



Devil in the Sand – The Case of the Teufelsberg Berlin and its cultural evidence

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For the Teufelsberg Mountain, we suggest developing this place as a site of remembering the consequences of WW II. Its very existence expresses the material and nonmaterial loss of hundreds of thousands of people during WWII. In the rubble lies buried the homes, schools, industry, and cultural values that have been destroyed by war and the failed politics behind it. The present, primary use of Teufelsberg as a site for recreation and leisure does not honor such memorialization in any way. One reason for this is that history is inevitably hidden, embedded in the soil profile. Our task as soil scientists, together with historians, cultural scientists, artists and designers, is to help preserve this place as part of the cultural soilscape, to make it accessible, and to ensure that historical reference is facilitated. Finally, the case of Teufelsberg has as much to do with the future as it does with the past. Albrecht Speer's vision of a thousand year "ruin value" finds its true legacy not in its visible shape but in the chemical compounds of its materials. No cost/benefit analysis offered by the ecosystem services framework can reconcile the ruin we are faced to live with for the next millennia. This too must be communicated so that future generations know the impact of war and that rubble will have on their future sustenance and well-being.