## **Table of Contents**

| Ac | cknowledgements                     | 9   |
|----|-------------------------------------|-----|
| Li | st of Abbreviations                 | 11  |
| In | troduction                          | 17  |
|    | Getting access                      | 17  |
|    | Studying "fallen elites"            | 22  |
|    | The purpose of this book            | 25  |
|    | Remembering the GDR                 | 26  |
|    | Three types of memory               | 29  |
|    | Political epistemics                | 34  |
|    | The Stasi stigma                    | 40  |
|    | Overview of the book                | 42  |
| Pa | art I Memory and Nostalgia          |     |
| 1  | The Emotional Factor                | 51  |
|    | Memory, Nostalgia and Politics      |     |
|    | Communicative memory                | 53  |
|    | Collective recalling and forgetting | 58  |
|    | Compartmentalized disremembering    | 61  |
|    | Nostalgia and trauma                | 66  |
|    | Nostalgia as a coping strategy      | 72  |
|    | Claiming "trauma"                   | 74  |
|    | Nostalgia and politics              | 78  |
| 2  | OKV Biographies                     | 89  |
|    | Shared Memories and Arguments       |     |
|    | The socialist autobiography         | 90  |
|    | I OKV activists' stories            | 93  |
|    | Stasi officer                       | 95  |
|    | Cultural functionary                | 97  |
|    | Former spy                          | 99  |
|    | Socialist academician               | 102 |
|    | Stasi drop-out                      | 104 |
|    | Hereditary communist                | 107 |



|    | OKV sympathizer  | 110 |
|----|--|-----|
|    | II Analysis of the (auto)biographies                         | 115 |
|    | A coherent age cohort  | 115 |
|    | Conversion narratives and social mobility                    | 116 |
|    | The personal is political: On the arguments in OKV autobiog- |     |
|    | raphies  | 123 |
|    | Antifascism  | 123 |
|    | Social mobility  | 125 |
|    | Conclusion   | 128 |
| Pä | art II The Ostdeutsches Kuratorium von Verbänden             |     |
| 3  | The Ostdeutsches Kuratorium von Verbänden                    | 135 |
|    | Origins, Structures, Strategies                              |     |
|    | The origin of the OKV  | 135 |
|    | OKV membership   | 140 |
|    | Internal organization  | 142 |
|    | Activities   | 143 |
|    | The OKV's organizational core: GBM                           | 146 |
|    | The pension issue  | 148 |
|    | Thematic and organizational development of the GBM           | 151 |
|    | Support for GDR functionaries against "Siegerjustiz": GRH    | 154 |
|    | Conclusion   | 157 |
| 4  | A Complimentary and Overlapping Web                          | 163 |
|    | The OKV as a Social and Political Milieu                     |     |
|    | Antifascism and peace advocacy                               | 164 |
|    | Art and science  | 168 |
|    | Historical memory  | 171 |
|    | Associations of GDR traditions                               | 181 |
|    | Conditional outreach: Local initiatives on social justice    | 187 |
|    | Conclusion: The afterlife of the GDR?                        | 191 |

## Part III The Maintenance of Communal Continuity in Activism and Outreach

| 5  | Legal Activism  | 203 |
|----|---|-----|
|    | ISOR as the OKV's Major Lobby Organization                        |     |
|    | The issue of Stasi pensions                                       | 205 |
|    | ISOR's resistance to the pension laws                             | 206 |
|    | Limited success   | 210 |
|    | Running out of options  | 215 |
|    | ISOR as Sozialverein  | 218 |
|    | Shifting to political strategies?                                 | 221 |
|    | GDR continuity?   | 224 |
|    | GDR legal practices: Petitioning the authorities instead of suing |     |
|    | the state   | 227 |
|    | Mediation   | 229 |
|    | Contacting politicians  | 231 |
|    | Conclusion  | 232 |
| 6  | Left Without Its Party  | 237 |
|    | OKV Attempts at Linkage   |     |
|    | After the divorce: The OKV and SED/PDS/Die Linke                  | 240 |
|    | Patron or traitor? Hans Modrow as a political mediator            | 246 |
|    | Flirting with the DKP   | 254 |
|    | Connections beyond the party spectrum                             | 256 |
|    | Conclusion  | 259 |
| Pá | art IV Conclusion   |     |
|    | Conclusion  | 269 |
|    | The Organization of Nostalgia                                     |     |
|    | Epistemic nostalgia   | 271 |
|    | Nostalgia narratives  | 273 |
|    | Strategies of continuity  | 275 |
|    | Organization  | 275 |
|    | Self-isolation  | 277 |
|    | (Re)framing   | 278 |
|    | The political environment   | 279 |
|    |   |     |

| Bibliograp                            | bhy   | 283               |
|---------------------------------------|---|-------------------|
| Index                                 |   | 301               |
| List of Fig                           | gures and Tables  |                   |
| Figure 3.1<br>Table 3.1<br>Figure 6.1 | The network of OKV member organizations Organizational diagram of OKV-affiliated organizations The OKV's possible partners and their placement according to traditional-new and West-East cleavages | 137<br>138<br>260 |