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Identities in transit: the (re)connections and (re)brandings of Berlin's municipal railway infrastructure after 1989

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ABSTRACT

This article analyses urban railway infrastructures as landscapes in order to reveal their role as constructions and constructors of collective and individual identities. It does this by introducing the notion of 'identities in transit', a rhetorical category that problematises the tendency to consider the nexus of urban infrastructure and identity formation only during discrete moments and in relation to abstract subjectivities. Specifically, it explores the (re)connections and (re)brandings that Berlin's municipal railway infrastructure, the Stadtschnellbahn (S-Bahn) and Untergrundbahn (U-Bahn), experienced in the years surrounding the fall of the Berlin Wall, and considers their contribution to the formation of post-unification municipal identities. These discussions are historicised and contextualised by an account of the consequences of Berlin's Cold War division on its transport infrastructure. The article then considers the subsequent impact of the city's reunification and how the S- and U-Bahn became a means of constructing more unified municipal identities. It considers the process by which Berlin's municipal railway networks were reconnected after November 1989 and frames this process as a metaphor for both the different durations and protracted process of the city's reunification and the identities these gave rise to. Thereafter, the article argues that the rebranding strategy pursued by one of the city's municipal transport authorities provides one of the earliest examples of an attempt to manufacture a unified identity for the New Berlin. The article highlights that while processes at the municipal level emphasised the unification of collective identities, experiences of the infrastructures themselves often involved persisting divides and forms of subversion and social conflict that highlighted the meeting of more diverse individual identities.

Urban landscapes are not only expressions of collective identities, they also shape the individual identities of those who inhabit them.[1] However, geographers who have investigated this duality have mostly focused their attention on the production of national identities, and landscapes created with, or retrospectively assigned, the task of social remembrance: memorials, monuments, museums, public architecture and heritage sites.[2] Only recently have

geographers begun to consider the role that more taken-for-granted urban environments, such as transport infrastructures, play in the construction of identities. These efforts remain piecemeal and often over-stress how infrastructural projects produce identities at the point of their construction or initial encounter. They can also fail to respect the inextricably connected nature of social and personal identities, conceiving these as static, and sometimes ignoring intermediate levels of analysis by emphasising macro and national or micro and individual frames of identity over the meso frames provided by, for example, specific urban contexts.

This article seeks to address these issues by outlining how Berlin's interconnected municipal railway networks, the Stadtschnellbahn (S-Bahn) and Untergrundbahn (U-Bahn), have acted as constructions and constructors of collective and individual identities since 1945, with a primary focus on the years immediately

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[1] M. Hall, Identity, memory and countermemory: the archaeology of an urban landscape, Journal of Material Culture 11 (2006) 189–209.
[2] See F. Driver and D. Gilbert (Eds), Imperial Cities: Landscape, Display and Identity, Manchester, 1999; C. Boyer, The City of Collective Memory: Its Historical Imagery and Architectural Entertainments, Cambridge, MA, 1999.

surrounding German unification.[3] It does this by recounting the production of various 'identities in transit' — a rhetorical category that pertains to a particular urban context, namely public transport networks, and specifically acknowledges the changes to Berlin's identities that were caused by the broader geopolitical shifts of the second half of the twentieth century, but are arguably still playing out today. Thus, this article aligns itself with a non-essentialist approach to identity formation by respecting Tilley's evocative conception of identities as 'transient, a reflection on where you are now, a fleeting moment in a biography of the self or the group, only partially connected to where you might have come from, and where you might be going.'[4] It carries out its task by approaching 'infrastructure as landscape' — a medium of collective identity formation composed of physical, representational and experiential elements, across and between which the construction of individual identities can be traced. It begins with a review of the literature that addresses the relationship of infrastructure and landscape, volumetric geographies and urbanisms, as well as identity construction in Germany, and in Berlin more particularly. Thereafter, an account of the Cold War division of Berlin's transport infrastructure is provided. Then the process by which Berlin's municipal railway networks were (re)connected after November 1989 is considered and framed as a metaphor for both the different durations of the city's reunification and the identities these gave rise to. The article then explores how the (re)branding strategies pursued by the city's transport authorities in the same period were an early attempt to manufacture a unified identity for the New Berlin, but one which masked the negative aspects of the networks that indexed other competing identities.

