Special Session
- State Violence and Trauma

Transitional Unwalling:
non-sites of re-memories, open city and participatory conciliation in divided and reunified Berlin

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Abstract:
The abrupt and violent imposition of a physical wall in 1961 upon Berlin further wounded and scarred the fabric of a city that was already a palimpsest of destruction and divide. Since the moment of the ‘fall of the wall’ in 1989 and subsequently the re-establishment of Berlin as the capital of reunified Germany, the process of healing scars of divide has been dominated by monumental plans and projects driven by the urge to immediately clear away all physical evidence of the violent wall. This urge is partially a matter of a perceived historical duty to memorialise events as monuments in order to clear the ground for a positivistic future, and partially a wish that the removal of physical reminders would aid the recovering of psychological wounds in Berliners’ memories and identities. Yet, it remains palpable even today that the differences of mentalities, ideologies and socio-cultural identities between German populations of divided histories across the C20th century continue to be reflected in public sentiments for or against the ‘others’, regional politics and elections, extremist views and populism tendencies. The rather quick removal of the ‘wall’ did not correspond to a quick remedy: the wall and its ‘unwalling’ was not allowed a part in the transitional process of the city, nor allowed to contribute as a lived element in people’s lived memories, where the voluntary and involuntary recollections of a shared history can offer a more conciliatory basis of shared present.

The strategic distraction away from the wall, perceived as a ‘negative’ physical element of the city of the divided past, and to focus entirely on the erection of new monuments or grand developments in place of the wall’s mundane physical presence and contingent structures, reflected the assumption that negative public emotions, which can be embodied in objects, spaces, names, garments, images and physical environments, must be dissipated quickly before a positive and rationalised process of conciliation can begin. To counter this assumption, this paper traces an alternative mode of ‘unwalling’ through ‘non–sites of re–memories’, as that which resists the grandiose models of ‘sites of memory’ instrumentally associated with a post–rationalised, authoritative history. Transitional unwalling is examined in four interconnected parts: ‘the wall’ (after the Wall) lays bare the problems of divide as a persistent problem in Berlin and in the context of Germany long after the fall of the Wall: the ‘supra/infra/inter–walling’ stories of tunnelling as that which inextricably bond the memories of the Wall with the physical fabric of the city; the ‘de/dis/counter–walling’ which presents a positive contradiction of disregarding and conciliation of Berlin’s urban identities and development plans between past and present, seeding the significant concept of ‘open architecture’; and finally the ‘ex/post/trans–walling’ traces the turbulent debates and contestations between ‘site of memorialisations’ and ‘non–sites of re–memories’ in the two decades after the fall of the Wall. The critique on the phenomenon of ‘sites of memory’ by Pierre Nora, the approach of ‘open architecture’ framed by Esra Akcan and the notion of ‘potential history’ proposed by Ariella Aisha Azoulay as commons of lived memories in the company of others through unlearning archives and dismantling thresholds are interwoven in the account of Berlin’s transitional unwalling, which are further linked to Mihaiela Mihaei’s stance on the role of negative public emotions in the expression of moral and social psychology of democratic transitional moments, and the call for politics of affinity and passion by Chantal Mouffe and Donna Haraway.
part 1:
the wall (after the Wall)

'East German dissident Bärbel Bohley, after the fall of the wall, famously remarked of the reconciliation process: 'Wir haben Gerechtigkeit gesucht und den Rechtsstaat bekommen' – ‘We wanted justice, but instead we got the rule of law.’ This statement opened up heated debates not just regarding the limitations of law but about something deeper, unresolved to this day. The belief in the role of 'virtue' in democracies – beginning with Montesquieu – is part of a long tradition. As archaic as this idea has begun to seem in early twenty-first-century politics, it nevertheless haunts the civic realm. In many ways it is at the base of all the conversations I have had in Germany about the post-wall period. Despite the past, there is the desire to live in a just society. This is also one of the reasons why, even beyond the charges brought against the GDR’s leaders, the issue of collaboration has continued to dominate public discussions.

‘Over the last twenty years it has been clear that it is grief over the unquantifiable but fragile phenomena of intercommunity ethics that has been most painful.’


As a consequence of its own notoriety–turned–fame, and the problem of simplification when political representations became synonymous with collective memorialisations, what little remains of the Berlin Wall and associated border apparatus can be found today in different neighbourhoods of the city: some in odd juxtaposition with new urban developments: some informally blending in with current streetscape or parkscapes; some appearing rather vulnerable behind protection fences: some restored and venerated through incorporation with memorial projects: some proactively repurposed and acquired a second, contemporaneous life. Further fetishised fragments of itself have been passionately chiselled out and travelled into different homes in the world showed off as personal memorabilia and touristic souvenirs.¹

Out of the 302 watchtowers and command centres that overlooked the 160km wall which supposedly protected the people of GDR, only a few still stands, offering a glimpse of quasi ‘room–like ‘condition, a stealth of an almost inhabitable space along the relentless, impenetrable and de–humanised construct.² The way these towers were made – either part of the A–Turm

¹ berlin wall as the ‘absent monument’, Memorializing the GDR: Monuments and Memory after 1989 By Anna Saunders – ch 5
the berlin wall: historical document, tourist magnet or urban eyesore?
² remaining watch towers along the wall:
Wachturm am Potsdamer Platz | Watchtower at Potsdamer Platz
Wachturm der Führungsstelle Kiefer Eck | Gedenkstätte Günter Litfin
Wachturm Bernauer Straße | Gedenkstätte Berliner Mauer
Wachturm Schlesischer Busch (The Watch residency projects)
Wachturm Mühlenspeicher
(Communications Tower, AT) or B-Turm (Observation Tower, BT) series – is also reminiscent of the well-known standardised pre-fab panel systems (Plattenbau) of the majority of housing construction under GDR. Ever since the an artist took over occupation of the watchtower along Schelsischen Busch three days before border control ceased on 1 July 1990, the watch tower reincarnated into ‘The Watch’ and opened itself up to a variety of residencies that provokes its past forbiddance. Choreographer–resident Clément Layes remarks: ‘It takes its own time. It is as though the space itself is hallucinating a fiction and obliges those within its walls to work in a gap between times.’ Much more than a passive ‘site of memory’, a category which this paper will later interrogate, which other remaining towers have become, the precarious contemporaneity of ‘The Watch’ in the relic of a watchtower offers itself as an anachronistic time capsule of reflection, dialogue and production, thus empowered as a ‘site of re–memories’. In this sense, ‘The Watch’ as a project a constant remaking of memory is not only a provocation of, thus liberation from, its past forbiddance, but also a provocation of the relation of such ‘sites’ in the city where they were engrained, and how the continuous and contemporary nature of remaking memories can be productive in the project of the city that can address its own history of trauma and justice.

