***After the Berlin Wall. Memory and the Making of the New Germany, 1989 to the Present.* By Hope M. Harrison. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2019. Pp. xvii + 463. Hardback $34.99. ISBN 9781107049314.**

As the physical embodiment of the Iron Curtain, the Berlin Wall has been the subject of numerous historical monographs. Thirty years after its fall, however, Hope Harrison’s book deals with the complex history of its memory. *After the Berlin Wall* examines the debates and deliberations surrounding two key elements of this memory: the development of key historical sites (predominantly the Berlin Wall Memorial Site on Bernauer Strasse) and the commemoration of historic dates associated with the Wall (namely its erection on 13 August 1961 and its fall on 9 November 1989). Harrison’s examination is detailed and engaging, providing a rigorously researched and balanced approach, while also managing to convey a sense of the personalities and personal histories entangled in – and often influencing – the development of Wall remembrance.

By combining archival research with interviews and participant observation, as well as the examination of policy papers, official records, exhibits, films, design competitions and other relevant documentation, Harrison’s methods are varied and her materials are rich. She presents them in a broadly chronological structure across nine main chapters, beginning with developments in the early 1990s and ending with plans for the thirtieth anniversary events in November 2019. The introduction and first chapter provide readers with essential background information concerning memory politics in Germany, the central significance of Holocaust memory and different approaches to the fall of the Wall. The following two chapters then turn to the early debates surrounding the preservation and development of the remaining sections of Wall at Bernauer Strasse; here Harrison outlines in particular the significant role played by Manfred Fisher, then pastor of the (formerly West Berlin) Reconciliation parish, whose church – which was situated in the border zone – was blown up by the GDR authorities in 1985. Fisher’s tireless fight to preserve the memory of the Wall and create a memorial ensemble casts him as one of the key ‘memory activists’ throughout the book, whose dedication has significantly shaped existing memory narratives. The intense struggles over memory at the site are also highlighted, and its transition from border zone to memorial site is presented as a journey of negotiation and compromise, yet also one that was influenced by regional and national party politics, such as the possibility and eventual reality of an SPD-PDS coalition in Berlin in 2001. Chapters Four and Five then turn to two related memorial interventions: first, the temporary installation of crosses to commemorate victims of the Wall on the site of the former Checkpoint Charlie in 2004-2005, and second the Berlin Senate’s development of a ‘master plan’ regarding remembrance of the Wall, which was, in large part, a response to the former. Both are significant for the development of Bernauer Strasse, not only because this became the central site in the ‘master plan’, but also because they refocused attention on the need to address tourist interest in the Wall, raised awareness of political and personal sensitivities, and highlighted the role of emotion and the need to demonstrate a sense of historical responsibility. Some of these issues are traced through the following two chapters, which look at Federal government policy towards the Wall and the thorny question of victims and perpetrators, in particular through the role of the *Grenzer*. The latter is exemplary in its nuanced approach and outlines an area which has hitherto received relatively little attention. Chapter eight focuses on conflicting narratives about the Wall, from those of civil rights’ activists to the actions of party members, the role of the West, and differing international perceptions of 1989. The final chapter examines the twentieth and twenty-fifth anniversaries of the fall of the Wall, showing how this event has become a new official narrative – or ‘new founding myth’ – for Germany, marking a path away from a culture of memory dominated by the Holocaust. The conclusion, however, reappraises the situation following the refugee crisis of 2015 and the rise of the AfD, demonstrating increasingly complex dynamics – and yet the continued importance of drawing lessons from the Berlin Wall.

Harrison’s book not only provides nuance and detail that even those familiar with this history will find enlightening, but its careful analysis draws out a number of important themes. At the heart of the book is the role of numerous ‘memory activists’ – such as Manfred Fisher – who have tirelessly worked to influence the way in which the Wall is remembered. Harrison expertly weaves their personal stories into her analysis and demonstrates how a wide cross-section of individuals and personalities has impacted upon on official understanding of the Wall – from pastors and historians to civil servants, politicians, former demonstrators, museum directors and entrepreneurs. Other themes to emerge include the multiple and conflicting ways in which the Wall has been remembered, the grey areas surrounding understandings of ‘victims’, ‘perpetrators’ and ‘heroes’, and the issue of regional, national and international competition over the memory of 1989. *After the Berlin Wall* is a wide-ranging and engaging study; it is without doubt a valuable addition to the growing body of literature on memory of the GDR and will appeal not only to those interested in GDR history, but also memory studies, sociology, politics and cultural geography. While there is no single narrative of the Wall, nor any universal agreement on its meaning, Harrison successfully demonstrates why much still remains to be learned from its study.