

Divided Cities & the In-Between

*An Analysis of Edinburgh, Prague and
Berlin*

by

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I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

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ABSTRACT

All cities set up a condition of disjunction as they are inherently manmade 'built' places separate from the natural wilderness they abut. The cities that emerge over time are then places held in tension between the kinetic and static forces of civilization, nature, people, ownership and infrastructure. These conflicting pieces manifest as division within the city. The division can be physically seen in specific gaps in the physical infrastructure: urban *slips* that act as thresholds for a city by gathering and revealing the in/visible dueling qualities, and can ultimately prove to be important spaces and cultural magnets for the city.

The analysis is centered on three specific *slips* within three northern European cities: the South Bridge in Edinburgh, the Charles Bridge in Prague and the Berlin Wall. Looking from the perspective of both the physical, visible infrastructure and the unconscious, invisible cultural realm, these architectural objects are then charted through historical, literary, cartographic and urban analyses to come to an understanding of both the specific 'characters' or 'spirits of place' and the broad predisposition for division within cities.

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*For my mum,
and for my dad*

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PROLEGOMENA

The fundamental building block of a city is the line. This is classically expressed through the erection of a wall at the city limit, but the demarcation line pervades all aspects of the city by marking out every internal layer, from the facade to the street to the invisible boundaries of districts, and as such can take many forms. This notion of the city as made up of abutting, oftentimes polarizing, pieces can be traced back to the prehistoric shift from hunting/gathering towards the domestication of the landscape through agriculture. When palaeolithic humans transitioned from hunter-gatherers to cultivators of the earth, their relationship permanently shifted from that of existing alongside nature to that of shaping and controlling the land. Consequently, the idea of ownership quickly became paramount.

I.

The primary motivation for establishing these initial settlements was a practical one: palaeolithic hunter-gatherers lived an uncertain life, one whose best chance of success was a scarcely populated area, with ideally no more than ten people inhabiting any given square mile.¹ When, roughly fifteen thousand years ago, the world began to warm up at the beginning of the transitional mesolithic age, the more favourable climate conditions led to increased human populations and an abundance of new plant and animal life; however, the warmer earth also resulted in the decline of the existing colder climate animals who prehistoric humans had depended on as a key food source in their survival. These compounding conditions made hunting even more unreliable, and as a result, the first instances of permanently settled hamlets and villages, usually clustered around a new, abundant maritime or tuber-based food source² began to crop up. This basic change in lifestyle in turn precipitated the clearing and cultivating of the freshly settled land for the purposes of harvesting such plants as the date palm, olives, apples and grapes, and the domestication of both working animals, including chickens, pigs and oxen, as well as guard animals and pets such as the dog.³ Together these changes signalled the beginning of the agricultural revolution and the neolithic era. For the first time in human history there was an elemental separation between the land inhabited by humans and the wilderness beyond.

The changing food supply was not palaeolithic humans' sole motivation for claiming parcels of land: prior to the move towards agriculture and these permanent hamlets, there had

existed a long history of prehistoric meeting places to which humans regularly returned. These spots were founded in specific natural sites that were seen to hold a unique quality or function for the people using them. The places ranged from an especially fruitful spring returned to annually, to a secluded cave where different nomadic groups met to engage in trade and exchange. As these sites evolved, many started to emerge as shrines and were used for ceremonial purposes beyond their initial practical ones. Although shrines developed for a variety of reasons, these places significantly emerged due to the respect and reverence palaeolithic humans felt for their dead,⁴ and accordingly, many developed into burial sites or familial cemeteries marked by a cairn, mound or long barrow. As such, prehistoric shrines memorializing the dead became key places and points of pilgrimage to which people ceremonially gathered and periodically returned to communicate with and to appease their ancestors.

Returning to the idea of ownership over segments of the earth, these ceremonial spots holding both the physical remains and the spiritual presence of ones own ancestors were then places over which one could claim ultimate ownership. This basic new relationship with the land continued virtually unchanged up until the first forays into city building, as evidenced by the early neolithic city of Çatalhöyük in what is present day Turkey, where every house was purposefully built on top of the remains of that households ancestors,⁵ who were then worshipped at the inhabitants' hearth. Further, as family members passed away, they were buried under the hearth as well, implying an unbroken familial line of ownership.

Although the idea of a fixed meeting place used for exchange

and ceremony predates the practical move towards agriculture and permanent dwellings, both are predicated on the notion of possessing distinct portions of the landscape. As such, the impetus of the future city was founded on these dual needs for ceremony and practicality, which in turn led to the shift towards territorial ownership. The dualities inherent to the elemental founding of the city can then be further expanded to include the concepts of collectivity and individuality: that is to say, the resulting typological places both gathered and joined various people while concurrently defining a set area of land. Finally, expounding on the dual notions of gathering and dwelling, the initial prehistoric 'city' places were, by attracting many people, dynamic places in constant flux; while, by simultaneously binding themselves to specific tracts of earth, conversely places of permanent structures and perpetual inhabitation.

II.

Once prehistoric humans had made the break from their nomadic past, they had to go about articulating the edge of their new and different territory. As whole swathes of land were now being claimed by different bands of people, the limits of the settlements quickly became an area of contention, and as a result, these disputed boundary lines frequently became zones held in constant tension. This led to the desire to physically demarcate and protect the perceived limits of ones land through the erection of walls or other built elements. Although defining and defending ones territory was — and continues to be — of paramount importance for the established bands of people, these initial cities did not physically denote the extent of their

domain exclusively for the benefit of other humans: the erection of a wall or similar obstacle was also instrumental in protecting the city from natural predators and in generally keeping the wilderness out. The natural landscape and animals had, from the moment humans removed themselves from the 'wild,' become an enormous threat to the preservation of urban life.⁶

Symbolically, the definition of the urban boundary affirmed the separation of the city from the natural wilderness. The resulting enclosures then allowed for the creation of a new civilized way of life within their walls. Inside the city people had, in addition to physically tilling the earth, begun to cultivate a new collective world view centered on ideals of culture, law and order. The implication was that the city functioned at a higher order than the lawless, savage 'outside;' however, attaining this superior identity necessitated a collective agreement to come together and leave behind the unbridled, uncultivated land and life beyond the border. To thrive, the city effectively required the preservation of the collective good over the instinctual desires of any one person.

III.

It is said in the Bible that the founding of the first city by Cain, a farmer and the eldest child of Adam and Eve, corresponded with the murder by Cain of Abel, his younger brother and a shepherd. After Cain murdered Abel, he was cursed to wander the earth unable to farm the land as he had tainted it with his brother's blood. Cain wandered east of Eden,⁷ married his sister Awan and built the first city *Enoch*, named for their first born son. All of Cain's subsequent children and grandchildren then grew up to

found various activities directly related to urban life, including Jubal, the originator of those who play the organ and the harp⁸ and Tubalcain, an expert in forging tools made of bronze and iron.⁹

Fratricide then continues to be an intrinsic theme for the creation of cities and features in the foundation story of several that still exist today. Arguably the most famous among these is the story of Romulus and Remus and the founding of Rome. Romulus and Remus were twins descended from Aeneas' royal line; however, as infants, a usurper sent them off down the Tiber River to their presumed deaths. Instead of dying, they were discovered by a she-wolf who took them and nursed them. Eventually they came to the attention of a shepherd and his wife who took them in and raised them as their own, and when they were of age, Romulus and Remus became shepherds themselves.

After they had grown, Romulus and Remus discovered their ancestry and exacted retribution on the usurper who had left them for dead. Once that had been dealt with, they decided to found their own, new city. However, Romulus wanted to build this city on the Palatine Hill, while Remus preferred the nearby Aventine Hill. As they couldn't come to any agreement as to where their city should be built, they decided instead to each sit on their chosen site and wait for a message from the gods. Although Remus received a message first in the form of six birds, Romulus soon saw double that and so claimed victory and began to dig out the boundary for their future city on the Palatine Hill.

According to Plutarch's account in the *Life of Romulus*,

[Romulus] fitted a brazen ploughshare to the plough, and, yoking together a bull and a cow, drove himself a deep line or

furrow round the bounds; while the business of all those that followed after was to see that whatever was thrown up should be turned all inwards towards the city, and not to let any clod lie outside. With this line they described the wall ... and where they designed to make a gate, there they took out the share, carried the plough over, and left a space; for which reason they consider the whole wall as holy, except where the gates are ...¹⁰

After the consecrated boundary had been completed, Remus came and jumped over it, violating the sacred line. Due to Remus' flippant border crossing, Romulus immediately killed his brother. With the separation maintained, the foundation of the new city was now complete and Rome was established. Once again it had been both physically and symbolically necessary to leave behind elements — as represented here by the slaying of Romulus' twin Remus — of the natural world in order to carve out a discrete urban enclosure.

IV.

What first began as a necessary and symbolic separation from the wilderness as prehistoric humans transitioned into a new way of living had, by the Industrial Revolution in Europe during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, become an alienating disjunction between the city and nature. This second revolutionary shift was sparked by a confluence of technological, social and economic changes. The first of these changes leading into the Industrial Revolution was the inversion of the birth and death rates in the middle of the eighteenth century. For the first time in recorded European history the death rate had fallen below the birth rate, causing a fundamental shift in the population distribution.¹¹ Where before each generation had

essentially replaced the previous generation one-to-one, the lowered instances of infant mortality meant that eighteenth century populations were not only greater than ever before, but had a disproportionate amount of young people as well.

In terms of the physical infrastructure of cities, the second important shift to occur in the years prior to the Industrial Revolution was the gradual elimination of the common land system to better utilize space in the growing villages. Common lands were located on the edges of towns and villages, and, although owned by a single person, were for the collective use of yeomen to graze livestock and to collect such resources as firewood. The redevelopment of the common lands into more typical urban spaces was seen as beneficial for the growth of the towns; however, the loss of these spaces meant that an entire social class had become redundant with very little alternative opportunities available to them.¹²

Moving on to the revolution itself, the technological advancements and resulting economic changes in the textile industry are what is classically regarded as the ultimate catalyst for the Industrial Revolution. Before the revolution, textiles were wholly manufactured in the houses of individual weavers with minimal need for communication or exchange between enterprises. With the various innovations and new machinery developed during these revolutionary years, what had previously been a self-contained industry limited by the manpower available in any given weaver's home had become an industry concentrated into a series of centrally located urban factories. Further, where before each weaver would have enjoyed autonomous control over their product — seeing it through from the initial spinning

of the raw material to the weaving, dyeing and selling of the finished goods — after the advent of the revolution and the changing market demands, the new factories instead specialized in only one degree of refinement, thereby streamlining output and maximizing the efficiency of the new equipment.

The rise of these new factories presented a sudden abundance of new employment opportunities not dependent on specialized training or restricted by societal barriers. Conveniently, what with the recently inflated youth demographic together with the struggling yeomen from the outlying villages, there was no shortage of people willing to fill the positions. The multitude of opportunities meant that people were moving to industrialized centers in droves. The cities began to densify at unprecedented rates¹³ and this mass migration further disrupted the balance between manmade cities and the natural landscape.

A significant and long-lasting by-product of this new, aggressively mechanized urban evolution and the resulting extreme densification within the built world was that cities lacked the tools or space to funnel away waste and so quickly became overwhelmed by the dirt and excrement produced by the previously unheard of congregations of people.¹⁴ Although urban places throughout history have routinely been positioned as either positive or negative forces, prior to this second major revolution, the city was generally held as a place of civilization and exchange, standing in contrast to the lawless frontier. Practically speaking, in many ways cities were additionally then oases offering protection from the natural and human perils found outside their walls. After the effects of the Industrial

Revolution, cities became wholly associated with their dirt and depravity, both in the physical sense of sanitation and crowding, and in the cultural sense of questionable morals and anonymity. This perceptual flip of urban places from ultimate symbols of civilization to ultimate symbols of the coarseness of humans can be further perceived through the simultaneous recalibration in the collective view of the natural world: where before, the wilderness was generally seen as a dark and hostile place, after the revolution and its accompanying pollution and crowding, the countryside and nature were held up as physically and socially idyllic, pristine places untouched by the contaminating hands of humans.

If the Industrial Revolution triggered a widescale switch in the way the built world — specifically the city — was seen and perceived, that is, from a sacred place embodying the ideals of civilization to a profane place embodying the base aspects of human nature, it then becomes clear that both opposing qualities exist within the city and serve to define the city. Although after the Industrial Revolution the balance had plainly tipped quite heavily towards the profane aspects of the city, this cardinal shift revealed that all cities are internally made up of these various polarized elements. As such, the division inherent to all cities is not simply a division between the built world and the nature beyond; rather, all cities are internally divided through opposing forces which are held in tension within the actual city itself.

These internal forces are then fundamentally the pairing of the profane, or ‘wilderness’ against the sacred, or ‘civilization.’ As it is evident that the wilderness manages to persist within all urban settlements, the separation between civilization and the

wild in turn does not only exist on the urban periphery at the deliberate boundary between the city and nature, but is a core division within the city itself. Consequently, all cities are more specifically internally divided between what is perceptually 'civilized' and what is perceptually 'wild.'

V.

There are many physical, cultural and unconscious tensions inherent to all cities beyond the aforementioned sacred versus profane forces and the opposing pursuits of civilization versus that of depravity. Other basic dualities within cities include: the public zones of the city versus the private zones, and from that, civic or economic uses versus residential uses; the unpredictable forces of nature as felt through the weather and *acts of god* versus the desire in the built world to establish controls and moderate the natural elements; the idea of the city as the domain of the individual versus the idea of the city as a place for the collective, or, conversely, the experience of anonymity in the city versus the experience of crowding; and finally, the physical city versus the unconscious city, and on a similar note, the malleable city versus the permanent city.

Physical Dualities

Zooming out to a broader, macro scale, there are then general dualities existing within the universal experience of the physical world at large. The first and perhaps the most fundamental of these paired forces is that of the vertical plane and the horizontal plane, which are classically expressed in the built world via the archetypes of walls and bridges. Elaborating on these general forces, one then sees pairings in the sky/the earth, inside/outside (or alternatively, enclosures/open expanses),

front/back, up/down, and the two extreme visual qualities of light/dark or day/night. All of these universal phenomena are then similarly localized and manifested within the man-made world in ways specific to the makeup of any given city.¹⁵

Culturally speaking, there are then a multitude of generalized dualities inherent to humanity's collective experience and understanding of their world. Throughout history, humans have persistently been engaged with the idea of moral dualism. This concept essentially refers to the idea that there are both forces of good and forces of evil at work in the world, and further that all human desires and actions can be subcategorized as either being positive (good) or negative (evil.)¹⁶ In Judeo-Christian beliefs the two qualities are manifested in the world by the conflict between God, the creator of all life and his adversary, Satan, a fallen angel who, in Judaism functions as a sort of *Devil's Advocate* for God,¹⁷ while in Christianity, serves to tempt and seduce humans into acts of moral decrepitude. For individual people the consequences of good and evil are then actively negotiated through the choosing of acts of love, charity and wisdom over those of destruction, sin and negative desires.¹⁸

The Zoroastrians conversely articulated the moral opposites through the dichotomy of presence and absence. In Zoroastrianism there is one god, *Ahura Mazda*, who is the creator of all things in the world, and thus all things are defined as good. Although then similar to the choice implied by Judeo-Christian beliefs, rather than temptation towards all the ills of the world, Zoroastrian beliefs state that humans must actively choose to participate in the world and in humanity as created by *Ahura Mazda*. If one chooses not to participate, they are

Cultural Dualities

instead giving power to *Abura Mazda's* adversary, *Angra Mainyu*, the destroyer and overseer of the *druj*, that is, everything that is 'uncreated,' or the absence of the good.¹⁹

Ancient Chinese philosophy differs slightly once again, seeing everything in the world as boiled down to a single pair of interrelated forces called yin and yang. The principles of yin-yang seek to conceptualize the all-pervading duality in the world, here defined not as discrete opposite qualities such as good and evil, but as fluid forces making up a dynamic whole.²⁰ Much like how a shadow only exists because of the presence of light, or how a wave in the ocean becomes an undertow as it leaves the shore, all things not only possess both qualities, but further, as one force reaches its apex it will cyclically transform into its opposing quality. The forces are additionally understood to obscure their opposite such that nothing is ever known all at once: yin-yang are often represented by a day playing out over a place holding both a mountain and a valley. At the beginning of the day, the northerly part of the site beneath the mountain, yin, would be cast into shade, while the southerly part, yang, would be quite bright. However, as the day progresses the bright and dark spots will eventually flip and in doing so will reveal what had previously been hidden by the shade, while simultaneously drawing the formerly lit portion into darkness.²¹

Unconscious Dualities

Finally, at the other end on the micro, individual scale with regards to the kinetic, constantly changing city, humans themselves have long been held as entities embodying dual forces. This has been articulated in various ways throughout the ages in a wide range of disciplines. René Descartes in the seventeenth century famously stated that there was a distinction

between an individual's mind and their body. He argued, in his *Meditations on First Philosophy*, that one's mind is able to think independently from their body, while the body inhabits the physical world independent of any thought. As such, for Descartes, individuals were thought to have a basic division between mind and matter.²²

From the psychological giants Sigmund Freud and C.G. Jung come the concepts of the ego/id and the conscious mind/unconscious mind respectively. For Freud, the human psyche is divided into two broad regions; the ego (and the subset super-ego) where rational, considered thought would occur, and the id, that part of the mind propelled by instinctual desires and repressed emotions.²³ On the other hand, Jung saw humans as divided between their conscious and unconscious minds. The former encapsulated all thoughts, desires and projections one is consciously aware of, while the latter referred to everything, good or bad, intellectual or instinctual, that is not presently a part of conscious thought. All things residing in the unconscious mind, however, have the potential to move into consciousness, and so for Jung, the ultimate goal was his process of individuation, whereby one is able to internally integrate and balance their conscious and unconscious dualities.²⁴

VI.

Although the world can clearly be understood as made up of a number of dual forces when examined from a variety of scales (universal, collective and individual) and experiential perspectives, (physical, cultural and unconscious) the built world remains unique as it is not simply another host for these

general dualities; rather, as seen by the aforementioned various dual forces specific to the manmade world, cities are observably divided entities themselves.²⁵

To understand why cities have a tendency towards dividing their qualities rather than balancing them, one has to go back to the foundational reasons for the establishment of cities. The initial move towards city-building was predicated on the opposing purposes of practicality and ceremony, as humans were revolutionizing their food dependencies while simultaneously developing sacred meeting places to engage in the higher calling of ceremony and exchange. These dual foundations then in turn recall the elemental internal division between civilization and the wild, or cerebral and base needs. Further, the very way cities were and are conceived as places deliberately separate from nature affirms them as sites of 'either-or.' This purposeful severance for the betterment of the urban environment is what then causes the fundamental disruption to any underlying universal balance. Finally, and most significantly, the establishment of permanent, collective dwellings introduced the concepts of ownership, which therefore introduced the serious and pervading ongoing conflicts as to who owned what part of the physical land, from meagre houses or properties up to neighbourhoods, districts and whole cities.

If the very essence of cities is rooted in conflict and division, the layered accretions of events throughout the history and memory of a city, both in terms of what a society chooses to remember as well as what they choose to forget, serve to render the underlying tendency for division specific to each physical place. Generally these site-specific separations are ultimately

based in either a socio-economic division, an ethnic or religious division, or a division based on incompatible political ideologies. No matter the specific type of unconscious, cultural division emanating from a city, the overarching schism will always be physically perceptible in the city itself in addition to its underlying cultural and unconscious presence.

VII.

As a city is made up of a number of internal divisions enclosing various areas and zones, the city is then a place that is defined by its boundaries. Architecturally speaking, the boundary or border is a key element in the conception of spaces and places, as the existence of a boundary in both the built and natural worlds is what serves to define the area it is denoting and therefore enclosing.²⁶ For instance, at the more intimate level, a 'house' is meaningless without the suggestion of walls and a roof; it is rather the particular expression of that houses' walls and roof that not only articulates the limits of the shelter but begins to define and express its character as well.²⁷ For the city which has been seen to be physically made up of multiple borders and pervaded by overarching internal boundaries, understanding the nature of this physical and underlying internal division is of paramount importance. Although boundaries and borders are conventionally looked at as the expression of the extents of property, they alternatively, as observed by Martin Heidegger, can be seen not as the point "... at which something stops but, as the Greeks recognized, ... [the point] from which something begins its presencing."²⁸ If the edge of a place is understood as that point from which something starts rather than ends, edges

are then veritable centers giving definition to the two sides they necessarily determine.

Ancient Greeks intuitively understood edges as centers emanating outwards and so frequently placed temples and sanctuaries for their gods at the limits of each gods' domain.²⁹ Further, for everyday life, Ancient Greeks were then careful to explicitly identify the locations of their borders — most specifically those delineating territorial limits — for the use of the people passing through them. To mark the political boundary or threshold between different city-states or territories, travellers in Ancient Greece constructed piles of stones called *herma* and placed them at the relevant edges. Any time somebody crossed the boundary and corresponding *herma*, they would add a stone to the pile as a way to mark their presence and passing there.³⁰ Eventually these piles evolved into more permanent stone pillars, each constructed with a bust of the god Hermes carved out on top.³¹

As the messenger god enabling communication between gods and humans, Hermes was an appropriate figure head for the *herma*: he was both a boundary crosser and the guardian of boundaries, and his general spheres of influence included movement, change and the marketplace. Hermes was frequently depicted as a shepherd — a vocation requiring the daily crossing of properties and borders as one went about tending their flock of sheep — and suitably he was the protector of shepherds themselves.

However, Hermes' significance in the built world extends beyond his ability to navigate through it: as in the case of the ongoing interpretation of the dualities latent in the world,

Ancient Greeks also conceived of opposing force pairs whose qualities were embodied by the various members of their divine pantheon; so, while Hermes was subverting boundaries, the paired goddess standing in contrast to his constant movement and change was Hestia, the goddess of the hearth.³² As presider over the hearth, Hestia was an entity implying permanence and inward-looking community or domesticity. Consequently, the pairing of Hermes and Hestia is the pairing of change and permanence. These oppositional forces are analogous to the function of a boundary, or more specifically to that of a threshold, existing between two places, states or zones.³³

With regards to cities and other human constructs, the threshold is the opening in the wall or barrier that separates and defines the perceived 'outside' from that found within.³⁴ The threshold itself is then conversely the meeting point where the two sides converge. As such, the in-between space embodied by the threshold both physically and conceptually gathers together the qualities of each side, and by gathering them begins to reveal their hitherto underlying natures.³⁵ The in-between threshold spaces are not only conceptual gathering moments, nor do they only inhabit space on a simple line or edge; rather, they are physically inhabitable places existing between the two sides they gather.³⁶

An early example of these inhabitable interim places are the causewayed enclosures of Great Britain circa 4,000 B.C. to 3,300 B.C.³⁷ These enclosures were a physical and conceptual expansion of the boundaries between collected dwellings, and were conceived of in order to create inhabitable neutral territory. This territory was then exclusively used for all things existing

outside the bounds of daily human experience, such as meetings between strangers or opposing land owners, or ceremonial rituals such as funerary requirements for the deceased.³⁸

Although thresholds are inhabitable points of transformation and change, these archetypal spaces must also always maintain the permanent dividing qualities derived from their location within their bounding wall or barrier.³⁹ The complete mixture or integration of the two sides would physically result in the eradication of both: for instance, without a distinct border between the natural and built worlds, neither would exist. These architectural spaces must therefore balance their ability to separate with their allowance for passage from one to the other.⁴⁰

VIII.

The separation-gathering dichotomy inherent to these threshold spaces can be seen to occur in particular architectural objects specific to every city. These objects, found on the edges — that is to say the centers — of major internal urban dividing lines, manifest, or *concretize*⁴¹ the forces existing in a city first through the fact of their construction, and then through their ongoing physical presence. These unique places tend to be constructed to further perpetuate a city's unconscious dividing forces, but, by *concretizing* the collective forces acting upon a city, the objects simultaneously also gather and embody the two sides of the division within their physical architecture.⁴² Accordingly, it is through the analytical deconstruction of the urban objects that one can begin to understand a city's underlying division as well as the specific objects' significance and meaning within its urban environment.

These places continuously crop up in cities due to the fundamental link between the physical infrastructure of a city and the collective unconscious, or psyche, of its residents.⁴³ Cities and psyches are inextricably connected because the city, although a place of permanence, ownership, ceremony and practicality, from a day-to-day basis functions as a social organism.⁴⁴ As such, the city is ultimately the result of the accretions of its inhabitants' collective memory and unconscious, or alternatively, the collective memory and unconscious of those residents is localized and manifested in the physical construction of their city itself.⁴⁵

Upon closer examination of the city and its psyche, what a society chooses to forget is just as telling as what they choose to remember and memorialize in their architecture.⁴⁶ Interestingly, the unsavoury aspects that the collective strives to deny can invariably then be traced back to the city's personal internal dividing lines, whether they be rooted in socioeconomic, ethnic or political conflicts. Unfortunately for the urban collectives, as Sigmund Freud first recognized more than a century ago, though one can certainly purposefully ignore such inflammatory events and memories, such as those derived from divisive forces, nothing in the psyche can ever actually be destroyed.⁴⁷ Instead, as per Freud, "... everything is somehow preserved and ... in suitable circumstances ... can once more be brought to light."⁴⁸

In the absence of any ability to permanently destroy those unsavoury pieces, the psyche will alternatively strive to repress the unwanted elements to protect the collective consciousness from having to deal with them.⁴⁹ However, this repression, as one might surmise, is not a lasting workaround for the elimination of the collectives' internal conflicts, as although

the issues are removed from the conscious forefront, they still exist somewhere in the unconscious realm. As such, once the suppression is reactivated and sent back into conscious thought — and therefore the physical world — it will manifest, but not as an identical copy of its original conflict, but rather as a disguised *remnant* which, unlike the original, is impervious to any further repression by the collective psyche.⁵⁰

If the physical city is peppered with an assortment of monuments and architectural *memory-traces*⁵¹ articulated and preserved for remembrance by the collective psyche,⁵² the manifested *remnants* resulting from conscious suppression are physical precipitates located within the city as well.

IX.

The aforementioned architectural objects existing along the conflict lines of a city are then a specific type of built *remnant* as they specifically manifest at the center of a city's division and are only built as a reaction against said division. These unique threshold places are manifestations of an underlying conflict that the collective has attempted to suppress through the very act of the objects' construction. These specific architectural *remnants* then, by acting as a gathering agent for the conflicting sides, function as urban *slips* in the city's infrastructure. *Slips* are physical hiccups revealing the true nature of the collective unconscious in an otherwise seemingly cohesive built landscape. They are unique architectural objects or places that function as interruptions in the physical and cultural city. They 'interrupt' the city through their contrary or unusual functions and presence within the urban infrastructure, and overall they embody the city's

internal division. By permanently manifesting this underlying division, it is through these built *slips* that the ultimate character of the city can be revealed.

These *slips* are all born out of a conscious attempt at suppressing the specific dividing elements in the cultural collective for which the society feels particular disdain or shame. As a result, the physical places are firmly rooted in the time period of their construction, the era when the precise conflict they embody had reached its apex and come to a head. With this historically localized specificity, the urban *slips* are further removed from the homogeneity of the built city today. The *slips* have been seen to be, at the outset, manifested *remnants* of a contentious psyche; however, as they continue to persist within the city, they serve to become places wholly external to the day-to-day operations of the urban environment.⁵³ In this way, urban *slips* are not dissimilar to the temporal forgotten places defined by Ignasi de Solà-Morales in *Terrain Vague*. de Solà-Morales detailed a type of provisory place abandoned by the present both culturally and functionally; a place consumed by memory and the past, such as an overgrown lot or an abandoned building. Both these temporary leftover places and the permanent *slip* places seem to, as noted by de-Solà-Morales,

... exist outside the city's effective circuits and productive structures. ... In short, they are foreign to the urban system, mentally exterior to the physical interior of the city, its negative image, as much a critique as a possible alternative.⁵⁴

As persistent places in the city, the manifested urban *slips* then continue to be foreign bodies for the established consciousness

and physical infrastructure even after the catalytic conflict has faded.

It is because of the *slips*' dual nature as manifestors of the underlying division together with their ongoing presence on the edge of the city's consciousness that one can discern their final overarching characteristic: although the places are clearly rooted in the time period from when they came, they seem to be able to have adaptive meanings that evolve with the city. As per de Solà-Morales' forgotten places, the urban *slips* persist as physical mirrors for the collective city, continuing to manifest the specific ongoing polarization inherent to the built world. These architectural objects are then true threshold places, as they are held between not only the two sides of the division, but the physical and unconscious cities as well.

Due to their threshold functions together with their presence as both permanent and malleable places, the typological urban *slips* are contentious in-between places embodying the tension of the city they inhabit. It is within these revealing spots that the various lines meet and meld, allowing one to understand the meaning of the particular *remnant* or *slip* place as well as the ultimate character of the overarching city. Further, although these urban *slips* are physically permanent places, because they do not settle as to what they culturally and unconsciously are due to the internal and external tensions acting on them, they are able to have adaptive meanings throughout the progression of time, and this ability to adapt is what then enables their physical and cultural persistence in the city.

