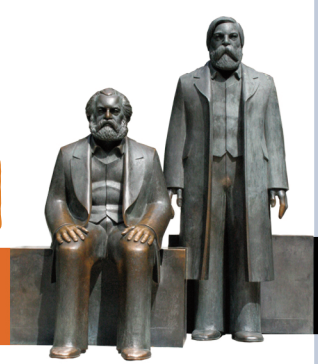


A Place in Berlin

Marx, Engels, and the Crisis of Communist Triumphalism in East Berlin



By Brian Ladd

After World War II, the new German Democratic Republic (GDR) needed to establish a new identity, distinct from both the previous (Nazi) regime and the rival West German state. That need for identity, whether expressed visually or socially, shaped plans for the eastern sector of Berlin. The regime (and many of its architects) wanted to build the socialist city, but what was that supposed to look like? Changing dictates about appropriate architectural and sculptural forms prevented the emergence of any clear visual identity. Nor was there consensus at any given time, despite the lack of open dissent.

From beginning to end, the leaders of the GDR agreed that the single most important location in Berlin was the site of the royal palace (although in the early years it was rivaled by the site of the former Reich chancellery). It was above all their desire to create a vast square for mass demonstrations that prompted them to demolish the badly damaged palace in 1950.¹ In 1951, the former palace square was renamed Marx-Engels-Platz. During the following years plans called for a central government building in the form of a grandiose Stalinist skyscraper to be built next to the square. Statues of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, the German founders of “scientific socialism,” were to be erected in front of the building.²

However, the only major project in the Stalinist style actually built in Berlin was Stalinallee (since 1961 Karl-Marx-Allee), a grand boulevard east of the city center that was lined with monumental apartment buildings. By the late 1950s the GDR had followed the lead of the new Soviet leader, Nikita Khrushchev, and embraced the more economical forms of industrial modernism. Consequently, renewed plans for the unbuilt government center in the late 1950s and early 1960s proposed a tower in simpler modern form. When, once again, nothing was built, doubts about the symbolic power of an ostentatious government tower presumably opened the way for criticisms that were now voiced about the practical use of a monumental building as well as its cost.³

Amid the ascendant modernism of the 1960s, plans for a monumental government center were quietly dropped. Berlin’s skyline was decorated instead with the 365-meter-high television tower, completed in 1969 near Alexanderplatz.⁴ Modernist and relatively modest government buildings were put up during the 1960s just south of the palace square (the Council of State building) and just to its west (the Foreign Ministry). The question of what would be done with the palace’s site was finally answered shortly after the new party leader, Erich Honecker, came to power in 1971. Honecker built few grand monuments. Throughout his tenure he made clear that his built legacy would be an adequate supply of housing for the country. This shift in emphasis from public to private space had far-reaching implications for urban planning in general and the center of Berlin in particular. Honecker’s one major project there was the modernist, glass-and-marble “Palace of the Republic” completed in 1976 on the old palace’s site. (The “Palace of the Republic” was demolished in 2006-8.) This “people’s palace” was only secondarily a government building. The building housed the insignificant national parliament, as well as infrequent official gatherings such as party congresses; but mainly it was used for popular entertainment: concerts in its main hall, plus a theater, bowling alley, and several restaurants and bars, all affordable and open to the public. The city’s historic focal point thus became home to its most popular attraction, but it was an attraction largely shorn of political symbolism.⁵

Honecker’s new emphasis on citizens as consumers may have staved off unrest, but it did so at the cost of revolutionary purity. The regime’s single-minded devotion to the legacy of Marx, Engels, and Lenin was no

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longer so clear. The shift away from revolutionary traditions in urban design left the Marx-Engels monument (as well as other planned monuments) in limbo. Honecker may not have wanted a huge government building in the center of Berlin, but, as became clear, he remained partial to massive vertical monuments. His artists, in contrast, had other ideas.