Landscape, infrastructure, and identity

In 1984 Jackson described landscape as the 'infrastructure or background for our collective existence', but only following the growth of an interdisciplinary academic interest in the networked society have the productive compatibilities of landscape and infrastructure gained significant scholarly recognition.[5] At least two distinct clusters of academic research reflect this. One emphasises how infrastructural sites relating to environmentally damaging industries can become sustainable landscapes.[6] This cluster frames 'landscape as infrastructure' and as 'a sophisticated, instrumental system of essential resources, services, and agents that generate and support urban economies.'[7] The other, which is partly built on the criticism of the first cluster's failure to account for the social production of nature, instead considers 'infrastructure as landscape', with landscape regularly conceived, either implicitly

or explicitly, in terms of Lefebvre's tripartite model for the social production of space.[8] This reflects how Lefebvre's categories of representational space, representations of space and spatial practices can be operationally mapped onto the predominant modes of landscape studies in order to consider landscapes as simultaneously physical, representational and experiential.[9] The second cluster, in often pertaining to urban landscapes that force aesthetic reformulations through corporeal engagement as facilitated by the notion of the cyborg, also helps to overcome the visual bias of much landscape research and allows more balanced and nuanced interpretations of the 'material interface between the body and the city.'[10] More generally, this approach reveals the productive roles of metropolitan cultures and the social and political composition of the city in ways that are 'sensitive to the social and historical contexts that produce the built environment and imbue places with cultural meaning.'[11]

Several types of transport infrastructure have been approached as landscape, including surface-level and elevated roads, railways and walkways, in ways that — if at times only implicitly — have considered questions of identity formation.[12] In Germany, for example, the *Autobahn* [motorway] has been considered within a landscape framework in order to ascertain its impact on collective identities.[13] But the focus of these studies is usually the national level, reflecting broader patterns outlined below. A corpus of literature loosely in this vein also exists for various subterranean urban infrastructural spaces (including sewers and communication networks), and of relevance here is Moss' account of the impact of Berlin's Cold War division and subsequent reunification on the city's water and energy infrastructures.[14] However, few have addressed how these geopolitical processes affected the city's municipal railways, and, more generally, urban underground railways — the buried infrastructure that is, arguably, directly experienced by the greatest number of people on a regular basis — remains curiously understudied from a landscape perspective. Addressing these gaps helps satisfy recent calls for innovative accounts of subterranean cultural and historical geographies.[15]

At the same time, reconceiving landscape 'to encompass the interconnectedness of space' and 'infrastructure to encompass the experience of space' highlights that urban underground railways are rarely hermetically closed subterranean systems.[16] Instead, they emerge onto and above the surface to connect with other transport networks, either physically or through the pathways and experiences of those who use them. In other words, they are multi-

[3] 'Unification' best describes the creation of a new German national political and geographical entity after 1989 while 'reunification' resonates more strongly with the processes that reconstituted the city of Berlin. See M. Blacksell, Partition, *die Wende*, and German unification, *Applied Geography* 17 (1997) 257–265.

[4] C. Tilley, Introduction: identity, place, landscape and heritage, *Journal of Material Culture* 11 (2006) 9.

[5] J.B. Jackson, *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape*, New Haven, 1984, 8; See M. Kaika and E. Swyngedouw, Fetishizing the modern city: the phantasmagoria of urban technological networks, *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 24 (2000) 120–138; S. Graham and S. Marvin, *Splintering Urbanism: Networked Infrastructures, Technological Mobilities and the Urban Condition*, London, 2001.

[6] See C. Waldheim (Ed), *The Landscape Urbanism Reader*, New York, 2006; M. Mostafavi and G. Doherty (Eds), *Ecological Urbanism*, Baden, 2010.

[7] P. Bélanger, Landscape as infrastructure, *Landscape Journal* 28 (2009) 79.

[8] M. Gandy, *Concrete and Clay: Reworking Nature in New York City*, Cambridge, MA and London, 2003, 10; H. Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, Oxford, 1991; see also S. Robertson, Visions of urban mobility: the Westway, London, England, *Cultural Geographies* 14 (2007) 74–91. For further critiques of the 'landscape as infrastructure' approach, see P. Rawes (Ed), *Relational Architectural Ecologies: Architecture, Nature and Subjectivity*, New York, 2013.

