Nine Months, Three Systems, Millions of Fates:
A Social History of Thuringia between January and September 1945
Spuren e.V./TRACES is a non-partisan, non-profit educational organization that facilitates exchange between different nationalities and generations by:

• organizing **short-term educational programs** (presentations, workshops, screenings, concerts)

• creating longer-term **exhibits, related events and multi-media documentation**

• bringing together **witnesses to history and learners**
As an example: One of our interviewees, Ernst Winkler of Arnstadt, witnessed first-hand the collapse of the Third Reich, then the chaos of first American and finally Soviet occupation.
Prior Exhibits in Germany:

- German POWs in the USA,
- US-POWs in Germany during WWII,
- family histories, emphasizing their roots of conflict as a means to prevent it socially
- lessons we can draw from past events and use today; for example (next slide)
ENCOUNTERS with “the Other:”

BEGEGNUNGEN mit “dem Anderen:”

Stadtmuseum Weimar
sowohl in den Stadtmuseen Erfurt und Dresden
Information: www.DE.TRACES.org
unterstützt von Quäker-Hilfe e.V. u.a.

“refugees, prisoners of war, and internees in Thuringia and Saxony—past and present”

Spuren e.V.

März/ March
3. - 30.

Stadtmuseum Weimar
Karl-Liebknecht-Str. 5-9
99423 Weimar
Tel.: +49(0 36 43) 826 00
Dresden in WWII - Beauty and Tragedy:
Oil Paintings and Watercolor Drawings by the Esslinger Artist Eugen Luick (1908-1991)

15 February to 8 March 2015 at Galerie 13, Esslingen
19 March to 23 April 2015 at the Universität Heidelberg’s Center for American Studies (HCA)

Behind Barbed Wire: German and US POWS during WWII
Our Current Project:
the BUS-eum:

- The BUS-eum makes it possible for us to **present our research** easily,
- to reach **people in urban as well as rural areas**, and to **(re-)live history** in an unusual space ("a classroom on wheels").
ROLE MODELS for a NEW BUS-eum (a selection):

• **BUS-eum 1**: Behind Barbed Wire
  - Midwest POWs in Nazi Germany, 1943-45

• **BUS-eum 2**: Held on the Homefront
  - German POWs in the U.S., 1943-46

Since 2004, the BUS-eum has toured some 1750 cities in 12 Midwest states.
At Home in the Heartland: Forgotten Stories of How Iowans Got to Be “Us”

- Docents Dr. Luick-Thrams and Irving Kellman visited 86 cities in Iowa/USA between 2015 and 2016.

- The basis of the mobile museum’s exhibit was Luick-Thrams’ book *Roots of Darkness*, his trilogy about the social history of Iowa between 1673 and 1980, as seen through one family.

- In addition, Luick-Thrams organized workshops, catalogs and presentations for pupils, students, and adults, so that they could interact with “Zeitzeugen” or “witnesses to history.”

- Teachers and students used the exhibit catalog to learn about the BUS-eum before their visit or study it in-depth later.
OUR NEWEST PLANS include to:

✓ create a new mobile museum, a “BUS-eum” in **Germany**, then take it to the Midwest on-tour

✓ organize presentations and train pupils or students to conduct interviews at schools, museums and other cultural institutions

✓ offer workshops and other events for inter-cultural and inter-generational exchange
This exhibit focuses on:

- the last months of the **NAZI-REGIME**
- the 3-month-long **U.S.OCCUPATION**, then
- the first 3 months of the **SOVIET OCCUPATION** ... as seen in the next frames:
The Third Reich's last months: January to March 1945
Thuringia under U.S.-occupation: April to July 1945
Thuringia at the beginning of the Soviet occupation: July to September 1945
Some central questions covered in the exhibit:

- Which historical events have influenced the current political climate? How have we come to terms with the past—or failed to?

Exhibit components:

- diaries, letters, drawings, photos, films, witnesses’ interviews
- We would also like to record witnesses’ interviews while on the road (for an oral history)

Main intentions behind the BUS-eum:

- To preserve historical events, then use them as case studies to understand current problems and possible responses to them

Partners:

- ministries/depts. of education, civic institutions, schools, universities, museums, churches and other cultural organizations
An example:
A - Windows
B - Seats
C - Hanging beds
D - Speakers corner
E - TV
F - Exhibit panels on exterior of the museum
G - Doors
H - Stairs
I - Storage
OUR ROUTE:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>expense</th>
<th>cost</th>
<th>additional notes:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bus [Purchase]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Retro-fitting Bus [Painting, Flooring, etc.]</td>
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<td>Panels [Fabrication]</td>
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<td>Technology</td>
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<td>Bus Maintenance</td>
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<td>500/month</td>
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<td>Docent [PHD Historian]</td>
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FURTHER INFORMATION at websites:
http://de.traces.org/
http://roots.traces.org/
http://traces.org/index.htm

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