Cultural authority, as defined by artists and other intellectuals, had always mattered a great deal to the GDR leadership.⁶ The party, in other words, was eager to keep its artists happy, and the artists thus had considerable latitude to express their views about the appropriate aesthetic forms for socialism. What vanished after the 1960s, at least in the field of sculpture, was the leaders' ability to organize an artistic consensus on matters of style. By the late 1960s the prominent sculptor Fritz Cremer openly called for a more human scale in sculpture, in the hope of preventing "certain megalomaniacal tendencies and realizations."⁷ The results of sculpture competitions showed that his colleagues shared his views. Those views did not prevail in the struggle at hand, however, as the politicians held to their decision to commission the Soviet sculptor Nikolai Tomsky to make the 19-meter-high Lenin statue completed in Berlin in 1970.⁸ (This statue was demolished in 1991-2 and secretly buried in a sandpit near Köpenick; the head is to be excavated and included in a permanent exhibit at the Spandau Citadel in Berlin as of 2013.) The lingering chasm between politicians and artists was further illustrated by the differences between the two major monuments built in Berlin during the Honecker years: the Marx-Engels Forum and the Ernst Thälmann memorial. Each in its own way, however, also revealed the GDR's failure to maintain any kind of symbolic coherence, as the different projects addressed different audiences.

Both of these monuments fulfilled long-delayed and much changed plans from the early days of the GDR. Thälmann, the prewar German Communist Party leader who was murdered in Buchenwald concentration camp in 1944, was the preeminent martyred hero of official GDR mythology.⁹ Over the decades, various sites for the memorial were proposed, and several East German sculptors were entrusted with plans for a statue. In the end, the monument was designated the centerpiece of a new housing project outside the city center, in the traditional working-class district of Prenzlauer Berg. In 1981, the plans of all German artists (as well as their subsequent protests) were swept aside once and for all, when the Politburo—probably Honecker himself—gave the commission to the Russian sculptor Lev Kerbel, who cast a massive, 13-meter-high bronze bust of Thälmann with his fist in the air and a flag swirling behind him. The decision outraged many East German artists, even as it demonstrated their impotence.¹⁰ Kerbel's statue stood on a pedestal in a large paved square, flanked by stelae inscribed with quotations from Thälmann and Honecker. (Although the monument was not dismantled in the 1990s, the stelae with inscriptions were removed.) It faced Greifswalder Strasse, along which the convoy of party leaders was driven on the daily trip to and from their housing compound in rural Wandlitz. (The entire length of this "protocol route" was so notoriously well maintained that officials sometimes felt the need to explain—privately—that they were not creating a Potemkin village.) Otherwise the square was best suited to ceremonial occasions and passive crowds.

Meanwhile, plans to commemorate Marx and Engels had languished in the absence of a firm commitment from leaders (probably reflecting uncertainty about style) and a clear plan for the city center.¹¹ The decision to build the Palace of the Republic in 1973 opened the way for new plans to commemorate Marx and Engels nearby. Work was entrusted to the sculptor Ludwig Engelhardt, who in 1973 already formulated the basic design that would ultimately be built.¹² He envisioned an array of grouped figures, all at or near ground level, and all completely accessible to strolling pedestrians who would be drawn into the site. The work was soon divided among a team of artists (including, naturally, one who kept the Ministry of State Security apprised of developments). The western side of the memorial would be marked by Werner Stötzer's marble reliefs of writhing human figures,

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intended to portray the suffering wrought by capitalism; on the opposite side, Margret Middell's bronze sculptural reliefs showed socialist paradise. Tall steel stelae designed by Arno Fischer and Peter Voigt would have photographs, illustrating the history of the socialist movement, etched into them by a newly developed electronic process. The stelae were thus not only the most technically innovative part of the project, they also absorbed great amounts of high-level attention and resources devoted to searching archives around the world for just the right images.¹³ When erected, however, they would not become the focus of attention. Instead, at the center of the broad circular expanse would stand Engelhardt's bronze sculpture of a sitting Marx next to a standing Engels, both gazing eastward past the stelae and toward the socialist paradise. Thus, the entire ensemble subtly portrayed the realization of Marx's and Engels' theories.