NOTES

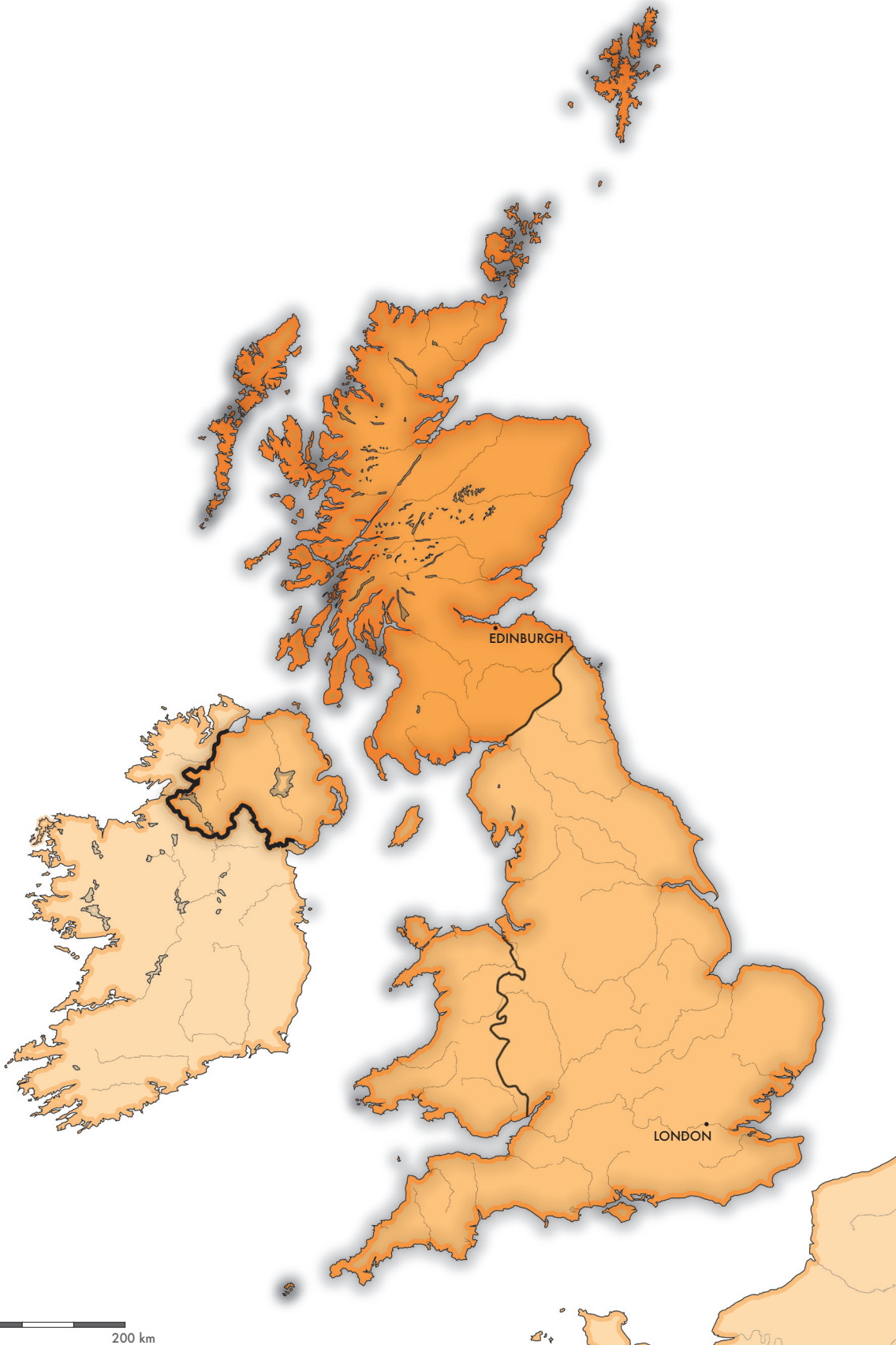
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ONE | SOUTH BRIDGE





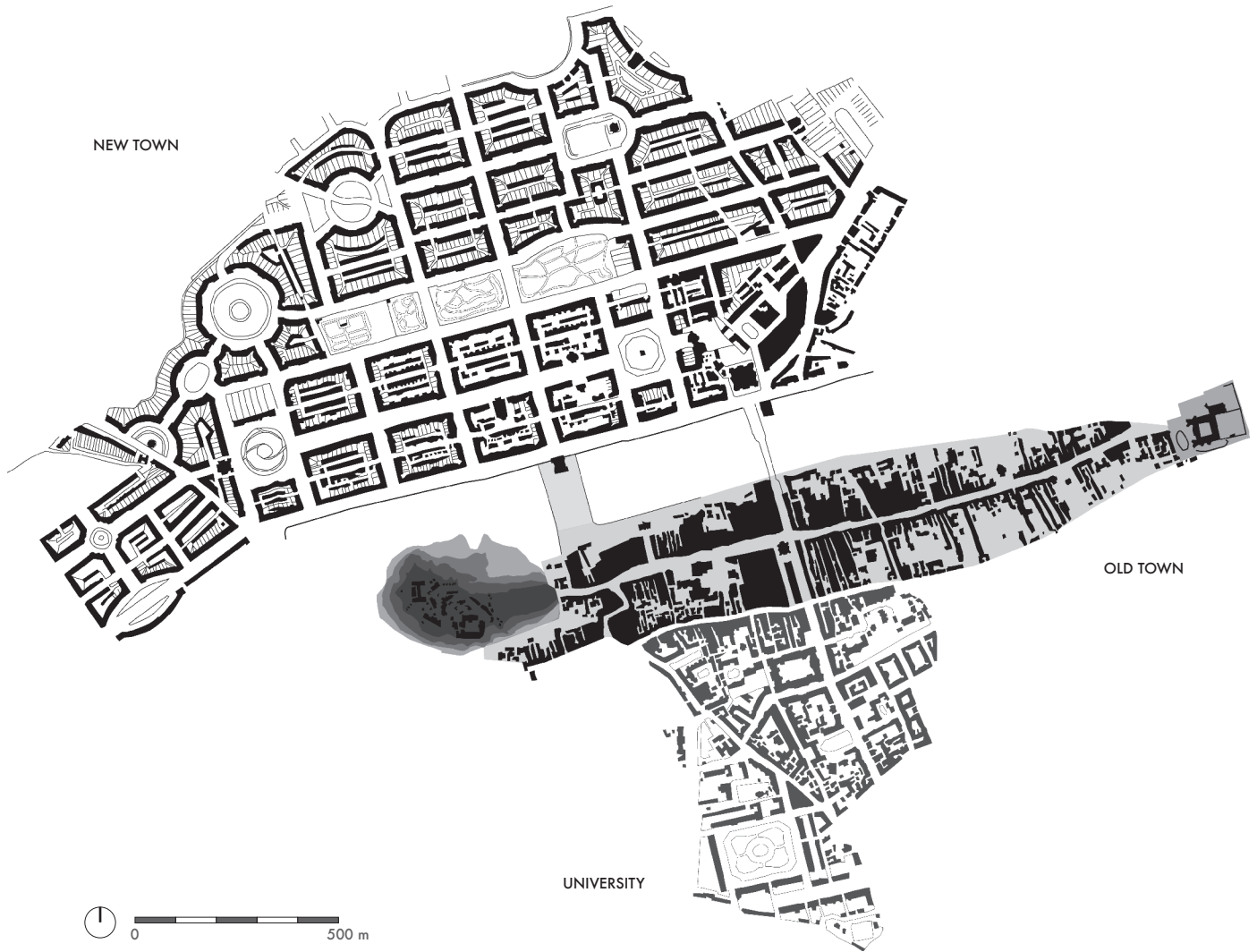


fig. 1.3

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fig. 1.1 | Scottish landscape at Loch Shiel in Glenfinnan, Lochaber

fig. 1.2 | Map of Scotland within the United Kingdom

fig. 1.3 | Context map of Edinburgh



SOUTH BRIDGE

Edinburgh began as a small hillfort called *Dun Eadain* or, ‘Fort of the Hill Slope’¹ atop an extinct volcano, Castle Rock, near the south shore of the Firth of Forth. At the end of the last Ice Age, while the glaciers were moving south, they hit the hard rock of the volcano and split around it, carving out a long, narrow crag characteristic to the landscape of Scotland; it was upon this outcropping that the hill fort was built in the mid fifth century. For Scotland’s early clan history, the elevated Castle Rock served as a perfect defensive location, and by the beginnings of a unified Scotland in the twelfth century, the fortress emerged as a royal castle under King David I, and a small settlement began to form below it along the crag.

Meanwhile, at the opposite, lower end of the narrow ridge, King David I had also founded an Augustinian Abbey around

fig. 1.4 | Edinburgh Castle
on Castle Rock

1128. This Abbey, called Holyrood Abbey, was founded for the religious order the *Canon's Regular*, and, though it geographically shared an escarpment with the royal castle, it was established as a continuous and separate burgh from Edinburgh, called Canongate. According to legend, the King founded Holyrood after narrowly escaping evisceration by a hart while hunting in the forests outside Edinburgh during the Feast of the Cross², and so established the Abbey as an act of thanksgiving.

By the fifteenth century Holyrood Abbey was increasingly used for royal endeavours alongside its religious ones, so, after the Scottish Reformation in the sixteenth century when the city no longer required the Abbey's monastic presence, Holyrood Palace was built adjacent to the remains of Holyrood Abbey. The Palace from then on out served as the principal residence for the Scottish monarchy and today Holyrood is still Queen Elizabeth II's official residence when she is in Scotland.

Joining the Castle at one end and Holyrood at the other runs the High Street, known as the 'Royal Mile' for it is roughly the length of a Scottish Mile. The Royal Mile follows the spine of the narrow ridge of the crag, and it is upon this main street that Edinburgh began to develop in the twelfth century.

For centuries, Edinburgh and Scotland had been under constant threat of invasion by the English. Though there was a Kingdom of Scotland reaching back to the ninth century, Scotland instead functioned as a series of frequently opposing clans, with even the idea of Royal Burghs not entering the Scottish consciousness until the aforementioned David I in the twelfth century and Edinburgh not officially named the national capital until 1437.



fig. 1.5 | The remains of Holyrood Abbey



fig. 1.6 | Holyrood Palace

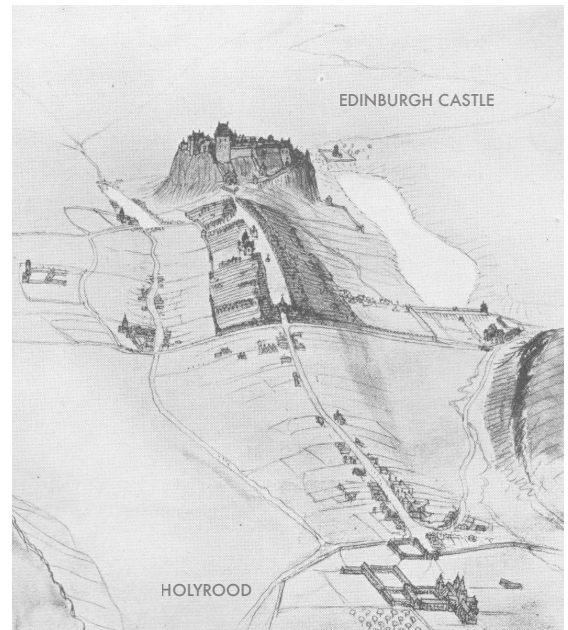


fig. 1.7 | 14th century Edinburgh developing along the spine of the crag

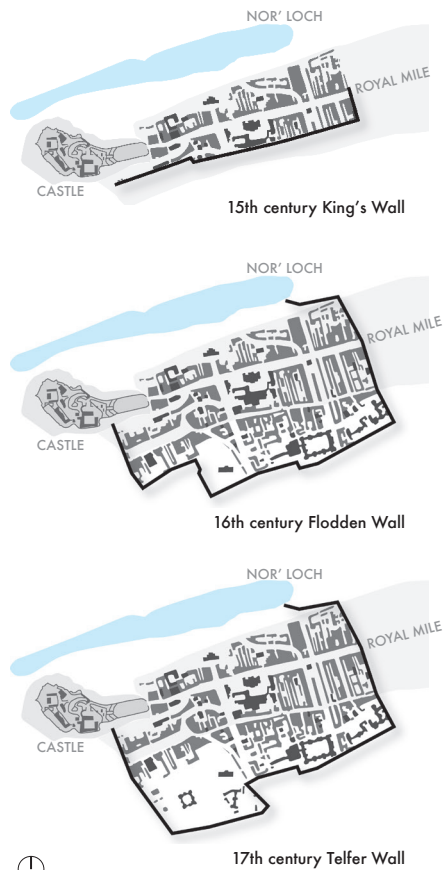


fig. 1.8

As such, there was no hard border agreed upon between the Kingdom of England and the Kingdom of Scotland until a reluctant one was made in the thirteenth century (for a time). This meant that England was always keen on absorbing the North into their kingdom, and so consequently, the need for a protected and defensive capital was paramount. Edinburgh was well protected in the west by the outcropping of the Castle Rock, and in the valley to the north of the crag by a marshy lake, the Nor' Loch or North Lake; however, to the south and east the city was vulnerable to attacks. To combat this, starting in the fifteenth century Edinburgh began to construct a series of defensive walls to the south and east which enjoyed varying degrees of success.

In 1295 Scotland and France had signed the *Auld Alliance*, the longest standing alliance to date between two countries. As a result of this agreement, Scotland in 1513, led by King James IV, attacked England at the Battle of Flodden in an attempt at diverting English troops from their march on and crusade against France. Unfortunately, the attack did not go as planned: the Scots were massacred and King James IV killed on the battlefield. Therefore, Scotland, decimated and without a king, became terrified of an English retaliation and so built the most expansive wall to date, the aptly named Flodden Wall.

With the construction of the Flodden Wall, Edinburgh in the intervening years could not grow out, and so instead began to grow vertically. The resulting wood framed tenement buildings characteristic to the city were then constructed on narrow plots of land called *tofts* and sometimes grew to be fourteen storeys tall. Within these tenement buildings, the different classes of the city



fig. 1.9 | Looking down the West Bow towards the Grassmarket

The West Bow connects the mercantile Grassmarket and Lawnmarket at the southern base of Castle Rock to the Hight Street at the crest of the crag, and until the nineteenth century was the only southern urban place whereby one could drive a carriage between the two extreme elevations of the city.



fig. 1.10

were then striated vertically: the ground floor was dedicated to poorer homes and occasionally shops and commercial endeavours, as it was closest to the noise and dirt of the streets; the middle of the building was where the most affluent lived, with the second and third floors reserved for the wealthiest inhabitants; and the poorest sections of society lived on the top floors, with the most destitute living on the roofs in rickety wooden shacks that were liable to rattle in high winds. Continuing the vertical experience of the city, internally the varied residents of each building shared a communal front door and small turnpike stair.

The secondary streets of Edinburgh run perpendicularly off the Royal Mile following the topography of the crag, which slopes away quite sharply from the ridge and the High Street; the overall effect, when viewed from above, has often been visually compared to the bone structure of a fish or a herringbone pattern. This urban configuration further meant that the entire city was itself vertically striated as the infrastructure effectively lay in several different levels — or layers — as one moved down the slope. As such, the social distinctions were again here felt as it was obviously preferable to live near the top of the ridge and the Royal Mile.



fig. 1.11 | Edinburgh, 1647

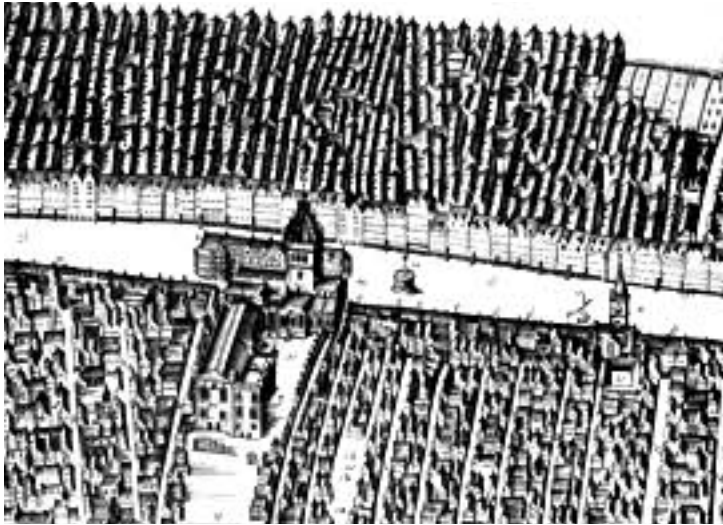


fig. 1.12 | Detail of the Royal Mile at St. Giles Kirk and Mercat Cross

Due to the lack of space in the city, off the relatively spacious Royal Mile the streets that grew up were little more than narrow, dark alleys between the tall buildings, frequently no more than a few feet wide. There were broadly two types of passageways running off the High Street: the *wynd*s, which were narrow public thoroughfares, and the *closes*, which began as larger courtyards and were actually private, and so had gates at their opening(s) which were closed at night. Rather than a permanent naming system, the *wynd*s and particularly the *closes* were named for their most influential resident and so changed accordingly throughout the years.

Even though the *wynd*s and *closes* were incredibly constricted and the city unusually dense, the management of waste was not a primary issue facing Edinburgh; instead, the closeness of the tall wooden buildings meant that fire was the chief concern and a very real hazard for the residents of the city. Consequently, by 1674, on order of the Dean of Guild, all roofs in Edinburgh had



fig. 1.13 | Daily life at St. Giles Kirk along the Royal Mile with the Tron Kirk visible in the distance, 1831

to be constructed with tile or slate, and all facades with stone.

A product of the confined conditions in the city meant that, although there were clear discrepancies in wealth and distinct social classes, Edinburgh functioned as a relatively classless society. Apart from the striated living quarters it was not physically possible to have separate socioeconomic districts within the city: even in cases where certain *wynd*s or *close*s were known to house more affluent or genteel occupants, due to the layout and density of Edinburgh they could still only ever be located a few hundred meters from known ‘immoral’ areas.³ Further, because of the spatial limitations, most of the day-to-day city life, including mercantile exchange, was conducted outdoors, especially along the Royal Mile.⁴ The net result was that the titled upper class, the professionals and the working class all lived and worked upon the same tracts of land and all attended the same markets, inns and alehouses,⁵ thereby affording the city a uniquely classless and familiar urban experience.

(overleaf)

fig. 1.14 – 1.16 | Wynds

fig. 1.17 | Lady Stair’s Close



fig. 1.14



fig. 1.15



fig. 1.16



fig. 1.17

After Queen Elizabeth I of England died without an heir in 1603, James VI of Scotland was crowned James I of England. James VI had spent his reign of Scotland fostering good relations with Elizabeth I, to the extent of not protesting when she moved to execute his mother, Mary Queen of Scots in 1587. Further, James VI had his own claim to the English throne as his great grandmother, through Mary, was the sister of Henry VIII, who was of course Elizabeth's father.

At first, this seems like the golden age for Scotland: not only was the constant, unabiding threat of England gone, but *Scotland* was ruling the English. However, instead James left Edinburgh for London, promising to return every three years but only returning once in 1617, leaving Scotland without a monarchy and effectively as a provincial state of England. The autonomy of Edinburgh and Scotland was further marginalized a century later when, in 1707, Scotland and England signed the *Act of Union* for the formal creation of a single, united kingdom, Great Britain, composed of the two nations.

As a by-product of this union, both the Parliament of Scotland and the Privy Council moved south to London, taking with them the academics, professionals and noble classes, who in some cases simply left their houses to fall into complete disrepair.⁶ As Edinburgh was never an industrial centre, the businesses that followed the Parliament south, as well as those unable to compete with the now free English market,⁷ meant that the city was quickly bankrupted, the economy destroyed and Edinburgh left without a relevant collective identity. The problems of overcrowding were then exacerbated as the poorer factions of the

city expanded and took over, while the populations continued to rise.⁸ It was not long before Edinburgh became a marginal city on the edge of the civilized world,⁹ rife with disease¹⁰ and the capital of the poorest country in Western Europe.¹¹

The City suffers infinite Disadvantages, and lies under such scandalous Inconveniences as are, by its Enemies, made a Subject of Scorn and Reproach; as if the People were not as willing to live sweet and clean as other Nations, but delighted in Stench and Nastiness: whereas, were any other People to live under the same Unhappiness, I mean as well of a rocky and mountainous Situation, throng'd Buildings, from seven to ten or twelve storey high, a Scarcity of Water, and that little they have difficult to be had, and to the uppermost Lodgings, far to fetch; we should find a London, or a Bristol as dirty as Edinburgh, and, perhaps, be less able to make their Dwelling tolerable, at least in so narrow a Compass; for tho' many cities have more people in them, yet, I believe, this may be said with Truth, that in no City in the World so many People live in so little Room as at Edinburgh.

- Daniel Defoe, 1720¹²

By the middle of the eighteenth century, though the physical city remained largely unchanged, Edinburgh's economy was on the beginnings of an upswing as the city began to reinvent itself as a financial center through the creation of the Bank of Scotland followed by the establishment of a number of insurance companies.¹³ As the century progressed, Edinburgh then began to emerge as an important city for the Enlightenment Era with many influential Enlightenment figures, from James Hutton to David Hume and Robert Burns, choosing to make the city their home. The long-standing University of Edinburgh, located just south of the crag, in turn expanded during this period

and became universally recognized as a leader in several fields including geology, philosophy and, most significantly, medicine. Edinburgh had been further re-established as a city of knowledge, even being dubbed the *Athens of the North*, with Voltaire writing that “[w]e look to Scotland for all our ideas of civilization.”¹⁴

Although the city seemed to have successfully reinvented itself culturally and economically after the devastating side effects of the *Act of Union*, physically the city still reflected Edinburgh’s old identity, and as such was seen by many to only facilitate the old crowded and uncivilized lifestyle. Fortunately, with the creation of Great Britain the defensive walls enclosing the city no longer served a purpose, so, to capitalize on Edinburgh’s new identity, in 1752 a pamphlet was put forth calling for proposals for the design of a new residential town to the north of the crag on the glacial plain just beyond the Nor’ Loch. This New Town would serve to rectify the apparent disjunction between the existing ‘Old Town’ infrastructure and the city’s new financially and academically oriented collective identity.

From the pamphlet *Proposals for carrying on certain Public Works in the City of Edinburgh*:

The healthfulness of [Edinburgh’s] situation, and its neighbourhood to the *Forth*, must no doubt be admitted as very favourable circumstances. But how greatly are these overbalanced by other disadvantages almost without number? Placed upon a ridge of a hill, it admits but of one good street, running from east to west; and even this is tolerably accessible only from one quarter. The narrow lanes leading to the north and south, by reason of their steepness, narrowness, and dirtiness, can only be considered as so many unavoidable nuisances. Confined by the small compass of walls, and the

narrow limits of the royalty, which scarcely extends beyond the walls, the houses stand more crowded than in any other town in *Europe*, and are built to a height that is almost incredible. Hence necessarily follows a great want of free air, light, cleanliness, and every other comfortable accommodation. Hence also many families, sometimes no less than ten or a dozen, are obliged to live overhead of each other in the same building; where, to all the other inconveniences, is added that of a common stair, which is no other in effect than a upright street, constantly dark and dirty. It is owing to the same narrowness of situation, that the principal street is incumbered with the herb-market, the fruit-market, and several others; that the shambles are placed upon the side of the *North-loch*, rendering what was originally an ornament of the town, a most insufferable nuisance. No less observable is the great deficiency of public buildings. If the parliament-house, the churches, and a few hospitals, be excepted, what other have we to boast of? There is no exchange for our merchants; no safe repository for our public and private records; no place of meeting for our magistrates and town-council; none for the convention of our boroughs, which is intrusted with the inspection of trade. To these and such other reasons it must be imputed, that so few people of rank reside in this city; that it is rarely visited by strangers; and that so many local prejudices, and narrow notions, inconsistent with polished manners and growing wealth, are still so obstinately retained. To such reasons alone it must be imputed, that EDINBURGH, which ought to have set the first example of industry and improvement, is the last of our trading cities that has shook off the unaccountable supineness which has so long and so fatally depressed the spirit of this nation.

...

To enlarge and improve this city, to adorn it with public buildings, which may be a national benefit, and thereby to remove, at least in some degree, the inconveniences to which it has hitherto been liable, is the sole object of these proposals.¹⁵

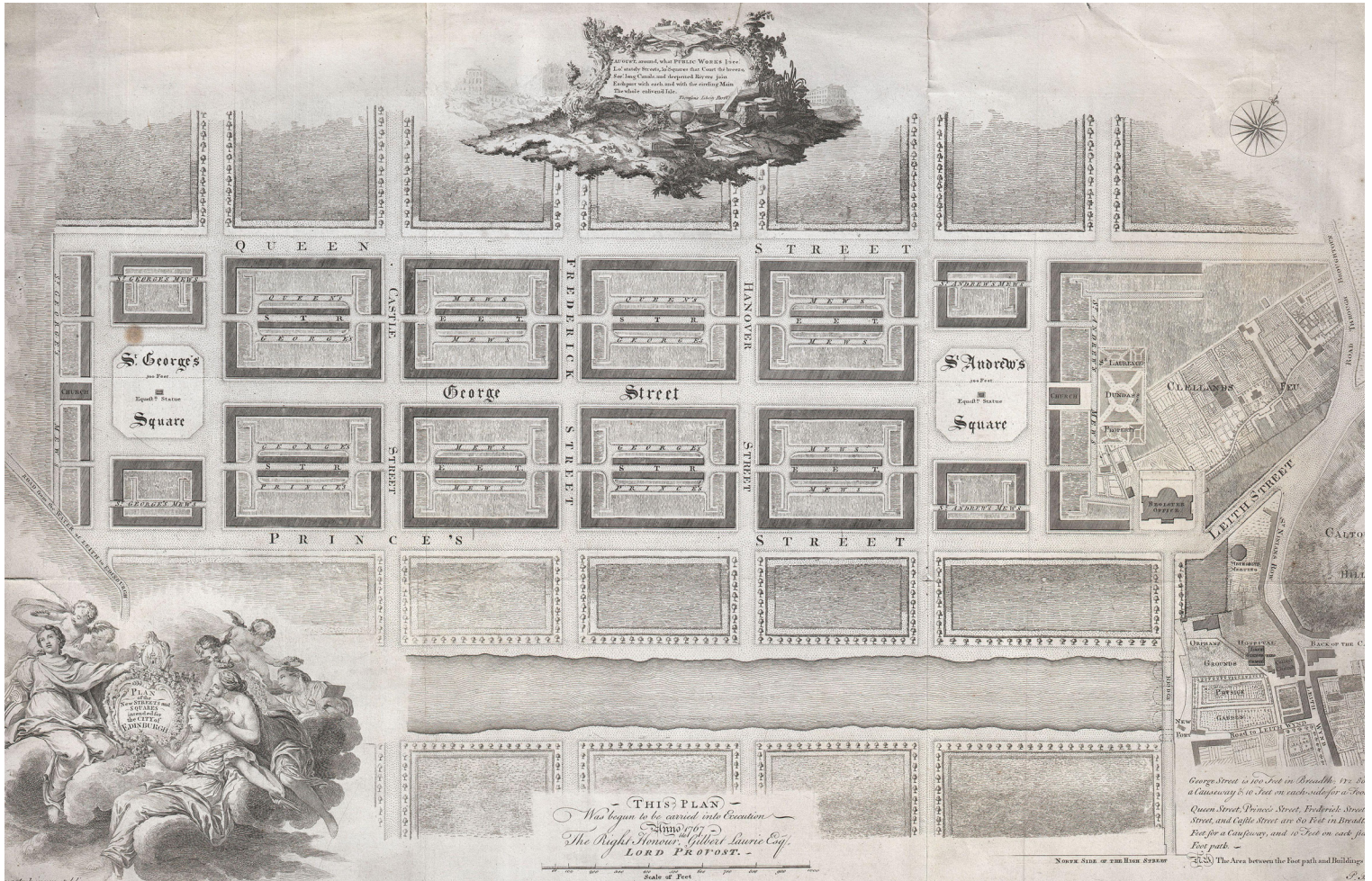


fig. 1.18 | James Craig's Plan of the New Streets and Squares intended for the city of Edinburgh, 1768.

The winning New Town proposal, designed by the Scottish architect James Craig, called for elegant Georgian buildings faced with ashlar, spaciouly laid out along a symmetrical street grid and filled with squares and gardens.¹⁶ Unlike the Old Town, there was to be no construction on the outer sides of the bounding streets, Princes Street and Queen Street, so as to preserve the views towards Castle Rock and the vista over the Firth of Forth.¹⁷ Further, amenities were to be brought to the New Town, such as a new water reservoir and the implementation and management of sewers running down the center of the streets.¹⁸ Craig's plan was to be built in stages as the land was purchased, and so, since the construction of the individual buildings was then in the hands of each landowner, the individual designs were subject to a series of Acts created and enforced by the Town Council. These Acts dealt with such matters as uniform setbacks, pavement widths, building heights and dimensions, maintenance obligations, and the location of Coach houses and other ancillary buildings.¹⁹ In one final separation from the Edinburgh and Scotland of old, the street names in the New Town were generally chosen to pay homage to the union between the nations and to the English monarchy: George Street after King George III; Princes Street, Queen Street and Frederick Street for the royal family; and Rose Street and Thistle Street for England's flower and Scotland's flower respectively.

As the project was designed for the professional and ruling classes, they were the ones who moved out of the Old Town and were attracted back to Edinburgh from London. Although the New Town was originally conceived as a residential quarter,



fig. 1.19



fig. 1.20



fig. 1.21

governmental, professional and business endeavours were soon attracted to the monumental streets as well, leaving no reason for the New Town residents to travel back to the Old Town or the Royal Mile. The relatively classless experience Edinburgh had for centuries afforded its residents quickly began to erode as the two classes began to lead increasingly separate lives.

After ground broke on Craig's New Town the Nor' Loch was drained and the need for a bridge to span the divide between the two towns was quickly apparent, as the steepness of both the north face of the crag and the south face of the plain prohibited the use of a carriage²⁰ thereby severely restricting the accessibility and the attraction of the New Town. The solution was to span the valley at either end of the Royal Mile. A long-term plan was set in motion to build an earthen bridge called The Mound just below Edinburgh Castle by utilizing excavated earth from the ongoing New Town construction,²¹ while in 1765 construction began on the North Bridge, which was to join the New Town and the Royal Mile at the east end of the city, just above the University.



fig. 1.22 | Section looking east at the North Bridge, connecting the New Town (left) to the Old Town (right)



fig. 1.23 | Old Town Typology



fig. 1.24 | New Town Typology



fig. 1.25 | Royal Mile



fig. 1.26 | Hill Street



fig. 1.27 | Old Town, 1831



fig. 1.28 | New Town, 1831



fig. 1.29 | Divided Edinburgh



fig. 1.30 | Old Fishmarket Close



fig. 1.31 | Cardinal Beaton's House, the Cowgate

By now, the Old Town had degenerated into a slum, and as the populations continued to rise at the end of the eighteenth century, managing the sanitation there was becoming a serious problem as the penurious residents had taken to, every night, throwing their waste into the street from the windows above.²² One of the worst areas of the squalid Old Town was then the Cowgate, located near the south edge of the crag and just beyond the terminus of the North Bridge. The Cowgate was named as such for it was the road by which cattle were brought to the flesh market to be sold in the preceding generations. Unfortunately, to get to the university in the south, residents of the New Town had to cross directly through the Cowgate area. As such, another proposal was made to build a second bridge below the North Bridge and Royal Mile, that would cross over the slum of the Old Town and the Cowgate and terminate at the University. This bridge was to be called the South Bridge.

The first proposal, the *South Bridge Scheme*, was made by the prominent Scottish architect Robert Adam, a man who had already designed several of the public buildings in the New Town. The desire was to create a direct route between the enlightened New Town and the University of Edinburgh, but it was further seen as a great opportunity to create a grand entrance for the city expressing Edinburgh's status as the Enlightenment Capital.²³ Adam then proposed the bridge could present all the values of an academic city while simultaneously being used as a screen to block any view of the Old Town below and beyond. Adam's specific design called for four storey buildings flanking either side of the bridge, all with shops on the ground floor sheltered by a continuous colonnade. On top of the colonnade, Adam had

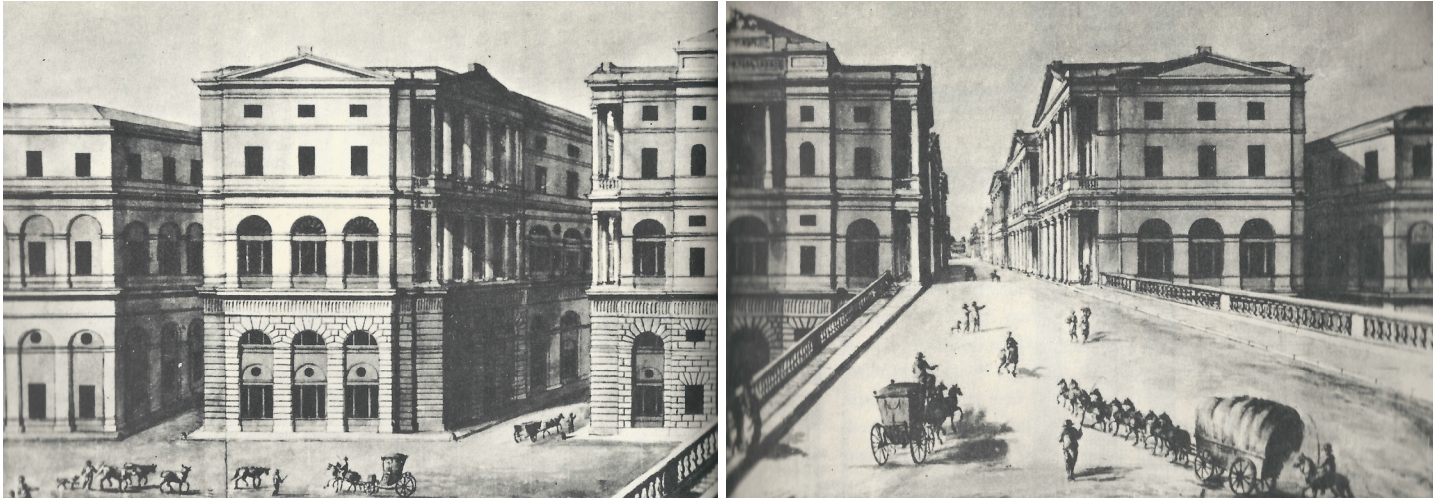


fig. 1.32 | Robert Adam's *South Bridge Scheme* at the Cowgate

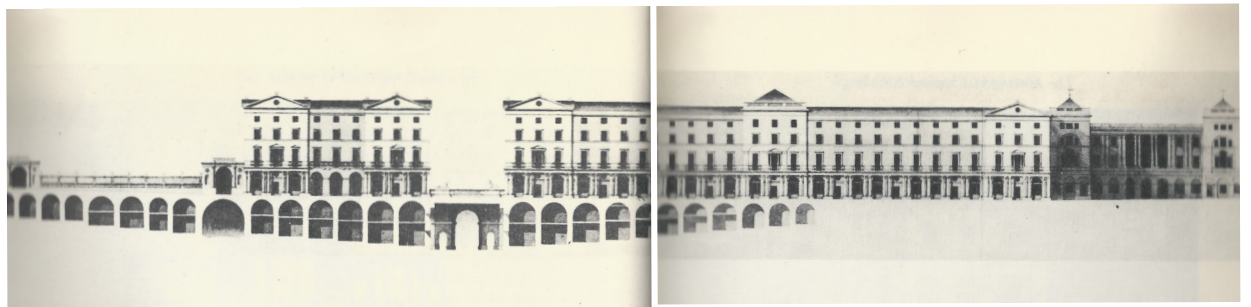


fig. 1.33 | Section through proposed South Bridge, looking west



fig. 1.34 | Proposed South Bridge elevation from Old Town below

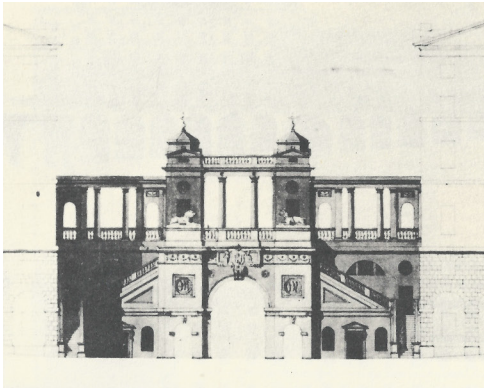


fig. 1.35 | Detail of proposed arch over the Cowgate

designed a balustraded walk, off of which would be the entrance to a series of three-storey homes.²⁴

This proposal was deemed too expensive by the city, so in the end a much more ‘practical’ bridge was built between 1785 and 1788 on specifications by the architect Robert Kay. The built South Bridge still mimicked a street and still had buildings flanking either side of the structure with separate entrances — and frequently separate uses — to them via both the bridge and the Old Town below. James Hunter Blair, a local banker and politician, had an ingenious idea to offset the cost of the South Bridge by proposing that the bridge could be financed through the sale of the adjacent buildings. Further, as these buildings were concealing the vaulted structure of the bridge in addition to the decrepit Old Town, Blair proposed the vaults could be fashioned into inhabitable places and marketed as ‘bonus spaces’ for the buildings, that could be used as warehouses or workshops by the abutting businesses. The business model was so successful that the land adjacent to the bridge was sold for £30,000.²⁵

To accommodate this incognito bridge, the city then had to buy up the surrounding property at prices deemed appropriate by an elected group of fifteen representatives.²⁶ However, this area of the Old Town, in addition to housing the particularly nasty Cowgate area was also, logically, one of the most densely inhabited parts of the city.²⁷ Many of the adjacent areas were bought for very small amounts and completely torn down, including the area around the Cowgate and the area between Niddry’s Wynd and Marlin’s Wynd, each individually acquired for £250.²⁸ Peeble’s Wynd, another area fully dismantled for the



fig. 1.36 | Eastern elevation of a building on the South Bridge



fig. 1.37 | Elevation of same building from Niddry Street in the Old Town below

bridge had boasted the Black Turnpike, a building that at one point had been the most extravagant in Edinburgh.²⁹ Even the main church, the Tron Kirk, on the Royal Mile at the future head of the South Bridge was altered to make room for the new structure through the demolition of both its side aisles.

