of power, so deep was the sting in their Turkish pride because of the defeat.
The photograph used in the exhibit is intended to enable the viewer to understand what it meant to feel humiliated. It shows the superficial facial expressions of a Turkish man who observes these atrocities. It is intended to convey the sense that the visitor sees secret intentions hidden behind the fence, signifying the danger of future perpetrators and thieves belonging to future generations who are waiting to seize a new opportunity to persecute all who do not belong to their community. In this we perhaps foresee a prophetic hint of more recent atrocities committed by ISIS and other radicals against Christian and other non-Muslim communities in Syria.

![Behind the fence: image found at the Armenian Genocide Museum, photographed with permission.](image)

Further chapters in Armenian history in the exhibition topic thirty-seven, *Justice and Retribution*, and number thirty-eight, *The Return of the Remnants and the New Disaster*, as well as number thirty-nine, *The Last Stage of Dispossession of Homeland*, give an overview of how Armenia could survive. The last topic particularly evokes the memory of the Treaty of Sèvres (1920) and the Treaty of Lausanne (1923), and provides the context for Armenia’s future political developments.
In connection with topic forty, *Smyrna*, today’s Izmir becomes again the scene of the atrocities by the Turkish Kemalists on 9 September 1922. Smyrna was the city of the former Ottoman Empire in which thousands of deportees sought protection and refuge from the massacres. The new state of Turkey under Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) (1923–1938) plundered and massacred the inhabitants of Smyrna (Informant B).

The Armenian, Greek, and European quarters of the town were set on fire and the people were forced to flee. During the massacres a total of between 100,000 and 150,000 Christians died, 25,000 of whom were Armenians (Lepsius, 1916:229, Informant B). The “view over the fence” and the intentions had again found an opportunity among the new rulers. Nothing had changed. Atatürk was involved in the various Armenian massacres to the same extent as when the Young Turks were at the height of their power and the Ottomans before them. Thus, the memorial complex drives home to the visitor the tenacity of the Armenian people and their willingness to die for their faith not simply in the past but also in the future (Isakhanyan, 2012:17; Khachatryan, n.d.:112–114).

7.5 Reflections on the Construction of the Monument Exhibition

The Memorial Genocide Museum was redesigned and renovated between 2011 and 2015. Previously, the exhibition’s design and furnishings had, in their arrangement, Christian crosses hanging between narrow windows in order to attach a sacred meaning to the Armenian deaths or to provide an image connoted with the Armenian Christian religion. However, during the reconstruction, the crosses between the large format photographs in the exhibition halls were removed and the structures remodelled according to the concept of a global universal memory culture and cosmopolitanization.
of remembrance. In the section of the permanent exhibition with the topic *The Construction of the Monument* photos from the previous exhibition can be viewed.

Previous exhibition design with crosses, found at the Armenian Genocide Museum and photographed with permission.

Before leaving the memorial every visitor is invited to sign a guestbook under the eyes of a phoenix statue. The sculpture behind the desk that holds the guestbook depicts the Tree of Life.

The Tree of Life and Phoenix as symbol of rebirth, found at the Armenian Genocide Museum and photographed with permission.
This symbolism is important because in ancient mythology it is out of the ashes that the phoenix rises to new life. In the rays of the dawn the phoenix burns itself, only to rise from the ashes to renew life and to be born again. This ancient myth stems from ancient Egypt before this mysterious bird with its message of rebirth was embraced by the Greeks. The symbolism indicates a mysterious transformation in the inner person for people who desire to leave their old life and to go to higher spiritual levels in the process of being reborn (Informant C). In the Christian tradition, particularly in Greek Orthodoxy and the Armenian Church, it was seen as a story that prepared the way of thinking for people to embrace Christ’s demand that humans must “be born again” (John 3:16).

The hallmark of the mysterious being is the indestructibility of the phoenix’s life and its constant return from death to life. As such the story foreshadows the life, death, and resurrection of Christ, which is central to the Christian tradition. This is transformed again in the memorial through an appeal to ancient religious thought onto which the Christian message is grafted, as the Armenian poet Hovhannes Shiraz (1914–1984) explained: “If there is only one Armenian uterus under the patronage of the goddess of Armenians, then the Armenians will come back to life in this world.” But this world is not all, and while the survival of the Armenian people is important as a witness to the truth of the gospel there is also implied in the symbolism the hope of glory. After this life is a new beginning and life with Christ and God (Informant C).

Near the sculpture a big panel is placed with the picture of Aurora Mardijanian, the Armenian-American author and actress and survivor of the Armenian genocide. She smiles in a friendly manner to the visitors before they leave the exhibition hall and enter the courtyard in the role of judges to make their own judgments about the events of
1915 and Armenia’s long suffering, but from a Christian perspective this is a brave and triumphant history (Informant C).

In this way the visitor becomes aware that the exit as well as the entrance is designed to confront the visitor with decisions that in turn force them to make judgments regarding the genocide and long history of persecution of the Armenians. In doing so it brings the visitor to the feet of an Armenian cross and causes everyone to think deeply about the meaning of life, the role of God in history, and the significance of the cross in everyone’s life.
CHAPTER EIGHT

YAD VASHEM - THE MEMORIAL SITE

8.1 Introduction

The historian Peter Reichel emphasises that as a form of support in the culture of remembrance, memorials constructed as monuments and memorial sites have become an indispensable medium for symbolic politics in society (Reichel, 1995:31). This form of negative commemoration has been universally adopted by almost all nations no matter whether these are perpetrator or victim nations, with the exception of Turkey, which denies the Armenian genocide.

A monument of this type, which is a new development, was erected in Berlin. Leah Rosh (1936), the initiator of the Memorial to the Murdered Jews (2005), called for a memorial for a “perpetrator nation” as a visible declaration of national disgrace and shame for the act of extermination of the Jews (Bernau, 2005:4). The creator of the monument, Peter Eisenmann (1932), the American architect who conceived stele architecture, viewed it as a reminder to remember, but not an appeal to feelings of guilt and shame (Neumann, 2011:57). Nevertheless, the monument has been received in a contradictory manner within German society and yet, according to Jan-Holger Kirsch’s view, it has contributed to a redefinition of national identity in a united Germany (Jan-Holger Kirsch, 2003).

The first memorial to the victims of the Holocaust has been identified in various sources as Yad Vashem. It may be seen as the first institution of a negative culture of
remembrance. We should remember that while the genocide in Armenia occurred before the genocide in Germany, the memorial site of Tsitsernakaberd in Yerevan was built much later than Yad Vashem. Nevertheless, both Yad Vashem and Tsitsernakaberd share a common ideological basis as memorials to genocide victims. Also, as we will see, the argument can be made that there are architectural and other similarities between these memorial sites. This is also due to an implementation of a global and universal culture of remembrance focusing on the Holocaust, based on human rights in all the nations that have signed the human rights conventions.

8.2 The Idea for a Memorial Site for the Jews Who Lost Their Lives

A proposal for the establishment of a memorial to the victims of the Holocaust/Shoah was first suggested in 1942 by the Zionist Mordechai Shenhavi (1900–1983), who was a delegate of several Zionist congresses and a member of the Kibbutz HaShomer haZair and the Kibbutz Mishmar haEmeq. The first rumours of mass extermination of European Jews were already circulating in Palestine at that time. Therefore, on the 10th of September 1942, Shenhavi submitted his draft and guidelines for a national project to the headquarters of Keren Kayemet LeIsrael (Board and Committee of the Jewish National Fund, JNF) in memory of the victims of the Holocaust/Shoah. He already had clear ideas for this project and its design, which would require about 200 hectares of land in an agricultural region, in order to build a national park with a memorial (Brog, 2002; Yad Vashem Studies xxx, 2002:297–336; see also Kurths, 2008:132–133). Due to Shenhavi’s Zionist character, it is not surprising that the first projects were based on a Zionist Socialist mission, and that the first proposals considered the heart of nature and landscaped regions as the locations for commemoration of victims of the Shoah.
Shenhavi’s idea and vision contain very concrete guidelines and illustrate the agony and tension he must have felt in the face of the Jewish catastrophe and the extermination of the European Jews that had already taken place. Shenhavi’s goal and intense desire was to erect a memorial to the slaughtered Jews of the Diaspora (Brog, 2002).

Nafatali Greenwood (2002) translated Shenhavi’s dream and concerns as well as ideas from the Hebrew document into English as follows, in a rare handwritten document entitled “The idea of commemorating all Victims of the Jewish Catastrophe Caused by the Nazi Horrors and the War.” See Appendix Four for further details. The architectural objects envisaged by Shenhavi can be read about in this document, and were later implemented in the Yad Vashem project with modifications and additions. These include, for example, the first point of commemoration and remembrance, which took place by collecting the names, as has already been expressed in the name of the memorial Yad Vashem. Furthermore, a symbolic cemetery was added, as well as study, research, documentation, archives and museums, a synagogue, and a presentation of the history of Jewish heroism. In particular, his pioneering reference to, and focus on, heroism illustrate Shenhavi’s immersion in Socialist and Zionist thought. Zionism ideologically corresponded to the secular self-conception of the founding fathers, with the vision of a new generation of strong and resistant Jews. The authors Brog (2002), Hass (2002) and Kurths (2008) emphasise in their explanations how Shenhavi’s ideas initially received little attention and were barely acknowledged and yet he persistently fought for the realisation of his vision.

He therefore submitted several revised drafts in the following years to the board and committee of the Jewish National Fund (JNF), before receiving interest from Keren Kayemet LeIsrael in London with the title “The People’s Memorial to the Memory to
the Fallen of the Diaspora and a Monument to the Jewish Soldiers” (Sheetret & Homolka, 2017:420). In mid-1944 he promoted and submitted his cause to the leadership of the Yishur Institution with the title “The idea of commemorating all victims of the Jewish Catastrophe caused by the Nazi Horrors and the War” (Neuman, 2014:71; see also Shetreet & Homolka, 2017:421).

After much effort, exertion and tenacity on Shenhavi’s part, and in agreement with the Head of the Religious Department (KKL), Rabbi Moshe Borstein (Burstyn), his ideas were adopted and they jointly decided on a name, Yad Vashem – A Memorial to the Murdered (Shetreet & Homolka, 2017:421). Shenhavi’s ideas and requirements had become increasingly concrete in his revised designs and the goal of his plan seemed to be within reach. He formulated it as follows: Let us erect an eternal monument, an educator and a guide for future generations and a guide for future generations, a signal and warning for us, a declaration of conscience and duty to the world around us (Brog, 2002). This eternal monument will preserve the memory of each individual victim and allow each Jewish person to dedicate their memory of the victims that they loved .... a memorial building:

1. Memorial hall [...]

2. Related projects: [...] a) a pavilion for the history of Jewish heroism covering all generations, especially in respect for the uprisings of the heroes of the ghetto, b) a central archive for the history of the Diaspora [...], c) an archive for the history of Eretz Israel covering all periods, but especially the Zionist work [...], d) a museum and a library, e) a centre for studies on the Diaspora and Zionist history [...], f) an auditorium and space for large conferences, g) a synagogue to meet the needs of religious visitors, h) hotels and youth hostels.

3. Millions were murdered, without leaving a trace. A special monument to the unknown victim shall be erected in the memorial hall to commemorate these anonymous victims, [...] The day of commemoration and the celebration of heroism shall be specified. An eternal flame has been planned for the victims,
[... a memorial for the destroyed Jewish communities, [... a memorial tower in honour of all Jews who fought against National Socialism [...] and a tribute to the Justice under the People (Brog, 2002; see also Kurths, 2008:134-135).

At least nine important priorities for remembrance were set during the planning phase, which had to be considered in the implementation of a memorial institution. They included the following:

(1) Yad Vashem should be a place of remembrance to the six million Jews who suffered martyrdom, (2) the Jewish families who were exterminated, (3) the communities and synagogues, movements and organisations, and cultural, religious and charitable institutions in which identity and Jewish culture was destroyed, (4) to the heroism of the Jews who sacrificed their lives for their people, (5) to the heroes of the Jewish soldiers and underground fighters who gave their lives in the fight against the Nazis in cities, villages and forests, (6) the heroes of the heroic resistance in the Warsaw ghetto who, through their uprising, restored the honour of their people, (7) the courageous struggle of the masses of the Jewish people who, faced with annihilation, fought for human dignity and the survival of the Jewish culture, (8) it should be a place of remembrance to the desperate and threatened who tried to reach the land of Israel against all odds and strove to save and deliver their brothers and the survivors with commitment and heroism, (9) and finally to the noble-minded members of general public, those righteous people who risked their own lives to save Jews (Keim, 1983:9).

Shenhavi stressed the importance of Jewish heroism and resistance during the Shoah. The designation of heroism will be examined in more precise detail in the following chapter. Kurths and Hass confirm this in their statements and focus on Shenhavi’s reflections, which “had emphasised the significance of heroism and the significance of resistance from the very beginning”, and therefore emphasised and formulated a decisive difference “between armed resistance in certain life situations and voluntary participation in allied armies” (Kurths, 2008:135; Hass, 2002:71). He therefore demanded two separate memorials. This distinction between those who could be viewed
as heroes and those who did not fit that category was later to become a central and
fierce point of contention among the Knesset deputies during the passing of the *Law of
Remembrance of Shoah and Heroism - Yad Vashem* in 1953 (Shetreet & Homolka,
2017:421).

The systematic extermination of the Jews by the Nazis was confirmed beyond all
measure after 1945. Together with the KKL and the Jewish Agency, the Jewish National
Council (*Va’ad Leumi*) discussed the founding of a Shoah memorial on the 4th of June
1945. Proposals were discussed and submitted to the Zionist Congress in London on the
15th of August 1945, and a provisional board was set up for the memorial institution,
including David Remez (1886–1951) as Chair, Shlomo Shragai (1899–1995), Baruch
Zuckermann (1887–1970) and Mordechai Shenhavi. Yad Vashem opened an office in
Jerusalem in May 1946 and a branch in Tel Aviv in February. The plenum met for the
first time on the 1st of June 1947 and presented their concepts in a public exhibition.
Neuman and Kurths briefly describe the concept as:

A scenic and architecturally impressive memorial work and installation should be
created in the area surrounding Jerusalem in Eretz Israel, on the *Har HaZikaron*
mountain (Mountain of Remembrance), which should fit suitably to the surroundings. A
living framework for a *Jaar HaZikaron* (forest of remembrance) should be grown on the
heights and slopes of the *Har HaZikaron*, and each of these trees should act as a
memorial to a human life. The memorial to our *martyrs* [Judaism does not view the
concept of martyr in the Christian sense, and this will be discussed in more detail in the
following chapters] will be immortalised with each individual name in *Hejchal Yiskor*
(Memorial Hall). Their joint tomb shall be the *Hejchal Yiskor*, in which the *Ner Tamid*
(Eternal Light) shall burn, a sign of inextinguishable remembrance. A permanent
memorial shall be dedicated to the soldiers and partisans, the *Hejchal Chasak* (house of the fighters). A *Gal Ed* (memorial stone) will be placed at the entrance of *Hejchal Yiskor* as a permanent reminder of Jewish martyrdom and heroism. Jewish communities which have been exterminated should be collected on a large map *Sde K’hillot Europe*, and geographical locations should be topographically determined and registered with the most important data. The history, information about significant personalities and their special achievements are written down in a book, the *Pinkasse Kehillot*, edited by experts in the field. Documentary material in the *Beit Eked* (archive) should refer to the communities and be completed on a continuous basis. To commemorate the countless Jewish places of worship, which were destroyed, a *Beit Knesset* (synagogue) shall be built on the *Har Hazikaron* (Neuman, 2014:72–73; Kurths, 2008:136–137).

In 1952, at the suggestion of Shenhavi, Ben-Zion Dinur, the Israeli Minister of Education, submitted a bill to the government entitled “*Hok haZikaron haShoah vehaGvurah – Yad Vashem*” (Law commemorating the Shoah and heroism – Yad Vashem) (Kurths, 2008:138), and after extensive debates, as well as the reference to a competing memorial planned in Paris at the same time, the first readings concerning a *Yad Vashem law* took place in the Knesset on the 12th/13th of May 1953 and the 19th of August 1953 (Kurths, 2008:139).

The law was published quickly, on the 28th of August 1953, and it came into force with immediate effect. This adoption of the law at such short notice brought a great deal of unrest to Parliament. It was agreed that the establishment of an institution to commemorate the Shoah had become necessary, but the definition of the term *Gvurah* (heroism) as a focal point in this bill created discomfort and led to fierce, intense debates about content and definitions (Kurths, 2008:41). Interpretation and more precise
explanations first had to be agreed and clarified, because there were differing opinions and ideas about what constitutes heroism. For example, the Socialist left parties agreed with this term only if it concerned armed resistance in ghettos and forests, opposing the view of social democratic and Zionist religious parties, who “argued that there had been many manifestations of Jewish heroism in the Shoah period” (Kurths, 2008:140–142).

A debate about unequal treatment stood in the space existing between the underground fighters and the victims of the Shoah. This debate derailed the discussions, which continued for a long time to the detriment of the Shoah survivors, whose interests gradually foundered. In particular, the lawyer and politician Serach Wahrhaftig (1906–2002) described it as moral injustice and discrimination between those who were murdered in the gas chambers and those who fought underground and died in the process (Kurths, 2008:142).

Nevertheless, there was much controversy over definitions of the term ‘heroism’, while there was general consensus on the emphasis of heroism in the national memorial, which was motivated by Zionism. In a call for remembrance of the Shoah, the drafts should have been implemented immediately, which had to take place within secular symbolism (Law of Remembrance of Shoah and Heroism – Yad Vashem 1953, (5713–1953); see further details in Appendix Five).

It should be emphasised that concrete details were legally anchored in the bill with a view to remembrance by the state and remembrance as a memorial institution. Nothing like this had existed in this form up to that point, meaning that the initial efforts for this new form of commemoration were underestimated and initially regarded as non-binding in public life (Shetreet & Homolka, 2017:422). Therefore, the general interest in the
memorial institution among the Jewish population was rather low. The memorial as a collective Zionist institution, legitimising political secularism as a precondition for a Jewish state, was viewed critically and even opposed, especially by religious groups, because it did not correspond to rabbinical ideas. It took a completely new approach that required a wealth of diplomacy and expertise to have enough authority to implement the new plans.

It can be seen critically that initially in that time, there were no clear concepts, and there were no models of visualisation, but only ideas and a lot of keynotes. The fact that a real and remarkable project could nevertheless develop from these ideas corresponds to the special abilities to create something new. However, worth mentioning and also exemplary, is not only the idea and implementation when designing a unique memorial institution to commemorate the murder of the Jews, but also the enactment of a law in the following years (1953), the content of which had no such precise precursor as an international comparison as expressed in the law entitled *Law of Remembrance of Shoah and Heroism – Yad Vashem 1953*. In the first place, the law itself was unique at that time and was an important way of formulising these concepts and ideas (Shetreeth & Homolka, 2017:422).

The law was passed in the Knesset and the way was paved for the Remembrance Authority to act, which led to the establishment of the Yad Vashem Memorial. Yad Vashem therefore became the central, symbolic and national focal point for remembrance and memory of the Holocaust, and the most important and official site for the State of Israel. As a national Holocaust memorial, it is not the end of Jewish life that is represented, but rather, in the context of memory, the end of the diaspora and of existence in exile (Young, 2002:274).
8.3 The Zionist Founding Model and its Relationship to the Old Testament

After closer examination, central characteristic features are reflected in the legal statutes, which include extensive narratives, symbols, and architectural forms which correspond to an inherent Jewish tradition, Jewish faith and Jewish identity. James E. Young confirms this point with regard to the cultural and religious spheres in *Jüdische Lebenswelten* (1991), which translates as Jewish Worldview, stressing that “as unique as the Shoah is thus conceived, ... its uniqueness is perceived not so much as the reason for remembrance, rather than as the *a priori* tradition that puts such remembrance first” (Young, 1991:149). Zertal, on the other hand, takes a critical view of this tradition and does not want to attribute this distinction to an *a priori* tradition, but comes to a similar conclusion in this regard and adds that this memory was “itself conserved, reconstructed, coded and highlighted as Israel’s central ideology, and is additionally taken from its most important resource, the Jewish religion” (Zertal, 2003:97). Her interpretation from a liberal point of view is somewhat more differentiated and therefore does not indirectly contradict Young’s considerations.

Hass stresses that he finds the concept of remembrance and commemoration culture in Judaism difficult, but defends it nevertheless in the light of the various implications in relation to the Holocaust. He sees a problem in the distinction between religion and nation, which seems almost impossible to him in Judaism. Nevertheless, he sees that in Israel after 1948, the patterns of interpretation were subject to influences and changes, the conflicts of which took place on three levels:

1. The interpretation of Zionism as an idea of founding a state, or the change and replacement of the original Zionist ideology by nationalistic and national-religious interpretations; 2. The interpretation and significance of the Holocaust
within these interpretations of Zionism; and 3. The daily political conflicts, in which the Holocaust was used to serve different interests (Hass, 2002:40).

Furthermore, he continues that Zionism as a political idea primarily refers to the Jewish nation, not to the Jewish religion, yet religious symbols and rituals were used in the secular and cultural contexts. This means that it is difficult to make a distinction, as despite their secular appearance, the Zionist utopias do not renounce religious legitimation and have used transcendence as a source of legitimation for their political order (Hass, 2002:40-41). Eschebach explains this phenomenon as follows and reminds us that “when it comes to its commemorative practices the state does not shy away from using those of religion to give them an allegedly safe foundation” (Eschebach, 2005:20).