These remnants and their odd fates are in fact overshadowed by what deemed more politically–sensitive and culturally–valuable enterprises of ‘re–presenting’ the Berlin Wall, accounting and remembering its variegated forms and effects as simulations and virtual re–enactments – in museums, as exhibitions, on websites, in archives, along walks, through images and stories – curated, reflected, evidential, post–rationalized, aestheticised and memorialised. These two trajectories meet occasionally, yet uncomfortably. The relegation of the historical duty of remembrance to these cultural programs of re–presentations, albeit arguably educational and artistic, exposes one deliberate intention to avoid attributing too much attention to the ‘actual’ Wall for the fear of attracting a conflicting mix of negative emotions, which would destabilise the politics of reunification and betray the desired picture of a happy whole healed of its dark, divided past. The Wall was the location of the wound, the entity that traumatised the city and the separated people: more so, it came to symbolise impasse and injustice, of events and experiences of fear, anger and pain that could not bear to be revisited, and could only be accessed and reframed with care and trepidation.

The deliberate distancing of the cultural memorial projects of the Wall with the Wall itself can be understood as an accepted mode of ‘unwalling’, which serves the purpose of memorialising, while not politicising nor emotionalising, historical events away from the actual sites of occurrences and physical situations intertwining spaces, substances, bodies and senses. The city, therefore, does not need to burden itself with the task to remember because the re–presentation of these histories and memories is safely relocated to the domain of cultural institutions, claiming to be the neural mediators between past knowledge and contemporary relevance. The city can carry on with the task of projecting a future, referring at will to different idealised or practical models of urbanism through its planning and development apparatus, for a reunified populace and a consensual vision: this drive

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1 bach memory landscapes and the labor of the negative in berlin and Daniela sandler’s ’Counterpreservation: Decrepitude and Memory in Postunification Berlin Third Text, 2011. also
is only inconvenienced at places where there may be incidental and relatively insignificant ‘leftover’ physical bits of historical ‘problems’.\(^4\) By tolerating these occasional remnants while proliferating the unwalling projects involving no actual walls, the the city and its people can positively let the past be gone and move on.

As the opening extract from Ellen Hinsey’s ‘Berlin Journal 1989–2009’ poignantly reveals, long after the fall of the Wall, the sense of ‘divide’ persisted. On electoral outcome maps, the divide continues to be sharply visible as the ‘red’ remains popular within the outline of the former GDR territory, as ‘them’ ex-Eastern Germans continue to support political parties representing or have affinities with socialist principles inherited from the former East or political discourse of the Left. She has portrayed characters – the well-dressed law student from West Berlin at the scene of the fall of the Wall in 1990 to who said ‘they are coming… they will take our jobs’, amidst rallies crying ‘We are the people’… we are one people’; ten years later, the man handing out flyers who expressed abandonment and disappointment of the failure of the ‘third way’ which promised to combine a strong social agenda with democracy and a market economy: the waiter’s friend who visited the unemployment office only to find, on the other side of the desk, her interrogator who had knocked out all her from teeth: twenty years later, the opera singer with a nostalgia for the GDR, not as a political system, but the sense of solidarity in impoverishment, and the lack of choices in consumer goods that turned attention to literature and music: the architect who for twenty years worked in ex-East Germany with optimism of developing a new civic culture, yet critical of the pressure from developers to restore only façades but fill in medieval cellars, part of an alarming process of obliteration of urban history: and finally the West German television anchorwoman who got drunk at Brandenburg Gate on night of the official ceremony of the twentieth anniversary of the fall of the Wall shrugs her shoulder and said ‘History and justice, we live those subjects every day. In fact we are sick of them.’

In sharp contrast to the reality behind these narratives, on a map of Berlin today, the eagerness of the municipality to progress the vision of unity has quite efficiently achieved, through three decades of intensive urban development and building/rebuilding activities, the aims of erasing almost all traces of the physical divide from the era of the Wall. It would have been inconceivable for the authority to accept the presence of either the positive forms of the walls or its associated negative forms of large ‘no man’s land’ zones in any of its future projections. There were a period of a few years just after the official fall of the Wall in 1961 that, when the border regime and its apparatus were removed, a surreal large wasteland appeared right in the centre of Berlin between Brandenburg Gate, Potsdamer Platz and Leipziger Platz and acquired affectionate names from Berliners as their ‘wonderful city steppes’ and their ‘prairie of history’. There was one moment, as Andreas Huyssen has captured, it unintentionally acquired the presence of a memorial when steel rods reinforcement within the wall were exposed, after the concrete bits were chipped off, and marched across this haunted space, blowing colourful paper leaves in the wind. Having served as a wandering ground, venue for open rock concerts and sporadic cultural events, Huyssen remarks how this temporary

\(^4\) certain ‘inconvenience’ remnants have been removed despite mass protest, one provocative story would be the Berlin Wall section removed despite protests – tear down parts of historic East Side Gallery to make way for access route to luxury flats, Memorializing the GDR: Monuments and Memory after 1989 By Anna Saunders – ch 5 the berlin wall: historical document, tourist magnet or urban eyesore?
‘void’ in the city rendered itself as a convenient ‘tabula rasa’ which became quickly filled up with an ambitious, symbolically charged yet alienating development plan, with the pretence to restore it to how it ‘was’ – but which past and whose past?

Huyssten wishes to see Berlin as a ‘palimpsest, a disparate city–text that is being rewritten while previous text is preserved, traces are restored, erasures documented, all of it resulting in a complex web of historical markers that point to the continuing heterogeneous life of a vital city’. Yet in the cracks of showcase architecture and rapidly realised urban visions, the mundane city, its incongruous spaces and incremental modifications, played a limited role in the plethora of projects of commemorations, remembrance, memorials and institutions purposely feeding into the contemporary obsession with memory, such as museums, archives, permanent exhibitions and documentation centres. The very physical fabric in which the divide had been scared on, the situated substrate of lived memories and traumatic events across pre- and post-wall years, the actual, troubled Berlin continue to be disembodied from that spectacular vision of a palimpsest, a victim of its own limelight. Because the motivation of a particular kind of ‘unwalling’ relies on the separation between memorialisation and urban development, there needed to be a drastic limitation on how many and how much of the continual and heterogeneous sites of embodied memories, the scenes, characters and stuff of everyday incidences that have led to drastic consequences, the normality that prefigured the tragedy, can shift from the presumed category of ‘non–sites’ to be recognised as ‘sites’ primed for symbolisation, formalisation, dramatisation and historicisation. One must not assume that these ‘non–sites’ lack of evidence of personal or collective memories, nor historical knowledge: they are populated by commemoration plaques, intervened by memorials, recognised on city guides, filed in archives, entered on databases and websites, featured in journals, catalogues and books. The abundance of these collected and organised ‘evidence’, presented and re–enacted persuasively through a plurality of mediums, have only heightened the insidious revelation that the bits of the city in which these incidences happened have well and truly been erased. This palimpsest, where ‘unwalling’ has supposedly taken place, can only function in a highly selective way: the symbolic and ideal intention to frame official ‘sites’ to commemorate a history of pain, violence and injustice for everyone – the ‘one people’ – only became more painful for those who had been directly affected, yet not given access and appropriate means of participation in the process of decisions that which shaped this assumed collective representation. On the one hand, this is because the specific physical anchors of memory in the city – the ‘sites’ significant to those who remembers – have been erased without affording opportunities to return, retell and reinteract differences in accounts, views and feelings. On the other hand, they resent the pressure to give virtuous consent to a collective representation at the new ‘site’, under the pretence of unity, bypassing the necessary respect for the varied, contingent and personal nature of traumatic memories and corresponding sense of injustice.