Although many details surrounding the specific design and construction of the bridge have now been lost,³⁰ in the end the South Bridge spanned 1,000 feet of the Old Town; at its highest point, the bridge stood thirty-one feet above the ground; its foundations went a further twenty-two feet into the bedrock, and the vaults themselves in some places descended four storeys below street level.³¹ The buildings flanking either side of the bridge did effectively conceal both the Old Town below and the structure of the bridge itself, save for a single arch across the Cowgate Road. The design of these buildings was quite clever, as, from the bridge they were three storey neoclassical structures replicating the New Town style, while, from the Old Town below, the structure resembled the typical tenement buildings of the Old Town. In another feat of classism, the South Bridge was not designed to gradually slope with the topography of the city and the crag; rather, there is no slope until the University, at which point the grade rises sharply. This is due to the fact that Robert Dundas, the President of the Court of Session, as well as the half brother of Henry Dundas, the first Viscount Melville and Bridge Committee member, noticed that if the gentle gradient

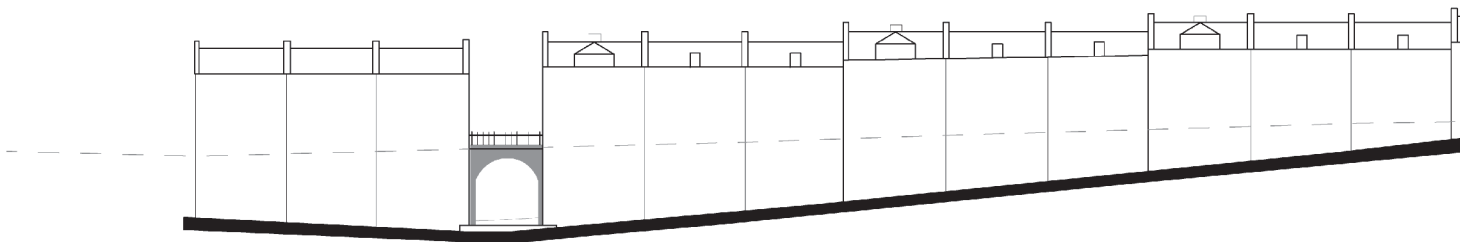


fig. 1.38 | Niddry Street Elevation of South Bridge
with the exposed Cowgate in gray



fig. 1.39 | Cowgate looking east

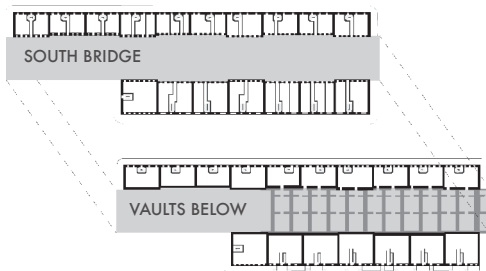


fig. 1.40 | Schematic plan of South Bridge vaults

one might expect were to be employed, the entrance to his home would fall in the lower Old Town below the bridge.

The South Bridge did not have an auspicious inauguration. The city thought it would be fitting for such an important bridge to have an important person in the city be the first to officially cross it: the Town Council decided that the oldest person in the city, a woman of good standing, should have this honour, and so hands were shaken and a deal was made. Unfortunately, a few days before the ceremony was to take place the woman passed away. However, because the deal had been formalized, city officials were reticent to back out; instead, they felt they should honour their agreement with the recently deceased, and so the first person to cross the South Bridge was the woman, in her coffin.³²

In the early years after the South Bridge had been completed the businesses that moved in were mainly booksellers, printers, publishers and public houses, no doubt due in great part to the proximity to the University. By the early nineteenth century, there were then 130 businesses operating on the bridge, including musical instrument makers, vintners and spirit dealers, booksellers, haberdashers and tea importers, as well as leather cutters, metalworkers, tanners and cobblers, among various other trades.

The South Bridge vaults were originally used as storage space and workshops for the adjacent businesses. The vaults themselves were curious spaces as, once in them, though they

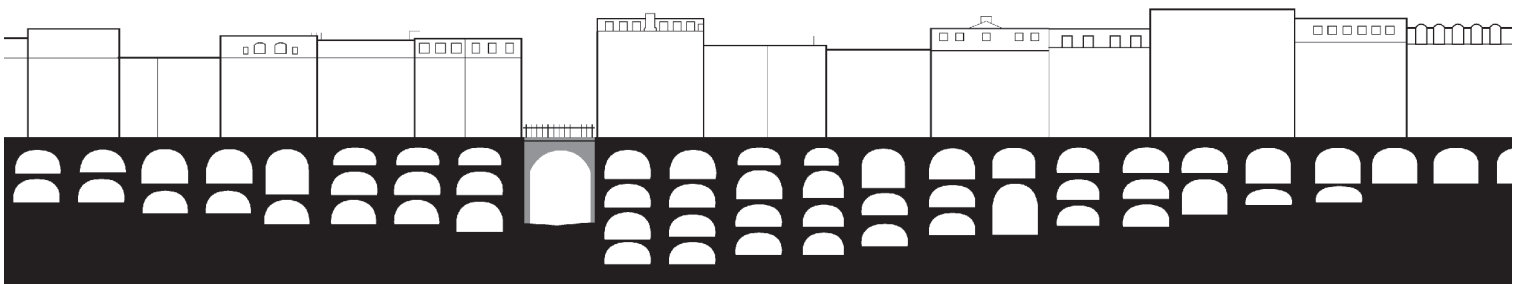


fig. 1.41 | Section through South Bridge with Cowgate in gray



fig. 1.42 | Inside the vaults



fig. 1.43 | Light in the vaults

were both below and inside the dense city, because they were so deep inside, one couldn't hear the sounds of the city or those of the streets: they were quite insular places. Unfortunately, the air quality in the vaults was not great. This was problematic as by and large those using them and working in them were tradespeople such as tanners and smelters. Compounding this, the light within the vaulted spaces was very poor, because to make the deep structural innards of the bridge inhabitable, the arches had been divided into a labyrinthian series of dark, windowless chambers and passageways spread over multiple floors and all lit only by candlelight. Finally, as the bridge had been built on such a tight budget, the quality of the construction was not optimal and no puddling clay had been applied, and so the vaults began to leak. The liquid coming in was not exclusively water: as it was the late eighteenth century and the vaults were below a street, the leaky bridge was secreting sewage.

As one can imagine, the vaults were quickly abandoned and the entrances filled in within thirty years of the South Bridge's construction.

This was not the end of occupation in the South Bridge Vaults: after they were boarded up, slum dwellers began to take over the vaults to create a sort-of red light district full of brothels, alehouses and illicit taverns. The vaults quickly became home to the underbelly of Edinburgh: burglars, thieves, pimps and prostitutes all lived and operated out of the dank rooms; it is also thought the vaults were used to host meetings of the Edinburgh branch of the Hellfire Club.³³ The vaults had become the center of the illegal going-ons in the city.



fig. 1.44 | Storage in the vaults

One illegal whisky distillery operated for some time out of the vaults. The entrance to the distillery was an opening that had been made in a fireplace grate in a bedroom abutting the bridge, and the stills were utilizing water siphoned from the buildings above. The spirits were carried out and sold to inns and taverns in Edinburgh by a notoriously ‘insane’ old woman hiding them in her large green bag.³⁴

Fairly quickly the vaults evolved again as the situation in the Old Town continued to degrade. In Edinburgh during the early 1800’s through to the middle of the century, the chasm between the Old and New Towns had grown ever further. The poorest factions of society were now so desperate that by 1795 one-seventh of Edinburgh’s population, — about eleven thousand people — relied on the charity of others to be fed.³⁵



fig. 1.45

Further, although populations continued to rise in Edinburgh throughout the nineteenth century, with those living in the Old Town specifically more than doubling between 1800 and 1870,³⁶ the city overall was not growing as quickly as before, and so new residential construction was not prioritized. This meant that the tenement buildings in the Old Town began to be systematically carved up into smaller dwellings, frequently no bigger than a single room, if that.³⁷ Under this dire surface climate, the most destitute and desperate began to move in to the vaults permanently. Whole families and those seeking refuge such as illegal immigrants from Ireland and the Highlands as well as criminals all began to live in the appalling conditions of this underground city.

During this time, above ground, in early nineteenth



fig. 1.46



fig. 1.47 | Mortsafe over graves to thwart so-called 'ressurrectionists,' Greyfriar's Kirkyard



fig. 1.48 | Old College, University of Edinburgh

Designed by Robert Adam and located at the southern edge of the South Bridge/beginning of Nicholson Street, the Old College was the original medical building for the Universty, focusing on anatomy and surgery.

century Edinburgh, the medical community at the University was enjoying great success and advancements in their field. However, there was a lack of cadavers available for use for teaching and research purposes: the University was only allotted bodies of convicted criminals who had been hanged by the city. Unfortunately, those were in short supply, and so the University began offering, off the record as it were, up to twelve guineas, no questions asked, for a 'fresh' body delivered to the school.³⁸ In response, Edinburgh developed a growing grave robber trade, with strategies emerging both for removing a body from the gravesite and for gravesite desecration prevention. Two men, William Burke and William Hare, realised they could go into the vaults and quietly kill the residents living there — as no one would miss them — and therefore be able to regularly deposit fresh bodies at the University without having to deal with the danger, hassle and unpredictable supply associated with retrieving recently interred bodies from their graves. So, in 1828, over the span of ten months, Burke and Hare killed sixteen people in the South Bridge Vaults. Burke and Hare were ultimately caught: Hare sold out Burke, who was then convicted and hanged, and his body dissected by the medical school.

Eventually, sometime in the nineteenth century, the South Bridge Vaults were abandoned for good, no one can say for sure why. The only thing that can be said with any certainty is that at some point the vaults were filled in with rubble rendering them wholly inaccessible. The vaults were quickly forgotten to the city and dropped out of the public's consciousness.

Edinburgh is a city that very clearly has two distinct halves physically separated by their ancient topography: the original vertically oriented 'organic' medieval town located along the tight confines of the crag, and the planned georgian town laid out along the plain to the north. The Old Town had developed both its physical infrastructure and cultural character in a very specific way due to the Scottish landscape and the national history. Edinburgh then had a deeply rooted sense of self with the seat of national power located in the city at Edinburgh Castle on Castle Rock, and, later, at Holyrood Palace, and although its citizens lived in confined and crowded circumstances, the experience of the city was also quite insular and accepting, thereby further providing a unique collective experience. When the collective identity of Edinburgh was effectively rendered obsolete in the seventeenth century, first with the amalgamation of the Scottish and English crowns at the beginning of the century, followed by the creation of Great Britain at the start of the next century, Edinburgh fashioned a new, enlightened and financially oriented identity accompanied by a new, matching, physically removed town.

The loss of the Scottish crown was the loss of a key piece of Edinburgh's collective identity. This loss was then compounded by the economic depression within the city following the signing of the *Act of Union* in 1707. As such, the Old Town in Edinburgh had not just become synonymous with the city's lost glory, but the Old Town had further begun to be associated with the poverty and shame preceding their re-emergence as a financial hub and city of knowledge. For the prominent citizens of Edinburgh the Old Town and 'old' Scotland had increasingly

begun to be perceived as provincial, uncivilized and uncouth. Accordingly, there was then seen to be a disconnect between the desired new Enlightenment identity and the cramped, dirty, classless physical infrastructure. Consequently, the notion that old Edinburgh lacked the physical amenities other cities of similar stature possessed, such as a proper Royal Exchange for the purposes of selling and trading, or the right kind of architectural styles in place to demonstrate the city's academic prowess and heritage, resulted in the effective abandonment of the entire existing physical city. As such, when looking at the city that existed between the old national capital and the new enlightenment capital, it becomes apparent that although the deliberate division was seen as a way for Edinburgh to separate its carnal, uncouth past from its civilized, enlightened present, in practice this division was fundamentally also a reaction against the economic lows the city had previously experienced, making the internal divide additionally a separation of the socioeconomic classes.

The novella *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* by Scottish author Robert Louis Stevenson, although set in London, was heavily influenced by the dueling identities he perceived in his hometown Edinburgh. The novella documents the actions of Dr. Jekyll, a respectable kind-faced man of fifty, who has outwardly devoted his life to upholding moral virtues in addition to actively pursuing knowledge through the study of religion, science and literature. However, Dr. Jekyll secretly has a carnal urge to engage in the 'pleasures' of pure, unmotivated violence. He suspects that, as all humans have both a good and evil side, he can rid himself of these unmentionable desires through the

development of a serum whose effects would physically separate the consumer into two discrete entities: one wholly good and one wholly bad (with the doctor of course ending up as the exclusively good entity.) Instead, the consumption of this serum transforms Dr. Jekyll into Mr. Hyde, a younger, physically deformed man, whose sole desire is to go out and commit horrible acts of unprovoked violence. Worse still: although Mr. Hyde is a separate persona, he remains linked with Dr. Jekyll, meaning he still feels horrifying guilt at Mr. Hyde's escalating acts of violence upon transformation back into 'himself.'

As the novella progresses, the transformations begin to occur spontaneously without the aid of any serum, and though Dr. Jekyll tries to suppress the emergence of Mr. Hyde through higher and higher doses of his concoction, eventually the novella ends with the malevolent Mr. Hyde completely taking over.

This famous tale can be seen to be analogous to the attempt by Edinburgh to completely sever their city in two. By rejecting the Old Town and all the residents who could not afford to follow the upper classes out to the new city, Edinburgh had attempted, like Dr. Jekyll, to separate out those parts deemed uncivilized and shameful, in order to free itself such that it could wholly engage in the pursuits of its new, civilized persona. The resulting city was instead undeniably two-faced. As Robert Louis Stevenson once remarked of Edinburgh: "... the whole city leads a double existence; it has long trances of one and flashes of the other... it is half alive and half a monumental marble..."³⁹ Further, as the Old Town after the separation fell into increasing squalour, Edinburgh's underlying problems became magnified by the very moves made to eliminate them from the new city, just as Dr.

Jekyll's nefarious secret desires only became uncontrollably realised after he developed the scientific intervention meant to staunch them.

Just as the appearance of Mr. Hyde grew stronger and more frequent the more he was suppressed, Edinburgh was unable to maintain the separation between their chosen, civilized persona and the rejected, carnal Old Town, as eventually the very things Edinburgh was trying to suppress and gloss over physically concentrated in the bridge meant to both present the new Edinburgh to the world, and to connect the New Town with the University in a way that completely bypassed the Old Town. The division came to a head through the construction of the final separating element: the South Bridge, which, while ostensibly facilitating the desired separation, became a magnet for the qualities the city had tried to deny. Further, the illicit inhabitation by the underbelly of society actually ended up directly supporting the veneer of the *Athens of the North*, such as with the case of Burke and Hare furnishing the medical community. Instead of creating the ultimate image of a World Class City, the South Bridge had become a mirror through which Edinburgh was confronted by the unconscious urban conflicts they would rather ignore, with the traditionally vertically classed people burrowing down right into the foundations of the monument to the Enlightenment.

As with Dr. Jekyll's realization that he couldn't parcel off his unsavoury qualities, Edinburgh too was confronted by their dual nature after the erection of the South Bridge.

It was on the moral side, and in my own person, that I learned to recognise the thorough and primitive duality of man; I

saw that, of the two natures that contended in the field of my consciousness, even if I could rightly be said to be either, it was only because I was radically both; and from an early date... I had learned to dwell with pleasure, as a beloved daydream, on the thought of the separation of these elements.⁴⁰

There is no definitive recorded event pointing to why the South Bridge vaults were ultimately abandoned. In fact, they weren't rediscovered by the general populace until the latter half of the twentieth century. Looking at the time period and later events from a broader context, one can begin to conjecture that as the quality of life began to improve for all the socioeconomic classes in Britain in general and in Edinburgh specifically, both the practical and unconscious need for the South Bridge vaults began to diminish. For instance, in 1851 the first purpose-built 'working class' houses were constructed in Edinburgh,⁴¹ and by the twentieth century a series of Acts regarding such things as the regulation of working conditions had been implemented throughout Britain. As the psychologist Marie-Louise von Franz observed regarding the human experience,

A conflict is never really solved, but the emotion invested in it diminishes, one outgrows it by suffering and it becomes absorbed in a new form of life with the result that one looks back dispassionately on it from a different angle.⁴²

Physically, around the turn of the twentieth century there began to be concentrated movements towards revitalizing the Old Town in Edinburgh, starting with Sir Patrick Geddes' proposal in the 1880s-1890s to regenerate the Royal Mile by restoring the existing buildings to create a residential street for

the bourgeoisie and academic classes. Geddes envisioned a Royal Mile not dissimilar to the established High Streets of respectable English university towns such as Oxford.⁴³ Although several buildings were restored, the project was essentially abandoned when Geddes left the city in the early 1900s. In 1949 there was again a move towards revitalizing the depressed Old Town, this time by Sir Patrick Abercrombie. Under this plan, Abercrombie saw the Royal Mile as a future grand commercial destination. This plan was eventually completed and by the latter half of the twentieth century the Old Town had become a desirable locale once more.

Today, Edinburgh is seen as a very stayed city: it is often contrasted with Glasgow, traditionally seen as a more malleable, industrial city. Since 1995, both the Old Town and the New Town have been designated UNESCO World Heritage Sites, and both towns are equally treasured with a mandate towards preservation and protection.⁴⁴ Edinburgh is specifically classed as a city to be preserved due to:

Criterion (iv): The Old and New Towns together form a dramatic reflection of significant changes in European urban planning, from the inward-looking, defensive, wall medieval city of royal palaces, abbeys, and organically developed small burage plots in the Old Town, through the expansive format Enlightenment planning of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in the New Town, to the nineteenth century rediscovery and revival of the Old Town with its adaptation of a distinctive Baronial style of architecture in an urban setting.⁴⁵

Further, in the 2000s Edinburgh additionally became the first

UNESCO City of Literature in recognition of their contribution to literature and their presence as a center of “literary activity.”⁴⁶ However, although objectively and theoretically very positive developments for both the collective identity and physical infrastructure, this modern celebration of the architectural heritage and cultural history in Edinburgh can tend towards historicizing the city, as this reaction can in application serve to confine the city within rigid ideals as to what Edinburgh is — and is not — thereby acting as a different type of elected persona for the collective city.

In 1980, Norrie Rowan, a Scottish rugby player and local proprietor, was in his bar in Edinburgh when he discovered a tunnel leading from his business into the vaults. Having an interest in history, he kept this discovery to himself, and quietly began buying up the properties adjacent to his bar, all the while secretly excavating the tonnes of rubble in the vaults with his son, Norman Rowan, by hand. In 1989 the elder Rowan made use of these secret vaults by using them to hide a visiting rugby player, the Romanian Christian Raducanu, for hours one night, so that Raducanu could stay in the United Kingdom and seek political asylum. In the nineties, Rowan made a deal with a local tour company, and since then regular tours have operated taking people down into the vaults.

The rediscovery of the South Bridge vaults dovetailed with another new era for Edinburgh. In the face of the preserved and deliberate city presented to the world, Edinburgh was internally beginning to push back against the status quo; culturally the city founded the Edinburgh International Fringe Festival in 1947, which today has grown into the largest international arts



fig. 1.49 | 'Wild' Edinburgh



fig. 1.50 | 'Wild' Edinburgh

festival in the world,⁴⁷ and politically Edinburgh and Scotland have increasingly demanded governmental autonomy, starting with the return of a devolved Scottish Parliament in 1999 and extending through to present day with the proposal to formally separate from Great Britain.

Fittingly, with the re-emergence of the vaults, this underlying dichotomy found itself centering on that same bridge connecting the two towns, as the collective rediscovery of the South Bridge triggered a public rediscovery of the 'wild' Edinburgh of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, specifically through the collective idea that the vaults are the center of intense paranormal activity. The South Bridge Vaults are now considered the most haunted place in the United Kingdom,⁴⁸ and countless ghost stories are told on the requisite ghost tours regarding the spirits of the destitute and/or depraved people who had lived there in the nineteenth century. This ghostly counter-culture, although concentrated in the vaults, has since further permeated much of the Old Town, with several new sites claiming to have their own nineteenth century ghosts.

Still, on the surface, the conscious collective perception of the South Bridge in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries reflects the stayed nature of the overall city. The bridge is officially remembered for its selectively chosen historical attributes: technically impressive as an engineering marvel; culturally significant as a purpose-built shopping street; and architecturally innovative as the first urban viaduct in Europe.⁴⁹ As such, the reemergence of the vaults and their resulting hauntings meant that the bridge had, once again, manifested the suppressed collective side of the city, in this case the 'wild' side. Although

the role of the South Bridge for Edinburgh had been redefined, it still was simultaneously rooted in the era of its construction, as it is literally haunted by lingering apparitions from the nineteenth century.

Some recorded ghostly tales from tours of the Vaults include:

In the double vaulted room I saw a man wearing a tri-corner hat, white ruff and leather boots, leaning against the far wall.

-Dennis, Edinburgh⁵⁰

A lady felt compelled to remove her hand from her pocket and as it was hanging by her side she was clenching and unclenching it, grasping something.... she was sure it was a little boy, trying to hold her hand for comfort.

-Bob [tour guide]⁵¹

My boyfriend and I.... heard the squeaking of shoes in the small 'very haunted' room.

-Melinda Welton, Australia⁵²

A man stands, barefoot, in a leather apron, in the glare of the light. He is happy to see all the people, but cannot understand why he has no work to do. He wants us to clean up the mess — it's getting in his way.

-Ebhlin McIntosh, a psychic from the U.S., as reported to a tour guide⁵³

Not a nice place. The feelings that I get there are horrible. I no longer enter that room. On one tour, a woman burst into tears inside the room, but claimed she did not know why. On leaving she was very distressed.

-Gordon [tour guide]⁵⁴

The sensation I felt was as if someone had gripped my leg just below the knee.... I was extremely cold and started to feel

uncomfortable...

-visitor from the U.S.A.⁵⁵

A pregnant woman standing in the 'veiled presence' corner, underneath the red light, became very distressed and asked to be taken out of the vaults. I took her and her husband up on to Niddry Street, whereupon she apologised. She explained that when she had stood in the corner, she had felt a fist pressing into the small of her back, and had an overwhelming compulsion to get out of the room. She assured me that she was not usually a nervous person, and that she loved ghost stories, but that she had been genuinely frightened in the vaults.

-Cathleen [tour guide]⁵⁶

A young American girl ... saw the little boy in the corner of the last room. She said that he had a ball under his left arm and that she had felt he wanted a friend. She felt the little boy hold her hand. She thought his name was Henry.... Incidentally, I did not mention the ghost of the little boy on this tour.

-Frances [tour guide]⁵⁷

Just as Marie-Louise von Franz articulated regarding the evolution of conflicts, the division in Edinburgh as understood through the analysis of the South Bridge has subtly shifted focus over time but never disappeared. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the bridge served as an extreme reaction against the attempt to leave all the unsavoury qualities behind and both physically and culturally begin anew. More recently, the tensions in the city have revolved around Edinburgh's further refined 'cultured' and 'preserved' identity. In each case, the South Bridge stands in the middle of the conflict, revealing the nature of both sides of the city's struggle.

Within the past decade, socioeconomic and image-based tensions have emerged yet again around the South Bridge site,

this time regarding the issue of gentrification. In the past ten years, the South Bridge and Cowgate area have become a bit seedy and depressed, and house a preponderance of dive bars, brothels, pawn shops, tattoo parlours, bargain stores, charity shops and several empty storefronts.⁵⁸ After a large fire in 2002 near the Cowgate destroyed several buildings, the city council along with local grassroots organizations began discussions regarding strategies to improve the whole area while preserving its historical legacy. These strategies included offering various subsidies,⁵⁹ encouraging occupation by the ‘right kind’ of businesses,⁶⁰ potentially converting much of the South Bridge into physically more appropriate office space,⁶¹ and looking at implementing a dedicated tram route to alleviate automotive congestion.⁶² However, in May 2013 the city unveiled a £35 million ‘mixed-use’ redevelopment project in the Cowgate area, anchored by a large 259-room hotel and supported by the implementation of such amenities as a major grocery store, a “well-known coffee chain,” restaurants and a new music hall,⁶³ with city officials remarking that the presence of this development will improve the tourist industry as it will afford a brighter image of the city to visitors by providing them with great amenities and located only a short walk away from the main attractions along the Royal Mile.⁶⁴ Once again the greater unconscious conflict has been attracted to and revealed by the persisting South Bridge in Edinburgh.

NOTES

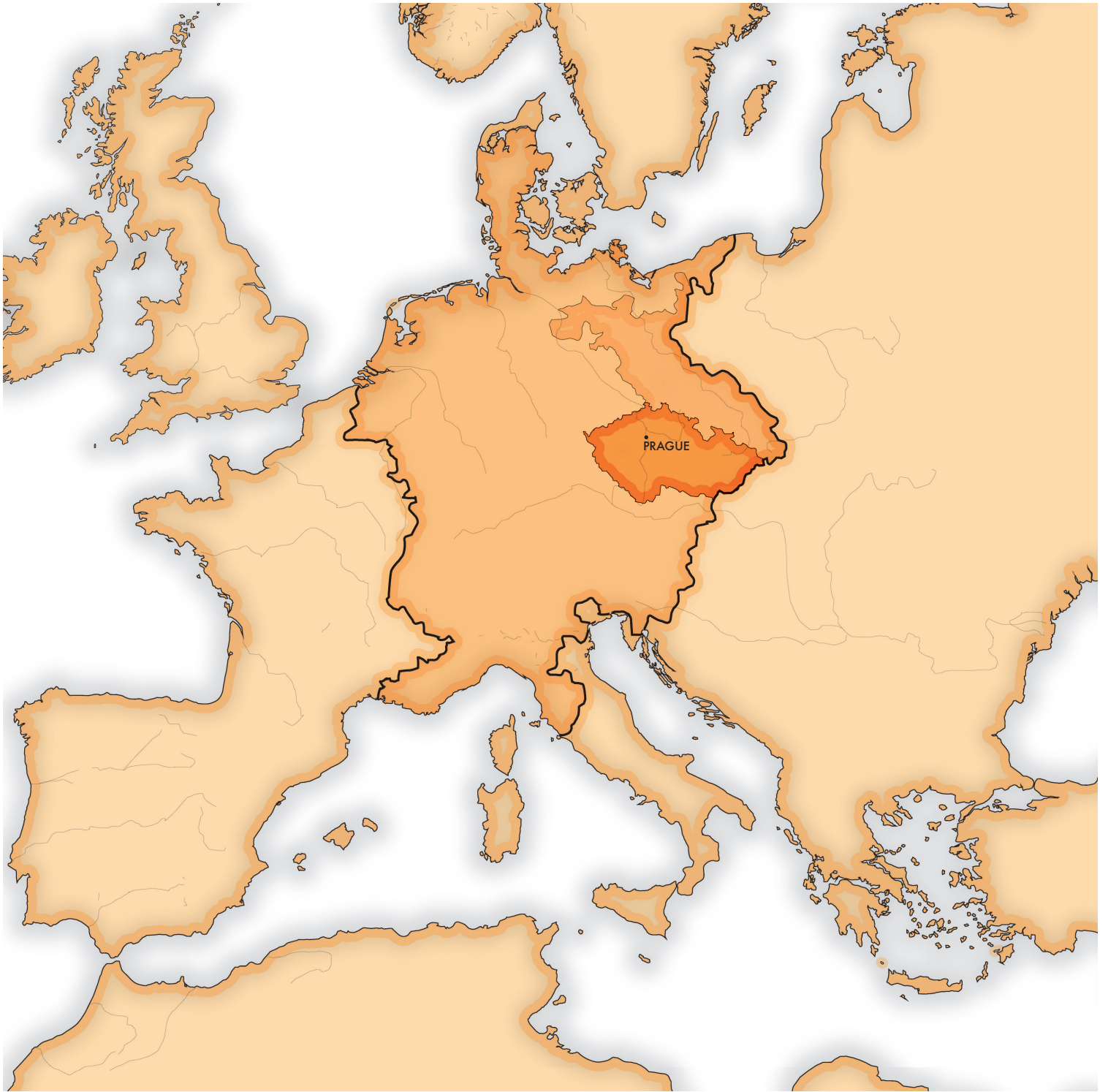
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TWO | CHARLES BRIDGE