Many academics have come to hold these views by coming to the conclusion that “Israel was founded as a secular Jewish state, but that religious moments play an important role” (Hass, 2002:41). Indeed, during the founding of the State of Israel, the Jewish religion played a functional role in a secular society, as it also does in Jewish festivals, but to put it into the words of Hass, religion did not serve to legitimise the founding of the state (Hass, 2002:40). In his estimation, the purely worldly, secular reference was increasingly transformed after the Six Day War (1967), with the conquests of the Judean and Samaritan territories. The land of Israel was viewed in a biblical context and identified with the Jewish religion (Hass, 2002:41).

Although it initially appeared that the Jewish religion was actually the most important resource, this was something of a secret source of inspiration. To put it in the words of Zertal, it must be noted in this respect that it was a development in the various fields; on the one hand, it was the state-bearing ideology, that of secular Zionism, and on the other
hand, it was linked to a tradition which conveyed patterns of action, customs and traditions as well as beliefs and convictions and provided a cultural basis. Viewed from the outside, both the secular ideology and the tradition initially acted independently, but over the course of time they flowed into each other on the basis of an *a priori* tradition according to Young’s statements, and into the most important resource taken from religion according to the statement by Zertal. Here too, it should first be noted that political Socialist Zionism first oriented itself towards the European national movement and increasingly associated itself with traditional patterns of action.

In particular, the influence of David Ben-Gurion (1886–1973) ensured that secular Zionist thinking was transformed to give it a religious connotation. For him, the catastrophe that struck the Jewish people and destroyed millions of Jews was a historical fact based on the homelessness of the Jews as a people. He formulated it as follows: “We will not rest until we have rescued you from the Nazi inferno and the rotting diaspora. We will bring you all back to our home, which will be built and redeemed” (cited in Bernstein, 1998:20–21).

In David Ben-Gurion’s view, the Jewish catastrophe is connected with the Jewish homelessness, and the redemption from it necessitates a home country, which is understood as a national rebirth. It should be once again emphasised here that the catastrophe in exile and the redemption with the return of the Jews to Israel is understood as key to a national rebirth. A certain ambivalence and sensitivity are simultaneously reflected in these statements, which contain religious elements. These statements are inspired by religion and need to be explained in more detail. The founding fathers and the Jewish population, as well as their new society, can best be interpreted in David Ben-Gurion’s own slogan, “From class to nation” (Meier-
The key to bringing Old and New together can be explained by the fact that David Ben-Gurion used the Old Testament as a national document and as the basis for Socialist and Atheist Zionism, in particular the words of the prophets, who had influenced the political and social circumstances in ancient Israel in a socially critical way. He dealt with this topic intensively. In his view, the prophets were the forefathers of Zionism (Segev, 2018: 16).

In addition, he regularly studied the Bible with Bible scholars, and studied and interpreted contemporary events using biblical representations in the respective matter. Generally, the Bible deeply impressed the Socialist Zionists “as a literary record of Jewish national glory in Palestine”, and they were strongly influenced by it. From their point of view, political and social circumstances can be read from the Decalogue, especially from the second table of the Ten Commandments (Keller, 2010:38).

As social law, the Ten Commandments ensured elementary legally protected rights, which serve to preserve family and community. It is typically Jewish to ensure guarantees in these elementary rights for the family, the community, and the vulnerable. In the prologue of the Decalogue in both versions of the Old Testament (Deuteronomy 5:6–21; Exodus 20:1–18), liberation from slavery in Egypt is explicitly mentioned, and therefore it is a strong reminder to the Jewish people that they were once slaves and were liberated by God’s work. The Commandments and the legal right to freedom are inseparably interwoven. As an incentive for freedom, the Decalogue sharpened the individual’s responsibility towards his neighbour in order to simultaneously secure the freedom of the community based on the rule of law (Keller, 2010:38, 42). This aspect, among other things, was taught, remembered and taken in over thousands of years, and may have been the spark that triggered the reason why Socialist ideas should not
contradict secular and liberal Zionism. They felt drawn towards Socialism in droves due to the basic commandment for the socially weak to take care of each other, to take responsibility and to fight against injustice. A longing was awakened in the emergence of Zionism, and a new possibility to connect the roots of the Jewish foundation with modern values was seized (Haumann, 2008:132).

Ben-Gurion and the founding fathers of Israel must have had these thoughts. Adelman confirms this view in his research by referring once again to Ben-Gurion’s reflections and adding that Socialism “was born anew as a form of Nationalism ... with social aspects such as ideology ... and becomes a moral absolute, a national essence” (Adelman, 2008:37). Ben-Gurion was viewed as a credible and pragmatic politician with a vision for a newly formed nation, and on the basis of the already outlined Jewish interior constitution, only Socialism with all its utopian ideas could overcome the 2000-year history of the diaspora and unite the scattered Jewish community. Therefore, Jewish people found Zionist Socialism extremely attractive in the period between 1880 and 1940 and viewed it as “the most fundamental revolution in Jewish life” (Avineri, 1981:13, 226).

Furthermore, the legacy of the Russian Revolution was taken to Israel by Russian pioneers in the first three Aliyas, and Russian Socialism initially had a tremendous impact on the new Israeli society. Adelman writes that the “Russian revolutionary heritage was brought by the numerous Russian pioneers of the first three aliyahs” (Adelman, 2008:38). He argued for the powerful impact of Russian Socialism on the Zionist Labour Movement. Yet this heritage is not comparable to earlier revolutions, such as the French Revolution, the English Revolution, or even to the Russian Revolution as it actually developed in Russia.
In Adelman’s view, the first Zionist Socialist revolution, “with its agrarian populist romanticism, rooted the urban Jews in the land and created a new productive class” (Adelman, 2008:133). Jews who did not own land or property became farmers for the first time. This was already revolutionary in itself, changing the Jewish community from a traditional religious community to a national community, and changing Jewish holidays to national holidays. The Socialist Zionism grew out of an early democratic Russian socialism (Herbeck, 2009:113) before radicalism by the Bolsheviks destroyed them (after the Russian revolution) (Adelman, 2008:130). Nonetheless, and ultimately as a result, in agreement with Adelman, the newly formed nation-state created the newest and most secular society in the Community of Nations, as one of the oldest groups of people in the world, in the ancient and once-traditional land of Israel.

8.4 Holocaust Memory and Traditional Characteristics in Modern Israeli Society

With the establishment of Yad Vashem through the law passed by the Knesset, the memorial received a political and national symbolism based on these sources and interpretations (Young, 1991, 2002; Sznaider, 2002; Kurths, 2008; Shetreet & Homolka, 2017; Hass, 2002). The law states that the memorial should act as the cornerstone of the new Zionist state. In particular, Young sees Yad Vashem as a memorial site unlike any other, and describes it as a type of “landmark monument,” in comparison to international memorial sites, which at the time “were cleared of” their national origins and interests. From an Israeli point of view, the memorial was given the mission of preserving, and at the same time creating, a national memory and enshrining these characteristics in law, with the formulation of a special law which served to link
remembrance to a Jewish understanding of present and past generations (Young, 2002:278).

As a cornerstone, it supports the ideals and self-definition of the nation in conjunction with a tradition of remembrance by selecting a Day of Remembrance for the Holocaust in the national calendar. The Day of Remembrance was officially set on the 8th of March 1959 as the *Day of Remembrance for European Catastrophe and Jewish Resistance Law* and adopted by the Knesset. Therefore, in addition to the institutionalisation of a memorial for the commemoration of the victims in Yad Vashem, a central Day of Remembrance was established by the state. In 1953, a mandatory Day of Remembrance was enshrined in Yad Vashem Law, as the following was established in Point 3, Paragraph 2 of this law, concerning the Shoah Memorial Day *Yom haShoah veGvurah*: (3) “to establish a custom of joint remembrance of the heroes and victims”... *Yad Vashem Law 1953* (Shetreet & Homolka, 2017:424–425).

The *Yom Hashoah veGvurah* (Holocaust and Heroism Remembrance Day) was modelled on the Jewish tradition as part of the collective commemoration, adopted from a combination of religious and national myths and legends, and specified in writing in the passages of the Holocaust and Heroism Remembrance Day Law, 5719 (1959) (Shetreet & Homolka, 2017:424). This resolution had already been discussed in the Israeli parliament on the 12th of April 1951, whereby the Day of Remembrance of the Shoah and the heroes of the ghetto uprising should be brought together on the 27th of *Nisan* according to the Jewish calendar, therefore creating a connection between the persecution, resistance, and independence, in which a biblical and modern return to the country would be combined (Bernstein, 1998:21).
The first Knesset (1951) announced that each year the 27th day of the month Nisan would be known as the day for commemoration of the Shoah and the battle of the ghetto [Yom haShoah uMered haGetaot], an eternal Day of Remembrance for the House of Israel, (Kurths, 2008:33). In this capacity, the Yom haShoah has inscribed, nationalised and secularised the remembrance of the catastrophe in the Jewish calendar, and at the same time adopted that remembrance in a legal framework as to how the day should be structured.

Sznaider explains that this date has been carefully chosen and placed within the Omer Days, when the Israelis commemorate the murder of the Jews by the Crusaders. In addition, according to Sznaider, the date was set between the end of Passover (Day of Remembrance of the Warsaw ghetto uprising) and Israeli Independence Day (Sznaider, 2002:187).

Furthermore, Shetreet and Homolka point out that in the title “of the Law as adopted, the Holocaust and heroism again completed together in the words Yom ha-Zikaron l’Shoah ool’Mered ha-Gheta’ot, although the name proposed in the original bill was “Holocaust and Ghetto Revolts Day” (Shetreet & Homolka, 2017:424). As dates for the Israeli ceremonies of remembrance, the tenth of Tevet, which was, according to biblical accounts, the Babylonian siege of Jerusalem under Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings 25:1), Yom Kaddish Klali (Day of the General Kaddish introduced by the Chief Rabbinate) and the 19th of April, the day of the outbreak of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, were taken into account by the left-wing Socialist parties as a further compromise. Therefore representatives of the various parties eventually settled on the 27th of Nisan, between Passover and Independence Day, after a long time in discussions, which went back and forth (Kurths, 2008:35).
In terms of content, the law in *Yom haShoah* sets out the following: a two-minute silence, during which all work should be suspended and all areas of public life should come to a halt in order to pause and remember. This memorial programme has today been ceremonially extended to include a grand opening ceremony at sunset on the evening before the Day of Remembrance, with dignitaries, survivors, children of survivors and their families. There, six torches are lit in the presence of politicians and state presidents, symbolising the six million Jews who were murdered. The focal point of the ceremony takes place the following day at 10:00 am with the sounding of a two-minute siren throughout the country, to remind them of the victims of the Holocaust. This is followed by wreath-laying in Yad Vashem by representatives of survivors’ groups and organisations at the foot of the six torches in Yad Vashem, in the presence of government and state leaders. Names are read out by survivors of the Shoah, and a ceremonial programme is offered by Jewish youth organisations (Kashi, 2012). As already mentioned above, *Yom HaShoah* is not a religious day of remembrance, and it is possible to speak of a dimension of remembrance without exaggeration, of a “day as a memorial,” which is politically motivated.

This particular form of historical commemoration, merging of the heroes of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising and those who died fighting in the war of independence, as well as the European Jews who were victims in the concentration camps, makes it clear that a culture of remembrance can vary and that many forms and types of remembrance are possible. For example, Yad Vashem itself can be read as a Memorial. These special forms of remembrance can be situated in the context of a “memorial space”. However, this does not mean in the sense of Pierre Nora’s memorial site, but in the time content and measures of contrast, with all their intermediate stages, which can only be
interpreted in a Jewish cultural context, namely in rhythms in time instead of cycles and timelines as is common among the Europeans habits of thought (Boman, 1952:114, 121).

Another national day of remembrance marks the 5th Iyar of the Hebrew calendar as Yom haAtzma’ut (Independence Day), the day on which independence was proclaimed and the state of Israel was founded on the 14th of May 1948 (in the Gregorian calendar). A year later, the government dedicated the day before Independence Day as a Day of Remembrance for those who died in the war of 1948. This Day of Remembrance for the fallen of the wars of Israel and the victims of terrorism takes place one week after the Day of Remembrance of the Holocaust. The selection of this date to be Yom Hazikaron (National Day of Remembrance) – the Day of Remembrance for the fallen of the Israeli wars – was a matter of controversy among the Jewish population, and many grieving families who had lost relatives in the war of defence were not able to participate emotionally in the joy of Independence Day (Kurths, 2008:35–38).

Nevertheless, the Israeli government, for ideological reasons, had persisted in linking myths, ideals, and political intentions to the fatalities, in conjunction with heroism, resistance, and statehood, which gave the message that no better ideal could be sought on the Independence Day of the State than to die. Connecting the death of soldiers to the birth of the state in this way was exaggerated in the opinion of Zertal, and as a further and supplementary explanation according to the formulations of Young, essentially “the oldest of all Jewish paradigms was nationalised”, namely in the terms “destruction and redemption” (Young, 2002:280). Its imagined death, resurrection and salvation were mythically staged in “a day of mourning that turned into a day of independence at
sunset, ... in that the death of these men was atoned for with the birth of the state” (Young, 2002:281).

Zertal critically concluded that “the juncture between the Jewish catastrophe of the Holocaust and Israeli power has become a central factor in the crystallisation of the Israeli identity, to achieve the greatest possibility of social unity and solidarity in the State of Israel” (Zertal, 2003:258). In her view, it includes the “sacrosanct declaration of Israeli military power, the canonisation of the home country and its borders, the mystification of death for the home country, in connection with, and recourse to, the Holocaust” (Zertal, 2003:289). Particularly, she points out that Zionism, as a modern revolutionary political idea based on national foundations, was not immune to either mystification or religiosity, despite its secular content. According to Hass, they made a “resort to religious legitimacy and transcendence as a source of legitimacy” for their objective and acted on this (Hass, 2002:55–56).

Hass, on the other hand, gives pragmatic historical reasons for his view that this form of hero worship served primarily to motivate self-esteem in Israeli society, because of the uncertain and unstable situation following the declaration of independence and the subsequent wars within a hostile environment. Therefore, in order to motivate and integrate a socially recognised culture of remembrance, it was necessary to emphasise the honour of the heroes. According to his analysis, therefore, “preoccupation with the Holocaust in the 1950s in the form of hero worship became constitutive for the formation of an Israeli identity” (Hass, 2002:55-56).

The nature of the Day of Remembrance was fully in line with the secular self-understanding of the new, young Zionist state, and in the context of this tension
between nation and an *a priori* tradition of remembrance (*zkr*) the opposite could have
developed over time, namely a “social liberation and cultural diversity”, which could set
in motion and bring about the development of the process of remembrance within this
tension (Ravitzky, 1999:148).

Today, *Yom haZikaron* is celebrated six days after *Yom haShoah* and one day before
*Yom HaAzma’ut*, on the 4th of the month of *Ijar* according to the Jewish calendar. *Yom
HaZikaron* honours all the Israeli soldiers killed in the War of Independence in late
1947 and in five other wars and terror attacks, as well as the victims of Palestinian
terrorism. The law was passed in 1963 and this date was set as a Day of Remembrance.
It was extended in 1998 to include the commemoration of victims of terrorism.

At first, the days of remembrance had a secular character. This changed when Yad
Vashem hosted a conference of religious leaders, declaring the Day of Remembrance to
be a religious day, with traditional prayers and rites. Nevertheless, it was not in the
spirit of the Founding Fathers that a collectively religious commemorative culture in the
new state of Israel should be stylised as the core element, in order to prevent the new
state from attempting to form a religious identity. Resistance and stamina were to have a
higher value in commemorative culture than other commemorative events, so it was
initially difficult to integrate the Shoah into official commemorative culture, in the way
that it has increased in significance today.

As a consequence, according to the analyses by Hass (2002), Kellerman (2009), Young
(2002) and Zimmermann (2000), there was initially a significant separation between the
resistance fighters and Holocaust survivors, and this was expressed in their unequal
treatment in remembrance and commemoration. In addition, there were still reservations
about Jews living in the diaspora, and Zimmermann in particular discussed various critical views taken in this rivalry between Israel and the diaspora. Since the founding of the state, Zionism had been able to propagate the hypothetical claims that the Shoah could have been prevented if the Jewish state had been established at an earlier point in time, and instrumentalised the history of the Shoah as a legitimating factor, providing even less acceptance of the Holocaust survivors (Zimmermann, 2000:193–195).

8.5 The Holocaust Survivors in Conflict with Heroism and Jewish Martyrdom

These contrasting perceptions determined different forms of political remembrance in the 1950s, and according to Yechiam Weitz (Hass, 2002:45–46) four types of confrontation with the Holocaust and its survivors were observed. First, there were radical positions towards the Holocaust survivors, represented by the Herut Party and the Communist Party, which used the Holocaust to delegitimise their political opponents, the Mapai Party of Ben-Gurion. Secondly, a condescending and patronising position towards the Holocaust survivors was taken by the Zionist left, and as former partisans, they determined the principles of remembrance as the only legitimate representatives of the resistance. Thirdly, a defensive consensus position was taken by the political centre, coming mainly from the ruling Mapai Party, which had to ward off radical positions and had no moral force to institutionalise the meaning and history of the Holocaust in a powerful commemoration. Fourthly, an enigmatic position, or cryptic, nebulous position was closely linked to the ultra-orthodox world, seeking an explanation for the extermination of the Jewish people in religion (Hass, 2002:45-46).

In the confrontation with the Holocaust, the rifts against the survivors deepened even further during the debates focused on the reparations from Germany (1951–1952) and
the Kastner trial (1954). Kastner was head of a Jewish Rescue Committee in Hungary, allegedly collaborating with the Nazis to save Jews. For the first time, this brought the question of the right behavior during the Holocaust into public discussion. Until then, the life stories of Holocaust survivors were purely private matters. Only the partisans and fighters were publicly noticed. Therefore, everything in connection with National Socialism was responded with a wave of aggression and violence, and so also Kastner’s connection to the Nazis. The conflict went so far that suddenly the governing Mapai Party found itself sitting in the dock accused of collaborating with the Nazis (Hass, 2002:47).

In this development process, the focus was now on the common survivors, and they were treated with less and less value in the eyes of Israeli society, and mercilessly viewed as unworthy. They were the ones who had followed the leadership like sheep to the slaughterhouse, and the manner of their death, which in their opinion was clearly different from heroic death, was in stark contrast to that of the soldier: “The soldier died the sacrificial death of a hero; the prisoner died like cattle to the slaughter” (Bunzl, 1994:458; Lenzen, 1995:81).

This quotation was “cynically” (Lenzen, 1995:81) based on a text from Psalm 44:11–12, 22: “You gave us up to be devoured like sheep and have scattered us among the nations. Yet for your sake we face death all day long; we were considered as sheep to be slaughtered” (New International Version, 1978). Lenzen explains the above-mentioned origin of this statement from the Psalms which, for the suffering Jewish community, links back to the Second Jewish Revolt against Rome (132-135), and became the slogan for the rabbinate, solidified as a traditional religious identity in Judaism. Nevertheless, in connection with the extermination of the Jews in the twentieth century, this
conception came out of the “religious film” of the Aqdat Jitzchaq Tradition, as described excellently by Lenzen. For in the Shoah, the lamentation of the Psalmist is understood both as a rebellion and an agonising question, and a centuries-old tradition of Jewish sacrifice in the succession of Aqedat Yizhaq, the binding of Isaac in Genesis 22:1–18, is broken (Lenzen, 1995:81–82).

However, survivors such as, for example, Elie Wiesel (1928–1916) identified themselves with this history as they had before (Schmitz, 2010:197), which emphasised that, on account of the identification of the survivors with Yizhaq, and the interpretation of the Midrash (religious texts belonging to Rabbinic Judaism), they made it their personal experience and, as a result, they survived. Yizhaq (Isaac) is the Hebrew prototype of sacrifice, and the archetype of the Jewish martyr who was to be sacrificed on Morijah by his father Abraham, according to Jewish and biblical scriptures. According to the scriptures, because he voluntarily surrendered his life, he got it back again. Many interpretations in Judaism and Christianity continue to appear on the “the binding of Isaac” (Landesmann, 2012:85). But what exactly does the Aqedat tradition mean? Josephus Flavius describes the consensual conversation between Abraham and Yitzhaq, and Yitzhaq’s readiness for self-sacrifice from which, in the end, Yahweh alone could liberate him (Josephus, 1988:29). There is no indication of martyrdom in these passages, and there is no explanatory definition on his part.

Avi Sagi emphasises that the greatest and most profound core thoughts and mysteries are contained in the story of Abraham and Yizhaq, and in agreement with Lenzen, the authors come to the conclusion that the view of “victims of violence as a self-sacrifice in al Kiddush HaShem was solely dependent on the internal perspective of the victims and those sacrificed” (Lenzen, 1995:82). The term al Kiddush HaShem (kedushat ha-
The forms of the Kiddush HaShem include prayer, conduct and martyrdom. The most dramatic aspect of Kiddush HaShem is martyrdom in particular, whereby the decision may be balanced in favour of life, according to Maimonides (Rambam), unless there is a coercion or demand to commit murder, pagan practices or sexual immorality, in which case it is advisable to choose martyrdom in order to avoid Chillul HaShem, the desecration of his holy name (Holtschneider, 2001:1–15).