Being aware that I am treading on crowded and heated grounds – knowing that every grain of the city of Berlin’s soils and souls have been tampered by scholarships – I am contesting by now clichéd labels of ‘city of memory’ or ‘memory landscape’ to argue that the vehement ‘project of memory’ of Berlin have long forgotten the actual city, and as a result, it has lost the raison d’{é}tat of having

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5 Memory Landscapes and the Labor of the Negative in Berlin by Jonathan Bach
captured and represented so much of its own memory, the lingering contestation of justice and civic rights, and the relevance to its urbanity at large currently. The project of memory has been instrumentalised to become an apparatus for forgetting, or positively neglecting, removing the hinderance of actual sites of memory with messy bonds to actual people and their intimate contexts. Furthermore, although it seeks to communicate to people, the mode of detachment inherent in its operation renders such relation passive and didactic – visitors arrive to see and hear, consume the experience and knowledge, and perhaps depart with a subjective shift of his or her feelings and judgements, yet the memorialised object shall be fixed and would not be changed with the encounter. In this sense, it stopped being an active ‘site’, but becoming a different kind of ‘un-site’, devoid of actual memory, in order that it can be purified within a self–perpetuating memorial politics, which is the politics of history. From ‘site’ to ‘non-site’ the transition became twofold: firstly, a tabula rasa emerges when the specificity of an urban space in relation to a personal memory is diluted by re–site–ing the memory at a different place in a different form, assuming that the commonality of such memory can thus be achieved through de–siting: and secondly, the saturation of new presences of memorials upon this tabula rasa of de–sited memories can further solidify and represent unity of an urban landscape. That is where, as the project of the city, with the help of the project of memory, reached a vertiginous and terrifying promise of a consensual, smoothed over and assimilated terrain of unified, historicalised signs of memory, doing away with all possible gaps and loopholes, thus possibilities of differences inherent to actual site of memory.

The selective mnemonic principle of the palimpsest analogy, the singular history that it attempt to congealed which avoids references to the cracked ‘real’, thus produces mere ‘sites of memorialisation’, which Pierre Nora describes as the way we organise the past, rather than ‘sites of memory’, which Nora argues to be present and live, and have arisen from fracturing with the past. Berlin affirms Nora’s insight – ‘We speak so much of memory because there is so little of it left,’ – and its projects affirms Nora’s definition of ‘sites of memory’ as a eulogy to the death of the essentially living, diverging and vulnerable memory by the dominant desire for a neutral, unifying history. While Nora attributes sites of memories to the deliberate creation of commemorations, anniversaries, archives and museums, all of which are instruments of history, which in turn camouflage history as a pseudo–collective construct. Taking Nora’s articulation of the problems of current society’s obsession with ‘sites of memory’ as a point of departure, the paper starts by reframing these sites of fossilised and reconstituted pasts in service of history as ‘sites of memorials or memorialisation’ behind glass cabinets, rather than ‘sites of memory’, the frustrated stones thrown yet again to smash windows. The intention is, firstly, to at least etymologically restore the meaning of memory in the context of this paper to that which Nora lamented as lost: and secondly, to rediscover the ontological potential of living, social and collective memory in the identification of ‘non–sites’ in the city, sites of change that are not deliberately planned, rationally organised nor singularly authored, and continue to resist being subsumed retrospectively as a unifying narrative. Instead, qualities of irregularity, contingency, incongruity, fallacy and incompleteness of ‘non–sites’, suspended between notions of ‘non–places’ and the ‘infraordinary’, are instilled with the remaking of memories through remaking of urban spaces and relations. The connection, as the paper seeks to

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6 reference to Marc Augé and George Perec
demonstrate through the process of ‘re~memories at non~sites’ as a critique of Berlin’s ‘unwalling’ process, is the dependency of vital urbanity with vital memories.

But somehow, the disobedient and defiant Berlin, resisted: it wanted less of a palimpsest, but perhaps more of a temporal constellation, offering differentiated readings by discerning actors along its anachronistic and multi~dimensional trajectory. The wish to continue to uncover and embrace stories and events that may deem negative or depresive, as a force that tears up the smooth continuity of a palimpsest, is what Berliners see as legitimate. This is what has been addressed by Mihaela Mihai’s study on the relation between the legitimate representation of negative emotions and its role in transitional justice, which she describes as the ‘moral and social psychology of democratic transitional moments’—forming and expressing one’s emotions in a way that does not violate the principle of equal respect for all. ‘The city of Berlin had to come to terms with how to accept the presence of the Wall – the tug of war between those demanding its urgent erasure and those who wish to see it preserved at parts as a ‘historical monstrosity’ – as a significant marker of negative emotions. These are emotions of not only its direct victims, those memorialised through memorial inscriptions, symbolic and artistic objects, perceived personal artefacts and exhibitions of archival documents, but all those implicated across three decades of the violence of the border regime.

This paper asks the question of how the city can be opened up with the possibility of ‘non~sites of re~memories’—that which with a distinct capacity to embrace negative emotions evoked through lived memories and embodied in the fabric of the city – to enable a personal, social and collective engagement with the process of transitional justice and the formation of a new collective identity for the city. Marcel Proust considers that our memories are embedded in physical situations, in objects, spaces and bodies, and that the re~experience of the situation would provoke an involuntary recollection.7 But to be able to fully extract the memory from the unconscious and to make it productive in the present of our lives, there needs to be ‘a hard and purposeful work of the conscious mind’, which Proust calls ‘creation’, and Walter Benjamin calls ‘actualisation’. The city, through these notions, becomes the substrate of this ‘work’: the ‘actualisation’ of involuntary recollection is that which not only recognise the relevance of past memories to the emotional constitutions in the present, but also the ‘actualisation’, understood as a form of creation through re~interpretation, is transformative in corresponding the change of cityscape with the change of the moral, social and psychological conditions of its people. Thus it is the responsibilities of those collaborating in the urban transformation to actively engage in the reinterpretation and reconstruction of urban identity by opening up to offer opportunities for people to ‘actualise’ their personal and collective memories – empowering architecture and urbanism with the ‘mediated role’ in transitional justice.

Each part of the essay has been given subtitles, a play of prefixes, that deliberately complicates the problem of a simplified understanding of ‘unwalling’ as that which has been dramatised as a matter of rapid demolition. The nuanced convolution of the ‘unwalling’ process, as that which oscillates,

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1 Alexander Wille, Fang-yu Li, Paola Laterza
Proust / Benjamin
even to this day, between being a historical artefact, a ruin, an evidence of violence, an eyesore, a ghost from the past, a resurrected monster, an annoying obstruction, an inconvenience to development, or a scene of drama. The ‘supra/infra/inter–walling’ part journeys through stories and re–memories of tunnelling in the 1960s as that which reveals the complicit relation between the city and the Wall in the battle between ‘walling’ and ‘crossing’. The ‘de/dis–counter–walling’ part discusses the crisis of urban identity of Berlin in the 1970s and 80s and significant shift in its approach to urbanism through the ‘gentle renewal’ programme of IBA 84/87 and driving concept of ‘open architecture’, which seeded the consideration of a certain urban common ground that can be shared between the two Berlins. Then the final part ‘ex/post/trans–walling’ debates the contestation between the enterprise of ‘sites of memorialisations’ and ‘non–sites of re–memories’ in post–wall Berlin, in particular the evolving ensemble of sites at the Bernauer Strasse Berlin Wall memorial across the two decades after the fall of the Wall, and implications since the introduction of the Gesamtkonzept for the remembrance of the Wall.