■ Holy Roman Empire ■ Bohemia 1400 ■ Czech Republic

fig. 2.2





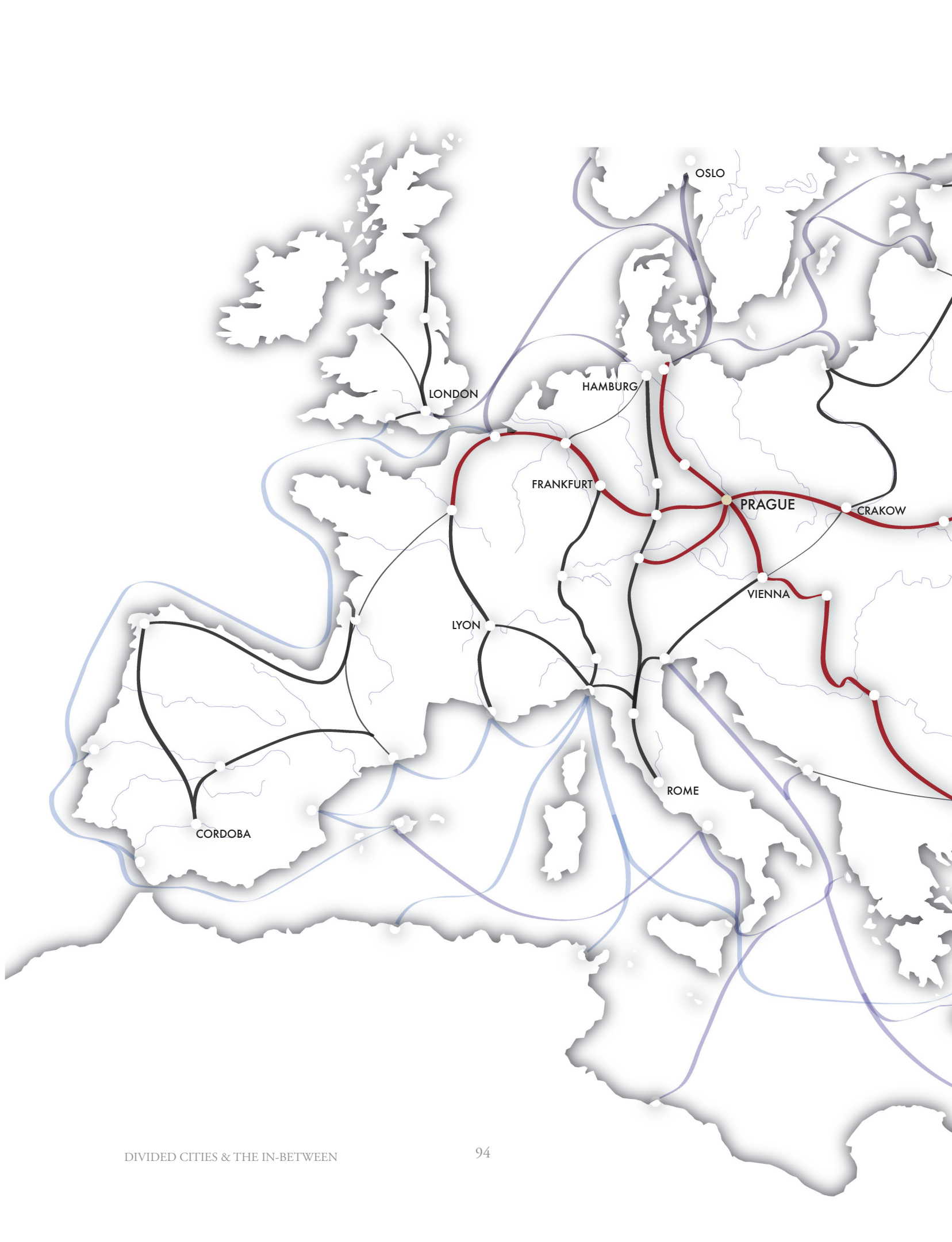
fig. 2.3

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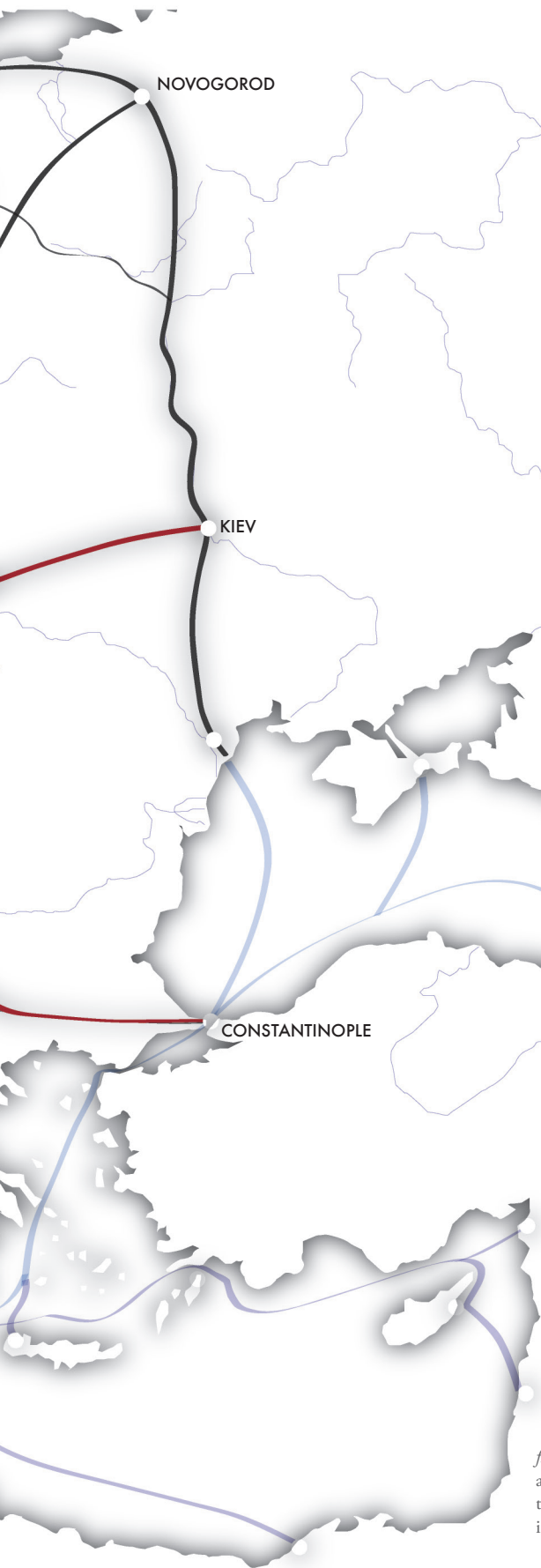
fig. 2.1 | Looking south down the Vltava River at the Charles Bridge

fig. 2.2 | Map of Prague's centrality in Europe in the fifteenth century versus the twenty-first century

fig. 2.3 | Context map of Prague



CHARLES BRIDGE



Prague sits at an ancient crossroads of Europe.

The city is located in the center of the ancient land of Bohemia, which in turn existed in the middle of the continent. The land of Bohemia was split in two by the Vltava ('Moldau') River running north-south 435 km before joining the Elbe River downstream 29 km north of Prague. The Vltava begins as two unassuming springs in the Bohemian forest, the Teplá or 'Warm' Vltava and the Studená or 'Cold' Vltava, that upon uniting form a serious waterway: both the Czech name *Vltava* and the German name *Moldau* are thought to derive from the old Germanic words *wilt abwa*, meaning 'wild water.'¹ Perhaps it is not surprising then that historically it was quite difficult to cross the river. For centuries the waters pounded against the rocks of the land and frequently swelled and flooded the adjacent banks, forcing the

fig. 2.4 | European Medieval land and maritime trade routes, with those crossing Prague highlighted in red

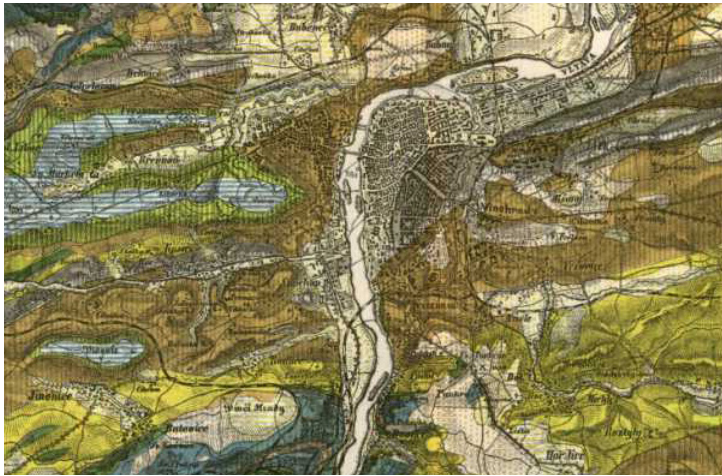


fig. 2.5 | Detail of Vltava River and land around Prague

primeval inhabitants to restrict their settlements to the higher ground. Eventually, over time, the rocks were worn down and the eroding landscape deposited sediments into the riverbed. This meant that a few places emerged where the river could be tenuously crossed, with one ford located in a practical place at a central bend in the Vltava. At this key crossing, the ancient east-west trade route running between Germany, Poland and the Ukraine met the ancient north-south trade route running from Prussia and Saxony down to Austria and eventually Constantinople. As such, this ford became an important node for Europe and accordingly, by the sixth century, a settlement had grown up around its adjacent banks.²

It has been chronicled by the medieval historians Cosmas of Prague and the monk Kristián that the Bohemian Slavs, living in the forests “...like horses unrestrained by a bridle, without law, without a prince or ruler...”³ were being hounded by a plague, and so went to the Princess Libuše and her betrothed,

the ploughman Přemysl, for advice on what to do. Libuše, who had the gift of divination, had a prophetic vision whereupon she saw the founding of a city “...whose glory reaches the stars, thirty miles from here, in a forest, washed by the waves of the Moldau...”⁴ She said they would know when they reached the spot, as they would meet a man making the threshold, *Prab*, for a house. “And because even great rulers bow to the low threshold, you will call the town that you will build there Praha.”⁵

By the tenth century Praha, or Prague, was an established trading centre with a corresponding settlement on the east bank of the river, where the two ancient trade routes crossed one another. Merchants and caravans would stop in Prague prior to or after fording the Vltava before continuing on their journey, and a large central marketplace had developed near the present day Old Town Square.⁶ As a place of trade, the Spanish-Jewish merchant Ibrahim ibn Ya’qub wrote, upon visiting Prague in 965, that it was a thriving centre,

made of stone and lime and is the biggest merchant center, where Russians and Slavs come from Cracow with goods. From Turkey come Muslims, Jews and Turks also carrying merchandise and coins, and exported slaves, tin and various furs.⁷

On the west bank of the Vltava, a castle had begun to be constructed beginning in the ninth century. Consequently, by the High Middle Ages Prague had a clearly established urban structure: a dense, flat mercantile settlement on the east bank; a protected castle on the hill across the river; and the Vltava itself, separating the two halves, with the ford acting as the unifying element providing communication and enabling trade.



fig. 2.6 | View of Prague with the Old Town in the foreground and castle on the opposite bank, 1493

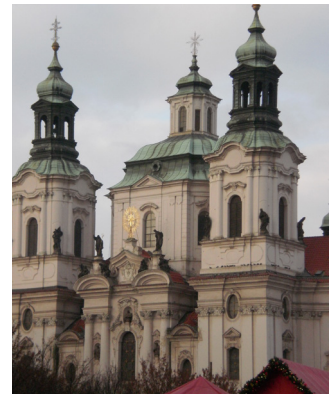
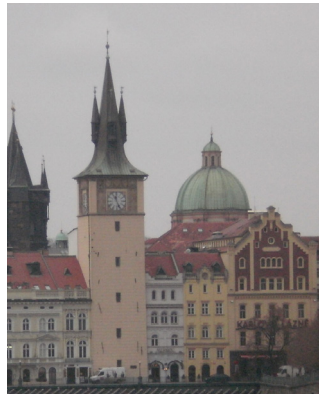
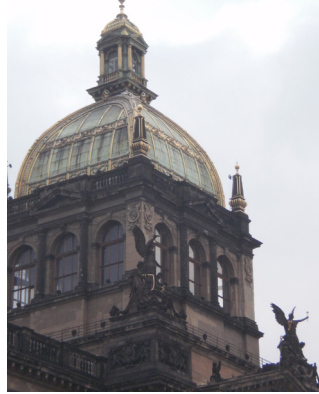


fig. 2.7



fig. 2.8

Prague had developed into the economic center and cultural meeting place for Europe. Due to its position as a trading hub, there was then a diverse mix of people from around the continent living there. However, within this eclectic diversity the land of Bohemia was ruled by the Czech Přemyslid dynasty out of Prague, with the Slavic Czech community then dominating the city's population. By the latter half of the tenth century, a large Jewish community began to migrate to the city, thereby making up one of the larger minority groups in Prague.

Beginning in the thirteenth century, during a period of 'peaceful colonization,' German citizens began to settle in Prague as well. The Germans were happily welcomed to the country by the Bohemian Prince, Otakar I, who thought that the German presence could break up the power wielded by the Czech nobility residing in the city, and so gave them a small amount of land in the center of the Old Town on the east bank to be governed autonomously. Still, overall each community within Prague lived alongside one another and was afforded relative freedom.

Physically speaking, the local architecture of Prague was uniquely influenced by styles from around the continent. That is not to say that Prague resembled a museum of architectural styles from everywhere but Prague; rather, as examined by Christian Norberg-Schulz, the architecture was always re-imagined as something uniquely Bohemian:

The architecture of Prague is cosmopolitan without ever losing its local flavour. ... [M]otifs from the Slavic east, the Germanic north, the Gallic west and the Latin south meet in Prague and blend into a singular synthesis ... Evidently Prague is one of the great meeting-places where a multitude of meaning are gathered.⁸



fig. 2.9 | Spires and towers on the west bank of Prague



fig. 2.10 | Detail of Prague looking north with the castle on the hill at the left and the Old Town across the river, 1649

One specific way the differing architectural styles could be seen to find unification is through the overarching expression of the vertical plane in the city, which projects both towards the sky and into the earth. The castle dominates the skyline, perched on top of the hill overlooking the city across the river. This vertical emphasis is then carried throughout Prague through the implementation of spires and towers; Prague is known as the city of a hundred towers, and indeed these projections were built on every type of structure without regard to stylistic or architectural convention.⁹ The physical structure of the city is not only oriented towards the sky: walking through the streets, one has a deep sense of the rootedness and history of Prague. This is felt through the consistent rustication of the ground floors, deep exterior walls and crouched arcades. The streets and districts of the city feel equal parts enclosed and protected as well as enigmatic and dangerous.¹⁰



fig. 2.11 | Arcade off Old Town Square



fig. 2.12 | Deep exterior wall/door



fig. 2.13 | Looking east towards the Old Town Square

The tower in the foreground forms part of the Old Town City Hall. The famous Prague astronomical clock, the *Orloj* is mounted on the southern face of the City Hall (as seen in photo) and was originally installed in 1410. The twin spires of the Týn Church are visible in the background of the photo, in the Old Town Square proper.



fig. 2.14 | Detail of the Astronomical Clock

Prague is commonly thought of as a ‘magical’ or ‘mysterious’ city that is difficult to tease out — one has the sense of continually going deeper and deeper into both the physical fabric of the city and the legends and history of those who inhabit it. This sense of always being just on the periphery of uncovering something about Prague’s dense present and past is pervasive, and so rounding out the physical melding of the parts of Prague is the notion of the city as an ever-penetrable labyrinth, with no direct thoroughfare in.

If on a world stage, Prague was physically, economically and socially a unifying city, internally it was a city pretty clearly demarcated by different communal and geographical zones. Although the whole city was under the jurisdiction of the King, Prague in the Middle Ages rather functioned as a series of individually governed hamlets in the city limits with each afforded separate administrative status’ and rights by the Kingdom of Bohemia.

The Staré Město, or Old Town, on the east bank where the original marketplace had grown up, was the oldest settlement and the first to ascend to the status of ‘township’ in 1230 due to the prosperous merchants residing there. The Old Town was a very dense medieval settlement built on the flat around the spacious Old Town Square, and the entire settlement was encircled by extensive fortifications replete with a moat. The architecture of the Old Town was unique as it was full of internal courtyards and passageways that could only be accessed via the buildings, meaning that one could walk through whole swathes of the town without ever having to use the public streets.



■ The Old Town

fig. 2.15 | Old Town district in Prague



fig. 2.16 | View of Old Town City Hall and Astronomical Clock



fig. 2.17 | Tyn Church



fig. 2.18 | Old Town



fig. 2.19 | Old Town



fig. 2.20 | Josefov, before 1907



fig. 2.21 | Josefov, 1890



■ The Jewish Ghetto

fig. 2.22 | The Jewish Ghetto (Josefov) in Prague

Within the geographical bounds of the Old Town, although outside the town culturally and administratively, was the Josefov, or Jewish Ghetto, where the Jewish population was required to live until 1781, and then which officially became, in 1852, simply a district of Prague (essentially a slum district.) Originally, the Jewish population is thought to have been much more mobile within Prague, with people settling on both banks of the river in a few different concentrated neighbourhoods within the city.¹¹ Comparatively speaking, the Jewish community was initially afforded many more freedoms than their counterparts elsewhere in Europe; however, the pogroms that were sweeping the continent made their way to Prague in the twelfth century, and as a result the Jewish community was forcibly consolidated within their oldest neighbourhood, the Josefov.

In the twelfth century, the Jewish Ghetto was separated from the rest of the city by a wall. This boundary was never enlarged until the whole area was torn down at the turn of the twentieth century under a ‘revitalization’ and ‘improvements’ plan. Consequently, this area of the city was the most dense, with extraordinarily narrow, crooked, unpaved lanes and wooden houses built virtually on top of one another. Unlike the rights and benefits afforded to the Old Town, upon the Jewish Ghetto was imposed the strictest limitations of all the towns with the status and freedom of the residents the least stable; until the end of the eighteenth century under Emperor Joseph II (‘The Emancipator’) Jewish Praguers were barred from most occupations and trades, and throughout history, the Jewish people of Prague experienced waves of extreme prejudice, which included pogroms, expulsions and sieges.¹²



fig. 2.23 | The Old-New Synagogue in the Jewish Ghetto

The Old-New Synagogue was finished around 1270 and is the oldest 'active' synagogue in the continent. It has been said that the famous Golem is hidden in the attic of the building.



fig. 2.24 | Josefov before 1896



fig. 2.25 | Gravestones in the Jewish Cemetery

A further restriction bestowed on the Jewish population was that they were not allowed to bury their deceased outside the ghetto walls. Consequently, the Jewish Cemetery, one of the surviving elements of the ghetto, had to be enlarged vertically through the addition of fresh soil so that new coffins could be buried above the old. By the time the cemetery was closed to new occupants in 1787, there were twelve layers of graves and twelve thousand visible markers. These markers accounted for only one sixth of the people buried in the striated gravesite.¹³ As per the Talmud the grave stones can never be moved; consequently, the visible markers are then so numerous and crowded that they butt up against each other, projecting from the earth at dramatic angles. Unexpectedly, these grave stones are actually slowly sinking back into the earth at a rate of about ten centimeters per century.¹⁴ Many markers have already almost slipped out of sight and eventually all of them will disappear into the consecrated ground, leaving only historical documents to validate their existence.¹⁵

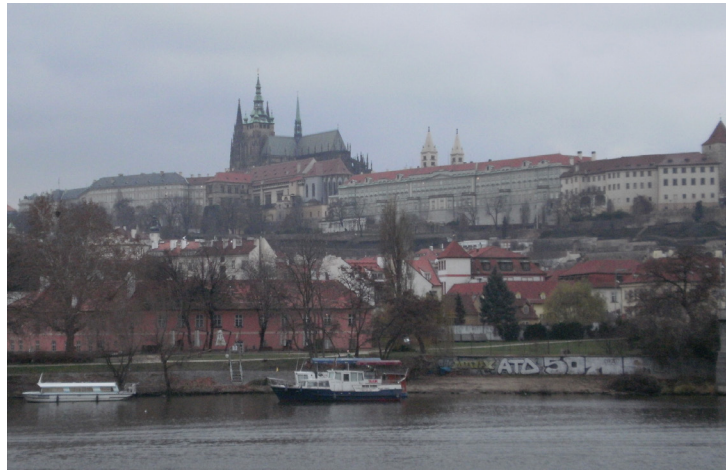


fig. 2.26 | The Hradčany

Once a castle had been established on the west bank of the river, in an area now known as the Hradčany, or Castle District, a settlement began to form below it along the steep hill stretching down towards the Vltava, that was called the Malá Strana, or Lesser Quarter. Many people initially gravitated towards the left bank to capitalize on the clear advantages the castle provided in terms of protection and trade. However, in the twelfth century the Prague Castle was the subject of repeated sieges, and that, compounded by a district-wide fire in 1142, led to a large shift back east towards the Old Town on the right side of the river.

In 1257 the Lesser Quarter was made a ‘royal town’ and all the inhabitants still living there were unceremoniously evicted and ‘relocated’ to the other side of the river. The King, Přemysl Otakar II, then gave over the newly formed royal town to local German burghers, or nobles, and fortified the entire royal west bank. As a royal town the inhabitants enjoyed many more privileges than those, now predominantly Czech and Jewish citizens, across the river.



■ The Hradčany



fig. 2.28 | Stepped street



fig. 2.30 | Sloped streets in the Lesser Quarter



■ The Lesser Quarter

fig. 2.31 | Lesser Quarter district in Prague



fig. 2.29 | Lesser Quarter

Architecturally, the Lesser Quarter was again unique. Unlike the dense, flat, east bank, the buildings and houses on the west side were generally larger and more private in that there were no secret secondary routes through the district. Further, as it was constructed along a hill, many of the non-thoroughfare streets are stepped, and all of the streets are more spatially generous. If the east bank feels very connected to the earth and penetrates downwards with the dense network of narrow streets obscuring the sky, the Lesser Quarter and Hradčany are very much oriented towards the heavens. Pernath, the protagonist from Gustav Meyrink's *The Golem* found that "...as [he] walked up the countless granite steps toward Hradčany, each as wide as four human bodies, the city with its roots and gables receded in a haze..."¹⁶ After a second devastating fire in 1541, the Lesser Quarter was reconstructed in the Renaissance and Baroque architectural styles, which it is known for today.

The Castle on top of the city in the Hradčany should be understood as a fairly vast complex of buildings that again can



fig. 2.32 | Lesser Quarter



fig. 2.33 | Lesser Quarter



fig. 2.34 | Detail of the Prague Castle and Lesser Quarter, 1607

be read as a city within the city. In 1306 the male Přemyslid line died out after a turbulent period culminating with the assassination of the seventeen year old King Wenceslas III. After the end of the Slavic Přemyslid Dynasty the Hradčany and Castle remained physically empty until the twentieth century — save for two emperors — as Prague was mainly then ruled in absentia as a small part of the Holy Roman Empire. As the city and country were ruled by foreigners, the Castle and Emperor were consistently perceived as antagonists by the Czech and Jewish citizens, and with no physical ruler in the city, it was felt that control over Prague was essentially for the taking. In the early fourteenth century the once uniting center of Europe was beginning to feel the strain of the building internal ethnic power divisions.

The first foreign emperor to live in Prague was the Holy Roman Emperor Charles IV who ruled from 1346 to 1378 and who chose to make the city the capital and center of his empire.



fig. 2.35 | Looking down Wenceslas Square in the New Town

Charles' reign has become mythicized by Praguers, as during this time, he, through his personal architect the master mason Petr Parléř, set out to revitalize both sides of the city to establish Prague as a world class intellectual and cultural center beyond its well established trade abilities. Under Charles, Prague saw the construction of a number of new public buildings, all done in a generally Gothic style, many of which can still be seen today. Further, in 1348 Charles decided to increase the boundary of Prague, specifically through the expansion of the limits of the Old Town by enlarging the existing walls to create the *Nové Město*, or New Town, which was to be another Czech district. This new town was also given its own administration with again different civic liberties afforded to those who settled there.¹⁷

Around the time of Ibrahim ibn Ya'qub in the tenth century, a wooden footbridge had crossed the Vltava River at roughly the same spot where the natural ford was located. This footbridge was relatively unimpressive and was unable to hold up against flooding by the river, necessitating continual reconstruction.



■ The New Town

fig. 2.36 | New Town district in Prague

One of these incarnations was completely washed away by the river during a flood in 1157, and so shortly after, between 1160 and 1170, the Slavic King Wenceslas II built the first stone bridge across the Vltava, the Judith Bridge, so named for his wife. This low-lying bridge was 514 metres long, seven metres wide, and was supported by 27 arches.¹⁸ Unfortunately, the Judith Bridge could not withstand the river either and was damaged to the point of destruction during flooding by the Vltava in February of 1342.¹⁹ What could be salvaged from the bridge was repurposed and used in the foundations of several buildings under construction in the city,²⁰ while the pillars that had not been swept away were sunk into the riverbed.²¹ Still today, one can find remnants of the old pillars in the river on the Lesser Quarter side.²² The destruction of the Judith Bridge was seen as a national disaster for Bohemia,²³ and as a result the city reverted back to the wooden footbridge construction.

In 1357, Charles IV decided to build a new stone bridge across the river as a key part of his patronage to the city. Charles thought a permanent bridge connection would be the apex for uniting the physically and culturally divided sides of Prague, and would present the city as a worthy capital to the world. Further, and perhaps more significantly, erecting a bridge would ensure that the crossing would remain under the monarchy's control and jurisdiction — an important consideration for a city made up of variegated administrative and ethnic towns. To raise funds for the construction, Charles commanded that the footbridge be given over to the trust of the local Knights of the Cross with the Red Star, who in turn instated a toll for crossing the footbridge.²⁴ Petr Parléř was again retained to be the master mason.

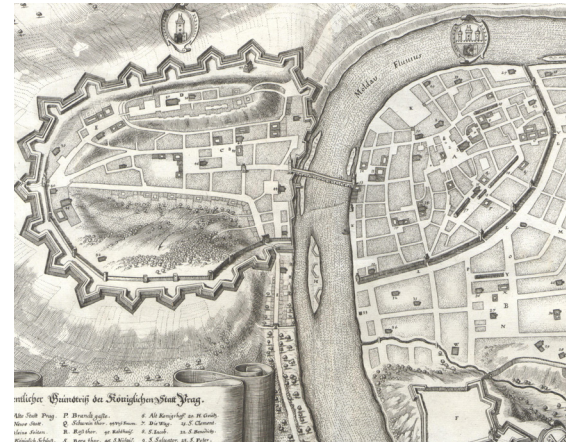


fig. 2.37 | Prague on either side of the Vltava connected at a single point



fig. 2.38 | Charles Bridge over the Vltava connecting Prague

Unlike previous attempts at spanning the Vltava, this bridge, — known for centuries as the Stone Bridge or the Prague Bridge until 1870 when it was officially named the Charles Bridge — was positioned slightly upstream from the natural ford²⁵ and was gently curved against the current of the river as a way to alleviate pressure from the force of the water against the bridge.²⁶ This curvature also meant that the whole span of the bridge could be seen and protected from the Lesser Quarter bridge towers in the event of battle. The bridge further deviated from the Judith design in that the pillars were dramatically pointed against the current, and, as a preventative measure specifically against flooding, wooden ice-breakers were implemented just before these pointed pillars.

The built Charles Bridge then stands on 16 arches with a



- The Lesser Quarter
- The Hradčany
- The Jewish Ghetto
- The Old Town
- The New Town
- The Charles Bridge

fig. 2.39 | Prague districts



fig. 2.40 | The curvature of the Charles Bridge from the Lesser Quarter Bridge Towers

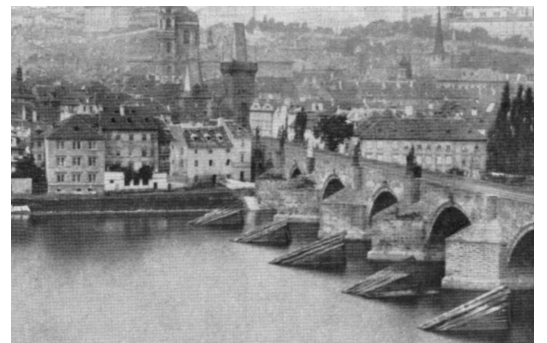


fig. 2.41 | Looking towards the castle, detail of the pointed pillars and icebreakers



fig. 2.42 | Old Town Bridge Tower



fig. 2.43 | Lesser Quarter Bridge Towers. The shorter one on the left dates from the smaller Judith Bridge

bridge tower marking the Old Town side and two towers marking the Lesser Quarter side. Although the arches are resting on stone foundations, the pillars themselves were built on oak piles that were laden with millstones. The millstones were kept together by iron clamps which then had hot lead poured on them. It is said that one reason for the longevity of the Charles Bridge was the addition of eggs to the mortar to create an uncommonly firm connection between the Bohemian sandstone blocks making up the structure. The bridge rises further out of the water than the Judith Bridge, and, coming in slightly wider at 9.5 meters and longer at about 516 meters, visually appears much grander than both its previous incarnations and any contemporary structures elsewhere around the continent. Functionally, if the water from below is channeled in a superior fashion compared to the previous models, the rain from above was also innovatively channeled via a raised roadway and stone drains.

Stylistically, the Charles Bridge itself is an interesting amalgamation of several different architectural styles. The weightiness of the foundation and pillars is reminiscent of Romanesque architecture, while the towers bookending the bridge on each bank and the thinned arches of the bridge itself are clear expressions of the Gothic style which Charles is most remembered for. Finally, sitting on the bridge is an alley of thirty Baroque sculptures which were implemented beginning in 1683 and are the only architectural element added after the initial construction had completed. Before the addition of the statuary there was no ornamentation on the bridge proper; instead, all the sculptural detail was located on the Old Town Bridge Tower. Interestingly, on the other hand, the Lesser Quarter bridge towers



fig. 2.44 | Charles Bridge at the center of Prague, looking east

always more closely resembled fortifications.

On July 9th, 1357 at precisely 5:31 AM, Charles IV himself laid the first foundation stone for the bridge. This date and time was chosen by royal astrologists and numerologists as being the most auspicious time for beginning the bridge construction. As Prague had not fared well with building bridges in the past, looking for magical assurance was seen as a very positive action. The date and time corresponded to the Sun-Saturn conjunction²⁷ and the numbers themselves are both a palindrome and the increasing/decreasing scale of single digit odd integers (Year: 1 3 5 7, Day: 9, Month: 7, Time: 5 3 1, or: 135797531.) These numbers are carved into the gothic bridge tower on the Old Town side.

The building of the Charles Bridge across the Vltava in the center of the city cemented Prague's position as a key trade route between the corners of the continent by providing a permanent 'land' connection uniting the two halves. The presence of such a beautiful and structurally impressive connection served to further elevate the perception of Prague as a world class city, and overall the bridge was seen as a physical and symbolic gathering element for the disparate parts of the city. Visually, the horizontally driven bridge was the one built element of the city that stood in contrast to the pervading vertically oriented labyrinth of Prague: when on the bridge, the vertical walls of the dense city fall away leaving one with the feeling of being simultaneously in the very center of Prague while outside the bounds of the city entirely.

With regards to the physical infrastructure of the city, the three main ethnic districts of Prague — the Lesser Quarter, the Old Town and the Jewish Ghetto — were all inwardly oriented



fig. 2.45 | Walking towards the Old Town



fig. 2.46 | Effects of May 1872 flash flood



fig. 2.47 | Aftermath of 1890 flood

zones with their own physical and cultural centers and landmarks. The Charles Bridge is then the single element in the city able to unite and gather these distinct districts to create a central focus and landmark for the city as a whole.²⁸

Although the Charles Bridge may have withstood the wild waters of the Vltava where its predecessors could not, one must not mistake this tenacity for permanence. While the bridge was initially being built, the unpredictable waters frequently carried away the half-completed pillars, repeatedly necessitating construction begin anew, and after it was finally completed, the Charles Bridge has continued to require restoration and partial reconstruction throughout the centuries due to the flooding of the river.