The decision-making process culminating in the Politburo's commitment to the Engelhardt design is poorly documented. Its anti-monumental scale (if not its particular style) clearly reflected a broad consensus among GDR artists, and in this case (unlike with the Thälmann monument a few years later) party leaders did not reject their own artists. The "Engelhardt group" could count on backing from the Ministry of Culture and, perhaps most crucially, from the Party's ideological chief, Kurt Hager.¹⁴ Speaking to artists and architects at a workshop in 1980, Minister of Culture Hans-Joachim Hoffmann argued that the Marx-Engels Forum (which by then had been approved) would serve to illustrate artistic progress when compared to the nineteenth-century equestrian statue of King Frederick the Great, which was just being re-erected nearby: "We will soon have a Karl Marx monument and this Karl Marx monument will make clear the contrast with the one of Frederick the Second that is about to be erected, because it will be clear that we are not looking up Karl Marx's nostrils; rather, we will be able to hold conversations with him and with Friedrich Engels and there will be a new spirit, a new art, a new understanding of the portrayal of great contemporary social issues."¹⁵ This was an unusually forthright declaration of taste—probably more frank than Hager or any other Politburo member would ever voice in public—not because Hoffmann criticized a nineteenth-century statue, but because his critique could just as well have been applied to Tomsy's Lenin statue and many other Soviet or GDR monuments.

Although documentation of internal debates within the leadership is as usual scant, other influential people were clearly less enthusiastic, a fact that undoubtedly influenced decisions about the memorial's location and official reception. One predictable criticism focused above all on Marx's posture. Immediately after the Politburo viewed photos of the design on June 28, 1977, the elderly Politburo member Albert Norden wrote to Honecker to express doubts he had been unwilling to voice in the meeting. Why such stiff, lifeless figures? he wanted to know. And why is Marx sitting? Norden preferred Tomsy's nearby Lenin statue.¹⁶

The Forum was slated to stand on the opposite side of Marx-Engels-Platz from the Palace of the Republic, and thus directly on the site of the former "National Monument" that the last emperor had erected in his grandfather's memory. (In the early 21st century, this was designated as the site of a new memorial to German unification.) The new building and the new memorial would, between them, frame this central square and finally complete its socialist form. After the new "People's Palace" came into use, however, the choice of site was called into question. Grand military parades were no longer held here after it was discovered that the new Palace left too little space for tanks to turn. As people flocked to events at the Palace, the formerly ceremonial square was put to use as a parking lot. This fact itself speaks volumes about the changing identity of the GDR and also seems to have fatefully influenced further decisions about the Marx-Engels Forum.

In late 1982, the long-envisioned symbolic identity of Marx-Engels-Platz was consigned to the dustbin of history. In October, construction minister Wolfgang Junker and the powerful head of special building projects for

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the capital, Ehrhardt Gisske, formally proposed to move the location of the Forum to the other side of the Palace of the Republic, across the Spree River.¹⁷ They argued that the parking area on the square could not be spared. Subsequent documents also asserted that the shift of location would save money, since the original site required expensive excavation, but Hager understood the parking issue to be decisive.¹⁸ He bowed to the arguments of Junker and Gisske, who were supported by Mayor Erhard Krack and Berlin party chief Konrad Naumann. None of them committed to paper any lack of enthusiasm for Engelhardt's design. Although the Politburo was formally presented with a choice between the two alternative sites in January 1983, by then the decision seems to have already been made, and an unhappy Engelhardt agreed to it.¹⁹

As Engelhardt argued to the end, this decision ruined his plan to have Marx and Engels symbolically bury the old cult of the emperor. It did, however, leave Marx-Engels-Platz with a clear identity—as a parking lot for ordinary visitors to the Palace of the Republic. It also left the city without a central place for ideological display, whether in the form of military parades, mass rallies, or monuments. The boulevard Unter den Linden, just to the west, had been restored as the central showcase of an older history, a restoration crowned by the return of the statue of Frederick the Great in 1980. Earlier planning documents had described Unter den Linden's historical identity as separate from that of the central square of socialist Berlin, which in turn would be distinct from the center of popular entertainment and commerce, across the river to the east.²⁰ By bringing popular entertainment to Marx-Engels-Platz, the Palace of the Republic had already blurred the latter distinction and thus opened the way for shifting the Marx-Engels Forum to the east. The area east of its new site lacked an overtly political identity: it was dominated by the television tower, beyond which lay Alexanderplatz, East Berlin's most bustling transit hub, shopping center, and rendezvous point.