The prefix of ‘non–’ and ‘trans–’ share the sense of an ontology of the temporary. The propositional notion of ‘non–site’, as the word ‘site’ denotes a place or situation of action, instils the power and value of being able to take action, make changes, yet accepting that these transformations will always remain dynamic and in flux, and always open in the sense of welcoming the next occasion of dialogues and expression of differences, thus a new, possibly incongruous, action altering the results of the previous. In this open oscillation, which is the condition of ‘living’ that restores the personal, social and collective dimensions of ‘remembering’. Esra Akcan’s exploration of the category of ‘open architecture’, which will be discussed in a later part, picks up a trace from Jacques Derrida to Jacques Rancière in defending the importance of a democratic process that shall never be complete, and that ‘it involves an infinite openness to that which comes — which also means, an infinite openness to the Other or the newcomer.’ Under the ‘open’ condition, ‘non–sites’ do not work alone, because the definition of its ‘site–ness’ remains ambiguous: there are no clear, predetermined and static outlines, contents, users or required programs: and it may also be ambiguous in terms of its ownership status, occupancy patterns and physical conditions. That is why non–sites are inherently plural, as potentially sites–within–sites, sites–in–relation–to–sites and other–sites: and in a mode of multiplicity, many questions need to be asked and many conversations need to take place. These processes of working out and working through unleash the potency of people ‘remembering’ together, piecing together partial experiences and expectations, to articulate the force of latent affinities and solidarity between people, yet not undermining the indeterminate fluidity of a kind of ‘open democracy’ based on the politics of affinity, rather than fixed identity, and an urban spatial process of ‘differentiated commoning’ emerging from the constellation of activated non–sites.

part 2:
supra/infra/inter–walling
But the Berlin Wall, as we know, was not just the simple, vertical, linear and continuous feature that acted as a barrier to horizontal movement on the ground. From porous barbed wires and fences to the solid precast reinforced concrete panels, from single to double walls and the creation of a fortified zone, the East German regime soon realised that they needed much more to prevent their citizens outsmarting these border controls that were to keep them in. Both the plan to keep in and the urge to get out involved much more strategies around, along, above, within, beside, below and beyond the vertical wall per se. In the famous story of Tunnel 29 in 1962, the first escape story, told through the perspectives of three tunnellers Luigi Spina, Domenico Sesta and Wolf Schroeder, unfolding in real time on US news network NBC whose reporter and cameramen followed the tunnellers as it was being built in exchange for partially funding its construction. Reputed to have revolutionise TV news, as it was filmed in real time without knowing how it would end, the controversial decision for a US news network to finance a group of students building an escape tunnel under the Berlin Wall highlighted the intense involvement of media in the story–making, thus memory–making, of the Wall internationally. The tunnellers were told, when the US President J.F. Kennedy saw the documentary, it moved him to tears.

Right under the nose of East German border guards, and across one of the busiest streets Bernauer Strasse along the border, the tunnellers had chosen to start the tunnel at the West Berlin end in the cellar of a small factory, and despite their initial pretence that they were jazz musicians searching for a rehearsal space, the factory owner immediately understood that they intend to build a tunnel and have more than willingly agreed for them to use the cellar. The East Berlin point, however, had to be changed half way through their project because of flooding and the exposure of another tunnel, and ended up being in the basement of one of the tenements along Schönholzer Strasse, a street which had been split by the line of the border, with front entrances to buildings only meters away from the wall and heavily patrol. The city and the entirety of its messy conditions become complicit in the ‘walling’ and ‘crossing’ battle between enforcers and escapers: thresholds, passages, lacunas, fissures, labyrinths, substrates, services, shadows and noises were all cunningly observed, calculated, reinforced, penetrated and defended. Tunnellers begged and borrowed from friends in the government confidential information on public utilities, further researched about streetcar lines, water lines, and made engineering calculations of tunnel structures and necessary materials. They know that border guards have put grills in manholes and sewage pipes to prevent escape attempts, and use listening devices to capture any underground activities: if found, they would dig a small hole and shoot directly into it, or throw in explosives to collapse the suspected tunnel. By listening back, tunnellers could know where they are in relation to the guarded Wall, whether still in West Berlin where you can hear distinctively noises of streetcars, buses, and even be able to distinguish man and woman’s footsteps, or they have entered the subterranean world of East Berlin directly under the ‘death strip’ where, devoid of all other street noises, they can hear border police talking and patrol footsteps. Excessive rain have caused the tunnel to leak and flood, which made them unusable: but as resolute as the tunnellers were, they asked friends in the university to analyse the water which, after a week, turned out to be from a burst water main. More lucky still, their message to the water utility board of West Berlin was received and the leaking water main was serendipitously fixed, without exposing their tunnel project.
Not only is the sheer physicality of the city in and around the Wall of central importance to the tunnellers as a constructional challenge, they were also faced by the informational challenge as another form of ‘walling’, to be able to trust and control who to or not to communicate with in the city, to inform recruits, helpers, collaborators, media (especially pertinent as a weak point for Tunnell 29) and escapees (friends and relatives in the East that they want to help to get out) in different ways, yet vigilant to not to expose the project. In 2019, BBC retold the Tunnel 29 story from the perspective of a different tunneller, and revealed much more the parallel aspects of the Wall as an espionage – counter-espionage information network – watching, listening, covering, recording, spying, lying, trusting and betraying. This reworked history more than half a century later re-stitched memories of tunnellers told in contemporary interviews with new information from secret records that have been opened up in the course of time and from the depth of the Stasi headquarters archive since the fall of the Wall. It revealed the entanglement of the 1962 story of Tunnel 29 with other tunnels, the web of student–tunnellers and recruitments, knowledge and resource exchange, civilian and municipal support, media exposure, helpers–turned–spies, informants and espionage, victims and heroes. Some diggers of Tunnel 29, when flooded half way through, were involved in another tunnel project that was exposed by a Stasi spy who infiltrated the team, which led to them emerging from the tunnel to enter a trap and be greeted by border guards.

Yet, with a twist of fate, the tunnellers were lucky enough to escape from that close encounter with death and capture to return to their original tunnel to reach a partially successful ending. Joachim Rudolph, the tunneller who was the main storyteller in the BBC series, was one of those who were involved in both tunnel projects, who narrowed escaped the trap because of a moment of hesitation of East German soldiers, went on to describe another hair-raising moment when they finally broke through into the basement of one of the tenement blocks along Schönholzer Strasse, they didn’t know which number it was, which would be a crucial piece of information to tell people who wanted to escape via it. Joachim had to open the front door, passing through the forbidden threshold, and stepped onto the street, into a territory where he became a target to kill by patrolling border guards. He turned around to see the building from the front and managed to see the number 7 on the door, and again luckily not been caught, before disappearing back into the hidden tunnel to unleash the signal of ‘escape on’ across their infra–informational cross–wall network.