Generally it is the pillars of the Charles Bridge that have borne the brunt of the damage inflicted by the Vltava. In 1890, after particularly heinous flooding, thousands of pieces of debris collected upstream and smashed against the bridge. The debris was slowly funneled through the arches, but in doing so caused damage to most of the pillars, collapsing three of them and tossing the statues of St. Ignatius and St. Francis Xavier into the water. Most recently, in 2002 and in the early summer of 2013 Prague has again been assaulted by severe flooding, and in the case of the former the Vltava swelled to quadruple its normal size in less than 48 hours and caused widespread water damage to large portions of the historic city.²⁹ However, in these more recent floods the Charles Bridge has conversely escaped relatively unscathed.



fig. 2.48 | Charles Bridge arch detail from Lesser Quarter



fig. 2.49 | Arch detail at Kampa Island on Lesser Quarter side



fig. 2.50 | Structural detail, looking east

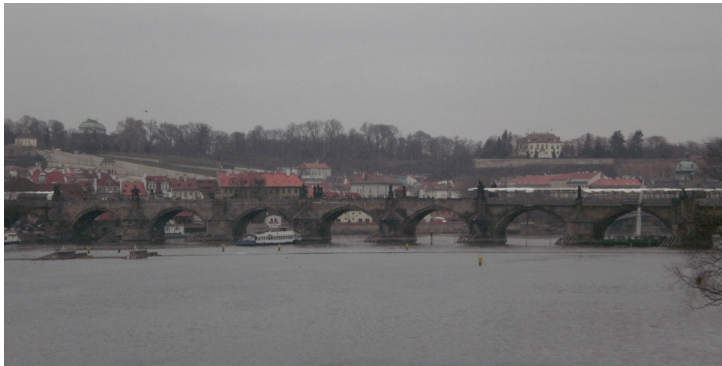


fig. 2.51 | Charles Bridge from the north

The Charles Bridge was unquestioningly built to be a unifying element for Prague: it solidified communication and trade; it functioned as a fulcrum for the separate entities of the city; and poetically it presented an image of the city harnessing nature. Further, on a global scale the bridge was seen as the center of European trade and was the meeting place for a whole host of different people and cultures; however, fairly quickly after Charles' unifying reign ended, the presence of the Charles Bridge internally came to cement and facilitate the underlying ethnic and social division within the city. As Martin Heidegger posits in Part II of *Building, Dwelling, Thinking*,

[A bridge] does not just connect banks that are already there. The banks emerge as banks only as the bridge crosses the stream. The bridge designedly causes them to lie across from each other.³⁰

By outwardly constructing the bridge to unify and amalgamate the discrete section of the city while inwardly using its presence to maintain economic control, the construction of the Charles Bridge in turn had physically manifested the hitherto unconscious division between the Czech, German and Jewish citizens of Prague.

The protagonist, K. in Franz Kafka's *The Castle*, a novel almost certainly drawing from the social and physical infrastructure of Prague, spends his entire life in a strange village trying to get to the castle on the other side of the bridge to speak to Klamm, a city official. K. had been called to this place by its mysterious authorities who had retained his services as a Land Surveyor. The book opens with the lines:

It was late in the evening when K. arrived. The village was deep in snow. The Castle hill was hidden, veiled in mist and darkness, ... On the wooden bridge leading from the main road to the village K. stood for a long time gazing into the illusory emptiness above him.³¹

Fairly soon after his arrival, it becomes unclear as to whether the castle actually requested K.'s services, or if his summons was instead the result of miscommunication between the castle and the town. Unfortunately, K. is not able to know either way as he is continually thwarted when trying to reach the castle to speak with Klamm or any other official regarding his job.

As the novel progresses, K. is repeatedly reminded that he is an outsider with no business going to the castle (even though as Land Surveyor he literally does have business to attend to at the castle) and further that the castle officials are separate from the villagers, the two only mixing when the officials have work to attend to in the town, never the other way around. K. is not even a villager, so his audacity in attempting to contact the castle and officials is even more ludicrous. As K. nears the end of his life still on the wrong side of the bridge, the futility of his repeated attempts and the possibility that there may not be anyone in the Castle at all becomes overwhelming. Although the

novel was never finished, it is implied that K. dies never having reached the other side.

This triple division between the three peoples of Prague as reflected by Kafka — the German officials, the Czech villagers and the Jewish outsider — can be further understood as a multifaceted socioeconomic, linguistic and religious divide based on the fundamental historical origins and cultural differences between these three groups and the resulting power struggle due to the empty castle's absent rulers. The hierarchy between the subsets of the city was physically reflected by the German nobles perched on the hill below the Hradčany on the left bank of the river, followed by the Czech mercantile settlement on the lower east bank, and finally by the Jewish Ghetto within the city limits but walled off from the rest of the Old Town. For Praguers, the Charles Bridge then represents neutral territory standing between these various factions, but further it symbolizes the most important territory in the city, as whoever is in 'possession' of or controls the bridge, effectively controls both the operations of the internal city and the management of the continental trade routes, thereby assuming dominance in Prague.

Immediately following Charles IV's reign at the turn of the fifteenth century, amidst a wave of growing Czech nationalism, a Slavic priest and academic, Jan Hus, was preaching in Prague in Czech to Czech citizens, against the widespread corruption in the Catholic Church. As a part of his speaking, Hus condemned their exclusionary practices regarding who could take communion, and called for wide reforms to Christianity beginning with a greater emphasis on the Bible.³² Hus' teaching resulted in the conversion of the majority of the Czech population



fig. 2.52 | Jan Hus Memorial in the Old Town Square

to this new ‘Hussite’ sect of Christianity. This exacerbated the religious conflict in Prague, as the German Praguers — as well as the remote seat of power — remained Roman Catholics.

Charles IV’s son and heir, King Wenceslas IV, was a much weaker ruler than his father: already in 1400 he had been deposed of the more lucrative title of Holy Roman Emperor, but he was still hanging on to the Kingship of Bohemia. His brother, Sigismund of Hungary, who was waiting in the sidelines for his chance at the throne, declared Hus a heretic and threatened to drown all of his followers. Sigismund then lured Hus to Prague under a fallacious promise of safe-conduct; upon arrival, Hus was instead immediately imprisoned and then, after refusing to recant his teachings, burned at the stake in the Old Town Square in 1415. The Hussites did not take this in stride: there was widespread rioting, a defenestration and expulsions followed by all out war between the Czech Hussites and the Catholic Germans. Neither side conceded, but after a decade and a half of fighting a tenuous peace agreement was made affording both sides some religious autonomy.



fig. 2.53 | Defenestration of Prague, 1618

Following the Hussite Wars the schism between the people

of Prague became progressively more vast, with fighting erupting like clockwork. The Charles Bridge was the site of many of these battles, where the ‘taking of the bridge’ had considerable implications. In 1618, the relative religious freedom afforded to the Protestant Hussite Czechs was under threat by the new Emperor, Ferdinand II, an advocate of the counter-reformation. In reaction to the Emperor’s tightening position, the Protestant Czechs again revolted, triggering the Thirty Years’ War in Europe. This revolt ended at the Battle of White Mountain in 1621, where the Catholic League emerged victorious. Twenty-seven of the Czech leaders involved in the final battle were executed in the Old Town Square on order of the Emperor. Twelve of the leaders’ heads were then incased in metal cages and put on display atop the Old Town Bridge Tower, serving as a gruesome reminder and threat for any Czech crossing the Charles Bridge. The heads remained there for ten years before they were stolen away in the night.

In 1648, at the tail end of the Thirty Years’ War, Sweden captured the empty Castle on the Hradčany. The Swedes then attempted, several times, to cross into the Old Town but were repeatedly forced back before reaching the Old Town Bridge Tower by a militia of Praguers. The Charles Bridge served as the principle battlefield, which included all manner of contemporary weaponry. One sculpture was obliterated by Swedish cannon fire and virtually all the ornamentation on the Old Town Bridge Tower was destroyed; however, the Swedes were pushed back and Prague ultimately emerged victorious.

Other battles fought along the bridge included: skirmishes fought during the Hussite Wars, one notably in 1420 when



fig. 2.54 | Detail of Battle with the Swedes on Charles Bridge (1648) diorama



fig. 2.55 | June 1848 Revolution at the Old Town Bridge Tower



fig. 2.56 | Nazis occupying Prague Castle, March 15, 1939

the Hussites tried to cross into the Lesser Quarter; the uprising of 1611 with the invasion by the Bishop of Passau; and the Revolutions of 1848, where the curvature of the bridge was used to the Castle's advantage when they repelled the students marching toward the Hradčany with cannon fire as they were crossing the bridge. The six-day Uprising in the aftermath of the 1848 massacre saw fighting in the streets and the erection of barricades by outraged citizens, including one at the Old Town Bridge Tower. In World War II, days before Germany surrendered to the Allies, an uprising by the Czech Resistance served to isolate the different Nazi factions occupying the city from the Hradčany through the erection of barricades in key locations throughout the city, one specifically again at the Old Town Bridge Tower blocking access to the eastern side of Prague.

Compounding the division and varied perceptions of Prague is the aforementioned alley of thirty statues along the Charles Bridge. Compared to the more overt examples of discord, the statuary seems benign enough; each sculpture depicts a different, sometimes local, saint. However, looking into what each sculpture actually depicts, and the intended meanings each was to symbolize, it becomes apparent that these Baroque adornments were another way the internal conflict manifested on the bridge. Although most of the statues date from the early seventeenth centuries, one of the oldest statues, depicting St. Jan Nepomuk, was sculpted in 1683. Nepomuk died three hundred years prior to the unveiling of his statue after he was thrown off the Charles Bridge and drowned by order of the King, Wenceslas IV. It is said that Nepomuk, a Czech and Catholic priest, was thrown to



fig. 2.57 | St. Jan Nepomuk

his death after he refused to reveal what Wenceslas' wife, Queen Sophia, had said during confession. After Nepomuk fell out of sight it is said that five lights appeared on the dark water marking where he fell. Accordingly, five golden stars encircle the sculpted Nepomuk's head.

Historically speaking it is posited that Nepomuk was probably a casualty of a larger conflict between the Archbishop of Prague and King Wenceslas IV. After a contentious church appointment was made, Nepomuk, the Archbishop's Vicar General, along with two other church officials were arrested and tortured on Wenceslas' command. After the torture each was made to sign something agreeing that there had been no mistreatment, but Nepomuk died from his wounds before he could be made to sign. To cover up what had been done, his body was thrown off the Charles Bridge,³³ and once again the bridge was at the center of the religious and power struggles emanating out of Prague.

After the martyrdom of Jan Hus earlier in the century and the recent display of the Czech heads on the bridge tower, there was a desire by the Hradčany to distract the Protestant Czechs from their new religious-based nationalism through the consecration and public memorialization of a local Catholic Czech saint, and so the statue of Nepomuk was erected in the center of the bridge and the more legendary story propagated. The statues added after St. Jan Nepomuk by and large also depict Catholic saints and figures, thusly together presenting a Catholic ideological message along the bridge, subtly reinforcing who was in charge.

(overleaf)
fig. 2.58 | Catalogue of statues
on the Charles Bridge



1. St. Ivo



6. St. Christopher



11. St. Nicholas of Tolentino



2. St. Barbara, Margaret and Elisabeth



7. St. Francis Borgia



12. The Dream of St. Luthgard



3. Pieta



8. St. Ludmila with little Vaclav



13. St. Adalbert/Vojtěch



4. St. Joseph with baby Jesus



9. St. Francis of Seraphim



14. St. John of Matha, Felix of Valois and Ivan



5. St. Francis Xavier



10. St. Vincent of Ferrer and St. Prokop



15. St. Václav

SOUTH SIDE



16. Madonna and St. Bernard



21. St. John the Baptist



26. St. Augustine



17. Madonna, St. Dominic and St. Thomas Aquinas



22. St. Norbert, Václav and Sigismund



27. St. Cajetan



18. Crucifix and Calvary



23. St. Jan Nepomuk



28. St. Philip Benitius



19. St. Anna



24. St. Anthony of Padua



29. St. Vitus



20. St. Cyril and Methodius



25. St. Jude Thaddeus



30. St. Cosmas a Damian with Salvatore

NORTH SIDE

One statue along the bridge that has also been a focus of the religious and power based suppression is the Crucifix and Calvary. This statue, as one might expect, depicts the Crucifixion of Jesus. Unusually, in 1696 Hebrew text from a Jewish prayer was added in gold around the cross, and reads 'Holy, holy, holy is the God of the crowds'³⁴ and further, also in gilded Hebrew, words referring to God were added around Jesus' neck. Very offensive to Judaism in and of itself, the addition occurred because a local Jewish man crossing the bridge was accused of being blasphemous towards the sculpture and as punishment ordered to finance these inscriptions.

A final example of sculpted messages is the statue of St. Francis Xavier, which was lost to the river during the flood of 1890. The statue dated from 1711 and was unusual in that the sculptor, Ferdinand Maxmilián Brokoff, actually sculpted himself into the scene. St. Francis Xavier, a Jesuit saint, was shown with a bevy of people gazing fixedly up at him. Brokoff, of Lutheran ancestry but whose family had officially converted to Catholicism, sculpted himself looking away from the Catholic saint. From the Catholic perspective, this sculpture then contributed to the propagation of their dominance in Prague; however, from the Protestant perspective, the statuery was subversively bolstering Czech nationalism by disseminating a secret message to the fellow Czech resisters of the German authority.

The sculptures on the bridge then can all be seen to have dual meanings and interpretations: the German side of Prague would have seen the sculptures as celebrations of Catholicism and the power of the Habsburg Monarchy at the head of the Holy Roman Empire; for the Jewish community, the bridge was



fig. 2.59 | Crucifix and Calvary



fig. 2.60 | Replica of St. Francis Xavier with Brokoff looking away located on the right of the image, under St. Francis Xavier's outstretched hand holding a cross

lined with antagonistic and degrading statues by an oppressive ruler; and for the Czech side of Prague the statuary held glimpses of subversive nationalistic messages against the foreign church and state.

Although the Charles Bridge became a physical focal point for the ongoing conflicts between the three ethnic groups within Prague, the bridge also emerged as a reoccurring meeting place in the stories and histories told by the three different communities. By existing both in the center of the city and physically outside the built world suspended over the river, the Charles Bridge was in another sense the neutral territory.

... K. was soon out in the street, and from the threshold the two men surveyed him. Snow was again falling, yet the sky seemed a little brighter. The bearded man cried impatiently: 'Where do you want to go? This is the way to the Castle, and that to the village.'³⁵

One famous story involved the Emperor Rudolf II, the infamously eccentric foreign ruler and the only other Emperor to make Prague his capital, who was consumed by the study of the occult and alchemy and is known for his philosophy towards religious liberty and his enormous collection of oddities, meeting with the revered Rabbi Loew, the creator of the legendary Golem and a leader in the study of Jewish philosophy and the Kabbalah, in the middle of the bridge to discuss reversing an edict regarding the expulsion of the Jewish population. In another, Rabbi Loew plants both a rosebush and some rosemary underneath the stone bridge to facilitate the forbidden love between Esther, the daughter of the mayor of the Jewish Ghetto, and the Emperor

Rudolf II. The planting of the rosebush and the rosemary under the bridge served to bring the two lovers together for magical trysts; when the rabbi realises their affair is unsustainable for the future of the city, he unroots the bushes and the relationship ends.

The stories of the city do not only depict the bridge as a place of temporary unity for the triad of Prague; the Charles Bridge also features in stories of triumph over the foreign rule. In one story, the knight Bruncvík buries his magical sword in the middle of the Charles Bridge for St. Wenceslas' future use. It is said that if Prague — or rather, Czech Prague — is ever in need, St. Wenceslas would reappear and gather his vast army, currently lying dormant in the nearby Blaník mountain, to march on the Hradčany and triumph over the usurpers inhabiting it. As the army crosses the bridge, St. Wenceslas' horse will stamp his foot in the centre, revealing the sword, which the Saint can then use to liberate the Czech people. Allegedly during repairs after the 1890 flood a large rusty sword was actually unearthed from the structure of the Charles Bridge.³⁶

Finally, the Charles Bridge appears in many local stories where its presence seems to imbue the protagonists with magic, including in the aforementioned story regarding the love between Esther and Rudolf II. Another story recalls the second defenestration of Prague at the beginning of the Thirty Years' War whereby one witness from the Charles Bridge watched as the Regents' secretary, Philipus Fabricius, was thrown out an upper storey window and appeared to gently fall to the ground like a feather, and live. Nepomuk, after being thrown from the bridge had the five lights appear in the water to the people on the

bridge. Finally, and perhaps most magically, the famous Golem was created by the Rabbi Loew on — and out of — the banks of the Vltava at either dawn or midnight in the shadow of the bridge. The Golem is famous for once roaming the streets of the Old Town under the direction of the rabbi, protecting the Jewish people of Prague from persecution, and his creation is recounted in Joachim Neugroschel's *The Golem*:

There, on a clay bank, we measured out a man three cubits long, and we drew his face in the earth, and his arms and legs, the way a man lies on his back. Then all three of us stood at the feet of the reclining golem, with our faces to his face ... Now the rabbi walked around the golem seven times with the Torah scrolls, like the circular procession in synagogue at New Year's and then, in conclusion, all three of us together recited the verse 'And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.'³⁷

Today the Golem is said to be lying dormant in an empty room with a window but no door, that can only be accessed through a hatch in the floor, which is in turn approached via a secret subterranean labyrinth. The Golem is kept in this secret room in case, similar to St. Wenceslas' knights in the mountain, there is ever the need to re-animate him to come to the aid of the Jewish people once again.

Prague, from inception, has been a city of labyrinths, where internal layers upon layers were physically and culturally built on top of each other. Each neighbourhood is oriented inwards, and in turn home to its own internal secrets. The Charles Bridge is then the architectural object which gathers the disparate parts

of the city and gives Prague an overarching focal point.

The external presence of the bridge, as read on a world stage, not only unites the various parts of the city, but further, validates Prague as an international trading hub and facilitates its capacities as a place of exchange. However, internally the bridge does not unite the different peoples; rather, the Charles Bridge embodies the underlying conflicts between the largely ethnically exclusive administrative hamlets within the city, and physically expresses the unconscious separation to the point where the bridge becomes the repeat site of battles and warfare.

Looking at the Charles Bridge as an architectural object, the bridge physically stands in contrast to the rest of Prague, as it is the only horizontal element in a vertically oriented city. Analyzing this further, the bridge then acts as a tenuous threshold for Prague: on the most basic level, the horizontal element is hanging over the wild waters of the natural landscape; culturally speaking, the bridge spans between the socioeconomic and ethnic sides of the city; and finally, symbolically, the Charles Bridge is suspended between the sky and the earth, which is significant as the German Hradčany and Lesser Quarter are physically and visually oriented towards the heavens while the Old Town and Jewish Ghetto are physically and visually deeply rooted in the earth.

The actual architecture of the bridge itself is a clear reflection of the dual nature of Prague and the different ways it is perceived by outsiders and Praguers: from afar the bridge appears to be a distinct, harmonious object in the city, — unlike much of the overlapping and labyrinthian infrastructure of the three districts of Prague — a beautiful structure that can be concretely dated to

the Middle Ages; it is only up close upon careful inspection, that one can begin to decipher and tease out the stylistic architectural inconsistencies that are present.

Prague's collective identity was divided along its ethnic, linguistic and religious lines through the rejection of the perceived 'other.' This was then exacerbated by the internal struggle to assert dominance in a city that effectively operated under a power vacuum due to absentee rulers. All this was manifested and concentrated on the Charles Bridge. Meyrink's novel *The Golem* is an interesting interpretation of the internal conflict playing out within Prague, as, unlike the classic interpretations of the myth, in Meyrink's novel the Golem is a monster that appears every thirty-three years to the trepidation of Praguers as he wreaks havoc on the city. Meyrink's Golem is a creature that is rarely seen, but is instead manifests to individuals in specific situations, where their perception of other aspects of the city is called into question. As such, the Golem is not a separate entity protecting the city; rather, he is a reflection of Prague's issues with their collective identity, specifically regarding the desire to cultivate a whole collective identity out of exclusive ethnic, linguistic and/or religious parameters. For the novel, this is expressed in individual confrontations where the Golem seems to embody those 'other' aspects and 'other' qualities that the ethnic subsets individually reject and abhor.³⁸ However, as the novel develops, it becomes apparent that these negative embodiments are not reflections of one or the other of the rejected cultures within the city; instead, they are reflections of those hidden aspects of oneself, and therefore of the collective unconscious of the whole city Prague, not a parceled-up piecemeal homogenous

city selected from the triad operating within the city.

I sent the scream echoing round my skull, but in vain . . . now it was . . . was taking on human form . . . the Juggler . . . and was squatting in the corner and staring at me with vacant eyes out of *my own face!*

For hour after hour I sat there without moving, huddled up in my corner, a frozen skeleton in mouldy clothes that belonged to another. And across the room he sat, he . . . I . . . myself.³⁹

The Golem for Meyrink serves as a symbol of Prague's collective unconscious conflict, and the inability to recognize that all three broad groups together are what make up the unique character of their city.

At the close of the Second World War, Prague and Czechoslovakia fell out of sight behind the Iron Curtain. The city at the end of the war was quite different than the city a few years prior: the Jewish community was simply gone due to the appalling actions of the Holocaust, and as a by-product of Germany losing the war, the ethnically German Praguers, many of whom could trace their inhabitation in Prague and Bohemia back several generations, were systematically expelled from the city and country. The Prague of the latter half of the twentieth century was, for the first time in its history, a homogeneously Czech place.

Today, after the Velvet Revolution of the late eighties and the fall of the Iron Curtain, Prague and the newly formed Czech Republic have reemerged onto the world stage. Even though since the turn of the twentieth century the Charles Bridge has no longer been the sole bridge spanning the Vltava, it has become the number one tourist destination in Prague while the other



fig. 2.61 | Behind the Iron Curtain: Soviet era *Panelák*, or 'panel tower houses' in Prague

fig. 2.62 | Traces of
'Magical' Prague



bridges serve merely functional purposes for the city.

Prague, even more so now that two thirds of the cultural groups inhabiting the city have disappeared, is a city where the pieces that appear to be hidden are often more tangible than what can be directly seen. The bridge today has become an example of this phenomenon. The Charles Bridge is no longer a threshold between the warring and conflicting Praguers; rather, it has become the threshold for Praguers — and tourists — to perceive the 'magical' and culturally diverse city, now buried beneath the years spent behind the Iron Curtain and the erasure of the cultural triad. Further, the bridge has become a place where one can touch the, now celebrated, rich ethnic history and people of Prague who no longer exist.

The bridge, which itself has magical underpinnings imbued in the mortar and its foundations, reflects the magical dense labyrinthian qualities of old Prague which people are now specifically trying to tease out and perceive. In this way, the Charles Bridge has emerged as a place where the magical past can still manifest. However, the bridge is still a contentious place for Prague. Practically speaking, the bridge has developed

into a kind of open air market, where both legitimate artists and illegitimate sellers of black market goods, knockoffs and drugs compete to sell their products. This division between creative business endeavours and underground offerings reached a head in the early 2000s when the artists banded together and formed the Charles Bridge Artists Association (CBAA) and petitioned the government to establish firmer regulations regarding the use of the Charles Bridge to ultimately try to remove the unsavoury ‘other’ sellers.

Even more significantly, the conflict on the Charles Bridge is now, fittingly, focused on the preservation of the past and the resulting access to the magical underbelly of Prague. This conflict is playing out through the polarizing ongoing restoration work to the bridge, where there is serious criticism regarding the techniques utilized and large questions on the overall capabilities of those undergoing the work. The base argument is that the restorers are needlessly removing pieces of the bridge adjacent to the worn elements, and not only employing historically inaccurate construction techniques when rebuilding the compromised sections, but employing substandard construction methods period.⁴⁰ The implications of having a bridge that is the image of the Charles Bridge but not the genuine artefact of course calls into question the authenticity of the treasured bridge and thereby the ability to use it to connect to the lost past.

The city of Prague has always been a place consumed by the power struggle between the perceived ‘other’ — at the creation of the Charles Bridge this ‘other’ was broadly a question of ethnic origin, but by the fifteenth century it had devolved into conflict



fig. 2.63



fig. 2.64

fig. 2.63-2.64 | Legitimate artists and entertainers on the Charles Bridge

between religious affiliation; and by the twenty-first century the 'other' referred to both the illicit black market and the lost magical past. The Charles Bridge, from inception, was dually created to externally unite the physical sides of the city as well as permanently link the broader trade routes, while internally controlling the fulcrum point and passage across the river, thereby implicitly controlling the city. As an unperceived consequence of its construction, the presence of the bridge further divided the ethnic lines of the city with the underlying conflict physically manifesting through ongoing battles and pointed messages all on the bridge itself. The fact that Prague Castle remained both physically and culturally empty meant that there was a elemental power struggle for the collective unconscious city. With the erection of the bridge, this power struggle concentrated on the centrally located 'in-between' place for the physical city and conceptual global city. This resulted in a collective rejection of anything that appeared to be part of that which was 'other' than any given cultural group.

Today the bridge is still rooted in the time period of its construction, clearly evidenced by the fact that it is both used to connect with the magical past and that the contentious identity issues for the city are manifested by the botched restoration of it. However, the bridge is still relevant and impacting the city today as it remains the integral crossing point and destination between the sides despite the fact that there are now numerous bridges spanning the Vltava. The Charles Bridge then continues to dually function as a uniting gateway between the universal sides — be them the geographic sides of the continent, the directional sky and earth, or the temporal sides of time — while physically articulating the internal conflict between the perceived 'other' within the city of Prague.

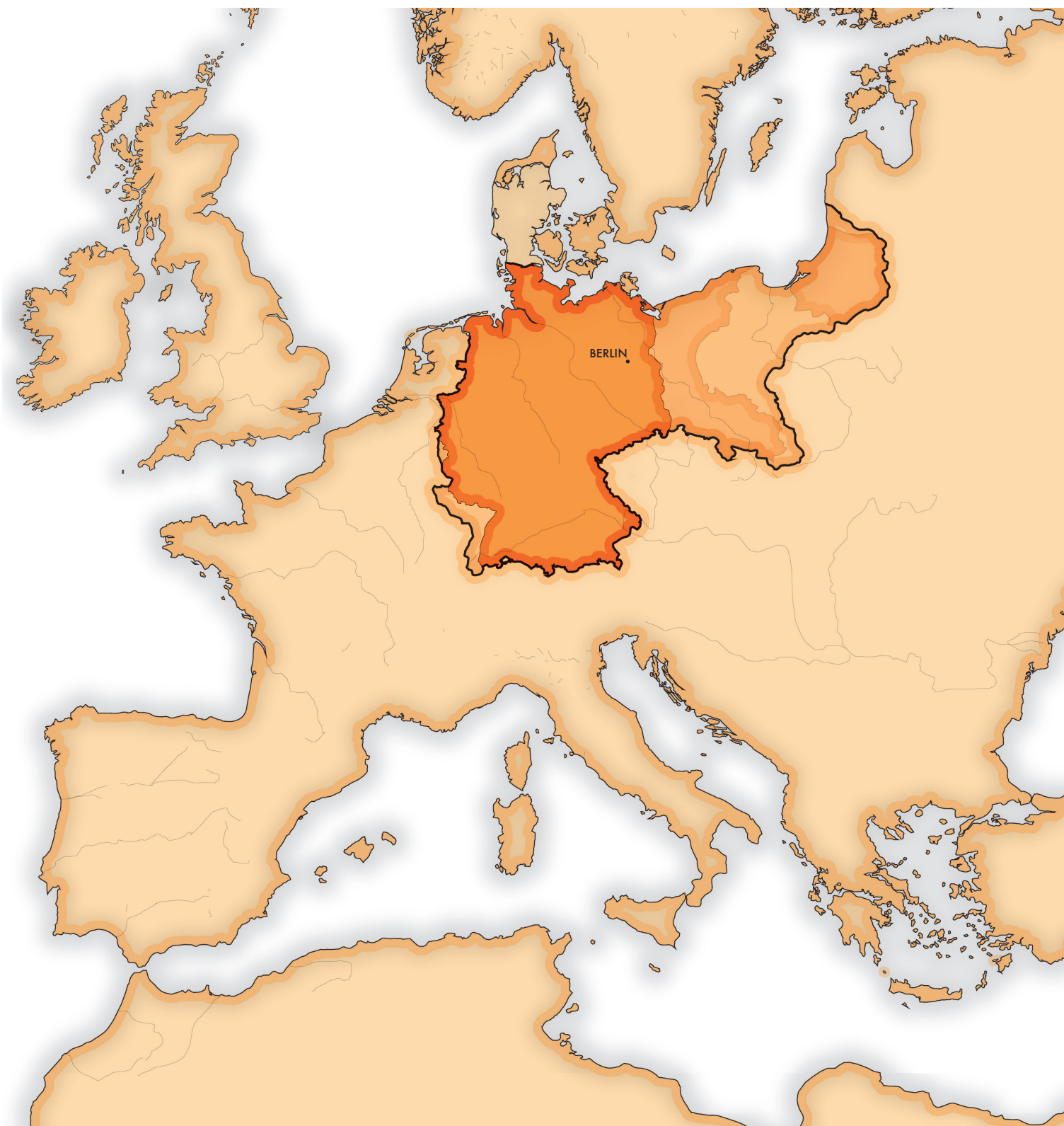
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THREE | THE WALL





Germany 1871 Germany 1920 Germany 2000

fig. 3.2





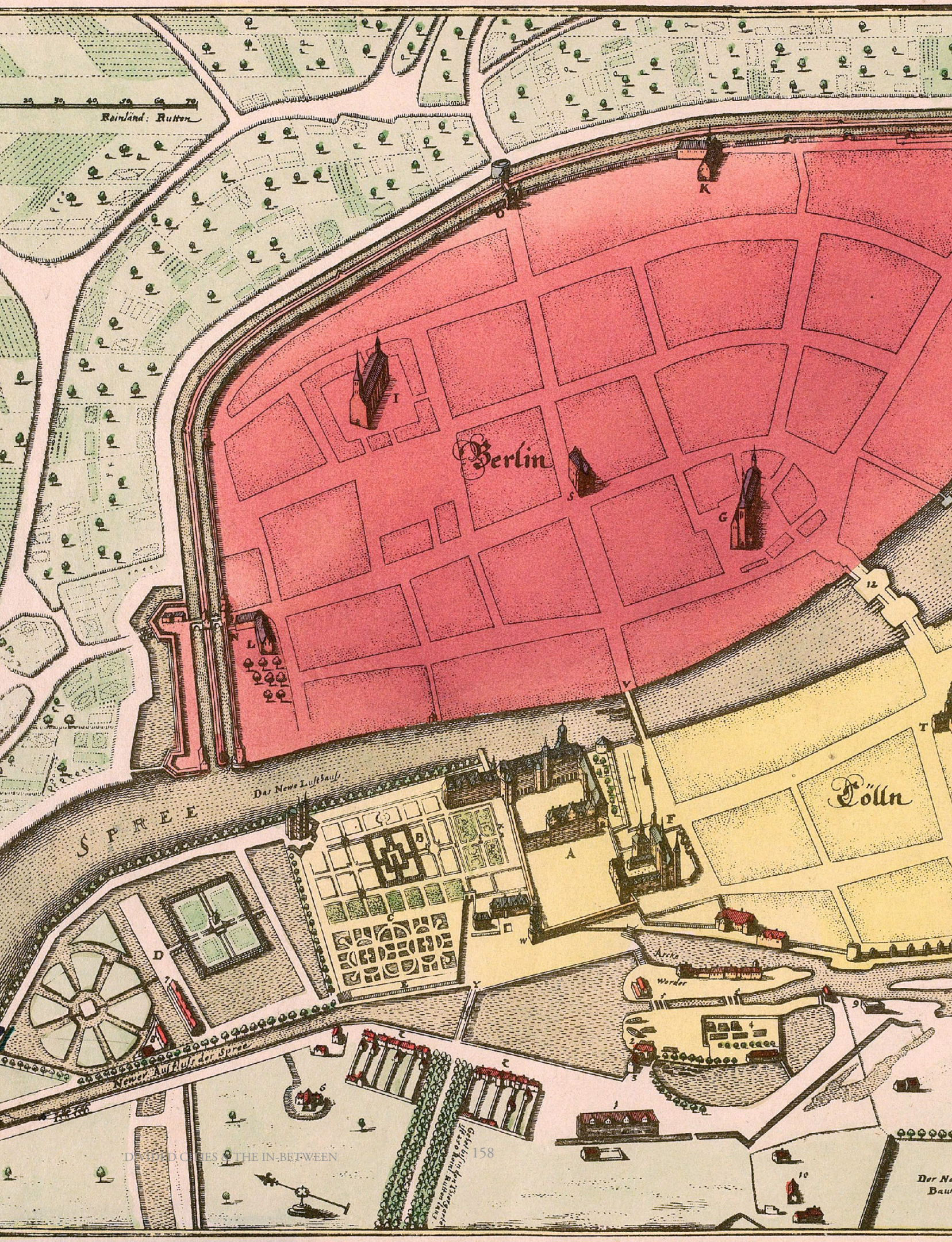
fig. 3.3

(prev. page)

fig. 3.1 | The Berlin Wall Memorial
at Bernauer Strasse, Berlin

fig. 3.2 | Map of Germany's
shrinking borders

fig. 3.3 | Context map of East and
West Berlin



Rindland: Rutton

Berlin

SPREE

Das Neue Lusthaus

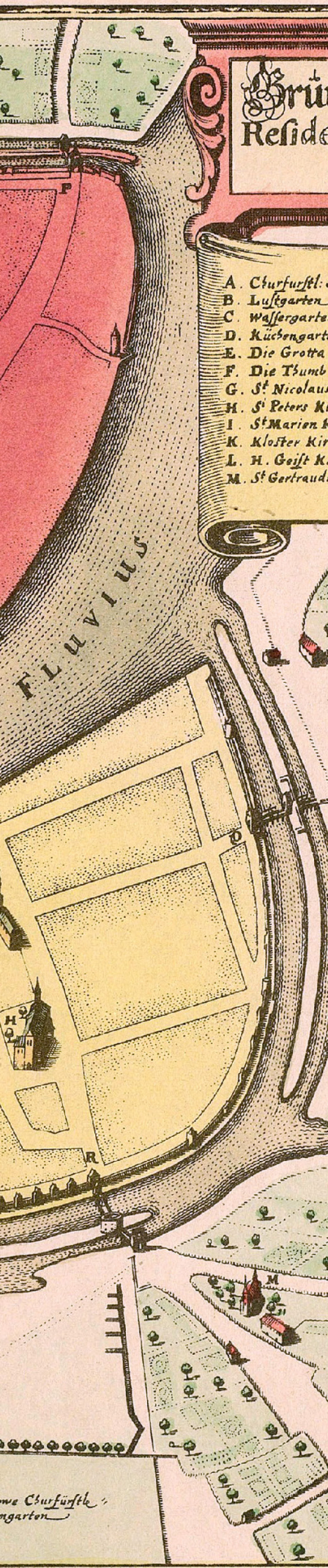
Dölln

DEIFIED COPIES OF THE IN-BETWEEN

158

Der Ne Bau

THE WALL



Berlin is unusual in that it has no grand foundation story. The city began as two fishing villages in the Middle Ages called Berlin and Cölln, that lay across from one another at a narrow juncture in the River Spree. The flat and windswept landscape around the towns was fairly inhospitable, and the sandy, marshy earth was not particularly suited to any sort of cultivation. There were no great natural features providing clues as to why the area had been settled; rather, by all appearances it seemed as if the town had been forced into existence only by the obstinate determination of its inhabitants. Accordingly, the settlement was slow to flourish.