The new location of the Marx-Engels Forum had been vacant land interspersed with wartime ruins, until it was cleared and provisionally landscaped as a park, in time for the Tenth World Youth Festival in 1973. The new name given the site in 1983, the Marx-Engels Forum, was a source of potential confusion, implying at once an extension of Marx-Engels-Platz and a separate space. In a letter to Honecker, Hager justified the name as a partial compensation to the artists for forcing them off of Marx-Engels-Platz.²¹ The new memorial entailed paving over a large part of the former park, a move that angered some East Berliners.²² Perhaps its status as an urban green space was the reason no one considered moving the parking lot there, instead of the Forum. (The construction of an underground parking garage had been rejected as too expensive.) In any case, official statements of reassurance could not disguise the fact that this was the backside of the Palace.²³ Because the design of the Forum remained fundamentally unchanged, Marx and Engels now had their backs to the river, the Palace of the Republic, and Marx-Engels-Platz; they seemed to be gazing at the television tower or the distant crowds on Alexanderplatz.

Both the site and the design were unveiled at a public exhibition in April 1983. Visitors had the opportunity to write their impressions in a comment book; others wrote letters, notably to the party newspaper, *Neues Deutschland*, which passed them along to the Ministry of Culture. Most of the comments written at the exhibition (which were analyzed in two internal reports) criticized either the memorial's location or the form of Engelhardt's Marx and Engels statues.²⁴ Several outraged letter writers raised the same issues. One Berliner wrote that for him Marx-Engels-Platz is "the [main] square of the capital. It is the red heart of our land. And now? A parking lot. A monument to the greatest revolutionaries, thinkers and human beings is now being set apart from the center of life."²⁵ The models of Engelhardt's Marx and Engels figures attracted the most criticism: they appeared "static," "stiff," "tired," "dead," "meaningless." "My first impression:" wrote one unhappy citizen, "here sit two defendants in the dock!" Many viewers also disliked the lack of any interaction between the two figures and the fact that

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they seemed to be staring into a void. A visitor from Erfurt compared this design unfavorably to Kerbel's proposed Thälmann statue: the latter moved him because it portrayed the heroic fighter that he knew well. (The heroic Thälmann was, in fact, an inescapable image in the GDR.) But Engelhardt's Marx and Engels were not the figures he knew: "Where in this Forum is the strength they radiated to the workers, where is the love and goodness to those near to them?"²⁶ A similar estrangement may have prompted another letter writer's more formal criticism that the circular arrangement of objects would lead visitors around, rather than to the memorial. This writer and another also noted with dismay that the arrangement of the Forum's parts within a broad paved circle resembled an Iron Cross.²⁷

It was obvious that the party had successfully implanted a heroic image of communism in these citizens, beginning with their schoolbook images of Thälmann, Marx, and Engels, and that these new artistic forms did not measure up to expectations. An official attempt at damage control took the form of a review of the exhibition by the art historian Helmut Netzker, published in *Neues Deutschland* on 29 April 1983. It had been vetted by Hager and at least shown to Honecker.²⁸ Without explicitly acknowledging any criticism, Netzker's implicit response to the critics was to emphasize that the models on display represented unfinished work and that no model could effectively show how a statue would actually function in space. Thus, he argued, the impression that Engelhardt's statue was rigid might not be accurate. Nevertheless, he gently went on to suggest, Engelhardt might be able to give his figures a more relaxed posture.