Listeners re–live these moments of determination, audacity, fear, failure, torment, terror, death, regret and joy through personal and collective memories to conjure an alternative perspective on the varied omnipresence of ‘walling’ – being supra–, infra– or inter to the erected wall – as physical, psychological and informational barriers intertwined in the fabric of the city, which is what acts of ‘unwalling’ in decades before the removal of the actual Wall attempted to overcome, circumventing it without touching it, crossing it without seeing it or being seen by it, bypassing its deterrence and defence without offending it. Obviously, the media ventures that aim to tell and re–tell stories, especially the personal, audacious and often tragic, efforts of overcoming the Wall and bypassing militarised confrontation, have fed the demand for spectacles to reinforce the political theatre of cold war. The original tunnel story of 1962 was consciously playing its role in it. At a point in time when the tunnel project was at an impasse because of flooding, the film showed the American reporter Piers Anderton crawled through the secret, cramped and muddy tunnel and sat down to have a sandwich break with a tunneller Domenico Sesta, who Anderton described as a ‘new generation of European youth’, and talked about how ‘politics is a game between capitalism
and communism: the man in the street wins nothing in this game.’ Knowing that this conversation captured as a live footage would resonate in the ears of an international audience already caught up with the emotional rides of tunnellers after following their measured and precarious actions for several weeks into the project, the reporter quoted Domenico further, relaying his distrust in all governments, and his belief in the individual capacity as a witness and to action: ‘I saw and heard what happened after the communists have closed the borders. I saw women in East Berlin weeping because their husbands are in the west, who will live forever without them. The East German rulers are swines, not because they are communist, but because they keep people living frightful lives.

People should live in happiness, with good eating and loving, not by an idiotic theory of a future one hundred years from now. I must help my friend and his family.’ The way that tunnellers, as how Domenico saw himself with a mundane existence, took the matter, and the fate of themselves and others depending on them, into their own hands, was heightened as a moment of both embodiment and empowerment – the man in the street (in this case also in the tunnel), sandwich, chat, motivation, action. The way the reporter picked up on Domenico’s Spanish background, alongside Luigi Spina’s Italian background, was a way to disclose the difference between the identity of Berliners and that of Germans, thus the relevance of the story as an international matter, reinforcing the projection of the Berlin Wall as a symbolic international ‘front’. Media became double-edged here. The ‘personal’ basis of such thought–sharing and memory–making had strategically been hijacked by the political heroism of ‘Ich bin ein Berliner’ of the 1960s, yet at the same time, especially after the work of re–telling more than 50 years later, the specificity of the material and immaterial facets of situation continue to resonate long after the end of the cold war, and in different ways when the symbolic ‘fronts’ between tyranny and freedom, trauma and justice, continue to play out the ‘walling’, ‘crossing’ and overcoming efforts individually and collectively.

Today, tunnels dug under the famous Bernauer Strasse have been marked on the surface of the ground as intermittent slabs, footstep distance apart, engraved with the name of the tunnel (named after the number of people escaped through it) and its year. Not all tunnels under that area have been built for the purpose of escape, but some were built by the Stasi to listen in and intersect areas where they expected to find escape tunnels, and at least one of these has been marked. Altogether, this area of contentious barriers, the surface manifestation of the subterranean battle of ‘walling’ and ‘crossing’, forms part of the memory landscape strategy in the Bernauer Strasse ensemble of Berlin Wall Memorial, Documentation Centre and Reconciliation Church. The immaterial aspect of the stories of tunnels and tunnels have been captured on official websites, guidebooks, retold through guided tours, as well as being part of the ever–growing internet–based archive by researchers, activists, social communities and history enthusiasts. Bernauer Strasse memorial complex is possibly as much Berlin has achieved in relating actual and personal sites of memory embedded in the fabric of the city with the project of sites of memorialisation in service of a collective history. It has been a long and treacherous journey to arrive at this assembly of opportunity for living memory, which will be expanded with the investigation on ‘ex/post/re–walling’, leading to a closing critique of ‘transitional unwalling’.
part 3:  
de/dis/counter-walling

By the 1980s, having lived with the Wall and the increasing sophistication of the GDR border regime for over two decades, the municipality of West Berlin and the FRG became well aware that they could no longer hinge their political attention solely on the stasis of the divide. Problems of the city that they faced were no longer dominated by ‘them’ behind the Wall, but by the dissidence and ‘others’ within Berlin: its souring reputation of being the mecca for the hip, cool, outcasted and countercultural have been increasingly met by frequent and fervent scenes of protests and confrontations. Berlin was suffering from an ‘identity crisis’, which became more acute with the arrival of its 750th jubilee year in 1987, and put to question the centrality of Berlin to West Germany. The municipality of West Berlin, with the arrival of the new chancellor Helmut Kohl who was keen to stabilise, normalise and re-center Berlin within West Germany as part of his intentions to shift ground of debates around the ‘working through of Germany’s past’ (Vergangenheitsbewältigung), the 750th anniversary was an opportunity to revamp Berlin’s socio-political image and its physical urban conditions. In this process, Berlin should shed its previous aberrant associations with outcasts, militants, inhospitality and volatility to embrace and promote a cosmopolitan, open and tolerant urban model that finds ‘unity in diversity’.

These scenes that haunted Berlin’s urban spaces – political activism, social movements, squatters occupations, drug use and unemployment, protests against government corruption and development plans, large scale demonstrations and riots – became the backdrop of a significant shift of public opinions toward postwar urban planning and its ‘modern architecture’. Berlin’s squatter movement brought the ‘Mietskasernen’ – the prominent and characteristic late nineteenth century Berlin urban block typology with interconnecting courtyards – to a positive limelight. This typology was linked to GDR at the start of the cold war, and further back, it was linked to the image of late nineteenth and early twentieth century industrialised Berlin that was vibrant and cosmopolitan, but dirty, congested and full of slums. The so far unplanned revival of the Berlin block, prompted by adhoc and proactive adaptations by squatters who may be students, unemployed, migrants and misfits, injected a new value to these ruinous and neglected urban spaces without provision of heating, water nor electricity, as that which can contribute to the sense of neighbourhood, social bonds and healthy community. The growing antagonism toward what was deemed progressive, liberal, modern and ‘western’ urban development, epitomised in media-hyped development projects in the 1950s

8 reference Emily Pugh and Emily Hinsey – linking Vergangenheitsbewältigung with the mission of the Enquete Commission – a special governmental body set up to investigate the ‘history and consequences of the SED Dictatorship’