Nevertheless, according to Maimonides, the Jewish person is bound to sanctify the name of God in life, and especially in the case when the enemy has no opportunity to make a decision, and death is in sight, they should sacrifice their life out of love for God, as Rabbi Akiba (55–135), the personification of a Jewish martyr, had done when he was led to execution to die as a martyr (Levinson, 191:174). But even here, the fundamental respect for human life predominates. This means that a person is free to decide and bears full responsibility for his decision (Wolffsohn, 2016:8).
This codification is only partially comparable to the Christian term. The original term in the Christian religious sense comes from the Greek term *martyr*, a (court) witness, and was first documented in the New Testament. After the Roman persecutions of the Christians (150 AD), this term became a title of honour for those who were killed because of their faith in Christ, but in essence it has a strong potential for protest and is an outcry of the living against death by arbitrary rulers and kings (Bergjan & Näf, 2014:26-27). This idea in the Christian sense became a cultish form of martyrdom, in order to achieve intercession for members who were left behind mainly in orthodox and catholic faith.

Again, the Holocaust opened a new dimension with regard to the term *Kiddush HaShem*, because in past Jewish martyrology, the Jewish martyr also had the possibility to choose life and to reject Judaism. Now, the only remaining option for the Jewish martyrs was faith, “going to one’s death degraded and dejected ... confronting (death) with inner peace, nobility, upright stance, without lament and cringing to the enemy ... this new option became another attribute of *Kiddush HaShem* during the Holocaust” in the view of the Jewish Holocaust victims (Schindler, n.d.:89; Dvorzeski, n.d.:128). This confrontation was ultimately not passive, but highly active in a deeper sense of an *Aqedat* tradition (Lenzen, 1995:83, Schmitz, 2010:195). Lenzen emphasises that during the murder of the Jews in the crematoria a rage erupted in the ghettos that actively resisted with the words: “Brothers, we will no longer go like sheep to the slaughter!” (Lenzen, 1995:82).

Nonetheless, the Jewish *Aqedat* tradition met with the same resistance in the twentieth century and the appeal of the Jewish resistance group in the ghettos and shook the centuries-old Jewish sense of sacrifice. The fundamental rejection of this tradition
constituted a conflict with the passive figure of Yizhaq and his self-sacrifice, who was to be sacrificed according to rabbinic testimony and tradition, and in this view embodied the model of \textit{Aqedat} tradition with an absolutely authoritarian obedient morality, whereas, on the other hand, the Jewish resistance groups resisted against this tradition in the ghettos. At the same time, the new Zionist Jewish state adopted this content and by no means wanted an obedient, humble servant of the \textit{Aqedat} tradition, whose guidelines contained martyrdom according to \textit{al Kiddush HaShem}. They had chosen revolution and strength (Lenzen, 1995:84). Hass and Zertal discussed that the emergence of heroism, the Zionist self-perception of the Jews in Palestine and the newly formed state of Israel was a priority in Israeli society, but in a revolutionary view with a heroic touch.

The idea of the \textit{Aqedat} tradition according to the weak diaspora Jews changed and it was possible to place the Holocaust survivors during the Eichmann trial into the Israeli society. The entire nation was shocked by the atrocities that took place in the concentration camps, and the silence of Holocaust survivors was shattered. The Israeli society recognised its own mistakes in showing contempt for the victims of the Shoah, for it was evident that they had not passively and unwillingly been brought to slaughter like lambs. Their resistance had shown courage and dignity, as Schwedmann under the heading “Jewish resistance” clearly states:

\begin{quote}
Smuggling a loaf of bread was resistance; teaching in secret was resistance; giving warnings and destroying illusions was resistance; rescuing a Torah scroll was resistance; creating counterfeit documents was resistance; smuggling people across borders was resistance” (Schwedmann, 2003:319–320).
\end{quote}
CHAPTER NINE

YAD VASHEM – THE CULTURE OF REMEMBRANCE AND MONUMENTS

9.1 Introduction: Israeli Culture of Remembrance in Terms

In the Israeli culture of remembrance, different forms of commemoration took place, which were integrated into an institutional framework. The priority was, as explained above, the idealisation of the fighters in the foreground, and a connection between the Yishuv (the Jewish population before the founding of the state) and the members of the diaspora (ghetto fighters) who had resisted. However, a compromise seemed to be made possible in the Israeli culture of remembrance in condensing the connected terms “catastrophe” and “heroism”. This was called Shoah veGewura.

This term Shoah veGewura is included in the official name Yad Vashem: Memorial to the Holocaust and Heroism (Hass, 2002:50). Hass makes it clear that, with the Eichmann trial, the country wanted to identify with the survivors and they were named as heroes rather than as part of the catastrophe. Their heroism existed in the fact that they had survived (Hass, 2002:59).

Other terms were coined by the Israeli culture of remembrance in the socio-political sphere in different ways, for example, in the connected terms “catastrophe” and “rebirth” the term Shoah WeTekuma was used. Making a seamless transition with the connected terms “extermination” and “rebirth”, Shoah WeTekuma was integrated into the Israeli culture of remembrance, which allowed a justification of the Jewish state to
be derived from the history of the Holocaust. According to the Zionist idea, it was only by having their own state that the Jewish people could have a basis of life. The pioneers or Chalutzim from the second Aliyah, or Ascension, who had already emigrated to Palestine between 1904 and 1914, celebrated their Aliyah as a rebirth and adopted new names, or declared that the day they had entered the country was now their birthday (Albig, 2013:40). The immigration into Israel called the Aliyah, or Ascent, led, over the course of time, to the derivation and acceleration of the heroes being glorified, in accordance with a Zionist understanding. But this Aliyah was inspired by a more modern national Zionist movement and led to the founding of Kibbutzim villages and communities, laying the foundations for a national rebirth (Barnavi, 2003:220; see also Goldberger, 2004:15). Both authors claim that in most cases the society preceded the nation, but in this case, the national feeling had first arisen before the process of nation-building was put into practice.

The rejection of the diaspora as a basic element of Israeli identity later intensified as a result of the Holocaust and became an important feature of the Israeli culture of remembrance. As a result, this rejection was also projected onto the Holocaust survivors who had not fought back. According to Hass (2002:53), Ofer addresses the thinking behind the connected terms in Shoah WeTekuma in her work Fifty Years After (2002) when she states the following:

However, these terms reflect two additional elements: first the nationalist educational message that political independence is the only way to prevent a future Holocaust; and second a broader frame in which to situate the story of Zionism and its place in the history of the Jewish people. The moral of this story is the catastrophic result of the Jewish people’s failure to answer to the Zionist call for Aliyah. This perception, which was part of the emerging Israeli identity, helps explain the actions of both state and society in the present as well as in the pre-state past (Hass, 2002:53; see also Dalia Ofer, 1996:463).
The third pair of connected terms in the Israeli culture of remembrance is *catastrophe and redemption, Shoah WeGeula*. It has a religious connotation according to Hass. For the Jews, the end of the Shoah did not come about with the liberation from the concentration camps, but rather, it is interpreted as being the return to the Promised Land of Israel and their redemption in this country (Hass, 2002:54). The words of Baal Shemtov (1700–1760), founder of Hasidism (Blume, 2013:173) decorate the memorial hall in Yad Vashem and are intended to commemorate, like this “*Forgetting will extend the exile. The mystery of redemption is called remembrance*” (Baal Shemtov, n.d.). Much speculation has been made as to the context in which this is meant: is forgetting also banishment, and is remembrance also redemption? (Nahshon, 2014). Baal Shemtov’s words are a religious reminder and his admonition is directed towards the Holy Land and to the ruined temples, yet various arbitrary interpretations continue to appear, which have been torn away from the very context.

Nevertheless, all of the above terms reveal different aspects of the Israeli secular culture of remembrance and have legitimising and educational aspects for Israel to present ideals and perspectives for Israeli society through role models and functions. The many different forms and their different aspects of commemoration and remembrance can roughly be divided into state, religious and individual forms. The collective memory also follows from Halbwach’s theoretical studies, *Das kollektive Gedächtnis* (1967) that translates as “the collective memory”. These social forms are recognisable in Israeli private commemorations and commemorative and memorial state institutions. Here, too, as a community of solidarity with regard to Auschwitz as a point of reference, monuments and memorials can be read as visible signs, even if this is not compatible with the Talmudic tradition from a Jewish religious point of view. An example of this is
the Yad Vashem memorial, on which the heroic deeds of the ghetto uprising were
carved in stone, in order to evoke a collective unity. This can be seen as critical because
of the religion in Judaism.

9.2 Monuments in Judaism

The Israeli monuments have become an integral part of the Israeli national myth which
tells of collective rebirth (Azaryahu, 1992:90). In particular, the War of Independence
has contributed to turning a victorious chapter of the Eretz Israel into a Zionist
interpretation and has set in motion a mythologizing process in the secular Zionist
liturgy, which was named as “redemption” (Goldberger, 2004:77).

But at first, the personal and private commemorative events took place on a small scale
within the Jewish family and among the survivors, by lighting a candle in remembrance.
Kurths describes how this initial, personal form of remembrance was passed on to
newborn children in the process of lighting a candle in remembrance of the murdered
relatives while saying a prayer, and passing on the first names of the murdered relatives,
and therefore the memory stayed alive.

Another form of commemoration was gathering and recording information about the
communities that were destroyed. This resulted in commemorative books, which were
rich in tradition, such as the Pinkas haKehillot, or Yitzkor books, becoming an ever
greater part of public commemoration (Hass, 2002:67). Data and historical events from
before the war were collected for this form of commemoration in the Yitzkor books, and
the results were published sporadically. In 1960, the Yad Vashem State Memorial began
to create a large-scale memorial book project in which the names of the devastated
communities of individual countries have been published in multi-volume editions by the respective members of the communities. The collection of names continues today (Kurths, 2008:90). These book collections simultaneously serve as history books for the future and as memorials to remember the past.

The culture of commemoration and remembrance as it exists today was not a state issue in Israel at the beginning, even though various sources have mainly focused on the conception of the state. Remembering and commemorating the catastrophe of the Holocaust served different needs from the beginning. The forms of remembrance were embedded, according to Hass, firstly in the culture of Eastern European immigrants, who brought “and maintained the national ethos of propagating culture in addition to that of the Zionists and the state” (Hass, 2002:67).

These forms of remembrance, which Young also described with the concept of the a priori tradition of a Jewish commemorative culture, has played an important role in the overall Israeli concept of a culture of remembrance. Commemorative plates were created as the result of private initiatives, on which names of the Jewish communities were engraved, and these found homes in many synagogues shortly after the founding of the state (Kurths, 2008:89). This form of remembrance was not directed by the state.

After the Eichmann trial, the perception of Israeli society towards the Holocaust survivors changed dramatically, as has already been discussed in detail above. Memorial stones, monuments and inscriptions were established between the 60s and 80s, and the memorials in particular were built in cemeteries, symbolically incorporating the ashes and soil of concentration camps (Kurths, 2008:90–92).
Hass also describes the motifs engraved on the memorial stones, such as “synagogues, church records, scenes from the Holocaust, objects from the Shetl, a list of victims of the Holocaust, a date of remembrance, often the deportation of the community, and verses from the Bible” (Hass, 2002:68). These memorials to the Shoah were mainly organised by the survivors and not initiated by the state, because on very few of the memorials were motifs of heroic martial or armed resistance represented. To summarise the views of Hass and Kurths, forms of Holocaust remembrance that were not enforced by the state include the Yizkor books, memorial stones, commemorative plaques, and candles, which arose from a personal and private need and developed into a collective memory.

Furthermore, secular Israelis from the Kibbutz movement have developed parallel methods of processing grief from a humanistic ethic. These forms of remembrance are moving artistic and humanistic celebrations of remembrance. Booklets or books commemorating the deceased are written by the bereaved and by friends, and passed on from generation to generation (Levinson, 1991:221).

However, it is important to note that monuments in the Israeli cultural landscape did not initially arise as a matter of course. Monuments were erected to immortalise events in ancient Israel during the conquest of Canaan, but it was forbidden to create portraits or figurative representations because of a prohibition stemming from the Ten Commandments of Moses (Deuteronomy 4:15–19; 5:7–11). In the history of ancient Israel, portraits and monumentalisations led to violent protests and criticism of religious Jews under Roman occupation, as well as conflicts between the Jewish people and the imperialist powers in all periods of history (Bernhardt, 1956:13, 15).
Most of these “monuments” were erected in the form of piled stones, which corresponded to the Old Testament tradition, and even in the Jewish diaspora, there was an incompatibility between Jewish culture and the erection of monuments containing sculpture, especially statues. It was only in the nineteenth century that this art form came into focus through a slow rapprochement of assimilation and emancipation (Künzel, 2001:171, 179–181). David Ben-Gurion is said to have considered, throughout his lifetime, the memorial/monument as an alien form of commemoration with pagan roots, and had great concerns and reservations about European monuments. This aversion cannot be attributed solely to his personal internal constitution, but to the fact that the nineteenth century was overflowing with monuments that propagated modern nationalism (Wippermann, 2010:9).

On the other hand, there was very little use for monuments in the Zionist utopia. The perpetuation of the Zionist heroes was largely resolved in a toponymical manner, that is, settlements and forest plantations were named after them. The Zionist pioneer ethos explicitly favoured a “living immortalisation”, as they called it, which only existed where the active reconstruction of the countryside and the memory of the heroes merged (Azaryahu, 1992:92). In particular, Harpaz (2013) states the following in this regard:

Zionism, a utopian conception that borrowed humanitarian concepts from socialism, is the ideology behind the settlement of Jews in Palestine during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The methods of establishing settlement companies and purchasing lands, building practices, architectural styles, and town planning were all inspired by Zionist concepts (Harpaz, 2013:19).

It was not until the War of Independence (1948–1994) and the victory over the Arab nations that a new chapter in Israel’s history and culture was opened up and translated into a nationalist Zionist interpretation, with texts and war memorials confirming
military victory and symbolically affirming the country’s conquest. Locations where battles took place or should be commemorated were symbolically marked. The construction of the monuments was accompanied by a mythologizing process.

Nonetheless, families and friends initiated simple constructions for the fallen, and in particular, urban monuments were created by the authorities with a great deal of empathy for figurative representations in the sense of a Jewish tradition. The Israeli monument has been kept in abstract contours from the beginning, meaning that individual stones or concrete walls have been engraved with names and Old Testament quotes referring to the heroic heritage. Careful attention was paid to the feelings of the religious population, and figurative provocations that could provoke reactions of aggression from the population were avoided (Azaryahu, 1992:93–94).

In summary, and in agreement with Azaryahu, it can be said that it was only with the Six-Day War (1967) that the barriers fell in favour of a monumental landscape of remembrance in Israel. Many monuments have since been erected to express victory and sacrifice. Larger monuments are erected nowadays, and, on certain battlefields, memorials are created with plain abstraction reminiscent of events, and these serve pedagogical purposes. The Zionist secular spirit saw no problems in erecting monuments and memorials at a later date, serving ideological and political justification. Nevertheless, this ambivalent relationship is still prevalent between secular Israeli society with its innovative creativity and Jewish tradition, which is in many ways shaped by rigid orthodox structures.
9.3 The Name Yad Vashem and its Special Location

The term *Yad* means monument or memorial, and *Shem* comes from Isaiah 56:5 in the Old Testament: “to them I will give within my temple and its walls a memorial (*yad*) and a name (*shem*), better than sons and daughters” (NIV, 1978:567). In Hebrew, the words “memorial and a name “ are translated as *yad vaShem*. The memorial is viewed as the central office for research and documentation, as well as an archive for the names of Holocaust victims. It was intended to ensure that the victims of the Shoah should be remembered and commemorated by their name (*Shem*), their identity and their history, even better than sons and daughters.

The special memorial was erected on the Mount of Remembrance, *Har HaZikaron*. Why was this memorial located in Jerusalem and not in the north of Israel in accordance with Shenhavi’s ideas?

In biblical times, the history of the Jews was already characterised by conflicts, sieges, deportations, and expulsions. There was only a brief episode of peace under King Solomon (972–930 BCE), son of the famous King David (1034–971 BCE). After the deportation to Babylon in the year 597 BCE, the land remained a place of longing in the times of diaspora and was always mentioned in the prayers of the Jews (Dorn, 2016:17–18). In Psalm 137 this is expressed with the following words: “By the rivers of Babylon we sat and wept when we remembered Zion. If I forget you, Jerusalem, may my right hand forget its skill. May my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth if I do not remember you” (Psalm 137:1, 5–6a, NIV).

The grief around the remembrance of Zion rendered the Jews silent. The Psalmist thus asks not to forget Jerusalem, where they once dwelt in the presence of God’s glory and
where He revealed Himself to His people Israel. *Zakhor!* “Remember” in the imperative is the central idea in the Jewish faith and is “written in Deuteronomy as a strong model and schema and as advice to the Jewish people not to forget the mighty Lord of Hosts who writes history” (Schottroff, 1967:114; Yerushalmi, 1988:21).

When Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans in 70 CE during the Jewish War and the walls of the Temple were reduced to the foundations, Judaism lost the sole centre for its religious culture and sacrificial system. More than 1.1 million Jews lost their lives, others were dragged off into slavery, and the surviving Jews left the land of Israel and entered into diaspora. A small remnant remained in the Holy Land and Rabbinic Judaism gained in importance. As punishment for the Bar Kokhba uprising of the Jews against the Romans (132–135 CE), the country was renamed Palestine after the Philistine people (Dorn, 2016:60–61; cf. Eban, 1984:107, 108).

Nevertheless, there was no doubt that the Jews’ emotional attachment to their ancestral land remained unbroken even when in diaspora. The idea of a return was embedded in their hearts and minds as it was prayed for daily in the *Amidah*. This is found in the *Shmoneh Esreh* or *Achtzehngebet*, the Eighteenth Prayer. At the end of Yom Kippur at the Western Wall in Jerusalem, the liturgy ends with the words “Next year in the rebuilt Jerusalem”, expressing the wish that God would build the city for eternity and usher in the age of the Messiah (Sluis *et al.*, 2005:232, 233).

The return home to Jerusalem, also called Zion, was at the root of the Zionist idea which dates back far into the nineteenth century. Zion, one of the hills of the Temple Mount on which Jerusalem was built, is not just a place of longing for the Jews. This
name has also become synonymous for a return of the Jews to their homeland as well as a mystical place offering redemption from oppression and persecution (Paetsch, 2013:28–30; cf. Brenner, 1999:40). This developed from a religious story into a political hope that was especially important for the early Zionists who were interested in exploring the definition of Judaism as a nationality, instead of placing the priority on religion and tradition. In response to the exclusion and abuse of the diaspora Jews, who were often hated for being “Christ-murderers” and “usurers”, there arose the desire for Jews to acquire their own territory, a Jewish national state (Paetsch, 2013:28). In fact, it can be said that Zionism is not only an ideology, it is a form of spiritual longing for a national homeland for the Jews.

Therefore, the city of Jerusalem became the symbol of the two-thousand-year hope of a new, rebuilt state, and no lesser place than Jerusalem, the heart of the nation and the heart of Israel, could fulfil the requirements as they should be realised in the memorial in Yad Vashem. This site was planned in the west of the city of Jerusalem on the Mount of Remembrance, Har HaZikaron.

The Yerevan Memorial was also erected to the west of the city and aligned according to the Sunset Amplitude. Like Tsitsernakaberd, Yad Vashem is not an authentic “crime scene” in the traditional sense, but as commemorative landscapes and centres of commemoration in the midst of nature with a spatial compression of symbols, with relics and artefacts, both Tsitsernakaberd and Yad Vashem are vital historical commemorative constructs for national cultural legitimacy.
The question of what makes a site a special place must also be answered. Assmann points out that particular locations or sacred places mark the presence of a numinous being or miraculous sources of power. She stresses that

... in ancient Israel, there were no sacred places which demonstrated a lasting presence of God. The sacred places at that time were historical memorial locations of a former encounter with God. They were also places which recorded such historical events, and later became memorial sites. The history of God and his people was spatially concretised and certified at these memorial sites (Assmann, 1999:64–65).

As an example, she cites Jacob’s struggle with the angel. Jacob marked the site of the encounter with God by the name Peniel (face of God), and by naming it, he gave a sign, which inscribes this place as a holy memorial. Therefore, Yad Vashem was built on Har HaZikaron as a memorial in the immediate vicinity of the National Cemetery on the Herzlberg.

9.4 The neighbourhood of Yad Vashem, the National Cemetery on the Herzlberg

Cemeteries concern death, but death is not the end in the Jewish faith. Therefore, cemeteries known as Bet Hachaijm, or Houses of Life, have a special role as places of remembrance for the dead and as houses of eternity. In addition to the House of Life, Yad Vashem was built in the immediate vicinity of the graves of the fathers of modern secular Zionism to the west of the Herzlberg which houses the grave of Theodor Herzl (Azaryahu, 1996:48).
This place was already the most important national place of remembrance and the National Graveyard, because the Herzlberg, or Har Herzl, was named after Theodor Herzl (1860–1904). He was one of the greatest founders of Zionism, a Zionist political visionary with ideas of a Jewish state, whose remains were housed on the top of the mountain in 1949. His grave is the focal point of the national commemoration and the location of the memorial has created another reference to a national culture of remembrance in Eretz Israel.

On the south side of the Herzlberg are the tombs of Israel’s presidents and prime ministers who were also important Zionists, such as Vladimir Zeer Jabotinsky, David Wolffson, Levi Eshkol, Golda Meir, Yitzhak Rabin (Azaryahu, 1996:54–56,62). On the northern slope of the Herzlberg, there is a large military cemetery with the tombs of Israeli soldiers who lost their lives in wars and conflicts, such as the fallen of the Yom Kippur War (1973) (Azaryahu, 1996:57). Numerous national and military memorials, such as the missing soldiers and unknown soldiers, as well as a park in memory of the soldiers who fell in unknown locations, were built in the National Cemetery. These include the Monument to the Victims of Terrorism and Mount Herzl Plaza, the main square where the ceremonies of *Yom HaZikaron* are celebrated. A further number of monuments and memorials are located in this memorial landscape, as well as a museum about the life of Herzl at the entrance to the National Cemetery.