[9] S. Merrill, *Excavating Buried Memories: Mnemonic Production in the Railways Beneath London and Berlin*, PhD Thesis, University of London, 2014.

[10] M. Gandy, Cyborg urbanization: complexity and monstrosity in the contemporary city, *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 29 (2005) 28; see also A. Picon, Anxious landscapes: from the ruin to rust, *Grey Room* 1 (2000) 65–83.

[11] Gandy, *Concrete and Clay*, 17.

[12] Robertson, Visions of urban mobility; A. Harris, Vertical urbanism: flyovers and skywalks in Mumbai, in: M. Gandy (Ed), *Urban Constellations*, Berlin, 2011, 118–123; P. Merriman, *Driving Spaces: A Cultural-Historical Geography of England's M1 Motorway*, Oxford, 2007; B. Rosa, *Beneath the Arches: Re-appropriating the Spaces of Infrastructure in Manchester*, PhD Thesis, University of Manchester, 2013.

[13] See D. Zeller, *Driving Germany: The Landscape Of The German Autobahn, 1930–1970*, New York and Oxford, 2007.

[14] M. Gandy, The Paris sewers and the rationalization of urban space, *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 24 (1999) 23–44; Graham and Marvin, *Splintering Urbanism*; T. Moss, Divided city, divided infrastructures: securing energy and water services in postwar Berlin, *The Journal of Urban History* 35 (2009) 923–942.

[15] P. Merriman, Mobilities I: departures, *Progress in Human Geography* 39 (2014) 87–95.

[16] M. Gandy, Landscape and infrastructure in the late-modern metropolis, in: G. Bridge and S. Watson (Eds), *The New Blackwell Companion to the City*, Oxford, 2011, 57.

levelled, forming one part of wider municipal infrastructural landscapes that are simultaneously vertical and horizontal. In this way they represent contexts in which to consider the research agendas of both volumetric geography and vertical urbanism that stress the need to cut through rather than look across landscapes.[17] These agendas criticise the horizontal favouritism of much critical urban research and emphasise a volumetric approach that appreciates 'the ways in which horizontal and vertical extensions, imaginaries, materialities and lived practices intersect and mutually construct each other within and between subterranean, surficial and suprasurface domains', while also noting that a concern for the aerial perspective has obscured crucial subterranean realms.[18] Extending across these domains, from deep-level to elevated tracks and stations, municipal railway networks provide a key landscape in which to consider these intersections and mutual constructions. They also exemplify the 'ordinary' vertical urbanisms that Harris contends are key to achieving a 'more diverse and multidimensional agenda for understanding and researching urban verticality.'[19] Furthermore, considering municipal railways as constructions and constructors of identity in turn extends recent efforts to understand how infrastructure shapes the social world, and partly answers Adey's appeal to examine how subterranean volumes 'are lived-in or not, what they feel like and how they might be reclaimed or made anew, and how ultimately other social and cultural registers might tell other sorts of stories.'[20]

This is not to suggest that municipal railways have not been interrogated as broader sites of collective and individual identity. A number of scholars have shown how urban, and often subterranean, railway networks across the world have contributed to the construction of municipal and, in turn, national identities as symbols of modernity that announced cities' — most often capitals — and their respective countries' arrival on the world stage.[21] Others have illustrated how municipal railways, along with their constituent technological developments, created new individual subjectivities, performances and modes of governmental conduct as embodied by the characters of the commuter and passenger.[22] While attempts to combine macro- and micro-analyses in these contexts are growing, they remain rarely pursued alongside one another and occasionally obscure, or encourage the simplification of, analyses of the connective intermediary levels of city identities

while sometimes assuming the existence of fixed identities, whether collective or individual. They are also inclined to emphasise the significance of a railway's construction or inauguration as moments of identity formation over longer durations of use and later processes. The (re)branding of transport authorities and networks, for example, is less regularly considered and such processes, along with the role of municipal railways as constructions and constructors of identity in general, have rarely been academically scrutinised in Berlin.[23]