In the twelfth century, the location of Berlin-Cölln on the narrow stretch of the Spree became advantageous as the twin villages were able to completely control access to the relatively

fig. 3.4 | Medieval map of Berlin and Cölln (east at top)

convenient crossing point in the Spree that ran between the towns. This meant that Berlin-Cölln could be sustained as a tertiary part of the growing Hanseatic trade route between Central Europe and the Baltic, and at the end of the next century the now consolidated Berlin had managed to become an independent town. Solidifying its place in Europe, in the fifteenth century Berlin grew once again to become the capital of the March of Brandenburg under the Holy Roman Empire.

Harkening back to its sandy soil, Berlin had not been able to cultivate any substantive cultural roots. Although there existed several distinct folk traditions, the overarching empire was vast and had been built by a diverse group of Slavic and Germanic peoples, with Berlin in particular having notable Slavic ancestry and later seeing various waves of immigration from around the continent. Having an ancient noble thread was further complicated by the fact that the capital Berlin, a supposed unifying element for the Germanic peoples, lay outside the bounds of the former Roman Empire, and as such could never claim that classical heritage for itself, unlike so many of its contemporaries. Further, an all-encompassing fire in 1380 had destroyed both the physical city as well as any records of Berlin's early history. This cultural dearth led to a desire, beginning in the 18th century when Berlin became the capital of the Prussian Empire, to rediscover, and often simply to create, an illustrious 'German Identity' that followed a clear historical narrative, through which the nation and Berlin could begin to derive a glorious Cultural Empire.

This exploration coincided with Berlin and the Germanic nation's increasing presence on the world stage. Consequently,

the ideas of nationhood and the pursuit of power became wholly wrapped up with one another. These ideals were furthered under Frederick the Great's military prowess in the 18th century, Otto von Bismarck's political machinations in the 19th, and barring drastic swings downward during the Napoleonic Wars and the First World War, reached its apex when Berlin became the center of Adolf Hitler's Third Reich during World War II.



fig. 3.5 | New Reich Chancellery, 1939



fig. 3.6 | Model of 'Germania' viewed from the proposed North-South 'Avenue of Splendours' running from the Brandenburg Gate through the Tiergarten to the Tempelhof Airport

Berlin was not simply the capital from which Hitler governed his State: the city was the highly centralized location through which all administrative functions, key decisions and logistics to do with both the war and, more criminally, the creation and implementation of the Holocaust, were made. Berlin was the home to tens of thousands of employees,¹ who, at various levels of influence — from the smallest cog to the highest-ranking party members — ensured that all the pieces of the war effort and the 'Final Solution' operated smoothly up until the very end, even after it was clear that Germany would fall.

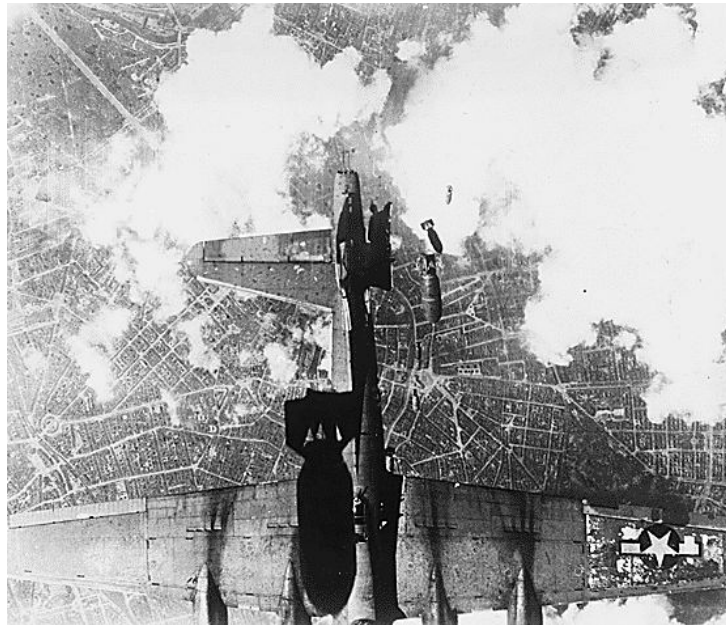
Additionally, the city itself just prior to the start of the war had been in the process of being physically reshaped in the image of Hitler's dream capital, 'Germania.' After Hitler had maneuvered himself into power in the nineteen-thirties, the desire was to cement his place as the continuing thread of the German narrative. Architecturally speaking, this involved the planning of several monumental buildings for Berlin and the design of grand additions to the city's urban layout, that together were meant to reflect the power and permanence of the Third Reich.

On August 25th, 1940, and continuing into September,



fig. 3.7 | Air raid on Berlin, July 1944

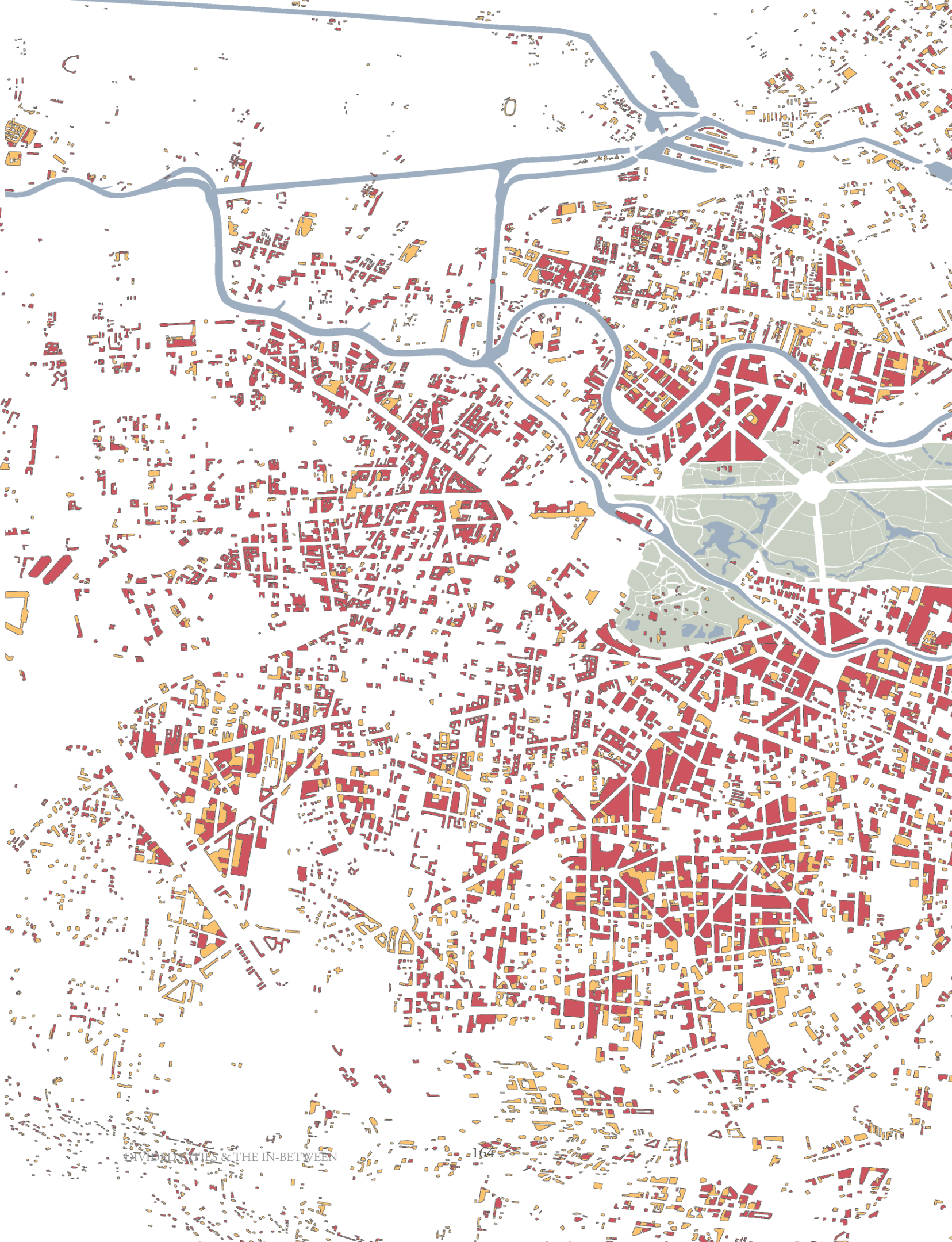
fig. 3.8 | U.S. Army Aircraft *Miss Donna Mae II* during an air raid on Berlin on May 19, 1944. This aircraft was subsequently fragged by the plane directly above it (who were incidentally also the photographers). The Tiergarten can be seen in the upper left corner.

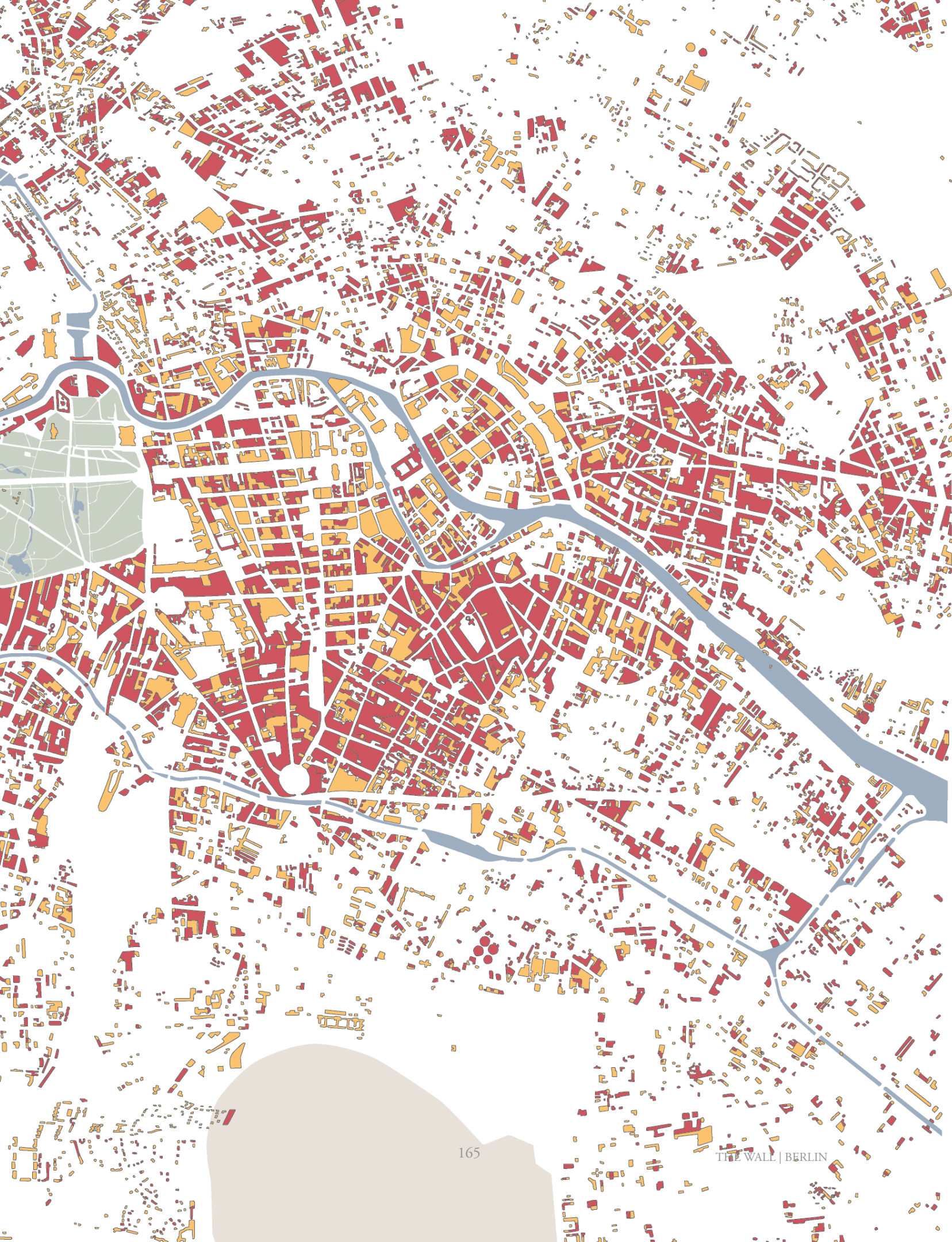


the Royal Air Force (RAF) launched the first prolonged air attack against Berlin in World War II in retaliation for a previous air raid on London. Starting in 1943, the air raids became constant and more destructive; suddenly Berlin, who had previously, even after the initial air campaign, enjoyed privileged and comfortable war years, found itself thrust into constant alert. Meanwhile, Hitler's offensive on the Russian front had gone sour, and war wounded, disillusioned men were returning to Berlin in droves, filling the streets and the hospitals. Finally, rations had gone down to about 60 percent of what had been available in 1939, and many food staples and items such as clothing simply could no longer be procured.²

During the air-based Battle of Berlin, a total of 33,390 tons of bombs were dropped on the city, ultimately flattening 70 percent of the city proper, leaving 1.5 million people homeless and killing at least 52,000.^{3 4} Any party member who was able to get out of the city did so, while everyone else tried to continue on as usual: going to work every day to carry out the war effort, and then sleeping in the bomb shelters every night.

(overleaf)
fig. 3.9 | Map of Berlin in 1945 showing damaged buildings in yellow and destroyed buildings in red





In the spring of 1945 the Allies were baring down on Berlin from all fronts. Hitler ordered the mobilization of the city to defend the core of his Reich in some sort of ‘last stand.’ Those called up consisted of the military forces still within the city, who were then rounded out by the so-called *Volkssturm*: elderly men and Hitler Youths, and capped off by injured soldiers recruited from the military hospitals. Anyone who was seen to have ‘deserted’ in this final stage was killed and strung up by the German ‘Werewolf Squads.’

The British and American forces were stationed to the west of Germany, while Josef Stalin’s Red Army was closing in from the east. As they were racing towards Berlin, the Red Army was liberating Soviet territory, as well as the general eastern frontier, all of which had been invaded by Germany in a direct breach of a secret deal between Hitler and Stalin, and were witnessing first-hand the ruination of the land and the sheer cruelty doled out to the citizens and the prisoners of war. As the land was liberated, those who were able joined the march on Berlin. As the Red Army crossed into the German borders, they were told to exact the long-deserved revenge on all the German people: the result was the beginning of an incredibly violent liberation by the victorious army.

By March, they had reached the fringes of the capital: on April 23rd the Soviets had reached Berlin. Stalin was especially motivated to be the first of the Allied powers to take Berlin as he recognized the strategic importance of the city in terms of reshaping post-war Europe in his favour, and so he created an internal race between his three army fronts to be the first to take the capital. The Soviets encircled the city and began opening



fig. 3.10 | *Volkssturm* men in position along the Oder River



fig. 3.11 | Soviet artillery fire during the Battle of Berlin

fire. Hitler from his bunker responded by demanding the city be destroyed rather than fall into enemy hands. Finally, order began to break down amongst Berliners and looting became commonplace; however, many high ranking officials were still, even then, trying to finish implementing their ‘Final Solution’ from the burned out city. The Soviets advanced through Berlin, taking individual streets and districts one by one; shelled out buildings made for perfect defensive locations, and so progress was slow, albeit steady. In these last throes of war, both sides sustained many casualties and much of the surviving physical city was collaterally laid to waste.

Berlin had been physically and culturally reduced to its lowest point. Physically the city lay in ruins, dead bodies were piled up in the streets, escaped animals from the zoo could be seen roaming around and there was no sense of order or chain of command. The first Soviet soldiers on the scene were generally from a minority class of professional guard divisions; when the



fig. 3.12 | Berlin street near Unter den Linden,
July 3, 1945



fig. 3.13 | Raising the Soviet flag over the Reichstag

rest of the contingents arrived, — primarily Russian civilians and peasants drafted to the front and fighting under appalling conditions — serial raping, general violence and looting became a fact of life and lasted well beyond the close of the war.

By the end of April, Hitler had killed himself and the Red Army had fought its way to the centre of Berlin. With one final, particularly brutal assault, on May 1st the Soviets raised their flag over the Reichstag: Berlin had fallen.

The scene was like a picture of hell — flaming ruins and starving people shambling about in tattered clothing; dazed German soldiers who seemed to have lost all idea of what was going on; Red Army soldiers singing exultantly, and often drunk; groups of women clearing the streets under the supervision of Red Army soldiers; long queues standing patiently waiting to get a bucketful of water from the pumps; and all of them looking terribly tired, hungry, tense and demoralised.

- Wolfgang Leonhard, May 2nd, 1945⁵



fig. 3.14 | On the street by the Brandenburg Gate and Reichstag after surrendering



fig. 3.15 | Frankfurter Allee, Berlin, May 2, 1945

(overleaf)

fig. 3.16 | Map of Europe showing the geographic expansion and subsequent suppression of the Third Reich during WWII, with Axis occupation in black, Allied occupation in white and Berlin highlighted in yellow



august
1939



september
1939



october - march
1939-1940



april
1940



march
1941



april
1941



may
1941



june
1941



july
1942



august - october
1942



november
1942



december - january
1942-1943



october
1943



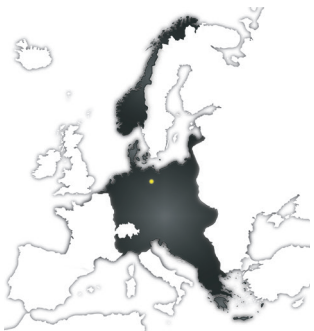
november - january
1943-1944



february
1944



march
1944



september
1944



october
1944



november - december
1944



january
1945



may
1940



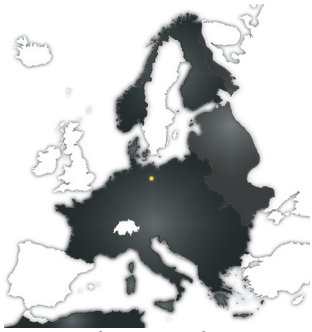
june - october
1940



november
1940



december - february
1940-1941



july - september
1941



november
1941



december
1941



january - june
1942



february - june
1943



july
1943



august
1943



september
1943



april - may
1944



june
1944



july
1944



august
1944



february
1945



march
1945



april
1945



may
1945

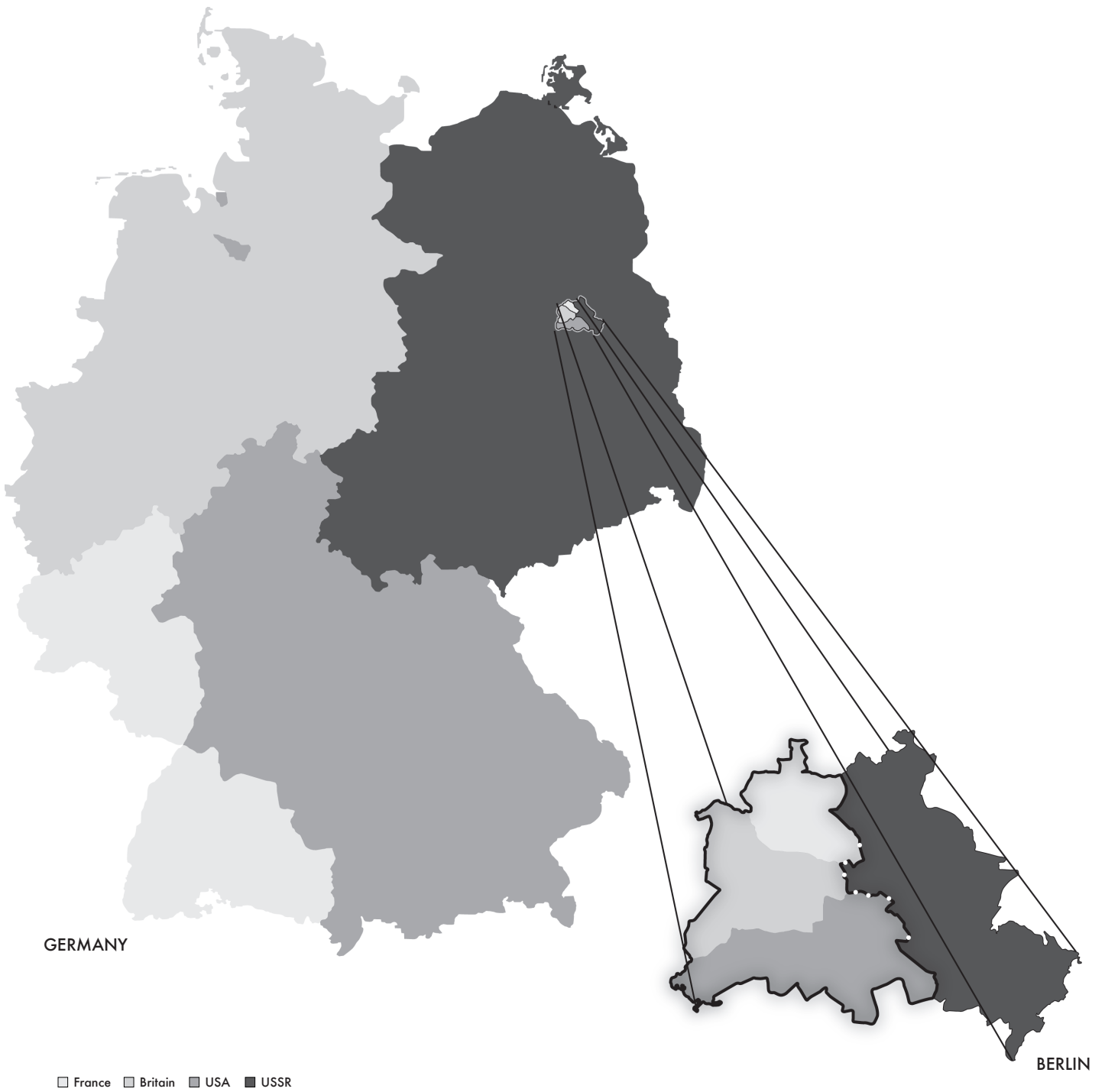


fig. 3.17 | Berlin and Germany divided into quarters

In the direct aftermath of World War II, Germany and Berlin were each parceled up into quarters, as per an Allied agreement made through discussions at the Potsdam and Yalta Conferences in May and February of 1945, respectively. Each quarter of Germany and Berlin was to be held under one of the liberating Allies' jurisdiction, (Britain, France, USSR or USA) with the intention that together, as the 'Allied Control Commission' they would run Germany and as the *Kommandatura*, Berlin, until such time as the country had been rehabilitated.

The USSR was, of course, the only Allied country physically in the fallen capital at the close of the war. Stalin moved quickly, through the German Socialist Walter Ulbricht, to establish a Soviet-sympathetic post-war administration in Berlin before the other Allies were able to reach the capital. For two months the Soviets remained the sole proprietors of the city — the length of time aided by various road blocks set up to stymie Allied access to Berlin. During this time the Soviets began to strip the city of all remaining useful products and cultural artefacts as compensation for both the final battle and the previous invasion of the Soviet Union. These unofficial reparations included the dismantling of more than 4,000 industrial plants to be sent to Moscow; the appropriating of gold and hard currency; the purloining of intelligence and historical archives (filling hundreds of boxcars with various official documents and historical records); and the liberating of virtually all of Berlin's art and literature, including the contents of twenty-five whole libraries.⁶ All this, together with the physical, political and ideological ruination, cemented the complete reduction of Berlin's collective cultural identity.



fig. 3.18 | Police in the Soviet sector of Berlin

When the western Allies finally arrived in Berlin, they optimistically agreed to leave in effect all Soviet regulations made during the months previous, and further, only secured verbal agreements regarding such key points as western access to Berlin, as the city now lay deep within the Soviet sector of the country. The governance of Germany had been laid out such that each Allied Nation shared equal input and control; however, of the 'Big Three' Allied leaders of World War II only Stalin remained, and the new heads of state seemed to have different prerogatives. In many ways, the USSR seemed to be coming out ahead.

As the global political climate changed in the late forties these differences were reflected in the increasingly strained Berlin. Instead of rehabilitating the disgraced capital and nation, the opposing east/west ideologies had pitted the two halves of the country against each other, and caused the Allied Control Commission and *Kommandatura* to all but break down. Further, it was clear that rebuilding the city and nation was taking time; with its new national borders Germany no longer had access to many raw materials, and internally industrial production was down to half its pre-war output.⁷ The new European borders also meant that millions of ethnically German Europeans were being systematically expelled from their former homes, resulting in the daily arrival of thousands of refugees to Berlin,⁸ all expecting to find refuge in the capital of the formerly powerful nation. This influx only served to strap the already inadequate rationing system and exacerbate the widespread housing and coal shortages. To further complicate matters, the Soviets were printing exorbitant amounts of the German Reichsmark to combat the economic



fig. 3.19 | Diagram of airlift flight paths in and out of Berlin



fig. 3.20 | Berliners watching planes landing at Tempelhof Airport, 1948



fig. 3.21 | Plane assembly line: unloading food and supplies at Tempelhof Airport in Berlin

gap but instead were only driving up inflation.⁹

In April of 1948, after three years of progressively terse discussions regarding how to best run Berlin, the Allied administration of the city finally collapsed and the Soviets withdrew from the *Kommandatura*. The three western powers then created ‘Trizonia,’ a free trade agreement between their zones; introduced a new currency, Deutschmarks; and set a successful economic plan in motion called The Marshall Plan. The USSR was livid; their course of action was to cut off all transportation and communication routes leading to the western sectors of Berlin, which they still officially had unilateral control over. This move set off the Blockade of Berlin, a Soviet attempt at starving the Western Allies out of the capital. Instead of capitulating, the Western Allies devised the now-famous airlift whereby they made round-the-clock deliveries into Berlin, supplying their half of the city with food, fuel, and various supplies, proving their self-sufficiency and engendering German loyalty to the Western Allies, particularly the United States. Although the blockade was lifted in May 1949, this marked the beginning of a concrete division between the east and west microcosms inhabiting Berlin.

In the fifties, Berlin’s role shifted once again, now functioning as a peculiar threshold between the different factions of the increasingly tense Cold War. The USSR introduced East Marks into their sector of Berlin, and the East and West each created their own German States: the western Federal Republic of Germany, whose capital was temporarily in the inconsequential town of Bonn, and the Eastern German Democratic Republic (GDR), whose capital remained Berlin. Both of these claimed

to be the legitimate successor of the German narrative and nation. Berlin was now in the curious position of encapsulating both sides of the unstable east/west conflict physically within its borders, and looked to be a potential flashpoint for setting off a third world conflict.

Internally, Berliners were all too happy to reflect the dual identities of their opposing occupiers, as the alternative was the far less attractive task of dealing with their direct past. What does it mean for a society that only years before not only wholeheartedly engaged in and supported such heinous ideals and genocide, but was the very nerve center administrating them? And what was the nation left with, when the whole notion and thread of ‘German Identity’ was tied up in the physical and cultural expression of the Third Reich? The collective society was staunchly unwilling to deal with those implications, and so eagerly absorbed the west and east cultures into its respective halves.

Each side of Berlin showcased its superior borrowed economy and ideology through the implementation of newspapers, theaters, exhibitions, and most notably, through the architecture used in the physical rebuilding of the city. The West’s approach involved first razing the shelled remains of the city and burying everything in the forests outside Berlin, to essentially create a 120 meter high artificial hill of the past, followed by inviting famous western architects to help create different pieces of a ‘new modern city.’ The idea was that this was the *Stunde Null* or Zero Hour from which Berlin and Germany could begin anew. This meant the outright rejection of anything associated with any German past in favour of the design and construction of International Style modernist structures. Building on the idea of



fig. 3.22 | Kurfürstendamm in West Berlin



fig. 3.23 | Kurfürstendamm



fig. 3.24 | Stalinallee in East Berlin, August 30, 1955

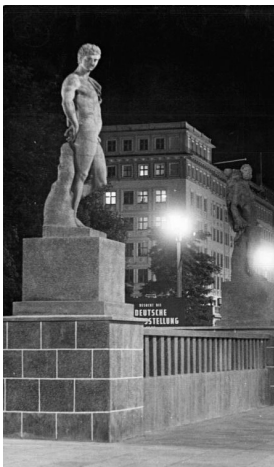


fig. 3.25



fig. 3.26

Statuary along the Stalinallee. Images show statues along the German Gymnasium in Block C North (left) and Stalin's monument (right). Today the Stalinallee has been renamed the Karl-Marx-Allee.

a new modern city, western economic supremacy was expressed through the redevelopment of the Kurfürstendamm shopping street and West Berliners began to carve out a capitalist-based new identity.

The East was also systematically dismantling the past, but to rebuild Berlin as a powerful socialist state. If the West had the Kurfürstendamm, the eastern showpiece was the Stalinallee: a new mile-long street flanked by standardized neo-classical functionalist buildings and an alley of grand statuary including a bronzed Stalin placed at the center. The street was carefully designed to be spacious enough to accommodate all manner of parades and demonstrations.

Where the West had invited architects from around the democratic world to help design a collection of new modernist buildings and public zones, the East had laid out clear rules for construction to ensure the proper standardization of its socialist city. These included specific dimensions for all residential buildings such that all were equal and could utilize pre-fabricated parts, and the creation of a sixteen-point guideline regarding the planning of public spaces, notably including ways to ensure every public space could also be used in parades, celebrations and demonstrations.

Although from virtually every angle Berlin had been divided into two half-cities, from a day to day perspective the city still functioned as a whole with very little physical boundaries hindering movement on the ground. Due to this unprecedented mobility in and out of technically enemy territory, Berlin became a hot bed for espionage on either side. As the city was



fig. 3.27 | Unité d'Habitation of Berlin by Le Corbusier, 1957

Buildings constructed for the International Building Exhibition of 1957, or Interbau, in the Hansaviertel quarter of West Berlin. The motto of the Interbau was *City of the future* and the exhibition included works by such architects as Alvar Aalto, Le Corbusier, Egon Eiermann, Walter Gropius and Oscar Niemeyer.



fig. 3.28 | Apartments in Hansaviertel by Luciano Baldessari (foreground) and Jo van den Broek/Jacob Bakema



fig. 3.29 | Block E-South Stalinallee, 1952

uniquely the threshold between the emerging global tensions, both external sides could simultaneously infiltrate and confront their opposing ideology in Berlin.