In fact, Engelhardt completed them without significant changes. The formal dedication of the Marx-Engels Forum took place on 4 April 1986 and featured a speech by Honecker that belabored the well-known significance of the two socialists, but said little about the form of the memorial being unveiled and nothing about its location.²⁹ As with any Honecker speech, it was widely but formulaically publicized, and attention soon shifted to the dedication of the Thälmann monument, eleven days later, which effectively served as the prologue to the eleventh (and, as it turned out, last) party congress. Kerbel's statue subsequently received considerable attention in the press. Not so Engelhardt's; those who awaited critical evaluation of the project found the silence resounding. Scholars and critics were advised not to write about it. Apparently some leaders feared invidious comparisons with Kerbel's Thälmann statue, which they knew was disliked by the GDR's artistic establishment.³⁰

Also unspoken here, of course, were the party leadership's internal divisions over the Marx-Engels Forum, which had presumably been behind Hager's determination, the previous year, to mount a publicity campaign for the project, as well as his bizarre explanation for its need. Official recognition was important, he observed in an internal report, "in order to make clear that this memorial project represents the realization of a Politburo decision, as well as a commission from the Ministry of Culture, and thus to forestall rumors that it represents an incidental work" by Engelhardt's group of artists.³¹

In September 1986, Engelhardt wrote a sad letter to Hager, observing that in the six months after its dedication "the silence surrounding our work was nearly unbroken," but comforting himself with the observation that visitors seemed to linger at the memorial. Hager passed the letter on to Honecker, who asked him to assure Engelhardt that both he and Hager stood unreservedly behind the work. Hager's reply to Engelhardt offered this assurance and added, disingenuously, "I can only explain the nearly complete silence in the media thus far as a result of continuing insecurity in judgment or of narrow-minded subjectivism."³² In fact, the Forum did attract—and continues to attract—attention. The low height and dispersed arrangement of the sculptures and stelae do invite passers-by to wander and linger, as Engelhardt observed. Many people see the appeal of a Marx on whose lap children can play. In their remaining three years in power, however, the GDR's communist leaders had little chance to grow accustomed to this new iconography.

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During the final years of the GDR capital, Thälmann and the Marx-Engels Forum (along with the older Lenin statue) served as Berlin's major political monuments. One stood, little noted, in the city center behind the Palace of the Republic. The other, far from the center, was the scene of many official ceremonies but was otherwise encountered by few visitors. The role of the Thälmann statue as the more blatantly political gesture was underscored by the fact that, apart from residents of its immediate neighborhood, it was most visible to the twice-daily convoy of leaders passing by. The audience for the Marx-Engels Forum, by contrast, was the GDR public in its un-regimented form, foreign visitors to East Berlin, and intellectuals and artists. Meanwhile, the most prominent public space of all carried the name Marx-Engels-Platz and the function of a parking lot.

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¹ Proposal to Politburo from Abteilung Wirtschaftspolitik, 14 Aug. 1950, in Stiftung Archiv der Parteien und Massenorganisationen der DDR im Bundesarchiv, Berlin (hereafter SAPMO-BA), Nachlass Wilhelm Pieck, NY4036/686, fol. 197; Gerd-H. Zuchold, "Der Abriss der Ruinen des Stadtschlusses und der Bauakademie in Ost-Berlin," *Deutschland Archiv* 18 (1985), 178-207; Werner Durth, Niels Gutschow, and Jörn Düvel, *Architektur und Städtebau der DDR* (Frankfurt 1998), II, 65-67, 214-18.

² Bruno Flierl, "Der zentrale Ort in Berlin—Zur räumlichen Inszenierung sozialistischer Zentralität," in *Gebaute DDR: Über Stadtplaner, Architekten und die Macht* (Berlin 1998), 121-71.

³ Flierl, "Der zentrale Ort," 135-45; Simone Hain, "Berlin-Ost: 'Im Westen wird man sich wundern,'" in Klaus von Beyme et al., eds., *Neue Städte aus Ruinen* (Munich 1992), 52-7.

⁴ Peter Müller, *Symbol mit Aussicht: Die Geschichte des Berliner Fernsehturms* (Berlin 1999).