Berlin itself has been extensively studied as a realm of collective identity, reflecting the 'near obsession with defining a German national identity' that has dominated much of the country's politics and public debate since 1945.[24] This obsession, the result of not only the incompatibility of national pride with the historical consequences of the Holocaust, but also the division of Germany into two separate self-identifying, yet mutually antagonistic, nation states during the Cold War, was reinvigorated by German unification in 1990, when new problems related to identity construction became apparent. Since then a number of scholars have interrogated how Berlin's urban landscapes have been implicated in the construction of Germany's post-unification national identity. Barnstone has framed the use of transparency in post-1989 German state architecture in terms of the construction of national identity and as a metaphor for a New Germany.[25] Till and Colomb, meanwhile, have separately considered how memorial and city marketing projects in Berlin have contributed to the construction of national identity, and the re-designation of the city as the New Berlin in the period up to 2000 when it once again became Germany's capital.[26] Both note that the idea of a New Berlin is itself not new. It has precedents in Martin Wagner's 1920s modernist housing experiments, Albert Speer's planned Germania and post-war reconstructive strategies in both West and East Berlin. The deeper genealogies of various elements of the New Berlin cautions scholars not to fetishise the post-1989 period and encourages historical contextualisation that reaches back, at the very minimum, through the post-war period to 1945.[27] Although Barnstone, Till and Colomb avoid the pitfall, analyses of the construction of German national identities in general seem to have overshadowed those of Berlin's municipal and individual identities, especially for the period since World War Two (WWII). In part this is probably because of the difficulties encountered when trying to isolate different scales of identity; difficulties that are amplified by the fact that capital cities are often planned and built to reflect the nation in microcosm, but also, at the other end of the scale, by issues relating to the multiple subjectivities of any single individual. Ultimately however, this imbalance in attention is odd, especially given that Berlin lends itself to the study of the non-essentialist, mutable and fluid forms of identities that are thrown into sharp relief by the numerous geopolitical shifts that it has experienced in the twentieth

[17] E. Weizmann, The politics of verticality, *Open Democracy* (2002), https://www.opendemocracy.net/ecology-politicsverticality/article_801.jsp; S. Graham, Vertical geopolitics: Baghdad and after, *Antipode* 36 (2004) 12–23.

[18] S. Elden, Secure the volume: vertical geopolitics and the depth of power, *Political Geography* 34 (2013) 35–51; S. Graham and L. Hewitt, Getting off the ground: on the politics of urban verticality, *Progress in Human Geography* 37 (2013) 74–75.

[19] A. Harris, Vertical urbanisms: opening up geographies of the three-dimensional city, *Progress in Human Geography* (2014) [published online before print], 1.

[20] See H. Angelo and C. Hentschel, Interactions with infrastructure as windows into social worlds: a method for critical urban studies: introduction, *City: analysis of urban trends, culture, theory, policy, action* 19 (2015) 306–312; P. Adey, Securing the volume/volumen: comments on Stuart Elden's plenary paper 'secure the volume', *Political Geography* 34 (2013) 54.

[21] See P. Gibas, Uncanny underground: absences, ghosts and the rhythmed everyday of the Prague metro, *Cultural Geographies* 20 (2013) 485–500; A. Jenks, A Metro on the mount: the underground as a church of Soviet civilization, *Technology and Culture* 41 (2000) 697–724; D.L. Pike, *Subterranean Cities: The World Beneath Paris and London, 1800–1945*, Ithaca and London, 2005; D.Z. Singh, *The History of the Buenos Aires Underground: A Cultural Analysis of the Modernization Process in a Peripheral Metropolis (1886–1944)*, PhD Thesis, University of London, 2012.

[22] See R. Hornsey, Listening to the tube map: rhythm and the historiography of urban map use, *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 30 (2012) 675–693; S. Höhne, The birth of the urban passenger: infrastructural subjectivity and the opening of the New York City subway, *City: analysis of urban trends, culture, theory, policy, action* 19 (2015) 313–321; J.B. Prestel, Hierarchies of happiness: railway infrastructure and suburban subject formation in Berlin and Cairo around 1900, *City: analysis of urban trends, culture, theory, policy, action* 19 (2015) 322–331.

[23] Although see S. Merrill, The London Underground diagram: between palimpsest and canon, *The London Journal* 38 (2013) 245–264; S. Merrill, Looking forward to the past: London Underground's 150th anniversary, *The Journal of Transport History* 33 (2012) 243–252; Prestel, Hierarchies of happiness; H. Manicke, *Berlin in Transit(ion): A Study of the Significance of the U- and S-Bahn Systems in Berlin's Cultural Texts*, Masters Thesis, Queen's University, Ontario, 2010.