In this Cold War the intelligence gathered and betrayed through interception, double agents and informers was a major point of battle for the overarching conflict as it revealed both specific information regarding the opposition's plan for Berlin, as well as a wealth of general military and tactical information about the other side, useful should the conflict ever heat up. The rampant espionage then resulted in a penchant for duplicity on the ground with Berlin essentially becoming a city of masks and facades, where no one could ever be sure of where they stood, nobody could ever really be trusted and nothing could ever be taken at face value.¹⁰ This external infiltration further magnified and mirrored the city's internal push to gloss over the collective and individual past in favour of new, superficial identities predicated on their occupying nations.

However, the climate of fifties Berlin did not continue indefinitely: the economy of East Berlin and the GDR was becoming untenable, and the optics increasingly embarrassing. While the Marshall Plan had facilitated a recovery of West Germany's economy, by the 1960s, the Eastern Bloc was still in a deep recession and facing extreme shortages of food and material goods. There had always been many so-called 'border-crossers' who lived in East Berlin but enjoyed the more lucrative employment opportunities in the west, and as Berlin was the hole in the east/west European border, there had also always been those who permanently left for the west via this gap. However, by the sixties the eastern recession combined with all prior

policies implemented towards 'building socialism' and the quiet tightening of control on the ground over movement between the sides meant that those taking advantage of the gap had increased exponentially. To exacerbate the problem, it was often the educated, young professionals holding vital skill-sets fleeing west, thus further causing a large labour shortage.

To solve the issue regarding the viability of their fledging nation and to save face in the global arena, in 1961 East Germany decided to build a wall to staunch the exodus of their people. The rampant espionage meant that these plans had to be kept top secret, under the code name Operation Rose¹¹ with the majority unaware of the future shape of their city up until the very instant they were participating in its construction.

East Germany and the USSR felt fairly confident that this project would not be challenged by the west thanks to a televised speech given by President Kennedy a few weeks previous in which he intimated that the United States' interest lay with the protection of *West* Berlin, and curiously omitted any mention of the whole city. Quite frankly the problem of Berlin, the disgraced capital of the vanquished side of the war, was becoming increasingly tiresome for the western powers whose attentions were more and more required elsewhere. Still, the East had to tread carefully so as to not push the West on to the defensive, and accordingly, the wall was designed to be constructed exclusively on Soviet territory.

In the summer of 1961 Erich Honecker, the master planner of Operation Rose, slowly moved the people and pieces into position for the construction of the formal barrier. These



fig. 3.30 | Closing the border at the Brandenburg Gate, one of the last areas to be divided, August 13, 1961



fig. 3.31 | East German *KdA* soldiers standing along the demarcation line at the Brandenburg Gate, August 13, 1961

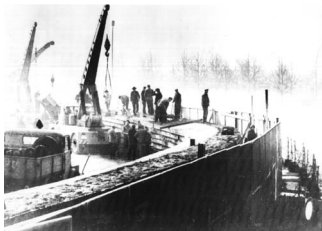


fig. 3.32 | Solidifying the Wall, November 20, 1961

people and materials had been driving around the country in several hundred trucks, taking circuitous routes to disguise their ultimate destination. Everything was held back from the east/west Berlin line until the very last minute.

At one a.m. on August 13th the physical sealing of the border began. The street lights remained dark for the duration of the work and guards were posted every two meters along the border line to stop any potential escapes, with larger vehicles blocking access farther back. All but thirteen of the existing crossing points were boarded up, and all streets running across the line were torn up and closed. U-Bahn and S-Bahn metro stations at the border were blocked, telephone wires were cut, and grates were installed in the sewers traversing the line underground. When Berlin awoke on Sunday morning, they found their city physically bisected by a barbed wire fence strung across regular concrete posts and under constant patrol.

Although the Wall was essentially in position by the time anyone realised what was going on, Eastern soldiers were still working to solidify the barrier. Even though this would have been the time to challenge the Soviets, Berliners generally hung back and barring some minor protests did not interfere. Further, the Western Allies chose to let this new scenario play out: they agreed with the USSR that this was, although a glaring compromise, the most practical solution to the global Berlin problem.

Even with the complete closure of the barrier, because the Wall was bisecting a city there were still several holes that could be exploited. Finding these gaps became imperative for many people



fig. 3.33 | The Berlin Wall Memorial at Bernauer Strasse documenting the escapes to the West via the Bernauer Strasse apartment blocks, 1961

as the Wall had left Berliners trapped on the wrong side of the border or had split families in two. Despite the overwhelming non-reaction during the Wall's construction, the sixties became a period of secret movement between the two sides.

The Bernauer Strasse was one of the immediately apparent holes as, due to a quirk in the original sector designation, the border between East and West happened to run straight down the southern side of the street, meaning there was a whole block of apartment buildings whose front doors were in East Berlin but whose backsides were firmly in the West. Many residents seized their opportunity and jumped out a back window, drawing a western crowd of supporters below. However, the Eastern Vopos were nobody's fool and followed the residents into the apartment blocks to stop and seize all would be defectors.

One man in the process of slipping into the West was grabbed by a couple of *Vopos* leaning out the window he had just left. As they began hauling him back inside, some West Berliners from below caught hold of his ankles to try to pull him



fig. 3.34 | Marking the paths of two tunnels across the divide at the Berlin Wall Memorial, Bernauer Strasse



fig. 3.35 | Looking towards the East, documenting the path of 'Tunnel 57' (1964) at the Berlin Wall Memorial, Bernauer Strasse

down. For a moment the man was literally suspended between East and West before the West won and he was dragged down to the street. The Bernauer Strasse's windows were soon after bricked up to prevent further escapes, and by the next winter the buildings were torn down entirely.

As a gap was stopped new ones were found and exploited, and moving from East to West became something of a cottage industry. A series of tunnels were painstakingly constructed through the dangerously sandy soil into East Berlin to liberate friends and family; alternatively, many people escaped via the checkpoints, utilizing falsified documents or cars with a range of secret compartments. Brute force was another tactic: a passenger train notably barreled through the border barricade at track level; others charged the Wall in trucks or blazed through the checkpoint security points in their cars. Even Eastern soldiers charged with guarding the border periodically saw their opportunity and jumped: in the first month alone there were 68 desertions by border guards.¹²



fig. 3.36 | Checkpoint Charlie

Unfortunately, there were also many failed attempts at crossing between the two Berlins, where the would-be-escapers were either arrested or killed, including four of the initial jumpers at Bernauer Strasse. The breaking point occurred on August 17th, 1962 when eighteen-year-old Peter Fechter and a friend made a run for the Wall near the infamous Checkpoint Charlie. While Fechter was scaling the Wall after his friend, an Eastern guard shot him in the hip without warning, causing him to fall back injured. Although he continuously called for help, no Eastern guard went to him, and no Western guard or civilian — a crowd of which had again amassed — could intervene as he lay within the Eastern side. For whatever reason the American GIs at the nearby Checkpoint chose not to get involved. It wasn't until after Peter Fechter had bled to death, an hour later, that Eastern border guards went in to retrieve his body.

The subsequent horrified reaction by the international community coupled with an internal desire to strengthen the weak points in the Wall, meant that the physical structure and official protocol were completely overhauled, undergoing four discrete iterations. In its final iteration, the Berlin 'Wall' that immediately springs to mind was in fact only the 'border

fig. 3.37 | The Berlin Wall at Bernauer Strasse



marker' in a much larger fortification system. From East Berlin's perspective, the 'Wall' began 100 meters inwards at the 'hinterland wall;' a similar 3.6 meter tall reinforced concrete slab structure. However, instead of the more famous graffiti, this wall was adorned with signs warning off Berliners. The idea was, of course, that this wall marked the edge of East Berlin: go beyond and one was officially in the hinterland, an outlaw subject to the guns of the patrolling guards.

Directly inside this wall was the 'border signal fence,' a barrier wired to set off alarms and an array of floodlights upon the touch. The fence recalled the original barbed wire barrier of 1961, except now the base was fortified with concrete to withstand vehicular impact and to prevent tunneling. Hidden in the loose soil directly beyond the signal fence were traps festooned with metal spikes capable of stopping tanks.

Past the traps were the observation towers placed at 100 meter intervals and housed guards with strict orders to shoot intruders on sight. Running alongside the ring of towers was a well-lit supply road and next to that the *Kontrolstreife* ('control strip') more commonly known as the 'death strip.' This spacious strip was laid with meticulously raked sand to clearly record

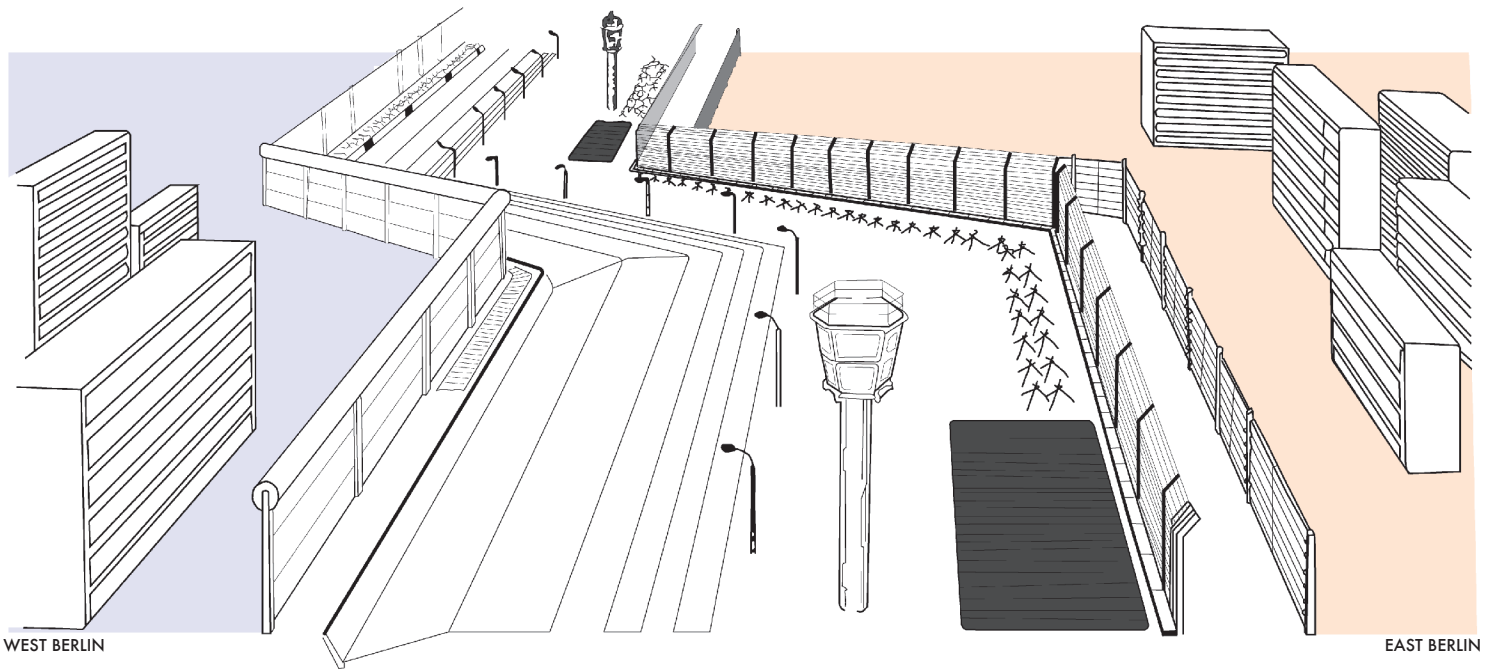


fig. 3.38 | Section across fortified Wall, with West Berlin in blue and East Berlin in orange

any footprints both for efficient apprehension and to hold the guards accountable. The death strip was also fitted with a dog run whereby appropriately trained German Shepards were individually tied to a lead spaced at specific intervals to help patrol the area. Finally, past the observation towers, dogs and well-lit death strip was the famous graffitied concrete slab barrier replete with anti-vehicular bases and anti-climbing rounded tops. Beyond that was the western city.

The two Berlins had completely opposite approaches to their shared physical and symbolic 'Wall.' For West Berlin, the Wall had become a tourist destination and the encircling structure was something through which West Berliners actively defined themselves. The concrete barrier was a focal point for protests, political speeches and was appropriated as a surface for artistic expression. Further, a series of viewing platforms adjacent to the West's Wall grew up and were used, primarily by tourists, to get a vantage point above the dividing structure to glimpse the death strip and the other Berlin beyond. However, for East Berliners the existence of this physical and cultural element was not collectively recognized, nor did the active acknowledgement of its existence become a defining aspect of their collective identity; instead, their collective declination to acknowledge the Wall's presence served to define the East. For East Berliners, on a day to day basis, the imposing structure might as well have not been there for all that it was outwardly ignored. Where maps of West Berlin always included some degree of detail on East Berlin, be it the footprint of their half of the city, or the location of Eastern U and S-Bahn lines, in Eastern maps, West Berlin was always conspicuously absent.

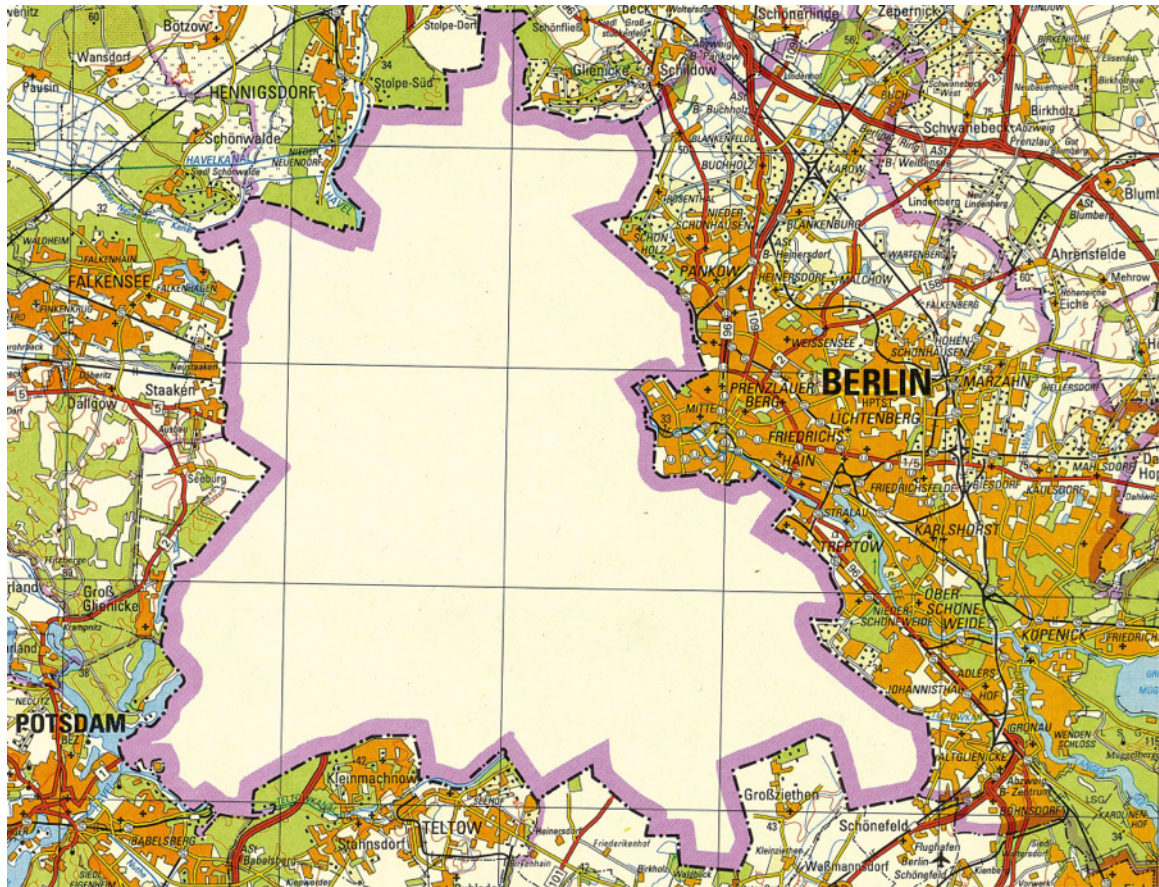


fig. 3.39 | GDR map of East Berlin, 1988



fig. 3.42 | Berlin Wall from the west



fig. 3.43 | Berlin Wall from the east



fig. 3.44 | The Wall



fig. 3.45 | Border guard at
Brandenburg Gate

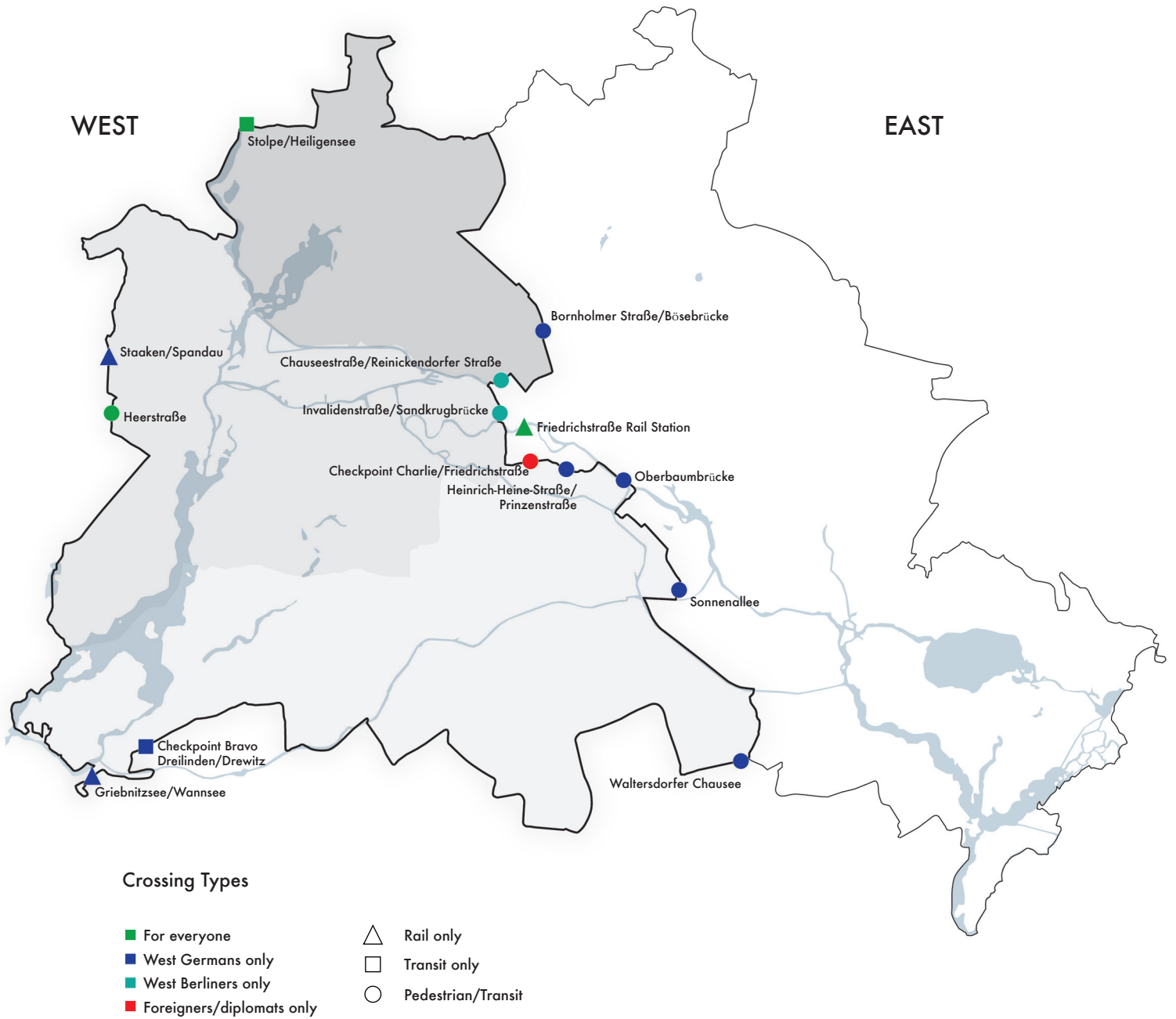


fig. 3.46 | Official border crossings in and out of West Berlin



fig. 3.47 | Closed U-Bahn
Stadtmitte Station in East Berlin

The vertical wall dividing the city in two was not the only wide-scale point of separation in Berlin: there was also a disparity in Berlin between what was apparent above ground and what was going on underneath. On the surface, Berlin had been neatly halved; it did not matter where the sector lines lay, the city had made way for the Wall and the Wall had concisely encircled the Western city within the East. However, underground the metro lines could not be so easily divided. The U-Bahn, S-Bahn and national train lines were all severed when the first permanent barrier was erected in 1961, but unfortunately the U and S-Bahn metro, especially around the original city center, was not so easily divisible as many of the lines criss-crossed the border between East and West from one station to the next. To resolve this, from the East the length of the U6, U8 and north-south S-Bahn lines were blocked off at street level and given over to the West for an annual fee. This meant that West Berliners could travel wholly beneath East Berlin at a walking pace through a subterranean no-man's land, past a series of ghost stations patrolled by armoured border guards, while up top East Berliners could feel the rumble of trains traveling by below them that they had no access to. In

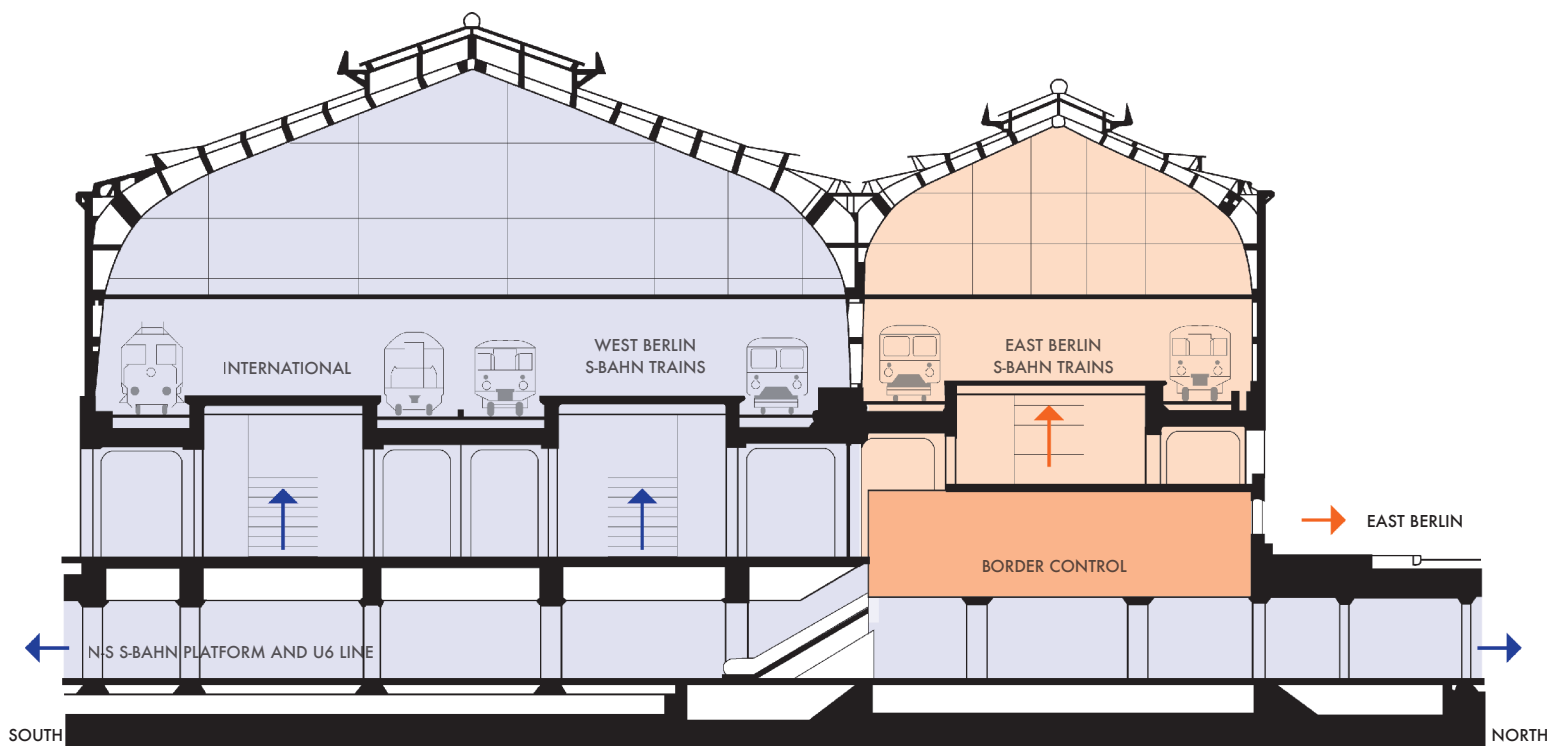


fig. 3.48 | Section through Friedrichstrasse Station with western areas below in blue, eastern areas above in orange, and the border crossing in between

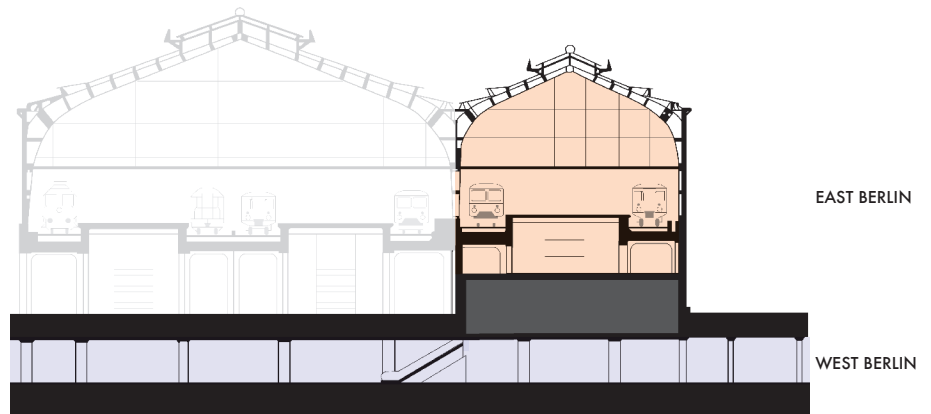


fig. 3.49 | The horizontal wall in Berlin, Friedrichstrasse Station

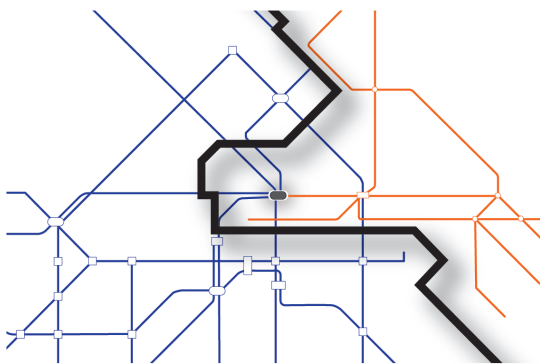


fig. 3.50 | Detail of underground system at the Wall, with western lines in blue, eastern lines in orange, and Friedrichstrasse Station in gray

this way the surface divide functioned as a second, horizontal Berlin Wall for the two cities, dividing east/west through Berlin's visible/subterranean cities.

By the 1980s the border restrictions were relaxed and travelling between the two sides of Berlin was permitted, although heavily regulated. The historical Friedrichstrasse station, located in the Eastern Mitte district, but surrounded at the north, west and south by West Berlin, then emerged as a vertical crossing point between East and West. This official border crossing became the main hub for 'domestic' transit by East and West Berliners, whereby people traveling from the West could arrive underground, slowly make their way up through the very busy and heavily controlled border crossing, to emerge at street level in East Berlin.

Additionally, underground, West Berliners were then allowed to use Friedrichstrasse Station as a transfer point between their U-Bahn and S-Bahn lines. These 'western' platforms were completely separated from the border crossing (and East Berlin) above. To hammer this point home, a white line had been drawn along the walls of the station's tunnels to mark the 'border' of

the underground transit point. Despite the painted reminders, these transitional platforms between the western trains and the eastern border guards functioned as a type of neutral space, and unofficial underground temporary markets and sellers began to pop up along them, allowing direct exchange between East and West Berliners.

Even though there would continue to be those who subverted the internal boundary until the fall of the Wall, with this incredibly elaborate physical, cultural, vertical and horizontal dividing system in place, by the seventies and eighties the shape of the new Berlins and Germanys — as well as the presence of the barrier itself — had been generally accepted both by the world and by Germans, the latter for whom a whole generation was emerging who had never known anything else.

East Berlin — or ‘Berlin’ as it was known in the GDR — had grown into the cultural and economic ‘showpiece’ of socialism for the Eastern Bloc with all the positive and negative implications that entailed. The state was tightly monitored by the enormous network of *Stasi* operatives who kept tabs on 1 in 3 eastern citizens to allegedly maintain order.¹³ The surveillance was managed via bugs, secret cameras and, most significantly, through the use of civilian informants — both willing participants and those operating under duress. This meant that, in addition to espionage by the enemy, East Berliners were under constant surveillance by their own state through their own family, friends and neighbours.

West Berlin, on the other hand, was, although unique from a global perspective, largely irrelevant in the progression of West

Germany as a nation. The half city was physically a frontier town; an island in the middle of enemy territory, and no longer held the ‘capital city’ cache. Because of West Berlin’s unstable position, the population had plummeted and people had to be tempted to work, live and invest there with heavy subsidies and what was essentially hazard pay. Consequently West Berlin no longer courted the powerful or exuded any sort of finesse; instead it attracted various groups of people from all over Europe, who — for one reason or another — could be said to exist on the fringes of society, and who were seeking the peculiar haven the walled city afforded.

Socially speaking, each side was finding it increasingly difficult to gloss over its Nazi heritage, especially when trying to cultivate a new collective German nation without somehow rooting it in a ‘German’ past. The GDR went so far as to espouse and teach only Russian history and heroism as their cultural base. As these tactics were not working, the problem was independently solved by both Germanys by pinning the Third Reich atrocities on the other side. Essentially, no need to deal with the direct German ancestry, as everyone who instigated, believed in or complied with those actions exists exclusively on the ‘other’ side of the Wall. Now each nation could reach farther back and ground their country in a more desirable German era: for the East this was the dominant, militaristic nation of Frederick the Great; for the West it was the culturally unique Weimar Republic of the nineteen-twenties.

For these two distinct countries who had emerged out of the fallen Reich, the only conscious commonality was their tacit agreement of silence regarding the burying of their direct



fig. 3.51 | Frederick the Great

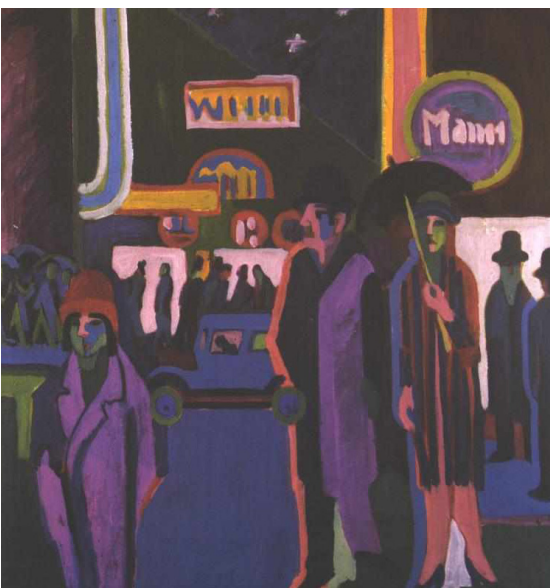


fig. 3.52 | *Street Scene at Night*,
Weimar Republic

past. In hand with the mutual elimination of their collective guilt, the two countries finally officially legitimized and accepted each other from a political and economic standpoint through the introduction of the *Ostpolitik*, the 'East politic,' a policy regarding trade and political dealings between East and West Germany.