The Israeli Ministry of Defence opened a modern memorial on the eastern base of the Herzlberg on the twentieth of April 2017, the *Memorial Hall of Israel’s Fallen*, inaugurated and added to the other memorials as a further site of national Israeli identity politics (Friedman, 2017). It is an extraordinary architectural object with digital technology. The patron and builder of this project is the Ministry of Defence - Family and Commemoration Department in Jerusalem.

This modern and unique construction is not only exceptional in its design, but also in its composition in terms of the building materials and masonry. The architects of the memorial are Kimmel Eshkolot Architects in Tel Aviv and Kalush Chechick Architects, Pelephone. The design by Kimmel Eshkolot is identified as a further reflection of modern architectural pathos formulas with the aid of digital technologies (Schöning, 2018; Friedman, 2017).
The new, modern architecture is mostly embedded underground in the hill and that it corresponds to the military cemetery. This was very important to the architects. Above ground, an artificial walk-in tower rises around a large oval oculus, which is modelled on the Pantheon in Rome. This project received the RIBA Award for International Excellence in 2018. In summary here, the names, heroic deeds in military missions are honoured with symbolic gravestones and therefore identity is returned, as well as dignity and respect.

The geographical location of Yad Vashem and the National Cemetery on Har HaZikaron, the Mount of Remembrance in Jerusalem, is not without significance, and it reveals itself to be a national and political place of remembrance in the choice of location. In these memorials heroism dominates in the commemoration of the martyrdom of the victims of the Holocaust and, in spite of everything, this is in line with the founding of Israel from catastrophe to rebirth. Neuman emphasises that this aspect that the Holocaust “and its memory were to become a nationwide issue, thus part of the Zionist narrative and tightly connected to the establishment of the State of Israel” (Neuman, 2014:22).

The entire area of Har HaZikaron, including the Herzlberg, is central to the culture of remembrance of the state of Israel. Hass explains that Yad Vashem is located on the side furthest away from the city centre of Jerusalem and that the memorial was erected to commemorate the greatest crimes against the Jews in the holy city, but it was not built facing the holy city (Hass, 2002:86).
In contrast, the tombs of the Zionist leaders are turned towards the city of Jerusalem as a symbol of the new state and take precedence over the “destruction” of Judaism by the Shoah (Hass, 2002:86). Therefore, the choice of location was a conscious decision, thought through down to the very last detail. Thus, Yad Vashem is located in the immediate vicinity of the National Cemetery, which contains the grave of the founder of the Zionist state Theodor Herzl, and here we encounter the memorial to this sacred place of the State of Israel, which guides the acts of remembrance and forgetting (Nora, 1990). Its purpose is to secure the identity and legitimacy of the people of Israel, which are reflected and manifested in this place of remembrance and therefore surrounded by a symbolic aura (Menkovic, 1999:19). As Chaim Weizmann (1874–1952), the first Israeli President, emphasised emotionally after the laying of the cornerstone in July 1954, this place is Holy Land:

... the land of Har HaZikaron, near the mountain given the name of the visionary of the Jewish state – this mountain is worthy of this neighbour ... known for its ideological significance and role, marking the relationship between the rebirth of the State of Israel and the Holocaust of the European Jews (Neuman, 2014:74).

9.5 A Short Analysis of Yad Vashem, the Memorial Complex

The ideological aspect of combining the Holocaust with the resurrection of the Jewish people has been presented above in Shenhavi’s plans and ideas. In these ideas, the location in a nature park, in which a cemetery, hotels, convention centres, archives, a cinema on the theme of Nazi crimes, and rural and agricultural settlements are situated, was proposed as a secular compensation and replacement of imaginary religious worlds.
9.5.1 The Administration Building

The first building to be completed on the grounds of Har HaZikaron was the archive and the library, which was inaugurated on the 29th of July 1957. Initially, the archive, library and other administration rooms were an administration building. It was designed by Munio Weinraub and Al Mansfeld, Ariel Sharon, Benjamin Idelson and Ariel Elhanani. Architecturally, the administration building was designed as an elongated rectangle, covered with the Jerusalem stone. At that time, the construction of the property cost over one million Israeli lira (Neuman, 2014:75). The memorial was rather modest and very small when it was first founded. It was not until the following years and decades that the memorial grew to its present size, covering over eight hectares (Schwedmann, 2003:323; cf. Ockman, 2006:19).

9.5.2 The Hall of Remembrance

The Hall of Remembrance (Ohel Yiskor, literally “memorial tent”) is another building, which was inaugurated on 13th April 1961, Yom HaShoah. The ashes of victims murdered in the Shoah are buried here, and with the lighting of the Eternal Light, Ner Tamid, it was dedicated as a holy, auratic place.
The eternal light is derived from the Eternal Light in the Tabernacle and in the Jerusalem Temple. This light burns day and night and symbolises the eternal presence of God among his people in Jewish thought (Exodus 27:20; Numbers 24:2; Guski, 2018). The impressive Eternal Flame Vessel in Yad Vashem was designed in the form of a broken bronze goblet by Kosso Eloul (1920–1995), an Israeli-Canadian sculptor.
The building *Ohel Yiskor* was designed and created in collaboration with an architect team, including Arieh El Hanani, Benjamin Idelson and Arieh Sharon. Neuman adds that the hall was planned as part of “a memorial complex that included a synagogue, an outdoor square for gathering and the hall itself” (Neuman, 2014:22). In particular, the synagogue was to serve as a place for the relatives of the murdered to say the Kaddish (the funeral prayer) in remembrance.

The height of the hall of remembrance and its location, as well as its shape and size, play important roles in the overall concept. As a memorial tent it is 8 metres high and 27 metres wide, and it corresponds to a monolithic structure in the design and shape of “the Euclidean geometry” (Neuman, 2014:76). This square, windowless building, in which the lower part of the walls consists of monolithic, uncut basalt stones stacked on top of each other with two iron relief doors, is reminiscent of a biblical type and form of art, by laying unhewn stones at the patriarchal witness sites and the biblical tent shrine of the tabernacle (Kurths, 2008:152). Neuman quotes Edwin Samuel:

> You feel like you are standing in an ancient Hebraic sacrificial site ... being filled with a sense of holiness and linking the place to the biblical story of the binding of Isaac – only this time, the ones being sacrificed are not animals, but human beings (Neuman, 2014:76).

We also see in these words how deeply Jewish religious tradition is rooted in everyday life, even though deep Zionist beliefs prevail. Publications from Yad Vashem describe *Ohel Yizkor* as a masterpiece of Israeli architecture. Its cubic shape produces a wholeness composed of two parts:

> … the monument base, made of basalt boulders – an indication of a burial place – is topped by cast concrete, referring to the materials used in the widespread
construction taking place in the young and rapidly growing country (Neuman, 2014:76).

It is worth mentioning again that despite its traditional content, the building’s exterior is symbolic of a Zionist narrative of redemption.

The upper part of this simple building is also made of concrete, opening up into a slightly pointed tent-like roof construction with a small opening (oculus) over the broken bronze goblet. The interior design is also simple, and completely dark, so that it is almost black. This darkness almost hits the visitors when they enter. The concrete slabs of basalt under which, according to Gerlach, the ashes of Holocaust victims are located, are labelled with the names of 22 concentration camps and extermination sites. It is for this reason that it can be identified as a burial ground. Neuman and Kurths write that “in the Hall’s ground and crypt in front of the memorial flame are buried the martyr’s ashes in an ancient-style sarcophagus made of Jerusalem stone” (Neuman, 2014:76). Therefore, the sanctity of this place, according to Eschebach and Assmann, is confirmed by the act of burying the ashes of the victims, which is also the case in the memorial of Tsitsernakaberd in Yerevan. According to Neuman, the Hall of Remembrance was converted into a cemetery in accordance with the Jewish Yad Vashem law of 1953. As a sacred place and sacred ground, therefore, it is prohibited to walk on the concrete basalt slabs.

Through the engraved names of the concentration camps, we also find a topographical European memorial landscape, as an abstract map of the extermination camps, just as we have already encountered in Tsitsernakaberd. This form of remembrance reminds us that the extermination which took place “there” in Europe and the reconstruction and redemption “here”, in Israel, as well as in “the context of holiness and sanctity”
(Neuman, 2014:77; Sznaider, 2002:186). Kurths therefore describes the entire property as having the characteristics of a highly religious place of cult status (Kurths, 2008:152). The function of the Ohel Yiskor is to serve as a venue for many commemorative events, and it is accessible to all visitors. On Yom HaShoah official ceremonies are conducted here, as well as important state visits, which take place strictly according to Jewish guidelines and rituals. State visits are not celebrated on the Herzlberg, as that is the identification site of the new modern state of Israel.

9.5.3 The Synagogue

On the anniversary of Kristallnacht in 1965, a synagogue was inaugurated as a further building in Yad Vashem. It was not only to serve as a prayer room for the relatives of the murdered Jews, but also as a negative reminder of Kristallnacht (Crystal Night, 1938), when on the 9th of November, the SA and NSDAP members attacked the Jewish population throughout Germany, burning down synagogues and destroying Jewish institutions and shops. A total of 191 synagogues were burnt down, 7500 shops destroyed and 91 Jews killed, and 30,000 Jewish men were deported to Dachau, Buchenwald and Sachsenhausen concentration camps (Neville, 1999:33). Remnants of the destroyed synagogues were kept in memory of this event.

9.5.4 The Garden of the Righteous

On the basis of the Yad Vashem Law of 1953 (see Appendix X), the Avenue of the Righteous was inaugurated by Golda Meir on Yom HaShoah, the 1st of May 1962. It honours the Righteous among the Nations. The Righteous were the non-Jewish people who helped the Jews to flee during the Holocaust, or who hid them, thereby saving their
lives. They were to be honoured because they put their own lives at risk. The first trees were planted on the path leading to the Hall of Remembrance, and 59 trees had already been planted by 1965 (Kurths, 2008:154).

There were also German people included in the Righteous among the Nations, although they were not originally intended to be honoured. The Righteous among the Nations included Emilie and Oskar Schindler, who saved over a thousand Jews from extermination, and who were made famous in the film Schindler’s List. Hermann Friedrich Gräbe and Corrie ten Boom were also honoured, to name but a few (Glumm, 2016; Yad Vashem, 2018). The space for further planting soon became too narrow, so the memorial was then transferred to a monument with the names of the Righteous, the Wall of Honour. The Avenue of the Righteous among the Nations grew into the Garden of the Righteous. The landscape architects Lipa Yahalom and Dan Zur were commissioned for the planning work. This Garden of the Righteous consists of a series of walls, which represent open spaces on which names are engraved and immortalised. The garden was inaugurated in 1996, August 7.

9.5.5 Monument of Heroism and Resistance on the Campus of Yad Vashem

It must be said that there was no conscious order in the conception and in the overall design of the memorial, especially in the sculpture garden. The various monuments and memorial sites are simply scattered throughout the site, and there are no fixed interdependent pathways, which are related to each other in any kind of sequence. Many monuments are therefore lost and not integrated, placed almost arbitrarily in the landscape. You have to find your own way in the extensive facility with parts branching out widely. This is critically noted by several authors in their publications and sources.
These are mainly European publications. Nonetheless, the overall ensemble reveals a great variety. Therefore, in this text only a small selection of them can be offered, which underpin this topic.

Heroism took various forms in Jewish and Israeli society. Accordingly, those who were martyred and did not renounce their rights and religion, or their convictions, were heroic. But the real hero was the pioneer who worked and defended the country with his weapon in his hand, being ready to die for his country and the soldiers who fought and defended the new state. Heroism therefore included the defenders, soldiers, the agricultural workers and the pioneers (Albig, 2013:40). At the same time, there were small gradations within the idea of heroism, such as the Jewish combat troops fighting with the Allies against the Nazi system. These troops were considered the real and respected heroes of whom others were in awe, along with the ghetto fighters, the partisans and the parachutists who jumped behind enemy lines. This view was the greatest challenge for Holocaust survivors. It was not until the 1960s that the victims of the Shoah were given their place in “this chronicle of heroism” (Bar, 2016:2).

However, this way of thinking can be traced back to the Yad Vashem law of 1953. Anchored in the Points of the Law regarding (1), (5), (6), and (7) were the heroic acts of the soldiers, the underground fighters, the prisoners in the Warsaw Ghetto, and the sons and daughters of the Jewish population, who fought for their “human dignity and Jewish culture”, which were to be commemorated under Point (7). According to Orly Ohana’s and Yehudit Shendar’s article *Footstep of Heroes* (2013), the most important monuments in Yad Vashem were built in accordance with this spirit, to embody the presence of Jewish heroism on the Mount of Remembrance (Ohana & Shendar, 2013).
The first monument erected in Yad Vashem is the *Pillar of Heroism* (1967–1970) by the artist Buki Schwarz (1932–2009), who, at the suggestion of the architect Arieh Elhanani, erected the monument on the highest point of the site (Gerlach, 2003:12; Neuman, 2014:78). Kurths notes that a “*Gal Ed* (memorial stone) was already included in the promotional flyer of 1948, as a permanent memorial to Jewish martyrdom and heroism” (Kurths, 2008:165). A tower, like a chimney, was built, over thirty metres high near the Memorial Hall, which could be seen from a wide distance in the vicinity of Jerusalem and the surrounding area. On the Day of Remembrance for the Shoah in 1964, a very impressive ceremony was celebrated to lay the cornerstone of *Gal-Ed-Hagvura* or The Tower of Valour (Kurths, 2008:166).

In defining *Gal-Ed*, Kurths refers to the story of Jacob and Laban in the Old Testament, in which Jacob erected a small stone, then layered a pile of stones around it (Genesis 31:47–48). Joshua also erected a “cairn of testimony“ as a covenant with God (Joshua 4:1–8). This is a very profound form of symbolism, and was intended to be accompanied by an agreement (alliance), supervised by God. Kurth’s criticism is that this biblical reference following the solemn inauguration no longer played a role, and it was therefore ensured that a clear distinction between the groups of active and passive heroism was no longer relevant.

Therefore, in the actual consecration of the monument, the term *Gal-Ed* was no longer mentioned and only the heroes of the active resistance were honoured. Ohana and Shendar emphasise that the inauguration of the monument in March 1970 was the focal point during the first international conference of *The Prisoners of the Camps and the Jewish Fighters Against the Nazis*. 
The height of the monument was 21 metres according to their designs, and as a pillar, it consists of three arched sections. At its top is the inscription *Zakhor*, which means *Remember!* in Hebrew, and there is an inscription at eye level written by Yehuda Leib Bialer (1896–1977), a member of the Yad Vashem Board (Gerlach, 2003:12). The inscription of the *Amud Hagvurah*, or Pillar of Heroism, was translated from the Hebrew script by Ohana & Shendar and reads:

> Now and forever in memory of those who rebelled in the camps and ghettos, fought in the woods, in the underground and with the Allies forces, braved their way to Eretz Israel, and those who died sanctifying the name of God.

(Ohana & Shendar, 2013).

As in the *Gal-Ed* of the Bible, sculptural concrete and stone walls surround the pillar, simulating rocks, which echo the Valley of the Shadow of Death, as written in Psalm 23:4 (Young, 1997:343; Ohana & Shendar, 2013). They border and surround the special location of the pillar. The height of the pillar differs according to different sources, and it was not possible to obtain the exact information on this.

### 9.5.6 Monument to Jewish Soldiers and Partisans

Another monument dedicated to heroism is the work of artist Bernie Fink, inaugurated on the 8th of May 1985 on the 40th anniversary of the victory against the Nazis in Germany. Bernie Fink’s design was favoured out of the ninety designs for this monument (Ohana & Shendar, 2013). The monument was erected for the 1.5 million Jewish soldiers and partisans, while the Pillar of Heroism is dedicated above all to the resistance fighters, partisans and heroism of this description. The theme and role of this monument is mainly addressed to the Jewish soldiers within the Allied armies, as well as to the partisans who fought in the forests. Hass interprets the orientation and
expression of the monument as a national memorial to soldiers, as is customary in other
countries for the Unknown Soldier. He further explains that the national Zionist
narration interprets Jewish soldiers primarily as fighters for the Jewish nation and as
universal fighters for humanity. During the opening speech by the former Minister of
Defence, Yitzhak Rabin (1922–1995), the heroism and idealism of the soldiers and
partisans was emphasised once again (Hass, 2002:132).

There is a sunken space in front of this memorial, which is in the form and design of a
seven-armed Menorah. The composition of these six powerful granite blocks layered on
top of one another symbolises the six million Jews who were murdered. In the centre of
the monument, the shape of a hexagonal star can be seen in the arrangement of the six
granite blocks. Ohana and Shendar interpret this star as a negative view of a Star of
David and as a symbol of Jewish heroism. A spear of made out of metal rises up from
the centre, piercing upwards into the sky. It breaks through the Star of David and
divides it into halves as a symbol against oppression and genocide. This model is reminiscent of the Armenian Reborn Tower in its expression and content. An inscription at the base of the Menorah can be read in English, French, Hebrew, Russian and Yiddish: Monument to the Jewish Soldiers and Partisans who fought against Nazi Germany 1939–1945.

Neuman has already identified important features from cultural studies in these objects and contrasts both monuments. By referring to Tim Cole, he comes to the conclusion that both monuments represent geographical and territorial political territories and explains: “all commemorating heroism protrude up from the ground, while all commemorating destruction are buried underground” (Neuman, 2014:80) Furthermore, Cole posited that this “phenomenon reflected a gender-based ideology: heroism was phallic and had to be expressed and visible all around, while destruction was expressed with a womblike metaphor” (Neuman, 2014:80). He explains this view of the dualism of ground use to represent heroism and destruction. Destructiveness of the feminine in dualistic thinking, and the view as a metaphor and allegory, is known since ancient times and is considered richly and extensively in cultural science and theories of religion and humanities. One object goes into the ground and the other uses the ground to erect and become visible. In both cases, and in common agreement with Neuman and Cole and Reuße, the terrain is used “both materially and figuratively to gain dominance over the territory” (Neuman, 2014:80; Reuße, 1995:166).

**9.5.7 The Warsaw Ghetto Monument**

Another important monument with emphasis on resistance, as well as being one of the first of these monuments to be made as a sculpture, is the Warsaw Ghetto Monument
designed by Nathan Rapoport. This monument was erected to commemorate the uprising in the Warsaw Ghetto (1943). As early as 1947, the Jewish sculptor Nathan Rapoport, born in Warsaw, had established a project based on the ruins of the Warsaw Ghetto, depicting the struggle and the uprising in Warsaw. It was opened in 1948 in Warsaw. On the initiative of Dr Yitzhak Arad, then Chair of the Yad Vashem Directorate, and the Warsaw survivor and donor Leon Jolson, a copy of this memorial was named in 1976 as the “Warsaw Ghetto Uprising Monument” and inaugurated on the Mountain of Remembrance (Ohana & Shendar, 2013; Young, 1997:253). Expressive, with resolute and angular gestures, monumental scenes of the uprising are depicted as a relief on both objects in Yad Vashem and in Warsaw. The front and back of the monument were designed as a single unified composition in Warsaw. In Yad Vashem, the replicas of the reliefs are embedded in a red brick wall as a symbol of the ghetto walls, and displayed side by side (Hass, 2002:127).

One panel bears the title “The Ghetto Uprising”, while the other relief emphasises the “Last March”. Again, the expression on the faces of the people who are beginning their final journey is touching. This relief shows the Jews as they were passively sent on their last journey to death by the murderers. The relief is smaller and flatter by design and is intended to illustrate how they were led like lambs to the slaughter.

Young and Drechsel describe the bas-relief in more detail as follows: the twelve densely crowded figures symbolise the twelve tribes of Israel and the Jewish exile at the same time. Dejected, the martyrs march from right to left, remaining in the stone ghetto wall (Young, 1997:244–245; Drechsel, 2009).

On the other side, there is a more elaborate and expressive relief, in which the viewer is confronted with an image of the heroic Mordechay Anielewicz (1919–1943), the Commander of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. In this monument, the cliché of eternal sacrifice unites with the symbol of heroism, which has shaped the self-perception of the state of Israel and its army.
Between the two reliefs, we encounter a biblical quote from Ezekiel 16:6, “in thy blood, live” as a connection between secular and transcendental thinking. The three elements are placed in contrast to the red brick wall. The spacious square in front of the monument, the Warsaw Ghetto Square, was created for state ceremonies and commemorative events.
CHAPTER TEN
MONUMENTS, MEMORIALS AND THE MUSEUM ON YAD VASHEM CAMPUS WITH THE TOPIC OF THE SHOAH

10.1 The Cattle Car Memorial and the Shoah

Another major theme in Yad Vashem is the group of sculptures which place the Shoah at the focal point in the Sculpture Garden. They contain a message to the observer and recall the extermination of the six million Jews, expressing the tenor of the catastrophe and hope for rebirth. In summary, it can be said that the view that favoured the fighters and their heroism has changed and developed because Israeli society has perceived the equality of the victims of the Holocaust.

As a result of this equal perception, the monument of a Cattle Car Memorial, a wagon from the Deutsche Reichsbahn (German National Railway), stands as a symbol for the transportation of the Jews to the extermination camps. This authentic piece of evidence stands on the abyss into the unknown. Furthermore, the Cattle Car Memorial by Moshe Safdie and Uri Shitrit is a monument which expresses extermination, destruction and the extinction of life and hope (Neuman, 2014: 90).