[24] M. Fulbrook, *German National Identity After The Holocaust*, Cambridge, 1999, 1.

[25] D.A. Barnstone, *The Transparent State: Architecture and Politics in Postwar Germany*, London, 2005.

[26] K.E. Till, *The New Berlin: Memory, Politics, Place, Minneapolis*, 2005; C. Colomb, *Staging The New Berlin: Place Marketing and the Politics Of Urban Reinvention Post-1989*, Abingdon and New York, 2012; also see A. Tölle, Urban identity policies in Berlin: from critical reconstruction to reconstructing the Wall, *Cities* 27 (2010) 348–357.

[27] S. Merrill and S. Jasper, Was ist so Berlin? Eine kritische rezension aktueller linien und fragestellungen der stadtforschung in der deutschen hauptstadt, *Sub\urban Zeitschrift für Kritische Stadtforschung* 2 (2014) 143–154.

century. These 'identities in transit' can be discerned in Berlin's municipal railways after German unification but have their roots in the post-1945 period that saw Cold War tensions divide the city and its infrastructure.

Divided infrastructures

The heavy allied bombing raids of February 1945, which targeted Berlin's railways in order to disrupt troop movements, and the fierce ground fighting of late April and early May 1945 that saw the S- and U-Bahn become strategic networks in an urban battleground, meant that by the end of WWII much of the city's railway infrastructure lay inoperable, in a ruinous state.[28] Vast sections of the S- and U-Bahn's elevated, surface and subterranean tracks – the interconnected volumetric landscapes whose construction dated to 1871 and 1902 respectively – lay destroyed or flooded, and in places uncannily exposed.[29] Although their reconstruction commenced a week after Germany's capitulation, the railways only became operable to their pre-war extent in late 1950. These reconstructive efforts were at first hindered and then reversed by the geopolitical divisions that the city soon came to symbolise. These divisions gained their greatest expression with the erection of the Berlin Wall (hereafter referred to as the Wall) in 1961, but the 155 km long construction that encased West Berlin was only the concretization of a separation process that had started in the earliest post-war years.[30] This process affected Berlin's municipal railways as much as it did any other sphere of life in the city.

Administrative divisions

The seeds of the S-Bahn's division were sown in the allied decision to allow the railway's operating rights to remain with the *Deutsche Reichsbahn* [German Railways] (DR), which was initially controlled by the *Sowjetische Militäradministration in Deutschland* [Soviet Military Administration in Germany] (SMAD) and later became the state railway of the *Deutsche Demokratische Republik* [German Democratic Republic] (DDR). The U-Bahn network, meanwhile, remained the responsibility of the *Berliner Verkehrsbetriebe* [Berlin Transport Service] (BVG), which was answerable to the post-war Berlin magistrate. The BVG became increasingly implicated in divisive political squabbles following the Western monetary reforms of June 1948, and during the Soviet Union's blockade of West Berlin, in ways that contributed to the establishment of two separate Berlin magistrates in late 1948, each with a separately elected mayor – the Communist, Friedrich Ebert Jr., in the East and the Social Democrat, Ernst Reuter, in the West.[31]

Reuter, elected mayor of the magistrate in 1947, had previously been forced to resume his position as municipal councillor for transport and utilities when the SMAD vetoed his election. In this position he created a new department of transport in West

Berlin in October 1948 amidst growing tension caused by, amongst other factors, trade union reforms that saw the Western-influenced Independent Trade Union Organisation split from the Eastern-influenced Free German Trade Union Federation. Thereafter, in November 1948, Reuter was unilaterally and, from the perspective of the Western Allies, illegally relieved by the SMAD of his duties to the magistrate.[32] Reuter's Soviet-backed replacement, Heinz Schlicke, quickly requested that BVG relocate its headquarters from West Berlin, where it had been since the late 1930s, to East Berlin, in an attempt, presumably, to bring it within the Soviet Union's spatial sphere of influence. This request was refused, but in March 1949, staff disputes, heightened by competing trade unions, led Reuter, now mayor of West Berlin, to dismiss BVG's personnel director, Wilhelm Knapp. The East Berlin magistrate backed Knapp and began referring, for the first time, to an Eastern BVG directorate. The following month Reuter agreed that certain BVG administrative departments be split between East and West.[33] Thus, for a short time, after the creation of the *Bundesrepublik Deutschland* [Federal Republic of Germany](BRD) in May 1949, a single transport network – still notionally unified – served and bound two different national states, ideological systems, economic administrations and the diverging identities that these were giving rise to. Then, on 1st August 1949, BVG was fully divided and Knapp placed in charge of a newly formed BVG-East. Thus, by the time the DDR was created in October 1949, two separate transport authorities, BVG-West and BVG-East, served their respective halves of Berlin, reflecting the increasing impact of geopolitical divisions on the city's governmental departments and infrastructure which had already led to the partition of the police and fire departments in July 1948 and the SMAD's manipulation of electricity, gas, water and sewage services during the blockade, and would lead to the disconnection of cross-sector telecommunications in May 1952.[34]