‘Among the former Eastern Bloc countries, in the first years after reunification, Germany is seen to have pursued the most thorough measures of Vergangenheitsbewältigung – the coming to terms with the past. But the results on the ground are often something different. That said, the Germans, unlike the Poles and the Hungarians, for instance, had immediately introduced “futation” measures, a screening system that prohibited former Communist functionaries from holding governmental positions. There were trials for wall border guards as well as for high-ranking officials. Unlike what occurred in most of the Eastern Bloc countries, here a procedure for consulting one’s secret police file was quickly put in place, Germany had also taken on the thorny and complex question of property restitution. Finally, it was hoped that the Enquete Commission would accomplish what Truth and Reconciliation commissions had done for other post-dictatorial countries.
such as the district of Hansaviertel as part of the *Interbau* 1957 (where chair lifts were installed to enable visitors to experience the spectacle of modern living while it was still under construction), coupled by the growing interest in repairing what was unique to Berlin before the arrival of the international style, became the basis of the agenda for one of the largest, longest and most prominent urban development plan for Berlin – *International Bauausstellung* or International Building Exhibition (*IBA 84/87*) – and with a particular focus on tackling Berlin’s ongoing problem of housing. Josef Paul Kleihues, who co–edited the ‘Berlin – Models for a City’ series in 1977 together with Wolf Jobst Siedler, the author of *The Murdered City* (1965), put forward the critique on Berlin’s ‘identity crisis’ based on a series of study on ‘Berlin–typical forms’, which was later adopted as principles in the *IBA 87* programme. Kleihues and Siedler intentionally stretched Berlin’s urban memory back to its golden age as an expanding metropolis in the 1920s, such as scenes depicted in the iconic early film *Berlin: Symphony of a Great City* (1927) directed by Walter Ruttmann, and further back to the pragmatism of the ‘Hobrecht–Plan’ as the adaptable development plan of Berlin’s successful urban expansion since 1860s that resulted in the emergence of the *Mietkasernen* as a typological grain of the city. Looking forward by looking back into its own urban history, by re–imagining and re–constituting the fabric of the city deemed unique to Berlin involving Berliners of the present, Siedler and Kleihues’ project of collective re–memory of the city’s spatial, typological and material structures signalled an important shift in the history of Berlin’s urbanity. It also seeded a new consciousness to the debates on preservation and renewal, which became especially polemical in the next ‘post–wall’ decade when the reunified Berlin was suddenly confronted with two existing ‘presents’ and two immediate ‘pasts’, posing enormous challenges and resistances to Siedler and Kleihues’ proposition on Berlin’s new urban identity.

The coming together of the promotion of national and international relevance of Berlin’s 750th jubilee and intentions behind *IBA 87* meant the establishment of shared goals to define (West) Berlin by its divisions, which Emily Pugh summarises: ‘Specifically, both events sought to... actively and publicly acknowledging many of the divides and tensions the city had come to represent. The city would be presented being “at the middle and at the border” of global and national politics, economics and culture, and jubilee activities would emphasise multiple perspectives and the “diversity of various ways of life, the coexistence of old and new, of experiment and tradition” in West Berlin.’ The mutual theme revolved around ‘Remembrance – Renewal – Dialogue’, as the jubilee director Ulrich Eckhardt remarked. Rather than just the promotion of newness and a singular narrative of the city, the focus around events in 1987 has shifted to become the dialogue between old and new: this tone of conciliation and tolerant co–existence have permeated the project of relating and reinterpreting past to present and the project of urban transformation.

It was palpable that already in the 1980s, the presence of the Wall both discursively and urbanistically had already become ambivalent, as new political agenda emerged to remove the centrality of attention so far bestowed on the Wall as a monumental and aggressive entity to render it a background, temporary element. As a result of this conceptual de– or dis–walling, diminishing and positively disregarding the presence of the Wall, the areas through which the Wall complex directly bulldozed across or created impasses acquired a certain sense of new opportunities, i.e.

8 pp.251 Emily Pugh ch.6 ‘Back to Center’
possible new ‘sites’ of change, rather than the previous status of untouchable ‘non-site’, albeit possibly the most monumental ‘non-site’ of Germany, that were frozen in or next to the no-man’s zone. The discussions on the ‘gentle urban renewal’ approach of old Berlin blocks were knowingly cross-boundary, as the urban grain of Berlin established since the nineteenth century is certainly something shared between West and East Berlin.

IBA–Altbau, which was closely related to the squatters movement since the 1970s (contrary to IBA–Neubau which focused more on raising the city’s international profile and making West Berlin into a ‘model city’), deliberately concentrated on areas of central West Berlin that turned into ‘edge’ zones because of the Wall, in particular the Kreuzberg area which had been partially encircled by the Wall within its ziggags. With its large swathes of war-damaged and decaying Mietskasernen blocks, population of squatters, outcasts and immigrants, Kreuzberg was transformed through IBA–Altbau’s collaborative projects that renovated 7,000 dwellings, landscaped 370 courtyards and developed plans for ‘rebuiding and extending’ ten schools and establishing 27 day care centres. Known for its ghettos of ‘others’ as the German Harlem, nearly half of the Kreuzberg at one point was migrant workers from Turkey who came upon the invitation to the West German government to help with the reconstruction of Germany, and most remain noncitizens because of deliberately-set hurdles in gaining German citizenship. From the initial overarching IBA 84/87 theme of ‘discourse/debate’ and ‘diversity’ to the emphasis of IBA–Altbau on collaboration between designers and residents, collectivity rather than individuality, flexibly and adaptability of form, and repair through multilateral inputs, the participatory nature of this process stepped away from the polarised and confrontational nature of cold war West vs. East or Right vs. Left ideologies, and projected a more ambivalent and amalgamated political position, an intended gesture of de/dis/counter-wallung.

By not directly addressing the Wall, a form of ‘dis-regarding’, which is in itself controversial, going against the tendency of ongoing monumental gaze on the ‘immutable reality’ upon the Wall that is actually central to both West and East Berlin’s identities. West Berlin through IBA 84/87 was in fact projecting an urban vision that, by disregarding the Wall, can be applied to the whole of Berlin if unification ever occur. This highlights the enormous contradiction in the IBA 84/87 agenda: the intention to refer to the Berlin urban grain in the pre-war past as a way to locate a common ground that would unite Berlin’s fractured urbanity opens up a speculative and imaginary new ‘de-walled’ reality, which directly contradicts the exclusion of consideration, and possible dialogues between, different types of urban fabric that were already parts of the reality of Berlins on both side. IBA 84/87 did not provide a response to how the concept of ‘gentle urban renewal’ can apply to the freestanding residential blocks that were featured both in modernism that characterised certain areas of West Berlin and in socialist housing developed by the GDR through systemised and standardised

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10 Esra Akcan: ‘The apartment will not be rented to foreigners’ was a common phrase in newspaper advertisements in Berlin. Because it was very difficult for migrant workers to acquire German citizenship (prior to 2000 there was a hurdle of at least 15 years of permanent residency in Germany plus other restrictions), ‘ghetto making’ followed by the legitimate destruction of a run-down neighbourhood became a preferred mode of urban development in Berlin. Civil right groups reported that landlords and housing bureau consistently turned down foreign families’ applications to rent apartments, which push them into the run-down buildings in Kreuzberg.

11 Ada Louise Huxtable quoted by Emily Pugh
models of prefabrication and assembly. Critics saw the contradiction as the inconclusiveness of the IBA initiatives in tackling the real crisis of housing in Berlin at a larger scale, and that it was a mistake to sidestep the monumental presence of the Wall, let alone the alter-reality that is happening just behind the wall, which was not a secret, politically and urbanistically.