10.2 Monument to the Prisoners in the Concentration Camps

This memorial to the concentration camp prisoners is a replica of the memorial at Dachau. The design and sculpture was first conceived by Nandor Glid (-1997) for the Dachau Memorial, which would be located on the roll-call square. This sculptural replica was one of the first monuments to the victims of the Holocaust erected at Yad Vashem (Gerlach 2003:13; Kappel 2010:54).
The artist and Holocaust survivor Nandor Glid depicts people entangled in barbed wire. The barbed wire and the pointed thorns became the most important symbol of the Holocaust. Bodies, limbs and wire merge into one another, and hands and heads with pointed and thorny fingers are disfigured and distorted by terrible suffering (Kappel, 2010:54).

10.3 The Six-Branched Candelabra

The six-branched candelabra by Zohara Schatz (1985) symbolises the murder of six million Jews (Gerlach, 2005:8). It is present everywhere in Yad Vashem as a logo. The six-branched candelabra was inaugurated before the opening of the Memorial to the Soldiers. This candelabra has indeed become the overarching symbol of the memorial. In the interpretation of Gerlach and Hass, the two ideological elements of extermination and rebirth are combined, having a decisive influence on the Israeli culture of remembrance. On the one hand, the design of the candelabra can represent a flame of extermination, and on the other hand, the winding design is reminiscent of a budding
shoot sprouting from the earth, suggesting the idea of rebirth (Hass, 2002:133; Gerlach, 2005:8).

The first proposals for the Children’s Memorial were made in 1974 with an expanded vision of planting a garden in memory of the children murdered in the Holocaust. This discussion of children as victims resolved the tension between the fighters and the victims. It did not need to be asked whether the murdered children who were in need of protection resisted or allowed themselves to be brought to the slaughter like lambs. The memorial (1976) to the 1.5 million murdered children was designed by the Israeli architect Moshe Safdie. But before that, a garden was planted in memory of the murdered children. A sculpture, which should not go unmentioned, is the monument to Janusz Korczak (1878-1942). He was a paediatrician and pedagogue, who accompanied the children of his orphanage on their way to the extermination camps, and died with them in the Treblinka extermination camp (Kahn, 1992:9).
In early 1985, the project was estimated at a total cost of $1.4 million and was funded by Abraham and Edita Spiegel (USA). The Spiegels had lost their 2½ year old son Uziel in Auschwitz. Criticism was made by the Yad Vashem Memorial management about the funding from the Spiegels and the project as a private initiative to commemorate only their son. A compromise was therefore sought to commemorate the 1.5 million murdered children and to include Uziel in this remembrance. Therefore, in the entrance area of the monument, which was carved deep into the mountain, a relief plaque with a name and face was installed on behalf of all children who were murdered. The monument was inaugurated on the 28th of June 1987 (Kurths, 2008:168; Neuman, 2014:82).

Architecturally, the memorial consists of an entrance hall with an anteroom in which nine portraits of children, five boys and four girls, including a portrait of Uziel Spiegel, can be seen behind a large glass wall. The main room consists of an extremely darkened hall, which makes orientation almost impossible in this space. Candles burn in the darkness (according to Kurth, there are four candles), reflected a thousand times over by a mirror construction. Music is played along with the names, the country of birth, and age of the murdered children, in various languages, such as Hebrew, English, and Yiddish. Each reflected light from the candles symbolises a child and every child has a name (Feldman, n.d.; Kurths, 2008:168-169).

Neuman clarifies the concept of the children’s memorial, starting with a candle placed in the centre of the premises. According to his representation, “the mirrors encircling the room create an endless number of reflections, so that the single candle, the *yahrzeit* candle, is reflected infinitely in memory of the 1.5 million children.” (The term *yahrzeit*
is yiddish, and means a year of time). In the Jewish tradition *yahrzeit* candles are lit on major holidays, as well as annually on the anniversary of a person’s death (Neuman 2014:82–83; Milgram, n.d.). When the visitor walks across the memorial, photos of the murdered children appear. Both the reflected and the dark spaces make the body lose its presence within the Jerusalem hillside. Regarding the mirror construction, Young (1997:348) refers to a Cabbalistic idea: “the souls (in the form of small lights) are those of the unburied who never rest in their endless wanderings through the universe” (Young, 1997:348; Kurths, 2008:169).

Neuman adds here that the ashes of the victims in the Hall of Remembrance include a symbolic interpretation, but that in the Children’s Memorial the visitor literally experiences being buried in the memorial cave with the murdered children through the dispersal of the bodies, as a demonstration of “Space and Absence”, dialectically between present and absence (Neuman, 2014:82–83). This is a new aspect of architectural rhetoric, which has come to be implemented and used legally as human and technically automated action, and spirituality as architectural manipulation (Böhme, 2013:144–145).

Nonetheless, and as mentioned above, a dispersal took place in the Children’s Memorial, which formulated their status as victims, and therefore the firmly connected terms Shoah and Heroism were loosened, because of the status of the child. This is because basic regard is not just about the lives of adults, but also children, who, while still learning and being taught, are never considered as inferior, or as not to be taken seriously.
The Valley of the Destroyed Communities was developed in the eighties. Kurths refers to a 1948 booklet on Yad Vashem, in which a large map of Europe, “Sdeh K’hillot Europa” is drawn depicting the communities that were destroyed. From the 18 designs submitted in 1980, the project was awarded to landscape architects Lipa Yahalon and Dan Zur. In October 1983, the foundation was laid for “The Valley of the Destroyed Communities”, and was completed and inaugurated in October 1992.

The inspiration for the architects during the planning phase was the biblical vision of the prophet Ezekiel in Ezekiel 37:1-2, 11-12: “The hand of the Lord was upon me, and he brought me out by the Spirit of the Lord and set me in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. He led me back and forth among them, and I saw a great many bones on the floor of the valley, bones that were very dry” (NIV, 1979). This prophecy of the dry bones in the Book of Ezekiel became the inspiration and symbol of the resurrection of the Jewish people, and the reference here to the Holocaust was obvious.
This valley covers an area of “about 2.5 acres on a ridge between two hills on the memorial site’s western edge” (Neuman, 2014:85). The monument is submerged in the ground and is not immediately accessible to visitors. The design of the monument roughly represents the geographical map of Europe and North Africa. The names of more than 5,000 Jewish communities that were destroyed during the Holocaust have been engraved into the rock. Names of the lost communities are carved onto each sandstone-coloured boulder, which stand 3 to 5 metres high (Neuman, 2014:85).

These names are engraved in the Hebrew and the Latin alphabet, like a labyrinth created in the rock walls, remaining in accordance with a double coding. The first code, according to Neuman, is geographic: “the location of the ruined community on the map of Europe and North Africa. In this way, the map of ruined communities is imported into the reality of Jerusalem. Each geographical area creates a small courtyard, with 22
courtyards in total.” Kurths adds to Neuman’s information and emphasizes that in the 107 walls the names of 5,000 Jewish congregations were engraved on the stone (Kurths, 2008:171). Furthermore, the second code is related to the size of the communities – the larger communities’ names are carved in larger letters (Neuman, 2014:86).

In summary, Yad Vashem’s publication describes the labyrinth as a garden and Neuman describes it as a symbol of revival and resurrection. He notes that there is no separation between interior and exterior in the labyrinth; there is no orientation and it does not create a sense of shelter. It forms a counter-paradigm to the architectural paradigm of monumentality – the pyramid (Neuman, 2014:87–89). All the objects that have been listed and analysed here hold a form of remembrance in themselves.

These forms of remembrance can be subdivided into two further characteristics of remembrance. In the view of Yad Vashem authorities, the Avenue of the Righteous Among the Nations includes the positive aspect and the positive qualities of human beings, namely, the fine humanistic spirit of enlightened persons who stand up against random destruction and extermination by their thoughts and actions. The Valley of the Destroyed Communities presents a symbolically negative contrast, but in the example of the biblical vision of Ezekiel, it carries the hope of a rebirth. The collective commemoration of the Holocaust is present in the Hall of Remembrance as well as in the Valley of Destroyed Communities. The sculptures and monuments as well as the Children’s Memorial invite individual remembrance.
The Yad Vashem Memorial has been in a continuous state of change since it was opened. The ideas enshrined in the law were implemented, modernised, and adapted as society changed. The content, fittings, and design of the Memorial’s 1990s-era presentation of the Shoah were revised as part of the *Yad Vashem 2001* project. Hass emphasises that these changes included “expanding the infrastructure for Holocaust research; acquiring more documents and archive materials and making them available for research at Yad Vashem; digitalising and adding technology to all areas; adding further professional methods to the pedagogical work; and expanding the presentation of the history in the museum with new focal points” (Hass, 2002:141).

The concept for the memorial’s redesign and remodelling, according to Hass and Kurths, had to adapt to the changes that were taking place in society, such as the generational change and the accompanying fading of memory as well as the revolution brought on by modern communication and information technologies, which necessitated a rethinking of the methodology used to tell the history of the Holocaust and to interpret it (Hass, 2002:137). This also meant that the new plan would not overlook certain themes, as Dorit Harel had pointed out: “the murderers, their partners, and those who stood by and watched – the neighbours of Jews, with whom they shared their lives for centuries” (Harel, 2010:12). All of these factors had to be taken into consideration.

However, Harel declares that the planning group’s main concern for the changed concept was “to use personification as a major axis for the narrative’s structure” and that the Jews along this axis would not be treated as nameless objects, but that each individual would get to tell his or her story subjectively. This includes first of all the
archival repository of all the Pages of Testimony that contain names and many known biographical details about the victims; secondly, it would speak of commemoration and memory; thirdly, it would be an interactive database for visitors to use (Harel, 2010:14).

Another major point given great consideration in the redesign of the museum, Harel points out, was to put the personal stories in the context of a “chronological axis along the central foci of the Holocaust event” (Harel, 2014:14). The basic principles already laid down in the law were implemented here, too, in order to ensure that the victims’ dignity, names, and personal history were remembered for all time. The central database was put online in 2004 and more than a third of the names in it had been compiled from the more than 2.7 million memorial sheets, therefore making a revision inevitable (Harel, 2010:21).

Central themes go along the chronological axis in the galleries and can be observed in Harel’s work *Facts and Feelings, Dilemmas in Designing the Yad Vashem Holocaust History Museum* (2010). She reports that the chronological axis in the galleries was divided into the following core themes:

1. The Jewish World before the Holocaust,
2. Nazi Germany and the Jews,
3. From the Outbreak of War to the Ghettoes,
4. The Fate of Jews in Western Europe and in the Ghettoes,
5. 1941 – From Barbarossa to the Wannsee Conference,
6. Final Solution & The Resistance in the Ghettoes,
7. The World’s Reaction, Partisans, Underground Org., Rescue Attempts & Righteous Among the Nations,
8. Jews in Concentration Camps & The Death Marches,
9. From Liberation Through DP Camps and Rehabilitation,
10. Hall of Names,
10.7.1 A New Museum and a New Architecture

The old museum was completely redesigned for the reasons listed above. The exhibition design continued to treat the material as a story from heroism to rebirth. The architect of this impressive design was Moshe Safdie (b. 1938), a citizen of Canada and Israel. Not only an architect, he is also an urban planner, theorist, and author with an idealistic claim that translated the “essential principles of socialist (Zionist) design into an architectural visual language” (Safdie, 2018). Safdie demonstrated this by using a highly creative and modern architectural rhetoric for the new museum both to force and enable a modern approach to the history of the Shoah through new museological methods. The new historical museum was inaugurated in April 2005, as was the atrium and entrance area integrated into the building project (Seiter, 2017:141).

The entrance area to the campus was designed as a perforated wall of twelve columns shaped like an aqueduct. It serves as a transition between Yad Vashem’s indoor and outdoor areas. A quotation from Ezekiel 37:14 is written in Hebrew and English on this main entrance gate: “I WILL PUT MY BREATH INTO YOU AND YOU SHALL LIVE AGAIN, AND I WILL SET YOU UPON YOUR OWN SOIL ... EZEKIEL 37, 14” (Safdie, 2006: 8–9).

It is architecturally striking that the columns at the entrance are identical to the columns at the information centre and the bookstore, creating a harmonious convergence in design, as if they are communicating with each other. In front of the visitor centre and the information building designed like a mevoah or a sukkah (an arcaded concrete pavillion, roofed by skylights), there is a spacious entrance area, a piazza with round
benches, and birch trees. Neuman describes the area, location, and orientation as a square’s periphery:

on the north side the administration building, on the western side the visitors’ center that includes a cafeteria, an information centre and more ... a bookstore ... while the new history museum lies a little further west; and on the north-western side a pathway is leading to the archives and education building (Neuman, 2014:92).

The entrance area was completed in March 2003 and the museum was opened in April 2005 to complete the ensemble (Ockmann, 2006:19).

After leaving the visitors’ centre, visitors come upon a half-shaped platform with a protruding sharp linear design like a crevice that has been cut into a mountaintop, running horizontally and perpendicular to the ridge. A bridge, like an outstretched tongue, leads across a chasm. The concrete, steel, and glass take visitors to the entrance area of the museum via the “bridge of the vanished world” (Köhr, 2012: 51).

Safdie’s Holocaust Museum covers 800,000 square feet and is some 200 metres in length, mostly underground, as with the Children’s Museum embedded in the mountain and drilled through Har HaZikaron, Jerusalem’s Mount of Remembrance. This time, the shape of the building is a massive triangular prism that breaks open at the end above the northern valley in the shape of two curved wings that mark the end of the exhibition. Safdie explains his unusual design as follows: “The cathartic opening at the end of the processional conjures up the biblical tabernacle, a pair of wings, the exultant blast of a horn or trumpet” (Ockman, 2006:23). This architectural model is a picture from the Old Testament and tells us how the two protective cherubim were seated atop the Ark of the Covenant with their outspread wings. In the midst of the outspread wings of the cherubim God is enthroned with his divine presence in this sanctuary. This was said to
be God’s presence on earth. The Ark of the Covenant was a symbol of the covenant relationship between God and the people of Israel (Liebi, 2003:622–623).

10.7.2 The Exhibition in the New Museum

Safdie explains his reasons for designing the museum as a triangular prism: “It is the psychic ambiance of German Expressionism, although more serene and controlled, producing a whole Rorschach of other associations” (Safdie as cited in Ockman, 2006:23). When asked what other meaning the symbolism intended and why he chose this prismatic design, he said: “The three-sided figure morphs in the viewer’s imagination from primitive shelter or tent, to half-star of David, to fir tree, to an arc filled with survivors, to, more ominously, the pitched roof of a train-shed full of deportees or a gas chamber at Treblinka” (Ockman, 2006:23). The symbolism of the building offers an unsurpassable architectural representation of the events of the Shoah, to quote Neuman here, marked with a dramatic tension between “presence and absence.”

The exterior and interior walls consist of unplastered concrete slabs separated from each other only by a narrow light slit at a height of ten metres. As visitors walk through the prism, they pass through an almost mystical darkness towards the light of hope. Before entering the interior of the museum, they then climb down a few steps before entering the circular path and a zig-zag route to the galleries. To the right, they are directly confronted “with the museum’s south face, an extruded and vertically compressed fifty-foot-high triangle.” Scenes of Jewish life in the twentieth century, compiled by artist Michael Rovner (b. 1957) from film archives and photos, are shown on this triangular wall (Kurths, 2008:190). The new museum has been designed to handle about two
million visitors a year, while the old museum had a capacity of just 300,000 (Kurths, 2008:189).

The museological restructuring under the leadership of Avner Shalev, Chief Curator and Chairman of Yad Vashem, faced many challenges regarding the theme and its presentation as well as the overall design. Shalev addressed the criticism levied against the new design and praises architect Moshe Safdie for the solution of a long axis tunnelling down into the earth to symbolize the destruction by the Har HaZikaron from south to north as well as the caesura in the “axis of historical time” (Shalev, 2010: 9–10). Safdie focused the design on the aesthetic, with the goal of touching visitors emotionally. There were initial experiments with how to present the content to allow the design to convey information as well. Together with the curatorial planning and Dorit Harel, sole designer of the new museum, all the characteristics of the space were first researched in order to combine principles of museum design with external aesthetics (Shalev, 2010:10).

Harel won over her critics with her professional style based on open dialogue and communication. This can clearly be felt in the layout of the museum, in the arrangement and subdivision of eleven galleries, and the eight barriers as a chronological axis (Shalev, 2010:10). Her design concept, as well as the various basic museological principles in each of the galleries, follows a chronological-thematic timeline that she analysed and summarised in her work Facts and Feelings: Dilemmas in Designing the Yad Vashem Holocaust History Museum (2010). The route through the museum is a long zigzag through the personal stories of the Holocaust told chronologically. The entire museum takes up 4200 square metres and claims to present the history of the Shoah reflecting the latest research and using the most modern technology.
In the first part of the permanent exhibition *The World That Vanished 1900–1933*, visitors follow a fixed route to the galleries. The first barrier, which creates a division in the exhibition, is defined by Harel as a rupture, preventing visitors from continuing straight ahead, and shows the pyre at Klooga Camp in September 1944. Large-format pictures show the bodies of murdered Jews piled up in the concentration camp at Klooga, Estonia during the German occupation. (Harel, 2010:26). The Germans are standing over this mountain of corpses, an image reminiscent of one at the museum in Tsitsernakaberd, Armenia, showing the crimes committed by the Ottoman Turks in the Armenian Genocide where the men of Zeytun await execution as their murderers pause to take photos with their prey.

The second section or division refers to the burning of books that took place across Germany in 1933. This barrier shows many original photos from the burning of books in Germany and gives an idea of the beginning of officially sanctioned discrimination against the Jewish population.

For Harel, the barriers are historical markings which she calls ruptures. As already mentioned, a total of eight ruptures or barriers mark important turning points in the history of the Holocaust. There is no axis that has not been interrupted and every visitor must go through the path of historical memory that has been dictated by the museum’s design (Harel, 2010:88–90).

The first gallery in the permanent exhibition opens with an aphorism by German essayist Kurt Tucholsky (1890–1935). The gallery shows how the Nazis and Adolf Hitler came to power and how Germany’s Jews came to be treated in Germany between
1933 and 1939 under the influence of Nazi ideology and anti-Semitism. With large-format photos, posters, exhibits in display cases, and flags, this section of history is vividly depicted (Harel, 2010:66-67). Particularly in the second gallery, the shift from fellow citizens equal under the law to criminalised outsiders is addressed, including the effects of anti-Jewish laws until Kristallnacht in 1938 (Kurths, 2008:190).

Another division, which represents a rupture in the historical timeline of memory, is the German invasion of Poland in September 1939 and the outbreak of the Second World War. The rapid conquest of the continent by Germany’s armies is shown on both sides of the gallery. The third gallery shows “the terrible beginnings and is dedicated to the outbreak of the Second World War and violence against the Jews” (Kurths, 2008:191). Using the experience in Poland as an example, the exhibition shows how violence, discrimination, forced labour, wearing the yellow star, and the confiscation of possessions quickly increased.

The fourth division, which again points to a rupture in historical memory, comes in June 1941 with the start of Operation Barbarossa, the deportations to the ghettos. The timeline also shows the wild massacres performed by death squads and German troops as they invaded the Soviet Union. The fifth rupture in January 1942 marks the Wannsee Conference (Harel, 2012:31).

In this part of the exhibition, the situation in Western Europe is juxtaposed with that in four Eastern European ghettos (Theresienstadt/Terezin, Warsaw, Łódź, and Kovno/Kaunas). Between the fences and walls stands a wooden carriage like that used by Jews to move their earthly goods as they were forced into the ghettos. A map shows that by
this time more than a thousand ghettos had been set up in Eastern Europe (Kurths, 2008:191-192).

While the fifth part of the exhibition addresses the “final solution”, i.e. the deportation of the Jews and the labour camps, concentration camps, and death camps set up to solve the Jewish question with their annihilation, the railroad tracks represent the means by which they were transported to their fates. The sixth part of the exhibition includes the “final solution” and the Uprisings (1942–1944). This is the biggest gallery in the museum. Extensive explanations of the murder machine are presented, including killings in the ghettos, mass deportations, death camps, and other acts of annihilation (Kurths, 2008:192).

The seventh division that points to a rupture in memory is a bent railway track that symbolically questions why the systematic destruction was not stopped. Where were the reactions of the world community? (Harel, 2010:33). The seventh gallery is entitled Struggle and Rescue. Two video monitors show the arrival of the Allies in original black-and-white and silent films, while visitors walk through the gate at Auschwitz topped with the infamous “Arbeit macht frei,” which translates as “Work makes you free” (Harel, 2010:35–37). Pictures of prisoners with shaved heads show the loss of dignity while clinging on to life in the camps (Seiter, 2017:145-147; Kurths, 2014:190-192). The exhibit also shows how many Jews joined partisan groups, resistance organisations, and the allied armies and were not going to surrender to this fate without a fight. Another focal point is dedicated to the Righteous among the Nations (Kurths, 2008:192).
The eighth rupture in the flow of history begins in November 1943 and shows the Jewish victims of the Shoah. The Jews live in terrible conditions in the concentrations camps and death camps. This chapter of the exhibition shows the dehumanization and suffering of the Jews to the death. In gallery eight, “big panels show the fate of the surviving remnant” (Kurths, 2008:193). The degradation of life in the camps and the final madness in the form of death marches are shown. At the end, contemporary witnesses report on the terror and their liberation from the concentration camps.