In all, BVG's division followed a spatial logic in which responsibility for maintaining infrastructure and operating services was allocated according to the dominant East-West binary. The result of this geography of division for the fixed infrastructure of the U-Bahn network meant that the track and stations of the A Lines (today's U2 Line) that crossed the sector border, initially uninterrupted, were split between BVG-West and BVG-East, while their service relied on inter-sector train crews. Meanwhile, BVG-West retained full responsibility for the B Line (today's U1 Line) as only one of its stations lay in East Berlin. The management of the intermediate eastern sections and stations of the C and D Lines (today's U6 and U8 Lines), which ran from north to south West Berlin beneath East Berlin, were handed to BVG-East while BVG-West retained responsibility for the lines' western stations, train crews and power supply. Finally, BVG-East gained full responsibility for the E Line (today's U5 Line), which ran entirely in East Berlin.[35]

Hidden divisions

BVG's inter-sector bus and tram services ceased in early 1949 and late 1952 respectively, but U-Bahn services continued to run freely across the city and provide a 'last bridge' for passengers until the

[28] T. Le Tissier, *Race for the Reichstag: The 1945 Battle for Berlin*, Oregon, 1999; F. Taylor, *Dresden: Tuesday 13 February 1945*, London, 2005.

[29] R. Berger, Die wiederingangsetzung der U-Bahn im jahre 1945, *Straßen-und Tiefbau* 11 (1948) 308–314; for the transport histories of the S- and U-Bahn, see P. Bley, *Berliner S-Bahn*, Düsseldorf, 2003; U. Lemke and U. Poppel, *Berliner U-Bahn*, Düsseldorf, 1996.

[30] M. Wilke, *The Path to the Berlin Wall: Critical Stages in the History of Divided Germany*, Berlin, 2014.

[31] The Berliner Verkehrs-Aktien Gessellschaft was formed in December 1928 and became the Berliner Verkehrsbetriebe in January 1938 but retained the BVG acronym. The blockade was triggered by the monetary reforms and lasted from 1 April 1948 until 12 May 1949. The West Berlin magistrate became the West Berlin senate in 1950.

[32] See G. Schoeler, SMA spaltet Berliner: Verwaltung Reuter und Klingelhöfer "abgesetzt", *Die Neue Zeitung*, 18 November 1948.

[33] H. Reif, "Mobilität für alle" 75 Jahre BVG, 1929–2004, in BVG (Ed), *75 Jahre BVG: Tradition auf neuen Gleisen*, Berlin, 2004, 1–16.

[34] Wilke, *The Path to the Berlin Wall*; Moss, Divided city, divided infrastructures; G.W.S. Robinson, West Berlin: the geography of an exclave, *Geographical Review* 43 (1953) 540–557.

[35] Rolling stock and depots were split in a similar manner.

construction of the Wall.[36] So, in the U-Bahn at least, BVG's administrative division remained 'hidden' to some until the early 1950s. It did so in part because a consistent fare system initially remained in place across the network. The 1948 monetary reforms created problems because BVG initially accepted both currencies, and passengers quickly learnt to take advantage of the favourable conversion rate of the Eastern Deutschmark (EDM) against the Western Deutschmark (WDM). In March 1949 it was agreed that journeys with a standard cost should be paid in the currency of their place of origin and this fare structure remained in place until May 1951 when BVG-West first increased the fares for its networks. From then on BVG-West's fare structure was developed to include a wider range of higher priced ticket options, while BVG-East's continued to rely on a standard fixed 20Pf fare within a relatively inflexible structure until 1990.[37]