Despite this contradiction, the achievement of IBA–Altbau, under its director Hardt–Waltherr Hämmer and his ‘Twelve Principles of Careful Urban Renewal’, had a long–term influence beyond the fall of the wall in the reunification period. This has been described by Esra Akcan as a model of ‘open architecture’, a concept that is related more to ‘open borders than open markets’, ‘open source’ than exclusivity, offering ‘new ethics of hospitality’ towards differences and others, democracy, plurality and further to ‘the expansion of human rights and social citizenship, and transnational solidarity’.12 Akcan’s ‘seven stops and six strolls’ account of the processes and implications of IBA–Altbau interweaving direct interviews, personal observations and series of conversations brought forth the voice of these noncitizens as significant actors in the collaborative process with designers and the authorities. Against mainstream criticism that dismissed the relevance of the IBA experiments, apart from local improvements, to West Berlin as a whole or beyond, the new consciousness seeded by it is precisely this force of resistance against a singular, imposed solution to the problem of urban identity and transformation.13 This resistance has become increasingly palpable as the city enters the historic project of ‘unwalling’ with the goal of absolute eradication that is more extreme than the approach of diminishing or disregarding its presence of de/dis–walling. IBA–Altbau seeded the resistance to reading Berlin as voids or potential tabula rasa, and to the selective preservation process in the analogy of a palimpsest, by flipping the messy, marginalised border areas of West Berlin to the foreground and turned them into active sites of recollections and reconciliation between past and present, and between the exclusive identity of ‘us’ to the open embrace of ‘otherness’. Non–sites at the overlapping and porous margins where occupants and occupations are not clear cut nor fitted to the normality of the centre have been put to task of reworking memory of the city’s past, and in doing so, turning themselves into actors in the new urban landscape that is inherently social, collective, diverse and inclusive.

Furthermore, the intentional ambivalence between old and new of its ‘repair’ and ‘renovation’ agenda that worked on distributed and interconnected non–sites enables a direct correlation between spaces of everyday life and spaces of memory (again in its archaic sense which Nora laments we have lost) by allowing residents/users to be engaged directly as actors in selecting, discussing, planning, designing and possibly physically transforming their chosen sites. Thus the sites of action and change oscillates between becoming a ‘site’ at the moment of actions, then receding back as a ‘non–site’ in the mundane, everyday fabric of the city. On its own, each endeavour at a non–site that is modestly and continually being transformed, it does not claim a privileged and permanent status, nor to compete with the spectacle of monuments that history wishes to remember itself: yet when gathered and connected, there emerge, like myths of constellations connecting

12 Esra Akcan
13 A sharp contrast to Esra Akcan’s distinct effort to mark the significance of IBA–Altbau, Emily Pugh emphasises a general dismissal of the achievements of the IBA, ‘Ultimately, neither the IBA itself nor any of its buildings became a representative symbol or monument for West Berlin. As several critics noted, no structure could compete with the Berlin Wall in this regard.’
disparate stars, not a site of memory, but a larger and more amorphous site of relation. Perhaps Akcan’s walks and strolls amongst open architecture demonstrates a process of revelation of the constellating non-sites, through which old and new memories of Kreuzberg, transitioning both people and places through new rituals and traces, come together to produce a fragment of a new urban identity of Berlin.

part 4: ex/post/trans-wall

As most would assume, since we have been conditioned by history to expect so, that the fall of the Wall would conclude by erasing it rapidly. The ‘wounded’ Berlin, a victim of the violent imposition of the Wall, a sentiment that had been shared between West and East Berliners, can thus recover and embrace a new ‘healed’ unity. By bulldozing away the entirety of the border apparatus, that aggressive, murderous space can be emptied, then returned to the pure state of a void, a tabula rasa, awaiting to be filled by future. Yet series of decisions and actions of taking various part of this extensive construct down, or not, across the next two decades after that fateful day on 1 July 1989, became one of the most difficult and treacherous subject for Berliners themselves. Most parts of the Wall were taken down by 1990, along with many landmarks from the GDR era, most controversially being the demolition of the ‘Palace of the Republic’ and the decision to resurrect the Berlin Palace of the Baroque period. But then, the city government were pushed to consider retaining some parts of it, along with certain worthy relics from the GDR, to answer the appropriate demand, such as what was expressed in Willy Brandt’s speech in 1989, that a portion of such ‘historical monstrosity’ should be kept as a memorial. What does it mean to ‘retain’ a part of the Wall that Berlin had waited nearly thirty years to tear down, especially after all these painful years of its divided citizens attempting overcome, suppress, disregard and counter it?

Many would say, driven by the predominant obsession with making ‘sites of memorialisation’, this should be done as a protected relic and as a lesson in history, safely detached from factors that may change it, such as the invasive urban context, the weathering in time, and possibly the most dangerous of all, people who may destroy or alter it. The creation of a memorial would be to suspend it from such factors, therefore be absorbed into the museum regime to maintain its authentic conditions, as carefully kept, displayed and documented as many other important historical artefacts. The first part of the paper has disclosed how Berlin excelled in turning its newly acquired picture of unity into this saturated cityscape of memory, which meant the kind of memory that has already been objectified, rationalised, categorised and archived in the city’s cultural institutions. This enterprise necessary dislodge the actuality of the city, from remnants of the Wall to citizens who continue to be embroiled in disparate, lived and haunting memories of it.

Bernauer Strasse very quickly became a contender of such a site for a ‘Berlin Wall memorial’. Several historians with close relations to institutions such as the German Historical Museum
proposed that a section of the border should be preserved in its entirety, including the double-wall set up, the ground of the death strip and control apparatus such as watchtowers. Due to the dilapidated condition of these remaining parts, a certain measure of 'reconstruction' would be necessary. This motion was sharply opposed by preservationists working for the Berlin’s Office for Historical Monuments because they believe ‘a memorial site should focus on the preservation of what remains’, captured by Anna Saunders.¹⁴ The preservationists were opposed to reconstruction because the brutality of the border regime, ‘could not be represented by material substance alone... “authentic horror” belongs to those who experienced it; it cannot be accessed via re-enactment. It’s over.’ Further debates raged on in opposing the supposedly ‘scientific’, thus authentic, process of preservation, with ‘artistic intervention’ that perhaps open the design of the memorial to competitions amongst artists, architects and landscape designers. It took several years, and many more rounds of negotiations between religious communities, neighbourhood districts, church parishes, a nursing home, historians and preservationists, politicians at various levels, before the decision was made to run a competition in 1994 for the design of the memorial that which includes a section of the Wall preserved in its entirety. Four entries were awarded second prize, but non as first prize, the a number of years later, to select one of the four runners up as the winner with the commitment to realise the scheme. Kohlhoff and Kohlhoff’s memorial which was built by 1998 was immediately criticised for ‘Disneyification’, ‘historical misrepresentation’, ‘memorial hotchpotch’, ‘trivialising the wall’, ‘sterile form’, ‘over-aestheticizing’ and removing remembrance ‘out of everyday life’.¹⁵ Together with the Documentation Centre that stood just north of the memorial with a viewing platform that can allow visitors to see the reconstructed ‘death strip’, and the ‘Chapel of Reconciliation’ at the site of a destroyed church, the memorial assembly began to be more accepted, albeit the number of visitors remained low because of its location away from the city centre area that have already been filled by memorials and museums as tourists magnets. Curiously akin to a non–site, the Bernauer Strasse Wall memorial project’s first phase was rooted in the formula of museum–preserved memory, and the double ‘framing’ walls of Kohlhoff and Kohlhoff’s scheme acted as an encapsulation, a vitrine at the scale of the city, that detached a preserved segment of the Wall as an historical artefact to be viewed and understood detached from the city, not accessible or could be re–enacted.