With the last historical rupture, May 1945, the war ends, victims and perpetrators are juxtaposed: a family photo at the wedding of a couple murdered at Treblinka on the front and a photo of Adolf Eichmann, later sentenced to death, on the back (Kurths, 2008:193). In this juxtaposition, the perpetrators and the victims communicate with each other. Here, too, the tension is unbearable and at its climax, comparable to the Memorial in Tsitsernakaberd. A new historical timeline begins in galleries nine and ten.

Gallery nine shows the liberation from the camps and life after it. The displaced persons camps are shown together with post-war pogroms and acts of violence in Poland and Russia. The emigration to Palestine and the struggle for Israel’s independence are then presented. The final stages are the Nuremberg trials and the Eichmann trial much later (Kurths, 2008:191-193; Harel, 2010:88–90).

Here, as in Tsitsernakaberd, the experience of the exhibition is facilitated and vividly presented with the help of large headlines, photographs, and artefacts in display cases. Colours, texts, materials, programs, layering techniques, and diaries communicate and complement the design of the museum. All types of media, digital recordings, film footage, and presentations with animation are represented in high quality.
10.7.3 The Hall of Names

The Hall of Names, called “Facing the Loss”, is the tenth gallery and has been integrated into the new museum as part of the renovations. It is located at the end of the museum and is a cylindrical room surrounded by shelves in which memorial sheets are kept. It can be said that it is the heart of the whole design and fulfils the core purpose of remembrance. The portraits of murdered Jews taken from the memorial sheets are embedded in a huge cone in its illuminated inner wall. Harel explains:

Floating in space, the ten-meter high cone is composed of rounded, illuminated glass panels with a mosaic of photographs of the dead, from those attached to the Pages of Testimony. 600 photographs of victims are set against a background of pages of testimony. The photographs are arranged in 92 panels set in seven rings. The cone’s lower part is illuminated by artificial lighting and the upper part by natural light. The Cone of Memory is reflected in the pool of waters below it, immortalizing those victims whose names and memory have been lost (Harel, 2010: 93).

These six hundred photographs of murdered persons, reflected in the ground by the water as a symbol of life, drilled into the interior of the earth in a depression of 10 meters and defined as a symbolic tomb, return the names and identities that had been forcibly snatched away back to the victims and make them immortal. Visible on the surface of the water on the ground are not only the blurred faces of the murdered on the cone carved into the rock, but also the faces of the viewers, thus bringing together past and present (Seiter, 2017:147; Köhr, 2012:52, 129).

The strong symbolic narrative of this design is unmistakably marked by the same hand as those of Moshe Safdie and his team. He conceived the children’s memorial site and
also left traces of architecture here, in which rooms are opened with commemoration and memory, which playfully penetrate deep spiritual worlds with their own subjectivity (Baier, 2000:56). From Köhr’s point of view, the underground cone carved into the rock is “a cemetery for the people who are to live on in the memory of the next generation” (Köhr, 2010:129).

Already at the entrance of the Hall of Names are words engraved above the archway from the book of Isaiah: “I shall give them in my house and within my walls a memorial and a name” (Isaiah 56:5). Here too, the words from the Hebrew Bible have a significant meaning and are very important in the exhibition.

At the end of the exhibition the visitor leaves the museum over the “Bridge of Life”. Remember, the visitors have entered the museum on the “Bridge of the Vanished World” and at the end the visitors leave the museum over the “Bridge of Life”. This has a significant meaning. But before leaving the museum, an open view over the valley of today’s Israel is granted, by taking up again the “secular Zionist narrative” with which the entire structure identifies (Köhr, 2012:51–52).

10.8 The Square of Hope

Over the “Bridge of Life”, the visitor arrives at a square, the Square of Hope, which invites reflection. From there one reaches the synagogue, which was newly designed by Safdie and integrated into the building ensemble so that the relatives of the murdered have a place for silent prayer (Kaddish, memorial prayer). In addition, an art museum which was also inaugurated in 2005 can be visited from the Square of Hope. This museum is a rotating permanent exhibition and shows 120 works of art by artists who
were murdered during the Holocaust as well as pieces that were made during the war (Yad Vashem, n.d.).

The museum complex includes the art museum and the exhibition pavilion, which is a critical examination of images, photography and film as means of expression of manipulation. These have been placed in relation to the National Socialist propaganda apparatus, but also important contributions are made through historical documentations from the point of view of the people behind the camera. This Auditorium Exhibition Hall, entitled “They say There is a Land: Longing for Eretz Israel during the Holocaust”, was organized on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the founding of the State of Israel. The exhibition describes the yearning of Jews for their own country during and after the Holocaust in collections of works of art, objects, diaries and eyewitness accounts.

Another structure is the Learning Center, known as the “centre of big questions”. This learning centre challenges the visitor to embark on a personal journey of discovery. Here studies are possible through multimedia presentations and discussions in groups under the guidance of trained pedagogues. Views and opinions are presented and discussed with the visitor by Holocaust survivors, religious leaders, thinkers, writers, artists and well-known researchers (Yad Vashem, n.d.).

In addition, the Learning Centre is a joint project of the Teacher Training, Teaching and Curriculum Development Departments of the International School for Holocaust Studies (Yad Vashem, n.d.: Learning Centre). Part of the museum complex is the Exhibition Pavilion and film centre. The collection consists mainly of numerous films acquired by Yad Vashem. Thousands of films produced about the Holocaust as well as
testimonies of survivors, and oral histories that have been reviewed, have been collected here (Yad Vashem, n.d.). Another centre of the Museum Complex is the Visual Centre. Yad Vashem emphasises that the Visual Centre is not only collecting films about the Holocaust, but also eager to develop its database by collecting survivor testimonies for viewing (Yad Vashem, n.d.).

10.9 Archives and Libraries

In collecting the names in Yad Vashem, Shenhavi’s ideas and vision were fully taken up. In the Law in Memory of the Martyrs and Heroes – Yad Vashem 5713-1953, under section (2), the task of Yad Vashem to collect and examine documentary material and to make it accessible to research and the people was laid down (Keim, 1983:9–10). This can be seen as the main task of the memorial site. The original idea for an archive was born during the war in the ghettos of Warsaw, Bialystok, to document evidence of murder and persecution. Therefore, the first archive building in Yad Vashem was erected in 1957 to collect, store, document and catalogue documents and artefacts, such as the famous underground archive, the Ringelblum Archive. Departments such as the Testimony Sections were created, containing testimonies of contemporary witnesses that are still of central interest today (Ernst, 2013; Schroeter, n.d.).

After the collapse of the communist Eastern bloc (1989), archives of the former Eastern bloc became accessible, and when the blocking periods for files in Western Europe ended, the archive holdings grew explosively. In the meantime, the Yad Vashem Archive is one of the world’s largest Holocaust archives with more than 210 million pages of documentary material, including official documents, diaries, personal letters, and more (Yad Vashem, n.d.). The inventory for the preservation of these valuable
materials is continuously scanned and digitized in order to prevent forgetting and to make it available for research, analysis and pedagogical teaching of the descendants. In textbooks and publications, the International School for Holocaust Studies (ISHS), which has been doing educational work since 1993, has made a special effort to combat trivializations and heroic representations, false and out-dated representations, and to correct or process them (Schleicher, 2014). The aspect of learning as a duty is deeply rooted in the Jewish image of humanity and is closely linked to the importance of humanistic education, which has a long tradition. These characteristics can be read in the Yad Vashem memorial, which even in small details stimulates thought, reflection, and learning.

To sum up, according to leading scholars such as Israel Gutman (1993–1996), Yehuda Bauer (1996–2000), and Bella Gutterman (2009–2013), the Holocaust or Shoah is one of the most intense and to this day most extensively researched events of the twentieth century, with numerous publications, articles, and conferences on Holocaust research (Yad Vashem, n.d).

The Yad Vashem Memorial in particular is not only the first memorial institution of its kind but has also made a decisive contribution to advancing and socially integrating the concept of remembrance in all nations. Not only was a social platform for negative memory created internationally and universally, but also in their own nation the memory of the resistance and the Shoah was integrated into the history of the new state of Israel as existential elements. According to the analyses of various scientists quoted here, three phases of the Israeli culture of remembrance can be derived.
Accordingly, there are three patterns of remembrance after the founding of the state of Israel that have a decisive influence on official remembrance. They can be perceived in terms of catastrophe (Shoah) with redemption (Shoah WeGeulah), rebirth (Shoah WeTekuma) and heroism (Shoah WeGewurah). To maintain awareness, the secular dates of the commemoration days, which are celebrated like religious holidays, such as Yom HaShoah, Yom HaZikaron, Yom HaAtzma’ut, are added.

These three implications of modern Israeli memory culture are clearly communicated in the Yad Vashem Memorial. The experiences of the Holocaust are deeply rooted in the Israeli identity, but also the sense and interweaving of guilt in German society. According to Lenzen there is a sequence of catastrophe-heroism-redemption-rebirth in the structure of the memorial institution, which partly derives from the Jewish religious vocabulary (Lenzen, 1995). Nevertheless, the culture of remembrance in Israel, as well as in Germany, is politically and culturally shaped and interlinked, always subject to developments and processes of change.

10.10 Summary and Comparison of the Memorial sites Tsitsernakaberd and Yad Vashem

In their design, the memorial sites are national places of collective remembrance placed in a secular context by law. While there have been public plans for the Yad Vashem memorial since 1942, expressions of mourning and suffering have been held in Armenia secretly. Only in 1964 was a memorial to the victims of genocide at the hands of the Ottoman Empire forced by the Armenian people through protests against forgetting the Armenian Aghet. It should be noted that large gaps in the processing of the genocide arose during Stalin’s reign of terror, and since more than one hundred years have passed
since the genocide, eyewitnesses can no longer be interviewed. Many documents and much important information have either been lost or destroyed, meaning that the cultural remembrance cannot appeal to it and it is thus incomplete.

With regard to the research material on the murdered European Jews, a great deal of information and evidence is available. Detailed planning for a national memorial was started while the mass murder was in progress, and clear ideas were formulated with regard to form, content and appearance. The Armenians, on the other hand, had to develop, research and design their project at short notice. From the architectural point of view, the Tsitsernakaberd Memorial evokes Soviet functionalist modernism with a hidden metaphor and symbolism. These can be described as primary architectural forms that convey expression over eternity and permanence.

The memorial sites seem to have a secular, political orientation, and are reminiscent of the victims of twentieth-century genocides. Neither site is the actual place where these atrocities occurred, but they feature integrated relics that create an aura and make them holy places. They are imaginative spaces of a cultural and collective memory and fulfil their functions as graves and cemeteries and museums.

Furthermore, they are also national memorials, but also places of learning and remembrance oriented to the west on a hill, according to the amplitude of the sunset. In addition, they are universal places of learning with the moral objective of protecting human rights and democracy, but also places of the legitimisation of their nations, and thus also politically and nationally important institutions.
The choice of locations is not a coincidence. They are woven into an ideal overall complex. Yad Vashem is located next to the National Cemetery, the Herzlberg, the resting place of the Zionist political mastermind of the Jewish state. Tsitsernakaberd was built above the Hrasdan River overlooking Mount Ararat. It is surrounded by a cultural centre modelled on a winged phoenix symbolically emerging from the ashes of death within the sign of the Cosmic Wheel, which, like a phoenix from the ashes, reflects the core ideological notion of rebirth in theme and content. Yad Vashem similarly emphasises the return and salvation of the Jews. Both sites draw on the traditional religions of the people involved. Yad Vashem expresses faithfulness to the Jewish tradition of memory, both religiously and culturally, while Tsitsernakaberd faithfully adheres to the Christian orthodox tradition of memory, through liturgy in the Lord’s Supper as the central point of remembrance – the memoria passionis et resurrectionis of Jesus Christ.

Both sites have a central sanctuary: on one hand, Yad Vashem’s Hall of Remembrance (Ohel Yiskor) with an eternal flame, the Ner Tamid, which is to be interpreted as a modern tabernacle; and on the other hand, the Tsitsernakaberd Mausoleum, with the Khachkars gathered before the holy flame, symbolically bowing to the martyrs, who eternally bear their prayers and pain to the throne of God. Other biblical examples can be found in Yad Vashem, written on the basis of prophetic writings from the Tanakh, such as the Valley of the Destroyed Communities, which was conceived as a source of inspiration based on the prophet Ezekiel in reference to the eschatological promise of Israel. At Yad Vashem, the entire memorial complex stands under the biblical heading of Isaiah 56:5, which calls for the names of the victims to be gathered in order to restore to them their identity.
Of further note are the synagogue for Kaddish prayers and Safdie’s architectural wonder at the end of the huge triangular prism, the two symbolic wings and the wings of the enthroned cherubim over the Ark, designed after the biblical model. As monuments, they emphasise the sacred background of the Jewish religion and dignify the victims of the genocide in their final resting place.

Civil religious elements can also be distinguished, which are rooted in Jewish and cultural traditions, and are almost inseparable from an *a priori* tradition of remembrance. These include the monuments that focus on heroism, such as the Monument to the Jewish Soldiers and Partisans, characterised by the Zionist ideal, as shown in the composition of the monument on Yad Vashem’s campus. In common, it can be said, that in the Tsitsernakaberd and Yad Vashem monuments are similar civil and religious interpretations, which can be seen in the spear of the Monument to the Jewish Soldiers and Partisans and in the Reborn Tower at Tsitsernakaberd. These monuments emerge from the middle of the sculpture and point up towards the sky, reminiscent as aesthetic models, and they are also carriers of the postmodern worldview in architecture (Kubsch, 2007:41). Both monuments are visual symbols warning against oppression and genocide; they stand for rebirth and salvation and can be seen as moral orders in Human Rights (Noebel, 2007:302).

Other civil religious monuments in Yad Vashem include the Pillar of Heroism, the Warsaw Ghetto Monument, and memorials to prisoners of the concentration camps and the Cattle Car Memorial. These warn against totalitarian ideologies, and belong within the ideological realm of humanism, human rights, democracy, freedom and tolerance. Here, in accordance with the words of Seiter and Hass, the founding ideas of Zionism not only allow the fates of European Jews in the Holocaust to be placed in the historical
context of German National Socialism, but they are also classified within a much larger narrative of the history of the Jews in the Diaspora. In this way, the memorial has the sense of an identity-forming function for Israeli society itself.

The Armenian Tsitsernakaberd Memorial is different in some content to the Israeli memorial. Tsitsernakaberd has from the beginning emphasised an imaginary tomb for the unknown Armenian victims of the genocide. The Genocide Memorial marked a turning point in Armenian history, and has a great significance in the national consciousness. The architectural exterior is reminiscent of Soviet modernism, but is also rich in symbols, liturgy and rituals from the Armenian Orthodox Church. The emotionally charged atmosphere, akin to that of a mass, only became established over time through political and social upheaval. Initially, the dead were remembered according to Soviet atheist rites, as stressed by Darieva. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, reconstruction phases and extensions to the Tsitsernakaberd Memorial have been carried out and adapted in content and aesthetics to the universal and international guidelines and principles of the UN Charter and the Council of Museums.

Nevertheless, the Mausoleum with the khachkar in Tsitsernakaberd and the Ohel Yiskor in Yad Vashem are identified as the main shrines of the Armenian and Israeli cultures of remembrance. Both memorial sites are places of mourning and prayer, and thus legitimacy for their nations. Tsitsernakaberd and Yad Vashem have memorial walls and floors with topography of mass destruction; the places which have been engraved in stones are places of pilgrimage and mourning for collective commemoration. A pilgrimage is a religious element and expresses the fundamental notion of making a journey to a sacred place. At the same time, they are to be interpreted as civil-religious in their new iconographic and modern depiction of the memory of the dead.
While the *Ohel Yiskor* in Yad Vashem gains yet another aspect of the Jewish timeline with regard to the topographic European memory landscape interwoven between Israel and Europe – between extermination “there” in Europe, and rebuilding and redemption “here” in Israel – similarly the Reborn Tower in Tsitsernakaberd symbolises the hope of the rebirth of the Armenian nation and illustrates that the grave, the genocide, has been overcome in the Christian context, and that Armenia has come to new life. The focus is on the symbol of the Phoenix, which is also an interpretation of Christ. Again, the terms are taken from religious terminology and woven into the Armenian political culture of remembrance, and directed against the aggressors as a clear warning against a renewed genocide.

The Tsitsernakaberd Museum is located underground, like a crypt or abdominal cavity. As an imaginary church and space of memory as well as a place of the history of the spirit and faith hewn in stone, according to the words of Naumann, it is not only a place for historical learning, but also has an identity-forming function. In Christianity, church buildings create identity through their architecture. The entrance area is supported by high arches and pillars as in a cathedral, and the sanctuary is where the cross, the Khachkar, lies at our feet. The mass and the message of the exhibition are supported by liturgical colours, and at the end of the exhibition, visitors once again find themselves before the cross to re-examine their conviction and the content of their hearts before the international judicial tribunal as to whether or not this was a genocide.

In summary, the use of architectural methods as the central medium of commemoration of the Holocaust and the Armenicide has preserved historical narratives and cultural identity. In agreement with Neuman and other scholars, Yad Vashem was “one of the
first cases in Israel and worldwide” to use and to apply architectural ideas into monu-
ments based on space as we are allowed to recognize them today in the memorial sites (Neuman, 2014:95–96).
CHAPTER ELEVEN

CONCLUSION

11.1 Introduction

This chapter sums up the previous ones and draws everything together. It then points forward to issues that deserve further research in the future.

11.2 Summing up the Armenian Genocide

The early twentieth century genocide of the Armenians and the later mid-century genocide of European Jews, as well as the two devastating World Wars in the twentieth century, are among the most extreme (Hobsbawm and Jeismann), darkest (Mazowers) and totalitarian (Koselleck) events recorded in human history. The question as to how and why such enormous crimes could happen remains the subject of research in numerous interdisciplinary studies, an end to which is not in sight. In Chapters Two and Three of this work, the reader is reminded of the historical backgrounds of these genocides.

The first clearly defined genocide of the twentieth century, described by Hesemann as the mother of all genocides, was committed against the Armenian population with the utmost brutality and cruelty, bringing about bewilderment and speechlessness even in sober and factual consideration by analysts. Barth (2006:7) described it as “a massacre that changes the meaning of all massacres” and according to Winston Churchill (2015:422, cited by Barth, 2006:7), the brutality of the genocide was indescribable.
Further, the treatment of Boer women and children in British concentration camps during the Second Anglo-Boer War (1899–1902) need to be taken into account in terms of future research. Technically this was not a genocide on the scale of either the Armenian or Jewish genocides. Nevertheless, it set the stage for future genocides and its impact needs to be recognized, although it goes beyond the scope of this thesis.

It was not possible to include many of the biographies and dramatic stories here, as they made up of human ideas and show the deepest abysses of human existence, describing “what man is capable of” (Pampel, 2007). Many biographies will never be recounted, because the lives of those people were extinguished during massacres and deportations, or remained hidden under a thick blanket of silence due to trauma. Therefore, there are still many gaps left in Armenian research, because Ankara is sticking to their denial of the genocide and will not release the contents of archives for further scientific research. This has to be criticized.

The period of the first genocide opened the door to one the darkest periods in history, the twentieth century, which is currently more relevant than ever. This is reflected in the many conflicts within the Arab world where the signs are pointing to storms ahead, and where the daily focus is on Syria, Turkey and the Kurdish conflict, Iran, Iraq, and Yemen, due to events of war and the inhumane atrocities carried out by Islamic State jihadists (IS). These regions are the former sites of the crimes of massacres and deportations of the Armenians to the Mesopotamian desert, such as Syria and Iraq, even though the terrorist militias have been pushed back in the meantime.

These recent events have set clear signs for a “once again”, a repeat of history, which was expressed in the destruction of Armenian memorial sites and churches in Deir ez-
Zoar and the expulsion, enslavement and killing of religious minorities. We have to wonder, what have all the statements, education and declarations of peace through human rights during the twentieth century brought us? We can relax somewhat by telling ourselves that there are no conflicts taking place in the West, but appearances are deceptive. The view that radical religious forces have come to a halt is thematically comforting, yet it would appear that extremist genocidal groups are celebrating their comeback through an unresolved past. In the Middle East in particular, the same radical forces are at work as in the days of the original catastrophe. Armenia has therefore not yet found peace.

Therefore, the fact that the genocide of the Armenians and the Christian minorities is still a neglected chapter in Europe must be lamented. The terrible crimes against the Armenian people are barely considered in German, European, or English schoolbooks, and they certainly do not form any part of regular history lessons. This is regrettable because opportunities are missed and not used.

On the other hand, there is a Turkish lobby, which attempts to downplay and explain away the genocide of the Armenians, leaving the crimes in denial and oblivion. The much-vaunted proximity between Berlin and Ankara, despite some irritation on the part of Turkey, is disturbing. Politically, it invokes historical friendship, whatever that may mean, and the German government prefers to use soft tones out of a false sense of consideration. The demand on the German Federal Government to recognise the Armenian massacre as a genocide and to participate in a reappraisal has been carried out only half-heartedly. The failure of the then German Empire, as an ally of the Ottoman Empire, has still not been dealt with, and there is a great deal of disinterest in a reappraisal.
11.3 The Problem of Sources and Need for Further Research on the Armenian Genocide

The first genocide of the twentieth century not only opened the door to further crimes, but also served as a model for a far greater crime, namely the extermination of the European Jews. Yet to many this connection is not clear, although Hitler communicated this publicly (Hesemann, 2015:18–19; Bucher, 2008:17). Part of the problem here, as Stangeland rightly points out, results from a failure to take the sources seriously and make them readily available to researchers. As a result, research on the role of Germany in the genocide of the Armenians is met with disinterest to this day, and therefore, the sources available for this event are very few and far between (Stangeland, 2013:85).