⁵ Flierl, "Der zentrale Ort," 152-5. Reminiscences of the building can be found in Kirsten Heidler, ed., *Von Erichs Lampenladen zur Asbestruine: Alles über den Palast der Republik* (Berlin 1998); and Rudolf Ellereit and Horst Wellner, eds., *Kampf um den Palast* (n.p. 1996).

⁶ Alan Nothnagle, *Building the East German Myth: Historical Mythology and Youth Propaganda in the German Democratic Republic, 1945-1989* (Ann Arbor 1999), 39-93; for Soviet precedents, compare Sheila Fitzpatrick, *The Cultural Front: Power and Culture in Revolutionary Russia* (Ithaca 1992).

⁷ Fritz Cremer, in *Bildende Kunst und Architektur: Materialien der Plenartagung vom 31. Mai 1968*, Deutsche Akademie der Künste zu Berlin, *Arbeitshefte*, no. 2, 1969, 19; Simone Hain, "Konfigurationen der Urbanität: Ein Lernprozess im sozialen Raum," in *Archäologie und Aneignung: Ideen, Pläne und Stadtfigurationen* (Erkner 1996), 112; Bruno Flierl, "Politische Wandbilder und Denkmäler im Stadtraum," in *Gebaute DDR*, 102-3. In a 1973 statement, Cremer repeated his wishes but claimed to see signs of progress: Bundesarchiv, Berlin (hereafter BA), DY30/38790.

⁸ Maria Rüger, "Das Berliner Lenin-Denkmal," *Kritische Berichte*, 20, 3 (1992), 36-44. On Walter Ulbricht's attempts to have Soviet sculptors influence their GDR counterparts: Brigitte Hartel, "Denkmalgestaltungen in der DDR," Diss., Humboldt University, Berlin, 1992, 44.

⁹ On the Thälmann cult, see Nothnagle, *Building the East German Myth*, 115-27; and Maoz Azaryahu, *Von Wilhelmsplatz zu Thälmannplatz: Politische Symbole im öffentlichen Leben der DDR* (Gerlingen 1991), 151-5.

¹⁰ Thomas Flierl, "'Thälmann und Thälmann vor allen': Ein Nationaldenkmal für die Hauptstadt der DDR, Berlin," in Günter Feist, ed., *Kunstdokumentation SBZ/DDR 1945-1990* (Cologne 1996), 379-82.