Oppositions to the deterministic mode of memorial–making would say that physical markers of past events are essential in the coming to terms of experiences of the past, which meant that these parts of of city that belonged to or as a result from the mechanism of divide, however small or large, should be freed from the regime of memorialisation and museumisation, and to continue to ‘live’ as accessible and changeable parts of the city with the people. This final part picks up on the identification of a long trace of resistance against the tendency to separate the development of the city from the responsibility of the city in the coming to terms of experiences of the past, as a matter of legal, civic and social duties. As demonstrate in the previous part, the resistance to a master narrative smoothed out between the construction of the past and the future was already palpable in the decade before the fall of the wall through the participatory and collaborative programme of IRA

¹⁴ who curiously enough have offered an extensive chapter tracing memorials of the Berlin Wall in a book that discusses Memorialising the GDR, which curiously took on a rather ‘orientalist’ approach in representing the East as those who can no longer represent themselves
¹⁵ Anna Sanders Memorialising the GDR
which instigated a different set of discourses engaging differences and ‘others’ in the making of a new identity for the city of Berlin. To keep the memory alive as social, collective and discursive bonds not only enable people to relate to one another empathetically but without diluting their difference, but also situates these memories and relations in actual sites in the city. Just like the invisible cameramen of the Tunnel 29 film who penetrated the soil of two Berliners to find the common subterranean reality along with the tunnellers, and like the gentle reinterpretation and renewal process of IBA to tie together the discussions on the restoration of a particular urban grain unique in the history Berlin with the discussions of noncitizens as transformers of urban spaces the the empowerment of self/collective spatial alterations. The restoration of the lost memories as a primary force of collective identity enables the development of the city to directly embrace people’s impulses to take actions to articulate injuries and injustices, to share stories and solidarity, to re–enact and interact, create civic and social bonds, and to care and support recovery from the traumatic past.

Between the realisation of the memorial at Bernauer Strasse in 1998 and the passing of the Gesamtkonzept by the Berlin Senate in 2006, the city, having negotiated its way through turbulent disagreements, made its first attempt to recognise and draw relations between disparate practices to articulate a set of appropriate and collective principles for its ‘transitional unwalling’. It first of all emphasises the basis of a ‘decentralised approach to the ‘remembrance landscape’ including main sites of Wall remembrance, including remaining watchtowers and former ‘ghost stations’ [also] information columns marking of footpaths and cycle paths following the former course of the wall, as well as audiovisual guides, maps, flyers, tours and an extensive internet portal. ‘There should be no singular, monopolised site of memory of the Wall. The site at Bernauer Strasse will serve as a ‘base’, and have since 2007 been expanded through further competitions and proposals, becoming an ensemble of experiential, memorial, archival, spiritual and social landscapes. The fundamental shift towards a decentralised principle of remembrance alleviated the previous criticism of the Bernauer Strasse site being away from the centre of the city, and the pressure for it to achieve some kind of total representation of the trauma caused by the Wall. The openness of the approach to ‘transitional unwalling’ also meant that it starts to serve as a site of remembrance for events not only before, but after the fall of the Wall, such as the pile of panels from a section of the original Wall removed by Pastor Hildebrandt of the parish occupying the Bernauer Strasse site overnight as a gesture of protest in 1997. In its second phase, visitors to the Bernauer Strasse site, which consists of several sites of preservation, reconstruction and interventions, are invited to ‘work’ through the distributed assembly to curate their own experiences. There are no distinct boundaries between the memorial assembly and the city, as the memory–scape strategically overlaps infraordinary and extraordinary aspects of these sites, as the city re–tell stories by revealing surfaces, passing objects, moving along routes, around walls, through the fields, crossing thresholds and climbing stairs, meandering through columns and reading inscriptions.

Perhaps the momentum of openness may lead to a third phase, where by this assembly of ‘sites’ can be further accessible to those who wish to add to the aggregating scene of collective memory, to re–enact or re–create physical scenes to set their stories, to modify certain physical conditions and corporeal impressions, as stages to communicate and interfaces to debate, thus to continue to inscribe and respond to broader experiences of trauma and injustice, companionship and solidarity.
on to the body of the city. In this imagination, sites within the Bernauer Strasse assembly are at the same time 'sites' and 'non-sites', as they open to various temporary forms of occupations, expressions and residencies, akin to what has been afforded by 'The Watch' residency, a relic of a traumatic past that continues to open itself in the remaking of memories through contemporary actors and agenda, as discussed in the first part.

In her critique on the notion of 'potential history', Ariella Aïsha Azoulay invokes the anachronous figure of a 'companion that we assume and welcome in that body known as collective memory, those that we remember together who may be characters from the past but share a commonness with us in the present. Often, as she discloses in what she termed the imperial regime of constructing the past through institutionalised archiving, these relations would be denied by the archive of history which violently exclude the company of others, through self-assigned decree of representation and legitimacy, and mechanisms of 'extraction' and 'shuttering' which couples selective preservation with the destruction of 'the rest'. In the scheme of archiving memories, thus the production of 'history' central to imperialism and totalitarianism, the identity of the city and its citizens are determined by the force of 'progress', guaranteed by the timeline of history and the supporting categorisation of the archive, and even the language that we is accept as the system of knowledge. Azoulay argues that: 'Intervention, imagination, transmission, accession, deaccession, plasticization, or open-ended indexicality are some of the procedures through which cocitizens exercise their archival rights, that is, the right to make use of the archive with others who have been excluded from entering... Together they refuse the archive’s claim to seal the past. Together, they insist the archive be a commons.' The dismantling of the 'threshold', which she pinpoints as the mechanism of exclusion, is crucial: these are the thresholds that keep the contents of urban memory inside memorials and museums separate from the city as changeable, live worlds outside. And the ever expanding enterprise of 'sites of memory' further encloses and fossilise urban spaces to fold them into the regime of memorialisation, to the extent that there will not be an outside anymore, i.e. there will no longer be a space free of the control of a constructed past in the clutch of progressive history: there will no longer be a free and vital city.

Berlin’s continual resistance to the tautology of a 'city of memory' is a testimonial to its awareness that it remains a social, civic and collective duty of the city to allow its citizens, or 'cocitizens' in the company of 'others', to rewrite its own history, and to enable the landscape of memory to be both open-ended and becoming a collaborative force in the actual projects of urban transformations. The resistance can be as ephemeral as ‘The Watch’ residencies, or ‘The Writing on the Wall’ series that projected historical photographs of Jewish community life in a 1:1 spatial correspondence onto an actual location of where the photograph was taken in post-wall Berlin in 1991, where the trauma and injustice of WWII is still transitioning in parallel to that of the fall of Wall. Or the resistance can be as materially complex as the evolving Bernauer Strasse memorial sites that can be understood as being literally and physical corresponding to sites of violence, yet at once inviting re-reading of these sites through the open, constellatory setup that deliberately overlays historical relics, contemporary reinterpretations and spaces of conciliation. The ‘unwalling’ process echoes the

16 http://shimonatte.net/portfolio/the-writing-on-the-wall/
urgent task of 'unlearning' in Azoulay's call, as that which is an ongoing, open and living process to actualise the humane condition of sharing in a common world and a respect for all.