The wall dividing Berlin and Germany in the twentieth century was the direct result of global political maneuvering primarily between the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War. Further, the Wall had arguably only come into existence due to the previous global imperative to halt the heinous actions and escalating invasions across Europe by the politically and ideologically extreme Nazi Germany. As such, externally the physical and symbolic Berlin Wall was the manifestation of a series of compounding international political and ideological conflicts with the city itself the unwitting stage ground for the global powers, and thus the political center of the world and the ultimate symbol of the proverbial Iron Curtain.

However, internally, the two half cities that grew out of the physically and culturally ruined post-war Berlin became liabilities for both of the 'new' Germanys. For the West, Berlin had become an unstable island in the middle of enemy territory, while for the East, Berlin was now next to a capitalist city it could never compete with economically, and so became a huge drain for the GDR as subsidies and funds were continually funnelled into it. Further, although symbolically Berlin may have been the most important city in the world, functionally, due to its unstable positions for the two countries and fully realised division, it was

increasingly excluded from the global arena.

The dichotomies centered on the Wall were not restricted to the external symbolic viewpoint versus the practical internal perspective. Looking at the physical layout of the barrier within the city, conceptually the Wall was simply dividing Berlin — and Germany — in two; however, practically speaking, as Berlin was entirely located in the Soviet sector of the country, the Wall essentially encircled the western city within the east, effectively trapping West Berliners in an urban island surrounded by their hostile other half. On the other hand, strictly speaking, the Wall had been put in place to keep eastern citizens in the GDR, meaning that although West Berlin was physically surrounded by a fortified barrier, culturally East Berliners were the ones who were contained, while the West was the free city.

Outwardly, the twin countries had wholly adopted their occupying nations' collective persona and purposefully omitted the unsavoury aspects of their German past; however, for both sides of Berlin, the shared presence of the physical wall served as a constant reminder of their immediate history. Consequently, Berlin, unlike much of the two Germany's, was never able to fully consciously bury their collective guilt over the past. As an unexpected by-product of this, for a culture that had diverged on all quantifiable spheres, Berlin then remained the place that embodied both sides of 'Germany' and became the place where one was confronted by their — otherwise easily ignorable — German doppelgänger. As per the observations on divided Berlin in Peter Schneider's novel *The Wall Jumper*,

Two conflicting feelings reinforced each other: The half-city beyond the Wall struck me from the start as thoroughly



fig. 3.53

familiar. Not only the garbage cans, the stairwells, the door handles, the radiators, the lampshades, the wallpaper, but even the muted, distrustful life-style over there seemed to me boringly familiar. This was the shadow city, the afterbirth, the emergency edition of West Berlin. Yet the tendency to recognition was contradicted by the impression of having abruptly landed on another planet. Life there didn't differ simply in outward organization; it obeyed another law. ... It came through more in half-sentences, in a gesture which left something unsaid, a laugh where none was expected, a manner of looking around. Not just ways of talking, but even certain facial lines could be linked to compass points in Germany.¹⁴

The pervading Wall had itself become the lens through which the doppelgänger could be perceived, and as wherever one went in Berlin they were always physically confronted by the Wall, they were also always continually confronted by the other Berlin, their 'shadow city.' This unique experience compelled Berliners to acknowledge their collective other half as it was unceasingly being reflected back at them. As such, the Wall was both a uniting and dividing structure internally for the two Berliners in a way it, as an abstract dividing line, was not for the rest of the two nations.

For the two halves of the city, the construction of the Berlin Wall and the beginning of the Cold War had derailed much of the rebuilding of the capital by the two opposing Superpowers, meaning that Berlin still retained much more of Germany's physical heritage where other heavily bombed German cities such as Dusseldorf, places physically removed from the boundary, had been made over in the new inoffensive modernist ideal. Many of the architectural remnants in Berlin could be found gathered in peripheral parts of the city, significantly in the spaces directly



fig. 3.54 | Juggling on the Berlin Wall,
November 1989

adjacent to the Wall, such as near the formerly vibrant Potsdamer Platz. In the same way that the Wall gathered the two mirrored cultures of the city it also gathered the physical remains of that which was elsewhere suppressed.

For a dual culture so intent on papering over their guilty past, the Wall subliminally was a secret collective monument — in fact the only German monument — to the Third Reich and the Holocaust. Because the shame and guilt of the people was embodied and monumentalized in the Wall, more specifically the Wall became a physical manifestation of the collective struggle with their national shame and guilt, and perhaps a way for the people to deal with their past. In turn, the ongoing presence of the barrier impacted the ‘German’ collective identities by formalizing the dual natures of the city and people.

In 1989 the Iron Curtain was seriously compromised in other nations belonging to the Eastern Bloc. This led to another large exodus west by East Germans, but this time the epicenter was Hungary and later Czechoslovakia. To maintain some semblance of control, while hopefully still preserving their nation, the GDR responded by agreeing to allow even more travel between the



fig. 3.55 | Fall of the Wall near the Brandenburg Gate

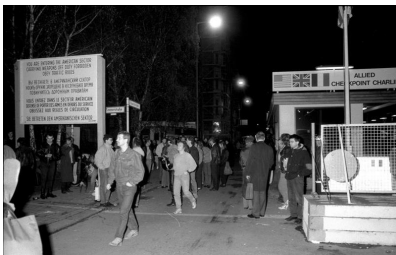


fig. 3.56 | Walking across the border at Checkpoint Charlie on the night the Wall came down

two sides, with some expected regulations; however, during a press conference announcing these new concessions, the Eastern representative misspoke and intimated that these border provisions were to take immediate effect, when they had not been intended to be rolled out until the next day. Upon watching the subsequent television newscast that evening, East Berliners responded to the news by taking to the checkpoints and demanding unrestricted access to the other side. When the border guards could not grant them access, the Easterners took matters into their own hands in a way they never had during the initial construction of the barrier, and spontaneously charged the Wall. The Easterners were joined by Berliners from the West, as they had been on all previous boundary events, and the two sides then worked together to mount and obliterate the Berlin Wall. The night of November 9th, 1989 thus officially marked the dismantling of the physical wall and the end of the Cold War. For the collective identity of the city, the destruction of the Berlin Wall further marked the destruction of the single monument to Germany's role in World War II and its ability to reconcile itself with the Holocaust. As analyzed by the cultural historian Yosefa Loshitzky:

... as an involuntary monument of collective guilt and a place of shame, the Wall had to be dismantled. ... the German people were compelled to redeem themselves by reinterpreting their past ... 'the people,' however enacted this redemption with their 'own hands' by manually destroying the Wall.¹⁵

After the Wall had physically disappeared, 'Germany' had to compile two nations into one entity: two nations who had each devised their own separate identities, and whose only

commonality had been ritualistically dismantled. Once the nations ‘reunited’ they diplomatically pretended that all things between them were equal. Practically speaking, this meant that the GDR was absorbed into West Germany. Immediately the East Marks were appraised at a wildly inflated 1:1 against the West D-Marks, before they were phased out entirely and the D-Marks adopted as the national currency. The nation also adopted exclusively western governmental policies and regulations, meaning the loss of many of the positive socialist initiatives such as various subsidies. Once the GDR was absorbed, many East Germans found that their skills were antiquated and irrelevant in the Western work force and large swathes of Easterners were pushed out of the job market. The replacement of ‘East Germaness’ in recreating Germany went so far as to westernize such inconsequential things as the eastern traffic signals in a bid to create a better, homogenized nation.

These moves lead to the unexpected *Ostalgie* phenomenon; a nostalgia for the former GDR and all its material goods, cultural practices and differing work ethics. On the other hand, West Germans resented having to suddenly shore up an entire nation from a financial standpoint: by the fall of the Wall, the GDR’s economy was in shambles and the nation in serious debt, and all the now unemployable Easterners had to be individually subsidized.

The destruction of the physical Wall had only destroyed the collective dividing monument, and its absence revealed the undercurrent of Berliners’ collective unconscious: the proverbial ‘Wall in the head,’ a cultural wall that was in many ways more divisive than the physical wall had been. Where the actual



fig. 3.57 | Eastern traffic signals (left and center) versus Western signals (right)

concrete barrier had united these disparate nations by its very presence, the removal of the Wall had left two incomplete states with two fundamentally separate collective identities.

The novel *The Wall Jumper* is a rumination on the two halves of Berlin during the life of the physical wall, focusing on the different ways and different reasons for crossing between the two Berlins. The unnamed Western narrator, throughout his explorations, keeps returning to his friendship with an East Berliner expat, Robert. He notices, through their conversations, the differences in the fundamental way they view the world:

Robert counters my readiness to see traces of another social mold in him by stressing the similarities between us. ... All this shows only that we're trapped: I by my tendency to pin Robert to his origins in the DDR; he by his irritated rejection of any allusion to these origins.¹⁶

After together witnessing a destructive protest on the Kurfürstendamm, where each friend had a completely opposite reaction, the narrator comes to see that:

Where I perceive merely an event, maybe an accident, Robert perceives a plan he has to decipher. ... As Robert sees it, Western society is essentially a well-organized syndicate deliberately kept in a state of disorder by a few people in the know. Whether consciously or not, every impulse within the society follows a plan for the benefit of the bosses: coincidences, accidents are built in; the world is controlled by the secret services. ... The advantage of his delusion is that the blame always falls on something outside him. For good or for bad, Robert is sheltered by a state that takes responsibility for everything; Robert himself is never to blame. As I consider this objection, it turns itself around. Who derives benefits from which way of thinking? Doesn't every career in Western



fig. 3.58 | Wall fragments, Bernauer Strasse



fig. 3.59 | Topography of Terror Museum



fig. 3.60 | Checkpoint Charlie



fig. 3.61 | Checkpoint Charlie

society, whether that of an athlete, investor, artist, or rebel, depend upon the assumption that every initiative is one's own, every idea original, every decision completely personal? What would happen to me if I stopped finding fault with myself, as I've been taught to do, and blamed everything on the state? Where does a state end and a self begin?¹⁷

The two halves of the Germanic nations had diverged on all levels, but instead of reuniting with their doppelgänger to collectively coalesce and become a more rounded society, Berliners replaced their aspersions towards World War II with an unconscious mental block against each other.

The Berlin Wall had always reflected the dual nature of Berlin, a city from its foundation that was plagued by both power and self doubt. Its destruction was initially interpreted as a triumph over (especially Soviet) occupation and the Cold War, but quickly flipped, and its destruction suddenly signaled the potential reemergence of the German threat to European stability.

The Wall had been the only symbol and monument to the Second World War and the Holocaust, but once it ruptured it became clear that the presence of the Wall had also served as a veil keeping any in depth questions or discussions of the past largely at bay for Berliners and Germans. The dismantling of the Wall had unleashed a huge discussion and need to deal with the previously suppressed collective past. Although externally the Wall materialised due to the opposing global superpowers, internally the creation of a physical barricade isolating half of the city and nation was a manifestation of the collective unconscious' inability to reconcile itself with its past, while further, the absent Wall after the end of the Cold War revealed and reflected the



fig. 3.62 | Wall fragments near Checkpoint Charlie



fig. 3.63 | Wall fragments at Potsdamer Platz



underlying tensions within Berlin and questions regarding its place in Germany, as the collective society grappled with their fundamental identities.

Since the Wall has come down there has been a widespread preoccupation with erecting (frequently controversial) monuments to the Holocaust in and around Berlin to replace it, where there had never been a desire to do so before. Further, remaining fragments of the Wall have been preserved and monumentalized all over the city. In the early spring of 2013 there were wide-scale protests by Berliners regarding the dismantling of a portion of the East Side Gallery — a famous preserved stretch of the Wall which now constitutes the world’s longest open air gallery — to allow for the construction of a collection of condominiums. The protest was so large that construction work had to be temporarily halted due to safety concerns.

Unfortunately, this move towards *Aufarbeitung der Geschichte*, or ‘working through history’ initiated another debate centered around where the capital of this newly incarnated Germany should be, a debate which instead became about creating a new revised history and shifting the blame around some more. The two cities in question were the provincial, ‘safe’ temporary capital of West Germany, Bonn, and the tainted old capital of

fig. 3.64-3.67 | East Side Gallery



fig. 3.68 | Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe



fig. 3.69 | The Holocaust Tower, Jewish Museum

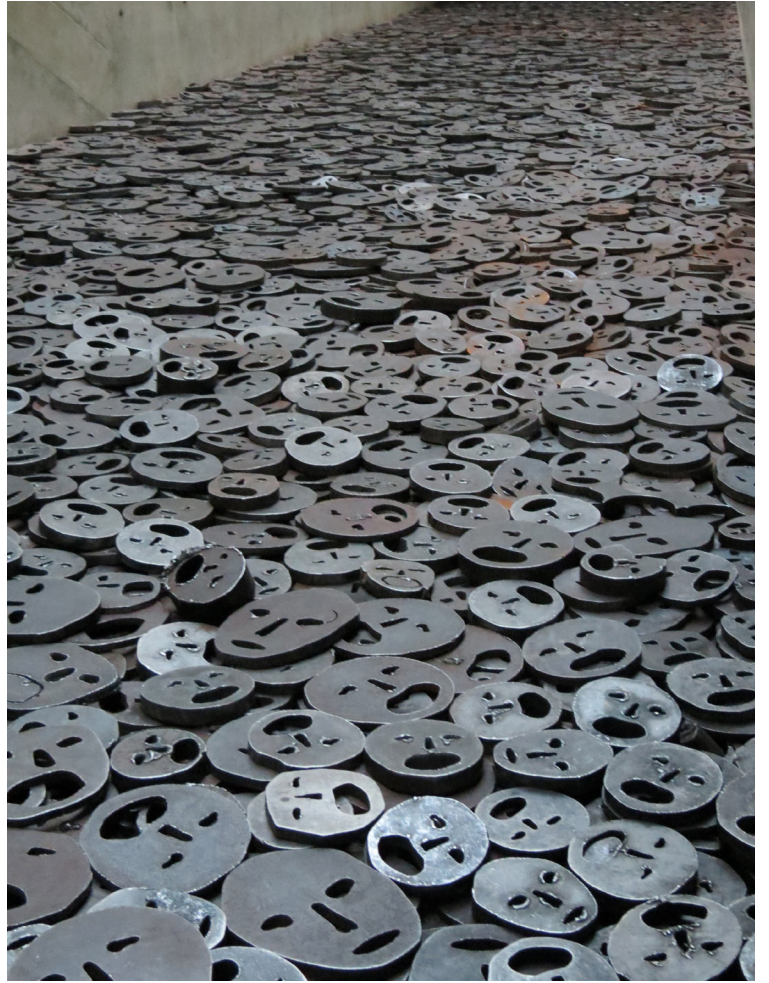


fig. 3.70 | *Fallen Leaves* in the 'Void,' Jewish Museum



fig. 3.71 | (West) Berlin today



fig. 3.72 | (East) Berlin today

both the Third Reich and the GDR, Berlin. Proponents of Bonn argued that the city represented the only 'successful' German capital in history, and that it gave the nation a fresh start, as it was not a traditional capital. Choosing Bonn would also insure that power was diffused throughout the nation, whereas choosing Berlin would imply another consolidation of power, a bad idea given their primary role in the Holocaust. Berlin countered that the tradition and capital foundations were an asset, but instead of 'working through' their collective history by pointing out that Nazism was a national past they all shared, Berliners went on to shift the blame by focusing on Berlin's — only comparatively slightly larger — resistance against Nazism during World War II. In the end, the debate and questions about their history were never fully resolved, but Berlin won out and was narrowly voted the 'new' capital, 337 votes to 320.

Interestingly, after the Wall was dismantled in 1989, buried remnants from the Second World War persistently pushed their way to the surface of Berlin and Germany's consciousness. Where the Wall had been erected as a suppressor of the past, while secretly functioning as a monument to it, its formal dismantling had immediately forced Berliners to confront their role in World War II. Immediately following unification, redeveloping the areas around the Berlin Wall began to uncover the vast network of World War II bunkers, including Hitler's bunker and place of suicide. As well, individual people's suppressed pasts have now come to light, some voluntarily, some not, including the late Derrick Horst Tappert the formerly beloved television star, now known to be an SS Officer during the Third Reich, and Margot Woelk, a Berliner who came forward in 2013 to confess to being

one of Hitler's fifteen food tasters. *Stasi* documents and files from the GDR have been made wholly available to Germans in another attempt at not hiding from the past, and physically every year more and more unexploded weapons from the war are uncovered in construction sites within Berlin or in fields and waterways in the surrounding countryside. An average of 10-15 devices are uncovered annually, necessitating a dedicated bomb squad specializing in antique explosives. About 2,000 bombs have already been removed from Berlin since 1945, and it is estimated that anywhere between 2,000 to 4,000 unexploded incendiary devices and hand grenades are still buried underneath the city.¹⁸



fig. 3.73 | The Wall today

Today, Berlin, the reinstated singular capital of Germany, continues to be a place of dualism. This is still most clearly seen in the continued life of the Berlin Wall. The Wall, which persists despite the fact that it is now physically absent, has evolved into a monument of the Cold War repression, not a symbol of World War II. In monumentalizing the Wall this way, it has simultaneously become a symbol of freedom and resistance while the collective relationship with the Holocaust remains unsettled. Berlin itself is trying on another identity, and is now known as a broke 'Bohemian' city full of culture and a renowned nightlife, while on the flip side it is the capital of a nation seen as a fiscally responsible financial giant in the European Union. Although the Wall is physically no longer a presence in the city, aside from a few preserved remains such as the East Side Gallery and a continuous trace marked out by subtle paving stones, it has become the most visited monument in the city.

As the significance of the Wall had again been purposefully shifted to predominantly memorialize Berlin's united triumph over suppression by a reviled outsider, the Berlin Wall continues to reveal the underlying collective tensions in the city. Berlin has consistently been a powerful and proud city, always unsure of itself and of its identity, and still is unable to fully reconcile both of its sides, be they Slavic and Germanic, Nazi Aggressors and Wartime Survivors, Alternative Bohemians and Fiscal Leaders, or Easterners and Westerners. As a result, the city after its complete reduction following the close of the war, compounded by the tainting of their collective identity, was constantly trying on external, false identities — a phenomenon perpetuated by the rampant external and internal espionage — while ignoring their collective 'shadow city.' Instead of working through the collective history, Berliners and Germans opted to pin their collective shame and guilt on their other side, their *doppelgänger*. As such, though the move to construct the Berlin Wall was motivated by the interests of the external superpowers, internally it persisted as a manifestation of, and monument to, Berliners' collective, uniting guilt and unreconciled cultural identity. For Berlin, both the initial, physical Berlin Wall and its current symbolic traces, serves to reveal the city's persistent collective unconscious conflicts with itself and with its struggle to reconcile its dual identities.

NOTES

- ¹ Alexandra Richie, *Faust's Metropolis: A History of Berlin*. (New York: Carroll & Graf Publishers, Inc., 1998), 475.
- ² Richie, *Faust's Metropolis: A History of Berlin*. 526.
- ³ Richie, *Faust's Metropolis: A History of Berlin*. 531.
- ⁴ Richie, *Faust's Metropolis: A History of Berlin*. 573.
- ⁵ Frederick Taylor, *The Berlin Wall: A World Divided, 1961-1989*. (New York: Harper Perennial, 2008), 34.
- ⁶ Richie, *Faust's Metropolis: A History of Berlin*. 612.
- ⁷ Taylor, *The Berlin Wall: A World Divided, 1961-1989*. 52.
- ⁸ Taylor, *The Berlin Wall: A World Divided, 1961-1989*. 45-46.
- ⁹ Taylor, *The Berlin Wall: A World Divided, 1961-1989*. 52.
- ¹⁰ Richie, *Faust's Metropolis: A History of Berlin*. 697.
- ¹¹ Taylor, *The Berlin Wall: A World Divided, 1961-1989*. 141-142.
- ¹² Taylor, *The Berlin Wall: A World Divided, 1961-1989*. 265.
- ¹³ Richie, *Faust's Metropolis: A History of Berlin*. 762.
- ¹⁴ Peter Schneider. *The Wall Jumper: A Berlin Story*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998). 13-14.
- ¹⁵ Yosefa Loshitzky. "Constructing and Deconstructing the Wall." *Clio* 26, (Spring97 1997). 288-289.
- ¹⁶ Schneider. *The Wall Jumper: A Berlin Story*. 21-22.
- ¹⁷ Schneider. *The Wall Jumper: A Berlin Story*. 94-95.
- ¹⁸ Andrew Curry. "Berlin Unexploded Bomb Shines Light on Buried Threat." National Geographic News, accessed July 21, 2013.

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For Edinburgh, Prague and Berlin, each of their internal and external tensions were embodied by specific architectural objects functioning as clear urban *slips* for the cities. Fundamentally speaking, these *slips* each acted as thresholds between the two divided sides of the city, and although the South Bridge and the Charles Bridge were both classically ‘connective’ objects while the Berlin Wall a classically ‘divisive’ one, they all, physically and unconsciously, both defined the limits of their divisions while allowing for passage between the two sides, and, further, served as a *locus* or focal point for that crossing and subversion of the boundary lines. In addition to simultaneously uniting and dividing their city, each architectural object became a microcosm embodying the character, tension and *spirit of place* of their urban environments, a fact which enabled the preceding

city analyses, as the objects, or *slips*, then revealed their city's precipitous and ongoing underlying conflicts and divisions.

These urban *slips* are anomalies, or irregularities, in the make-up of a physical and cultural city. By looking at — as opposed to discounting — such unique yet reoccurring sites throughout the duration of cities, one can perhaps begin to come to a more complete understanding and definition of both any given individual city as well as the broader nature of urban places in general.¹ The specific analyses of Edinburgh, Prague and Berlin, although unique to the circumstances of each city and corresponding architectural *slip*, can then together be used to identify other such places in different urban locations. That is not to say that these three cities can be used to develop a checklist or formula for determining other such *slip* places; rather, it is through the comparison of the three sets of findings that the existence of several repeating *slip* indicators, or similarities, can begin to be perceived.

The overarching indicator for urban *slips* is their capacity to embody a city's division on all levels; the physical, the cultural and the unconscious/psychological. Accordingly, this trifold division is plainly felt by each architectural object in each of the cities examined throughout the work.

In Edinburgh, the division was physically localized through the construction of a secret bridge over the undesirable section of the city, thereby parcelling the land in two. This was in turn culturally predicated on a socio-economic, or class based, division. Through the specific examination of the city, it is further apparent that Edinburgh's collective unconscious was utilizing the South Bridge in its bid to wholly reject its old, provincial

identity in favour of its newly cultivated urbane and intellectual persona. In Prague, although the internal conflict had also manifested through the construction of a physical bridge, this time spanning the Vltava River, it had instead stemmed from the cultural divide between the three religious and ethnic groups residing in the city. Prague's underlying unconscious tension was then more about the power struggle between the differing identities as Praguers collectively rejected their perceived 'other' in their bid to claim the symbolically vacant seat of power, a conflict continually playing out in the repeated claiming of, and battles on, the bridge itself. Finally, Berlin physically constructed the famous and expansive Wall around half of the city as a cultural result of the building external political tensions between the former Allied powers. However, internally and psychologically, the Wall additionally functioned as a physical expression of Berliners' collective struggles with reconciling their identities, a conflict compounded by their recent guilt after the Second World War and the Holocaust. As such, the Berlin Wall served to reflect both the multi-faceted parts of their overall identity as well as the specific opposing East/West halves that betrayed their unconsciously suppressed *doppelgänger*s.

Another similarity is that, although once constructed each of the urban *slips* examined continued to persist in both the physical cities and their collective cultures and psyches, all the *slips* emerged, and in some sense remain rooted, in distinct eras of history. The South Bridge in Edinburgh developed during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and today it finds itself once again a part of Edinburgh's underlying collective unconscious tensions in terms of gentrification and the desire for 'wildness,'

while simultaneously standing slightly outside the contemporary city as it is seen to be literally haunted by its former nineteenth century inhabitants. Similarly, the Charles Bridge was built to connect and control Prague at the tail end of the fourteenth century and today acts as a cultural gateway letting both locals and tourists feel a connection to the city's 'magical' past, while the tensions regarding the integrity of the structure as well as its uses are still very much at the collective forefront. The Berlin Wall on the other hand was erected in the twentieth century and today still recalls the separated city and nation as well as the overarching Cold War, while its fragmented current existence reflects the city's continued unease regarding their identity and its underlying implications.

Interestingly, for all of these cities the time periods from which these unique architectural objects emerged each coincides with epochs when their respective cities were in some sense at the center of a larger 'global' consciousness, a centrality where one could expect the projected and perceived image of the city would be held under heightened scrutiny both externally as well as internally. The South Bridge was ostensibly conceived as a part of a new entrance for the recently minted cosmopolitan *Athens of the North*; the Charles Bridge connected the riverbanks of Prague — an integral crossing point and the capital of the Holy Roman Empire — for Medieval European culture and exchange; and the Wall was an extreme act in the post-war battle for dominance playing out in Berlin, which was the main stage for the international Cold War.

There are also indicative factors derived from how the inhabitants of the city approach these architectural sites. As the

initial definition of these places argues, these *slips* all additionally act as thresholds in that they gather people and meaning inwards onto themselves. This is specifically seen in the abundance of activities and actions centering on the sites — be it through protests, battles, art, adjacent redevelopment, demonstrations or speeches.

Expanding on the flocking quality of urban *slips*, these objects also tend to act as magnets for that which they were designed to divide or suppress. In Edinburgh, the South Bridge was built to hide and bypass the old infrastructure and poorer factions of the city; however, once constructed the most destitute concentrated into the very bowels of the structure meant to suppress them. In Prague the Charles Bridge was constructed to unite the city while establishing clear dominance over the crossing, while its presence in actual fact cemented the division and offered up a perceptually unclaimed physical place through which the power struggles could be physically, culturally and symbolically focused through attempts to control the bridge via battles, blockades and ornamentation. The Berlin Wall was meant to separate East and West Berlin while moving the cities forward by papering over their past. However, the Wall continually attracted and gathered the two Berlins, pulling the people together to jointly witness events of conflict and generally provided the two sides with a basic commonality — the Wall itself. With regards to the past, the physical Wall effectively stood as a monument to it, and as its existence turned its location in a periphery, or edge for the cities, it became a forgotten holding place for architecture and artefacts from both the recent and more distant pasts, that elsewhere were being systematically destroyed.

Developing this further, *slip* spaces then functionally do the opposite from their intended purpose: the South Bridge was built to ignore, but magnifies; the Charles Bridge was built to unite, but divides; and the Berlin Wall was built to separate, but joins.

One final perceptible tendency is that these places seem to be directly involved with, or connected to, the foundational landscapes and founding principles of each city. Edinburgh was a defensive place from inception, built on an elevated glacial rock and surrounded by extensive fortifications. The South Bridge in turn was built into both this hard rock and the Old Town's infrastructure, with the most destitute burrowing right down into the substratum of the vaults below. Prague grew up around the forceful Vltava River, which both impeded physical unification while offering up a natural ford for crossing. The Charles Bridge was then, against the odds, constructed across this body of water, seemingly held in tension over the river and between the two sides of the city. The history of Berlin is about the appearance of strength and permanence, yet the city is resting on sandy, marshy earth and unstable foundations. The Berlin Wall then, also resting only on the surface of the earth, both physically and symbolically has the appearance of power and impenetrability; however, physically the barrier was repeatedly subverted and illicitly crossed — such as through tunneling — and unconsciously, as has already been remarked, the past was not able to remain buried. Ultimately, what was going on underground in Berlin was contrary to the neat articulation on the surface of the land and the collective consciousness.

As these are similarities or indicators, not all *slip* places

will have the exact same qualities to the same degree, and so each city was further chosen for the different types of division and architectural *slips* they express. The objects themselves are physically not identical, ranging from a secret bridge built through existing infrastructure, to a medieval bridge spanning a body of water, to a wall bisecting a city. Culturally speaking, as has already been analyzed, Edinburgh was a city divided through socio-economic lines; Prague through ethnic and religious lines and Berlin through political lines. Physically and unconsciously, Edinburgh was then divided through the progression of time and the internal evolution and development of the city as the new city was purposefully constructed apart from the old city, while Prague physically had its divisive potential from inception as it lay across a river. Berlin is different again, even among similarly politically divided cities, as the Wall was physically imposed on the city via external powers, the specific physical and cultural consequences of which were articulated in analysis of the city in the preceding chapter. However, the internal unconscious and cultural tensions in Berlin still predate the external Wall, and although this external imposition impacted the city greatly, as has been analyzed in the previous chapter, the physical Wall was exacerbating the preexisting tensions. According to Aldo Rossi in *The Architecture of the City*,

... stressing the importance of certain apparently accidental occurrences in the successive evolution of the city, such as the destructive effects of war and bombarding ... it can be shown ... that occurrences of this type only accelerate *certain tendencies that already exist*, modifying them in part, but permitting a more rapid realization of intentions which are previously present ... and which would otherwise still have produced physical

effects — destructions and reconstructions — on the body of the city through a process which in effect would be hardly different from that of war. It is nonetheless evident that the study of these occurrences, because of the rapid and brutal form in which they arise, permits one to see far more vivid and immediate effects than those which appear as the outcome of a long series of historically sequential facts of land ownership and the evolution of the city's real-estate patrimony.²

It is then clear that the complete physical and cultural reduction of the city after World War II simply accelerated the preexisting internal underlying conflicts and as such facilitated these surface exterior actions. The imposed barrier then catalytically allowed Berlin's foundational internal struggles with their identity to manifest in the physical wall itself.

Broadly speaking, a boundary serves to define the limits of something by marking out both what is inside the boundary and what is excluded from it. A city's boundary is then generally seen to exist exclusively at the limits of a city, defining the conventional edge between civilization and nature. However, as evidenced by the preceding identification and analysis of the unique *slip* places, cities are not homogeneous sites and dividing boundaries also internally exist at the center of a city, with these horizontal and vertical internal divisions separating and therefore enclosing different parts of the city itself. This then challenges the conventionally held ideas of the city as made up of a core and the periphery, as these identified inner boundaries and corresponding *slip* places reveal that urban edges exist in the very centers, or cores, of cities themselves. As such, the desire to enclose and exclude is not limited to the creation of a city

as apart from nature, but is a fundamental part of the internal progression of the built world as well.

There is then a disjunction between what is understood to be the center versus that of the edge within cities; however, edges should not simply be read as the limits of a boundary, as they are also the point at which the two sides meet, as illustrated by the existence of the central *slip* places. Accepting this duality between edges and centers then facilitates a shift in the way cities are perceived with regards to both the broader analysis of divisions and boundaries within urban settings as well as the specific analyses of the architectural urban *slips* operating as contentious thresholds between the bounded sides. This lateral definition of edges and centers paired with the dual analyses regarding the nature of cities further challenges the position that cities are made up of a core and a periphery, by redefining the way cities are fundamentally analyzed and perceived. Through this recalibration of the city, the center, or core, can instead be understood as a polarizing middle made up of abutting and divisible forces. As such, a central urban place should not be seen to function as a hub or core, but instead should be read as a contentious meeting place between bounding sides, that are in turn emanating outward into the infrastructure of the city beyond.

Cities are dynamic places, elementally predicated on the tension between opposing forces such as permanence/flux, civilization/wilderness, inside/outside and public/private. This tension defines the city as a type, because without polarization between opposing forces, neither would exist and the city would cease

to have meaning.³ Given that the city is based in opposition, and accepting that the conflicting nature of humans will render the tensions specific to their unique urban congregations, one can begin to understand why, then, these in-between *slip* places continue to persist in cities, even though their presence is not always a settling one, as without such places borne from the collective unconsciousness and revealing the underlying divisive forces, the city would no longer be a city; rather, it would be more akin to a preserved monument or an uninhabited ghost town.

Ultimately, as the city lives in its dichotomies, looking for and valuing these odd, crucial *slip* places is key to both appreciating the nuanced existence of the city as a (divided) type and maintaining relative parity between the opposing and conflicting sides. Although the sites are not always areas through which a city will identity itself — perhaps preferring castles, cathedrals or natural features — these *slips* will always attract people and physically persist in the collective consciousness, and it is through their ongoing revealing presence that one can know both a specific city and the overarching nature of the urban typology.

NOTES

¹ Aldo Rossi, *The Architecture of the City*. (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1984), 21.

² Aldo Rossi, *The Architecture of the City*. 144.

³ Hans Paul Bahrtdt in Aldo Rossi, *The Architecture of the City*. (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1984), 86.

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