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- ¹¹ Hartel, "Denkmalgestaltungen," 129.
- ¹² SAPMO-BA, DY30/38790 contains a description of the project submitted by Engelhardt on 7 Aug. 1973. See also Flierl, "Der zentrale Ort," 156-7.
- ¹³ Flierl, "Der zentrale Ort," 158-59; BA, DR1/1755.
- ¹⁴ Kurt Hager, *Erinnerungen* (Leipzig 1996), 288; Hager to Honecker, 13 Nov. 1984, in SAPMO-BA, DY30/35498; interview with Ludwig Deiters, 11 May 1999.
- ¹⁵ "Schlusswort des Ministers für Kultur," 5 Nov. 1980 (at gemeinsame Arbeitstagung des Ministeriums für Kultur und Ministeriums für Bauwesen im Zusammenarbeit mit dem Bund der Architekten und Verein bildender Künstler), 9 (in BA, DR1/7648).
- ¹⁶ Norden to Honecker, 28 June 1977, in SAPMO-BA, DY30/38790. Honecker had also mentioned the Lenin statue in the discussion. He passed Norden's letter on to Hager with the note, "Dear Kurt, please speak with Albert."
- ¹⁷ Wolfgang Junker, "Information über die Vorbereitung der Errichtung eines Marx-Engels-Denkmal auf dem Marx-Engels-Platz in der Hauptstadt der DDR, Berlin," 6 Oct. 1982, in BA, DH1/33091. Junker notes (2) that "this proposal has not been discussed with Comrade Hager."
- ¹⁸ Hager to Honecker, 25 Jan. 1983, in SAPMO-BA, DY30/38790.
- ¹⁹ Hager-Engelhardt and Hager-Honecker correspondence in SAPMO-BA, DY30/38790; "Information über die Beratung zum Standort und zum Aufbau des Marx-Engels-Denkmal in der Hauptstadt der DDR Berlin, am 18.1.1983," Zentralkomitee, Abteilung Bauwesen, in SAPMO-BA, DY30/33676/2; "Vorlage für das Politbüro," 24 Jan. 1983, in BA, DR1/1753, fol. 28-33, and in BA, DR1/1757B, fol. 117-21; "Protokoll Nr. 10 der Sitzung des Sekretariats des ZK vom 26.1.83," 4, in SAPMO-BA, DY30/J IV 2/3--3473; Flierl, "Der zentrale Ort," 160.
- ²⁰ Bruno Flierl, "Vom Münzturm zum Fernsehturm: Höhendominanten in der Stadtplanung von Berlin," in Karl-Heinz Klingenburg, ed., *Studien zur Berliner Kunstgeschichte* (Leipzig 1986), 33-40. Hager maintained this threefold distinction in an undated report, probably from 1973, in BA, DR1/1753.
- ²¹ Hager to Honecker, 25 January 1983, in SAPMO-BA, DY30/38790.
- ²² These were among the comments recorded from visitors to exhibits of plans: "Zwischeninformation zur Ausstellung 'Marx-Engels-Denkmal—Ein Arbeitsbericht,'" 25 Apr. 1983, 2, in BA, DR1/1757B, fol. 43; and "Fragen und Probleme von Besuchern der Ausstellung im Palast der Republik anlässlich der XV. Bezirksdelegiertenkonferenz," Mar. 1984, 3, in Landesarchiv Berlin, C Rep. 900, IV E-2/3/153.
- ²³ Konrad Naumann, message to Hager, 16 Dec. 1982, in SAPMO-BA, DY30/38790.
- ²⁴ "Zwischeninformation zur Ausstellung 'Marx-Engels-Denkmal—Ein Arbeitsbericht,'" 25 Apr. 1983, and Friedrich Nostitz, "Vorläufige Auswertung von Publikumsmeinungen in der Ausstellung 'Marx-Engels-Forum...,'" both in BA, DR1/1757B, fol. 37-45. On another copy of the former, in SAPMO-BA, DY30/38790, passages criticizing the new location and the form of the Marx-Engels statue have been underlined, probably by Honecker. (Hager=s note to Honecker, 26 Apr. 1983, sending this report to him, is in SAPMO-BA, DY30/33505.)
- ²⁵ Letter from Gerd Lüdersdorf, in BA, DR1/1759A, fol. 34-5.
- ²⁶ Letter from Karl-Heinz Maisch, 19 Apr. 1983, in BA, DR1/1759A, fol. 40.
- ²⁷ Letter from Ernst Schürer, 25 Apr. 1983, in BA, DR1/1759A, fol. 41-48. But in a letter of 27 April (fol. 49), he withdrew his criticisms without explanation. Self-serving but nonetheless plausible remarks in the two reports cited in note 22 (above) stress the ability of official guides at the exhibitions to change the minds of skeptical viewers.
- ²⁸ Helmut Netzker, "Gedanken zur Ausstellung über das Marx-Engels-Forum," *Neues Deutschland*, 29 Apr. 1983; Hager to Honecker, 26 Apr. 1983, in SAPMO-BA, DY30/33505.
- ²⁹ *Neues Deutschland*, 5/6 Apr. 1986; Flierl, "Der zentrale Ort," 162.
- ³⁰ Peter H. Feist, interview, 5 May 1999.
- ³¹ Report by Hager, 19 Apr. 1985, in DR1/1758, fol. 157.
- ³² Engelhardt to Hager, 15 Sept. 1986; Hager to Honecker, 22 Sept., with Honecker's handwritten reply on it; Hager to Engelhardt, 23 Sept.—all in SAPMO-BA, DY30/38790.