Nevertheless, these sources do exist, and in the meantime, more and more have become available. Stangeland also complains that the documents on the attitude of the Germans and reactions to the genocide can be viewed in Vienna, but that the sources are not really used for more in-depth research (Stangeland, 2013:89). In addition, it should be mentioned that the archives have been opened in the Vatican and the burden of proof can be viewed as information and a reappraisal of the Armenian genocide. Hesemann describes the burden of proof as overwhelming, and further research is necessary here (Ordukhanyan, 2015:10).

Further gaps in research need to be filled between the periods of the first and second phase of the Armenian genocide. According to Stangeland’s investigations, the first phase of the genocide lasted from May to October 1915, and the second phase lasted from February 1916 to November 1916. While there are detailed eyewitness accounts of
the massacres and the genocide in the first phase, there are few reports of the massacres which took place in the second phase, with a few exceptions, as the massacres were carried out in the desert regions, far from all public and other institutions (Stangeland, 2013). What happened there could be revealed by the archives in Ankara.

It is also worth mentioning the previous massacres of Armenians, which took place before the genocide happened, ordered by Abdul Hamid II. Those attacks, some of which are presented inaccurately and with differing stories in the literature, need to be investigated. The estimates of the number of victims are inaccurate and vague. In addition, massacres of other religious minorities must be lamented, such as, for example, the Assyrian Christians, Aramaic Christians and Syrian Christians who are scarcely mentioned in the literature and need to be reconsidered. Deficits in research are present in the post-genocide reappraisal.

To a considerable extent this relates to the Stalinist era, which did not allow for an inventory and “initial treatment” of the traumatic events, and used the threat of repression, aggression and violence to maintain silence. This period under Soviet rule is still in the dark and can only be approached with caution. The many years under communism have created many gaps due to persecution and repression and have created insecurity about the Armenian Christianity with which the Armenian people are identified. Nonetheless, the gaps and omissions themselves are perceived by the scientific elite, drawing on the pioneering research of Dabag, Dadarian, Akcam, Ohandanyjan, and others. As has already been pointed out, many topics on various issues are still open for reappraisal.
Everyone in Germany knows about the Holocaust, but almost nobody knows about the first major genocide of 1.5 million Armenians who disappeared during the German Empire. For this reason, it is also necessary, particularly in Germany, to carry out a reappraisal, together with a friendly request that Turkey open up the archives in Ankara, to make unmanipulated materials, in the form of documents and writings and other sources, accessible to research, in order to conduct a joint review of the Armenian genocide. Nevertheless, it can be stated that much of the information and many details about the Armenian genocide are represented by literature, lectures and research institutes, but the amount of research is extremely modest in comparison to the accurate and extensive mega-research relating to the genocide of European Jews. In this assessment, it should be pointed out that there is comprehensive and precise research in German and English, which gives detailed information about the Tsitsernakaberd memorial, which was unknown to me until today. The purpose of this contribution and research was to close a gap in the knowledge and encourage further research.

11.4 Reflections on the Holocaust in Light of the Armenian Genocide

In comparison to the Armenian genocide, the genocide of the European Jews has been comprehensively researched. This is reflected in the Yad Vashem Memorial. Sources show that the Yad Vashem memorial has been very well researched in comparison to the Tsitsernakaberd memorial site. Methods, questions and research approaches in Holocaust studies are still being addressed, and in particular, the questions have become more specialised and are examined in more detail (Bajohr & Löw, 2015:10).

The reason for updating this topic include the many ramifications that have taken place in all academic fields, the changes in media technology, and the digital revolution,
which has taken place via the internet. The research and its results have therefore become complex and have expanded and been placed in an international context, and in larger historical, cultural and sociological contexts. The culture of remembrance plays an essential role here, “bringing together” and – according to Erll’s findings – building a bridge between the social science, the humanities and the natural sciences (Erll, 2011:2; see also Pethes & Ruchatz, 2001:9). There is no end in sight to this interdisciplinary field of study.

The well-researched information from Nazi documents on the murder of European Jews contributed to this, according to the work of Raul Hilberg (1990). The precise details were available because of the precise bureaucracy, as well as the systematically listed data of victims and perpetrators by the National Socialists themselves. Not only did the official directories and documents of the Nazis provide information on the origin and status of individuals, but also the church directories and Jewish community records, according to the information of Deborah Hertz (2010:17–23). These sources were compiled after the war and used as evidence and essential directories in dealing with the past and conducting a reappraisal in Germany and Israel.

The Holocaust became a benchmark for all moral judgements and for a global and cosmopolitan orientation, according to Levy and Sznaider, and the paradigm against which all other mass crimes are measured (Levy & Sznaider, 2001:15). Levy and Sznaider speak of a singularity, and the universalisation of a Holocaust that has become internationalised and differentiated as well as specialised (Levy & Sznaider, 2001:61, 132, 149, 229; Frei, 2005:40; Wette, 2010). According to Bajohr, new branches of research and sub-disciplines emerged, such as perpetrator research (Bajohr & Löw,
Dadrian objects to a singularity of a Jewish genocide, and places emphasis on recognition of the genocide of the Armenians (Dadrian, 2005:98–99).

Germany became a test case with regard to human rights and democracy. The success of dealing with history can be explained by rejection from the outside, and the self-critical handling of nationalism. Education for peace and human rights has been introduced as part of educational processes. This process of development can be divided into four phases in dealing with history, which can be freely understood and described as a successful German learning process: the phase of political cleansing, the phase of the political past, the long phase of coming to terms with the past, and beginning in the 80s, preservation of the past. These developments can certainly be regarded as a success story and are also identified as positive political achievements. The phase to preserve the past, which is marked by the transition from a battle for remembrance to the remembrance culture which continues to this day, has given rise to a variety of currents, in which the focal point of the remembrance culture is the history of the Holocaust (Frei, 2005:26, 37).

Remembrance days, conferences, memorials which form part of a culture of remembrance, and working groups recall the crimes of the Shoah, and stabilise an interdisciplinary culture of remembrance. The historical moral basis for a universal defence of human rights is to be welcomed. But is it enough to prevent future genocides and similar crimes? In fact, theories of memory and remembrance are unanimously considered to be important elements in dealing with the past and are necessary in order to seize opportunities for improvement or to avoid or correct mistakes. Yates emphasises that those who have no memory and cannot remember the past may have an identity problem. Nonetheless, there is discomfort in dealing with the culture of
remembrance, for it is deemed to be expressed in too many, too abstract and too
universal forms of remembrance without pathos, as Knigge complained (Knigge,
2010:10–16). Knigge and Laubach criticise the German culture of remembrance and
call for its reorientation, given the discomfort and sense of inferiority that it creates
among young Germans who have no direct connections to the events of the Nazi era
(Knigge, 2010:10–16; Laubach, 2006:22–23, 30). Nevertheless, this reproach and
accusation may be justified in order to expose the institutionalized practices of memory,
remembrance, and memorial-making as superficial rituals to create the appearance of
sadness and sorrow (Knigge, 2010). It seems, and therefore must be considered, that
there is so much culture of remembrance, because there is so little identity. This
question can only refer to the Western attitude and it cannot be easily answered here,
but it inspires new considerations.

11.5 Reflecting on Memorials and Remembrance

According to Brumlik, state-initiated cultures of commemoration and remembrance
have cosmopolitan virtues of human rights within the meaning of a grand narrative and
pursue educational goals in the global age. The educational goals are based on values
and knowledge (Brumlik, 2016:29). But knowledge alone is not enough, without values.
In relation to memorial sites, Koselleck has already emphasised that remembering the
dead on a historical basis is not enough (Koselleck, 1994, 2002). Another way is
needed. When confronting death and loss we experience helplessness, a fear of
loneliness, but also consolation, hope and expectations, which seek answers that are
beyond the realm of everyday life.
Furthermore, Knigge wonders if remembrance is the ideal solution and answers his question by referring to Arendt: “Wie im Fall anderer Begriffe drückt sich Arendts Anliegen aus, die rein nacherzählende Darstellung nationalsozialistischer Gräu
dalyisch zu überwinden und eine elementare Selbstverständigung darüber anzustoßen, wie Vernunft, Geschichte, Politik, Gesellschaft und Mensch nach und mit der Erfahrung der Shoah gedacht werden müssen” (Knigge, 2016:4), which translates “As in the case of other concepts, Arendt’s concern is expressed in him to analytically overcome narrative presentation of National Socialist atrocities and to initiate an elementary self-reflection of how reason, history, politics, society and man must be thought of after and with the experience of the Shoah”. For a deeper understanding of Arendt and how Knigge is refering to her it seems to be recommendable to got to the original text (see Knigge refering Arendt, 2002).

According to this, not only does people need a culture of remembrance, but a multitude of possibilities for remembering, especially if it is to have a positive effect on society. This may be possible without values that make it possible to handle the past, or it may not be, but these values have been taken from a secularised version of Judaism and Christianity and have established themselves as human rights. Ines Seiter places this value consensus in a civil-religious environment as a “non-denominational communication, interpretation, and symbolic system which guarantees the political, social and ideological cohesion of free citizens in the state and on the basis of which an overall group identity as a citizen can grow” (Seiter, 2017:381).

Every year, the remembrance days are solemnly commemorated at Yad Vashem and Tsitsernakaberd to remember the victims of the genocide. Liturgy and ceremonies, as
well as sacred texts of traditional religions, all play an important role, placing the memory of the dead in an eschatological promise.

The memory of the Holocaust has shaped the identity of an entire people. According to Zertal, the genocide was the motive for founding the Israeli nation (Zertal, 2003:10–11; Young, 2002:275). Therefore, the genesis of the memorial sites is not accidental or designed purely for aesthetic motives, but they are, according to Young, counter-monuments of a negative culture of remembrance which is first secular, but is inwardly committed to the a priori tradition (Young, 2002:278). A similar interpretation can also be found in the Tsitsernakaberd Memorial. For this reason, in this work, in relation to the analysed memorial sites, the focus has been placed on the basic religion with the question of how much religious content is present in the memorial sites and how helpful it is in the treatment of loss and sadness.

11.6 Providing a Theological Perspective

The Tsitsernakaberd and Yad Vashem memorials point to Judaic and Christian values derived from the Old and New Testament writings, which are based on historical perspectives relating to salvation. They refer to their scriptural culture of remembrance, which they have derived from the basic category of the zkr and memoria. Both Judaism and Christianity offer a model in dealing with loss, sadness and healing in the same way, for both the victims and for the perpetrators. They emphasise remorse, forgiveness and restoration beyond a moral sense of duty and the “fast-food experience”. They affirm that everything is atoned for. They are creative processes which do not deny facts such as the past, feelings, time and justice, and they are embedded into a history of the universal perception of God, according to Jörns (2008). The meaning of the basic
theological category of remembrance is reconciliation and the question of the meaning in life as a practical dimension of action rather than “merely” of human morality.

The secular theories of memory have participated in this, have shaped this model and created its universal norms and moral beliefs, which have been recorded in the statutes of human rights in order to make the world a moral place. Human rights have taken this place and are legally, politically and functionally constituted as a religion, which has built its own “cathedrals” such as the Way of Human Rights in Nuremberg by Dani Karavan and the text of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights can be viewed in the Westhafen underground station in Berlin, as well as other constructions in Paris, Brussels, Stockholm and Lisbon. This should be considered separately and distinguished from the basic theological category of remembrance.

Nevertheless, state-initiated cultures of commemoration and remembrance should not only be viewed critically, even if they do suggest a “morally charged pathos formula,” as Volkhard Knigge expresses it in his observations (Knigge, 2010:10). As already discussed, he is partially critical of the negative, state-directed culture of remembrance in Germany, which presents itself as meaningful, therefore undermining critical historical consciousness. He pleads for a reorientation in the culture of remembrance, which is currently crumbling in confrontation with the Nazi crimes. Again, new approaches are needed in researching cultures of remembrance.

Therefore, in the practice of remembrance, several possibilities must be conceivable and feasible in order to learn from history and to value tradition, culture and religion. This has been shown by studies of the memorial sites at Yad Vashem and Tsitsernakaberd. They have endured the tension between politics, culture and religion and used it to
remember, to mourn but not to be broken. They derive their identity from the basic theological category of scripture. For them, remembrance is a basic theological category.

Religious learning in the tradition of the Bible, according to Lenzen, takes place as a reminder of biblical tales, of narratives of people who live out their relationship with God. Or in Judaism, it is by the educational institution of Judaism whose traditions are related to memory. According to Boski, individual and collective memories merge here, and create identity. The memory of the past has always been a central aspect of the Jewish experience, according to Yerushalmi, but first and foremost, it is not entrusted to the historian. Which is not to say that the historian has become superfluous by way of emphasis. Now the basic category of the zkr has been entrusted to historians, as well as other genres, and there is no end in sight regarding the cultures of remembrance.

The Yad Vashem Memorial is the first memorial institution to a negative remembrance. The ideological focus was initially based on Zionism, which was in line with the founding fathers’ self-image, and the national project should not refer to the Jewish religion in any case. It was not possible to realise this idea. The Zionist utopia resorted to religious symbols and rituals despite its secular appearance. Religion and politics are subject to tension, as was briefly reflected on when the work first began and, as emphasised by Pfleiderer, it is almost impossible to separate them from each other, and certainly not in the Jewish religion (Pfleiderer & Stegemann, 2004; Hass, 2002). The space between them, a kind of tension, which lies above the profane purposes, while at the same time being below a sacral attribution, could be used, according to Pfleiderer (2004:12–13). According to his explanations, politics is the interface between the sacred and profane and has to find itself again and again in every historical culture with regard
to its interface. Yad Vashem and Tsitsernakaberd made positive use of these interfaces. Nonetheless, this may relate to every form of political theory, as discussed and demonstrated in the first few chapters. With examples here from the twentieth century, pseudo-religious ideologies devalued and dehumanised “human life”, in essence, representing themselves as pioneers of genocide and other crimes against humanity. It is important to warn against such efforts. There is great tension between politics and religion.

As we have already said, we find these interfaces, or links between religion and politics, at the Tsitsernakaberd and Yad Vashem national memorial sites, which serve to legitimise their nations and the political order with which they identify. In their capacity as places of mourning, both memorial sites contain the basic idea of an eschatological salvation, of participation in God or Yahweh’s eternal life. This theme of death and resurrection from the Judeo-Christian religion in relation to the victims is only hinted at in the general secular literature and is not treated in depth. This should be criticised because the theology of death and resurrection contains central messages of hope for all people. Metz was particularly committed to this concept. Without dignity or hope for life after death, martyrdom would simply be suicidal and life-threatening in this sense, and this is precisely the aspect promoted by pseudo-religious programmes which lead to inhumane acts. Therefore, concern and a zeal for learning as an emotional achievement is a secular duty, but it will not change anything. Accordingly, the recognition of a theological tradition and superior authority are both essential, as well as the knowledge of the events, in order to prevent such crimes taking place in the future. This is what the memorial sites promise.
The memorial sites have been recognised properties since 1980 and have been established as new designs in the cultural policy of Europe and in almost all nations. The imperative “do not forget” or “against forgetting” is more important than ever as a reminder in order to counteract repression and denial. Repressing, forgetting and denial are human qualities. According to Assmann, Erll, Reemtsma and other scholars in this field, memorial sites are sites of documentation and serve as remembrance for contemporary societies, but they are also politically inspired, as well as being cemeteries and places of death and horror, which is often under-emphasised. On the one hand, they are places of learning and documentation for the purposes of proof, and on the other hand, they are special sites, and sacred places of meaning. Tsitsernakaberd and Yad Vashem in particular are embedded in a basic theological category.

This emphasis on a religious or theological undertone is often ignored in comparison to the politically and culturally inspired institutions of a universal culture of remembrance. That must be criticised. Rather, the main emphasis is on political self-expression and, according to Nora, focal points in the collective memory of nation states. This political memory can also be seen in the Tsitsernakaberd and Yad Vashem memorials and serves as a political and national legitimacy, except that their legitimacy is classified as “nationalistic” in the West because of their relationship to their traditional religions.

The difference between these memorial sites and the European ones is that they have deep roots in their religion. In particular, the Armenians, who are deeply rooted in an Armenian Orthodox religion and tradition, and who call themselves ethnic Christians, use a lot of liturgy and Christian rituals to commit this place of remembrance to the dead, with respect from the orthodox tradition. In comparison, the Israelis refer to their scriptures, the Tanakh, and resort to an *a priori* tradition of remembrance through
storytelling, recitation and rituals, and the main points of their remembrance can be traced back, for example, to festivals such as the Passover, Feast of Tabernacles and Pilgrim Festivals. Deuteronomy can be viewed as a paradigm of cultural and religious mnemonics, as well as zakor in the imperative from the Bible. As a result, these memorial sites differ from those of the Western world, which rely on historical science when commemorating the dead. This should be viewed critically, as the universal category of remembrance discards its Judeo-Christian roots in a push for secularisation.

There is great fear of religion and it is subject to great tensions that are due to pseudo-religious experiences.

Because of the indescribable crimes of both genocides, the monuments have deliberately been kept simple and abstract, as well as modern, as part of the culture of remembrance, and are expressions of a transformation in art, representation and iconography. In dealing with the crimes, iconographical representations and expressions in monuments can be tools to take away emotional pressure. Monuments in this case are important. Furthermore, according to Schneider, it is the symbols that are responsible for mediating between transcendence and historicity (Schneider, 2004:108–109).

They therefore have a dual function and are, so to speak, “bridgeheads” to transcendence, according to Neuhaus and Luckmann, conveying the extraordinary and the sacred (Neuhaus, 2001; Luckmann, 2014:111–112). In this case too, while politics must create and justify its symbols, no justification is necessary for religious symbols, according to Tillich (1986:3), if their meaning is understood. The religion itself can only be expressed in symbols, according to Tillich. This can be reconciled in accordance with Eschebach, who explained that, when it comes to its commemorative practice the
state does not deviate from those of the Christian religion to give them an allegedly safe foundation (Eschebach, 2005:20).

11.7 Conclusion

Memories are important, but they are also not neutral; rather they are subdivided into subjective and objective. What should be remembered is crucial, but how it is remembered is just as important. Memories are pieces of information set out and recalled in images, texts, communication and monuments. As a result, information about events such as the genocidal crimes can be kept alive in the memorial sites, museums and archives, which have been established by the state. They are purposeful memories, which fulfil the need for legitimacy and emphasise self-esteem and self-awareness. Assmann had subdivided these forms of memories into communicative and cultural memory, which, as collective concepts, call for action and practice in society across generations (Assmann, 1992:48–53. These purposeful forms of remembrance in the memorial sites are the great narratives, which are referred to as pathos narratives in cultural scientific studies. They are evidence of space and time in the secular realm and are under constant scrutiny and requirement for justification.

In comparison to objective religions, however, memories are fundamental. They are oriented towards a basic biblical and theological category. Objective religions based on institutional traditions do not need to be justified. They commemorate and remember on the basis of the fundamental theological and biblical categories and relate to the history of suffering, while at the same time providing the certainty of salvation. This is the divide between the visible secular culture of memory and a basic biblical and theological category. While the cultural and historical aspirations within the culture of remembrance are related to categories of educational science, learning and remembering
are inherent as a basic category from the tradition of the Holy Scriptures and refer to a final justification.

The following thoughts can be deduced from this. After the Holocaust the culture of remembrance with its basic moral-ethical educational theories that were helpful in the past, now testified to a story of survival and success in different societies. At the same time the foundation of this success can be attributed to the universal laws of Judaism and Christianity based on the Holy Scriptures. As shown these Scriptures have provided role models and patterns used and reinterpreted for preservation of a powerful culture of remembrance. Therefore memory and remembrance only on newly interpreted historical, ethical and cultural and as well as philosophical theories and conceptions alone fall short and become a compulsory exercise, because they can offer no final justification of hope. Knigge also criticizes the boom of memory, which is regarded as the ideal way of democracy and human rights education and which serves as an elementary role model (Knigge, 2013, 3-15).

For this reason, the Tsitsernakaberd and Yad Vashem memorials were investigated in this work in order to show that many aspects of religion are located symbolically in the monuments in texts, scriptures, rites, ceremonies, etc., and they are reflected as identifying factors to offer hope and consolation and to enable the reappraisal of the dark past we’ve ever had. The investigations in this work have shown that a culture of remembrance cannot exist without reference to traditional values. Traditional religions give an identity-forming meaning, which is visibly expressed in their functions, through monuments and memorials and by virtue of architecture. Therefore, mere knowledge of history with political rituals of the cult of the dead, as Koselleck expressed it, is not sufficient and will not prevent violent crimes or a new genocide being carried out by
totalitarian ideologies (Koselleck, 1994). In particular, memorial sites which rely on knowledge and values should argue their point not solely on the basis of human rights and humanism. The ethical and moral values, which they represent, can be traced back to the traditional religions, which they have set aside. Accordingly, more needs to be undertaken in this area, and new research approaches must be discovered and developed in order to bring all areas which contribute to reconciliation and pacification into this process.
ANNEXURE: Research Interviews

Much of the information in Chapters Five, Six and Seven in this thesis is based on interviews and exploratory meetings with Armenian professionals and academics who live in Armenia and Germany. The primary informants are identified by pseudonyms and extra care was taken to remove any information that might lead to their identification. In the thesis the interviewees are called informants.
APPENDIX ONE

1.1 Individual memory and the episodic, autobiographical features

Humanity needs memory, for without memory humans have no past. Without memory, there is no history: this could easily be taken literally. Accordingly, remembrance can be defined as an open process of experience with our thinking and feeling. There are memories that do good and memories that hurt. Memory is therefore a very complex area and, in addition to individual, mental and physical memory, can also be applied to social structures such as groups and nations. The historian Tanner (2002) compares *Gedächtnis und Erinnern* (memory and remembrance) with the English version and finds that in English usage “memory and remembrance” are mostly used synonymously, compared to the German language in which memory can be translated both with *Erinnerung* and with *Gedächtnis* (Tanner, 2002:77). We already find this conceptual branching in Plato and Aristotle, which Francis Yates (1966) examined and analysed in her work *The Art of Memory*.

Assmann distinguishes three general dimensions of memory: neuronal, social and cultural (Assmann, 2006:31). She explains under the generic name “individual memory” how episodic memories in our individual memory contain certain characteristics and that our own biographical memories are the stuff of which our experiences, relationships and image of our own identity are made (Assmann, 2006:24–25). She also distinguishes between available memories and unconscious memories and describes the entire complex of individual memory as a human ability that is individualised in the processes of remembering (Assmann, 2006:24–25).
For our episodic remembrance there are specific features. In the complex everyday memories of episodic, autobiographical memory Assmann identifies various characteristics. 1) Memories that are *basically perspective* are neither interchangeable nor transferable. 2) Memories that are connected with the memories of others are not *isolated* “by overlapping or crossing and connectivity, which confirm and consolidate structures created in a community-building and connecting manner” (Assmann, 2006:24; cf. Halbwachs, 1985:163-167). 3) She refers to the *fragmentary characteristics* and describes them as limited, unformed and preserved only through the narrative sense, structure and form, as well as having a supplementary and stabilising effect. As the last point 4) she clarifies the *volatility and instability* through changes in living conditions or views, and also includes the change of the person him or herself (Assmann, 2006:25). Sociologist Mathias Berek, in *Studies in Cultural and Social Sciences*, emphasises that individual memory is generally susceptible to manipulation. Along with the feelings in the perception of a current event, the credibility of these memories must be verifiable and questionable (Berek, 2009:13).

Personal memories do not only exist in a special social milieu but also have a specific time horizon that is determined by a generational change through personal exchange, through experiential, memory and narrative communities. Assmann describes this as three-generation memory – the existential basis of personal memories for one’s own orientation in time – and sets a time frame of 80 to 100 years. She calls this mainly generational memory the *short-term memory* of a society (Assmann, 2006:26).

1.2  The Fathers of collective and cultural Memory
The classical theories of Halbwachs have become trend-setting for the memoria research of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Collective memory as theory is the classical basis for today’s culture of memory and research has been removed from the spheres of philosophy and psychology (Freud) into the fields of history, sociology, politics, cultural theory, religious studies and art history. Halbwachs is considered the founding father of cultural memory research (Pethes, 2008:51-52). He coined the term “collective memory” in his works La mémoire collective (1939, here 1985), which translates as “The collective memory” (1991), Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire (1925), which translates as “The social conditions of memory” (1985) and La topographie légendaire des évangiles en Terre Sainte (1941).

Furthermore, Erll says, Halbwachs combines two basic and fundamentally different concepts of collective memory:

1) Collective memory as the organic memory of the individual that develops in the socio-cultural environment. Thus, according to Halbwachs, individual memories arise when people engage in communicative processes, and only that is recalled which can be communicated and which can be situated and classified in a superordinate, socially perceived form of time and space (cadres sociaux).

2) Collective memory as the reference to the past through interaction, communication, media and institutions within social groups and cultural communities (Erll, 2011:16-17).

Thus, collective memory is not only the sum of all individual memories but also the totality of all common perceptions and available meanings in correspondence with culture (see also Landwehr & Stockhorst, 2004:256). Nevertheless, his concept is not without controversy and is not completely consistent, and, in keeping with contemporary academic research, it remains fragmentary and in need of revision in some respects. Halbwachs has thus been able to achieve considerable effect and
relevance with his concept. Halbwachs had little time to revise his theses because he was murdered by the Nazis in 1945.

1.3 Halbwachs and the cadres sociaux: the socially-shaped individual conditions

In his work, *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire*, Halbwachs focuses on memory and its conditions. For him, individual memory is linked to a social framework. The prerequisite for a social imprinting of individual memory is that a memory can only be “collective as soon as it evokes a collective perception” (Halbwachs, 1985:363). For Halbwachs, a person’s existing collective perception is already shaped by a socio-cultural environment (Halbwachs, 1985:364–365). This means that the social framing is simply human, and depending on the impulses sent out, memories come up (Halbwachs, 1985:364–365). According to Erll’s interpretation, this can be summarised as follows:

Much more fundamental for Halbwachs, however, is the fact that through interaction and communication with our fellow human being, we are imparted knowledge about data and facts, collective ideas of time and space as well as currents of thought and experience. Because we participate in a collective symbolic order, we can locate, interpret and remember past events, which steer perception and memories in a certain way, because from the social framework, our social environment, social frameworks are derived in the metaphorical sense, namely “Denkschemata”, “thought patterns” (Erll, 2011:17).

In the interpretation of Halbwachs *Cadres sociaux* (1925) is an all-embracing dimension of cultural formations which interact with our perception and memories.

1.4 Halbwachs’ individually shaped Collective Memory
Collective memory is a term used in the social science debate. As Halbwachs used it, the individually shaped collective memory consists of a mutual interdependence between the individual, who remembers himself, and the group. By placing himself in the group the memory of the group is realised and revealed in the individual memory (Halbwachs, 1997:23). It is only through individual memory that collective memory becomes observable, for each individual memory is an “outlook point” on collective memory (Halbwachs, 1997:31).

Erll and Gudehus interpret this “outlook” as the location humanity occupies due to socialisation and cultural imprinting. Everyone belongs to several social groups; Halbwachs has comprehensively described this in his work *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire* (*Das Gedächtnis und seine soziale Bedingungen*). It is not remembrance *per se* but the combination of group membership and the resulting specific forms of group memory that give birth to the real individualistic momentum which makes a difference of memory within the minds of different individual people. Menkovic (1999) sees a national memory in the collective memory, according to Halbwachs. She stresses that “the bearers of national memory experience this only indirectly and do not draw this from their own experiences” (Menkovic, 1999:17–18).

Criticism of Halbwachs’ collective memory as a danger of collective psychology according to Le Bon’s *Psychology of the Masses* (1919) is absurd, since the subject of memory is always the individual and individual memory remains a social phenomenon. Gudehus points out that Halbwachs does not distinguish between *Gedächtnis* and *Erinnerung*, (memory and recollecting) but his starting point is taken for granted as collective memory and an individual memory (Gudehus, 2010:85). Jordan interprets the collective memory of Halbwachs, explaining that collective memory does not arise
solely from the human being, as individual memory does, but is a product of social learning from the outside in (Jordan, 2009:169).

Nevertheless, Halbwachs has initiated an extremely complex social issue in a groundbreaking way. This has led to new approaches in cultural studies, as Erll appropriately analysed. These have led to further disciplines and branches in the historical view of the twentieth century and ensured an enormous increase in scientific studies and concepts throughout the sciences. These new approaches have confirmed that social collective learning is possible, and have made valuable contributions to the study of past events of extermination.

### 1.5 Between collective memory and memory of history

For Halbwachs, historiography has no living reference in the consciousness of the group. History *per se* cannot be a memory (Halbwachs, 1967:66f). For him, the concern of history is the past. Collective memory, on the other hand, is oriented towards the needs and concerns of the group in the present. Furthermore, collective memory binds the group to space-time and the material milieu, and offers a concrete possibility of orientation (Halbwachs, 1967:142). In contrast to historical studies, which demand detailed reconstructions and ascertainment of facts, Halbwachs sees collective memory from the inside, to show an image of the past in which people recognise themselves in all stages, while he considers history as merely a historical fact, which indicates changes as a process or event (Halbwachs, 1967:69).

Jordan, in interpreting this, points out that group memory has its own dynamic of its own history, whereas historical time has an artificial duration, a *durée artificielle*, which
no group experiences as a *durée* and which is remembered as a non-functioning artifact, detached from the bonds and connections that are created by social life in space and time (Jordan, 2002:98–99). In summary, Halbwachs makes a clear distinction between history and memory. Erll quotes his view, according to Halbwachs’ theory, that the historian’s domain begins where the past is no longer “inhabited”, i.e., where the collective memory of the living group is no longer used.

### 1.6 Cultural formation in Noras’ *Lieux de Mémoire* (mnemotope)

Nora’s *lieux de mémoire* concept illustrates a contrast between memory and history. For him, cultural formations such as texts, museums, archives, monuments, festivals, and minutes of silence are manifestations of cultural memory. In comparison to history, which he sketches as a dynamic of historicisation, as a dead past, he defines memory as the warmth of tradition, the silence of custom, and the repetition of what is passed on (Nora, 1986:92, dt. 1990; cf. Jordan, 2002:99).

After Halbwachs’ statement that memory is to be interpreted in contrast to history, Nora wrote monumental works on the places of memory in his seven-volume study, *Les Lieux de Mémoire* (Paris, 1984-1992, Vol. I *La Republique*, Vol. II *La Nation*, Vol. III *Les France*), along with further essays, *Zwischen Geschichte und Gedächtnis* (1990). In his study, Nora documents cultural signs and symbols relating to his nation as unchanging placeholders that are intended to ensure the durability of cultural memories over long periods of time. For him, realms of memory are placeholders of living memory, which are intended to have an emotional effect on the viewer, with which he must willingly engage. For him, memory and history are by no means synonymous, but opposites in every respect (Nora, 1990:23). He explains that memory is life and is
carried by living groups. In this argument he is following Halbwachs’ thesis, from which it follows that there is a constant development of the dialectic of remembering and forgetting. He also emphasises that memory is always a contemporary phenomenon, whereas history is a representation of the past. It even reaches as far as the sacred:

but history drives away the sacred, and its subject matter is the disenchanting of everything sacred. The memory grows out of a group whose context it creates ... history, on the other hand, belongs to everyone and to no one and is called to the universal (Nora, 1990:12).

For Nora, signs of memory are initially places that he uses specifically in the terminus loci (Nora 1990:19). He follows the ancient tradition of mnemonic technique and rhetoric as loci which links every memory to a spatial context. He has a critical view of early generation places, the milieux de mémoire, which in the course of modernisation and the changing framework of social conditions, turned memory into lieux de mémoire (realms of memory or mnemotopes), and he emphasises that “there are lieux de mémoire, because there are no longer milieux de mémoire” (Nora, 1990:11). Therefore, the later observers have to reconstruct the history in the sense of the narrative, in order for the lost milieu to come into being again. In this sense, he describes the historian himself as a realm of memory. For him both places belong together, on the one hand the analytical historical science and on the other hand the lived embodied memory. In his opinion, each group must fulfil this duty, first by reviving its own history and secondly by redefining its identity (Nora, 1990:21).

In his theoretical considerations he divides the cultural objectivations into three dimensions: (1) a material dimension, which does not necessarily have to be substantial, and can be comprehensible objects, such as paintings, books, or minutes of silence; (2) the functional dimension must already fulfil a function in society and includes
belonging to a ritual; this leads to (3) the symbolic dimension, which identifies and
increases the status and intentionality of the relevant realm of memory within society
(Nora, 1990:21; cf. Erll, 2011:26). In this last dimension, actions become rituals or
places are surrounded by a symbolic aura. All three dimensions can be applied to the
exterminatory practices in authentic places of the twentieth century. For Nora the realms
of memory are geographical, temporal and symbolic places, which enable an interplay
between living ritual and ossified history (Nora, 1990:19–21; Pethes, 2008:90). They
are also places within which “memory crystallizes and secretes itself; the places where
the exhausted capital of collective memory condenses and is expressed” (Francois &
Schulze, 2005:8).

Birgit Neumann (2003) subsumes Nora’s concept from the ancient mnemonic technique
of “loci”, which was not aimed exclusively at topographical sites, under realms of
memory. Yates (1966) in particular wrote a comprehensive work on memoria as a
rhetorical model of memory, pertaining to the storage of facts and argumentative
connections, and pointed to a conceptual branching of memory and remembrance,
which she had already perceived in Plato and Aristotle. Starting from the spatial nature
of remembrance (spatial thinking) combined with objective points of orientation, “loci”,
certain contents were compiled into a mental map in thought, which could then be
remembered in free speech. This mnemonic technique included mnemonic verses
(versus memorialis), memory aids and mnemonic links (Yates, 1966:14-16; cf.

It should be noted that Nora follows the concept of ancient mnemonics, in which he
calls up and stores images of the French nation. For him, it is not the collective memory
of “a group connected in spatial and temporal co-presence that is important, but that of
abstract communities that define themselves across space and time through symbols” (Assmann, 1999:132). Nora introduces the term “lieux de mémoire” (places of memory) and refers to the work of Francis A. Yates, *The Art of Memory* (1966), who described the structure of mnemonic technique (Nora, 1990:8).

In summary, Maurice Halbwachs and Pierre Nora emphasise the importance of the space of collective memory and assume topographical organisations of group memory. According to Halbwachs, there is no collective memory that does not move within a social space. For Nora, collective memory adheres to the concrete, to space, to gesture, to image and object (Nora, 1990:14). In accordance with Neumann’s argumentation, memories that are specific to a group become concrete and material in *lieux de mémoire* (place or realms of memory), and it is here that a social group rediscovers itself and a history that is relevant to its identity.
APPENDIX TWO

Personal Sketches of Sashur Kalashyan, September 2017.
APPENDIX THREE: Application and Resolution (AGMI)

Application for a memorial site to the victims of the Armenian Genocide (1)

В ЦК КПСС. О мероприятиях в связи с 50-летием массового истребления армян

В апреле 1965 года исполняется 50 лет со времени массового истребления армян. В 1915 году, в первую мировую войну, трехмиллионное армянское население, проживающее в Западной Армении, а также в других городах и местностях Турции подвергалось массовой резне, выселению и истреблению. Это было осуществлением правящей кликой султанской Турции человеческой навистной политики геноцида в крупных масштабах.

Планы «решения» армянского вопроса путем физического истребления армян в Османской империи осуществлялись еще в 70—90-х годах XIX века султаном Абдул-Гамиром. Эту политику в более широких масштабах продолжали младотурки. Их планы вытекали из пантюркистских захватнических устремлений господствующих кругов Турции, стремящихся отторгнуть Кавказ и некоторые другие территории от России. На пути осуществления этих планов, по заявлением младотурков, стоял армянский народ, издавна и традиционно стремившийся связать свою историческую судьбу с Россией.

Начиная с весны 1915 года, правящая клика тогдашней Турции приступила непосредственно к практическому осуществлению политики геноцида — к физическому уничтожению армян. Истреблению подвергалось мирное население, в том числе женщины, дети и старики. Преднамеренно уничтожались представители армянской интеллигенции. Зверская расправа постигла крупнейших армянских писателей Зограба, Варужана, Симанто и многих других. Жертвами массового террора стал и из-

Resolution of the Armenian Central Council for the Construction of a Memorial Site (2).
APPENDIX FOUR

The idea of commemorating all victims of the Jewish Catastrophe caused by the Nazi horrors and the war


1) A national park at least 500 dunams (50 hectares) space, in an important area of rural agricultural settlement.

2) The area envisaged is Metsudat Ussishkin ... near the Kibbutzim Dan and Dafna, not far from the sources of the Dan River.

3) A centre in Safed: a pavilion on the history of the suffering and the victims.

4) Dissemination of the idea to create expectations of regular revenue from known arrangements (graves, monuments, plaques, roads and paths, book, s inscriptions.

5) The following should be provided at the site: a museum, cinema, ... a hotel; standardised memorial stones should be stationed there ... a special office should be established to gather the material by geographic area – details of the atrocity and the ways the victims fell, along with their names – all this material should be collected in the form of historical writings about the Jewish people. Each relevant country should be given a special area within the general space, commensurate with its geographic neighbours.
A national project should be announced in memory of those who perished in the current war, at the front and, foremost, the victims of the Nazi brutality in all its manifestations. For this purpose, an area of at least 2,000 dunams (200 hectares) in an agricultural region should be set aside and a national park should be established there. The park should include:

1) At the centre of the whole project, a building or institution that will contain the names of all Jews who perished or were killed, in whatever country, in connection with the current war and the German hooliganism in their countries. (Handwritten parenthetical note in the margin: “The names of all Jewish soldiers who fought in this war should also be included.”)

2) Pavilions devoted to the history of Jewish heroism throughout the generations.

3) A symbolic cemetery for those who died in exile.

4) A regular cemetery for Palestinian and Diaspora Jews.

5) A convalescent centre and hostel complex for immigrants.

6) Children’s hostels, affiliated with nearby settlements, which will take in some of the Jewish orphans from the war and the pogroms. This building should be monumental. It should express the enormity of the holocaust that we suffered and give everlasting evidence of our people’s will to live. We have to invest (the place) with this sense of expression ... so that the visitor will naturally be led to the ideas of Zionist fulfilment, to what is happening in the country, (and) to an understanding and appreciation of the activity of (the JNF and Keren Hayesod). This explains why the proximity of different types of agricultural settlements is so valuable ... For what happened to us and what may yet happen, perish the thought, to the Jews who remain in dispersion, there is but one answer: to lead the people from the disaster of their destiny to the remedy for that disaster. There is no remedy but to build Eretz Israel.
The law entitled *Law of Remembrance of Shoah and Heroism - Yad Vashem 1953*, (– 5713-1953–) contains the following statutes.

A. There is hereby established in Jerusalem a Memorial Authority, Yad Vashem to commemorate:

(1) the six million members of the Jewish people who died at the hands of the Nazis and their collaborators;

(2) the Jewish families which were wiped out by the oppressors;

(3) the communities, synagogues, movements and organisations, and the public, cultural, educational, religious and benevolent institutions, which were destroyed in a heinous attempt to erase the name and culture of Israel;

(4) the fortitude of Jews who gave their lives for their people;

(5) the heroism of Jewish servicemen, and of underground fighters in towns, villages and forests, who staked their lives in the battle against the Nazi oppressors and their collaborators;

(6) the heroic stand of the besieged and fighters of the ghettos, who rose and kindled the flame of revolt to save the honor of their people;

(7) the sublime, persistent struggle of the masses of the House of Israel, on the threshold of destruction, for their human dignity and Jewish culture;
(8) the unceasing efforts of the besieged to reach Eretz Israel in spite of all obstacles, and the devotion and heroism of their brothers who went forth to liberate and rescue the survivors;

(9) the high-minded Gentiles who risked their lives to save Jews.

B. Function and Powers of Yad Vashem:

The task of Yad Vashem is to gather in to the homeland material regarding all those members of the Jewish people who laid down their lives, who fought and rebelled against the Nazi enemy and his collaborators, and to perpetuate their memory and that of the communities, organisations and institutions which were destroyed because they were Jewish; for this purpose, Yad Vashem shall be competent –

(1) to establish memorial projects on its own initiative and under its direction;

(2) to collect, examine and publish testimony of the disaster and the heroism it called forth, and to bring home its lesson to the people;

(3) firmly to establish in Israel and among the whole people the day appointed by the Knesset as the memorial day for the disaster and its heroism, and to promote a custom of joint remembrance of the heroes and victims;

(4) to confer upon the members of the Jewish people who perished in the days of the Disaster and the Resistance the commemorative citizenship of the State of Israel, as a token of their having been gathered to their people;

(5) to approve and give guidance to projects concerned with perpetuating the memory of the victims and heroes of the Disaster, or to co-operate with such projects;
(6) to represent Israel on international projects aimed at perpetuating the
memory of the victims of the Nazis and of those who fell in the war against
them;
(7) to do any other act required for carrying out its functions.

C. Yad Vashem is a corporate body, entitled to enter into contracts, to acquire,
hold and dispose of property and to be a party to any legal or other proceeding.

D. The governing bodies of Yad Vashem shall be a Council and an Executive.

E. The contribution of the Treasury towards the establishment and maintenance
of Yad Vashem shall be fixed in the State Budget. Yad Vashem shall operate
under its own budget, the revenue for which shall be derived from the said
contribution and from contributions by national and public institutions and
organisations, from its own projects and services, from payments by members,
subscribers and supporters, from legacies, allocations and donations, and from
such monies and other resources as it may raise with the approval of the
Government.

F. The member of the Government empowered by it to implement this Law
(hereinafter “the Minister”) shall, with the approval of the Government, enact
the statutes of Yad Vashem, which shall come into force on the day of their
publication in Reshumot.

G. The statutes shall lay down –
(1) the composition, mode of establishment and powers of the Council and the procedure for convening it;

(2) the composition, mode of establishment, powers and working methods of the Executive;

(3) the methods and procedure for the summoning of conferences and conventions;

(4) conditions for the receipt of commemorative citizenship, and the procedure for the grant thereof;

(5) the means of commemorating the participation of Jewish soldiers and underground fighters and residents of the besieged ghettos in the battle against the Nazi oppressor and his collaborators;

(6) the procedure of the preparation and approval of the budget, and provisions for equipment and the administration of monies;

(7) such other provisions as the Minister may decide to be necessary for the maintenance of Yad Vashem as a memorial authority.

H. The Minister may make regulations on any matter relating to the implementation of this law.

Moshe Sharrett, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Acting Prime Minister

Ben-Zion Dinur, Minister of Education and Culture

Yitzchak Ben-Zvi, President of the State.


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