BVG's administrative partition was also masked by BVG-West and BVG-East's initial collaboration in order to ensure the continued operation of their less flexible forms of infrastructure.[38] For example, they cooperated on the post-war reconstruction of Hausvogteiplatz U-Bahn station in East Berlin. The station's reopening in January 1950 – the type of occasion that, as discussed above, had the potential to help create collective identities – was presided over by Knapp but was also attended by two BVG-West representatives, and was reported by the East Berlin press as a symbol not only of BVG-East's reconstruction programme but also of what could be achieved when Berliners worked together.[39] This remnant of a unified identity had been further eroded, and identities were clearly in transition, by the time BVG-East reopened the newly renamed Thälmannplatz U-Bahn station just eight months later, in August 1950. In this case BVG-West was not involved in the station's reconstruction, nor represented at the reopening, and East Berlin press coverage now emphasised ideological divides by stressing that the station's destruction had been caused by Anglo-American bombs.[40] The decision to ceremonially rename the station and the square it served after Ernst Thälmann, the former leader of the German Communist Party who was murdered in the Buchenwald concentration camp in 1944, was part of a wave of commemorative renamings that took place in East Berlin between late 1949 and the summer of 1951. The role of toponyms in the construction of political identities is well documented and the precedent of using the renaming (as opposed to the naming) of Berlin's train stations to engender collective memories and identities had already been set during the National Socialist period with, most famously, U-Bahn stations renamed after Adolf Hitler and Horst Wessel.[41] In the 1950s a similar strategy helped naturalise an East Berlin political identity but also revealed the extent of the city's division. The inclusion of a pantheon of DDR heroes and martyrs (including Thälmann, Stalin, Dimitroff, Marchlewski, Luxemburg and Ulbricht) within the U- and S-Bahn's toponymic landscape led to grievances and idiosyncrasies that actually helped reveal the extent of the transport authority's division, thereby allowing East Berliners and East Germans to identify more easily with BVG-East. For example, as one commentator wrote to the eastern *Berliner Zeitung*,

When I recently used the U-Bahn towards Pankow and the conductor announced 'Dimitroffstrasse'… there was, regrettably no lack of irrelevant, stupid and… disrespectful remarks.[42]

Thus, from as early as 1950 Berlin's transport infrastructure became a landscape within which Berliners' diverging identities were expressed. Besides being ridiculed, the new East Berlin station names were also ignored. While they appeared on the network maps that BVG-East produced from 1951, they did not appear on BVG-West's maps until 1952 – and only then in a smaller subscript beneath what the West Berlin senate believed to be the stations' legitimate former names (see Fig. 1).[43] An East German schoolchild complained to the *Berliner Zeitung* in 1951 when he noticed a map that did not show Thälmannplatz U-Bahn station.[44] A journalist from the newspaper investigated further and later clarified:

The BVG in the democratic sector [BVG-East] informs us of something that many Berliners do not know…the Berlin U-Bahn, with the exception of Line E, is operated by the West Berlin BVG. Although BVG-West has the new map it refuses to install it. It relies on the decisions of the West Berlin government, which does not recognise the renaming of streets and squares in the democratic sector of Berlin [East Berlin]… [I]f today it is still possible to find old maps in the U-Bahn, the BVG in the democratic sector is blameless.[45]

In late May 1952, on the day West Germany's sovereignty was confirmed, the DDR closed its national borders, thus requiring all West Berliners to acquire travel permits before visiting East Berlin and resulting in the closure by September 1952 of 200 of the 277 streets that led from West Berlin to East Berlin and East German Brandenburg.[46] BVG-West seems to have predicted the border closure as in January 1952 it released a new map on the occasion of the U-Bahn's fiftieth anniversary, which displayed, for the first time, the sector border in a manner that would be echoed by later cartographic iterations throughout the 1950s (Fig. 1). In 1961 the hatched black line that at first represented a political boundary and the DDR's fluctuating border regulations came to represent the solid topographical feature of the Wall.

Physical divisions and networked ruins

The border-sealing process ordered by the DDR government on Sunday 13th August 1961 involved the permanent closure of 68 of 81 border crossing points and 193 streets.[47] Twelve municipal railway lines were directly affected and sixteen separate stations became what Moss has called truncated, consolidated and bypassed spaces – infrastructural intersections that created tensions between the two political regimes and which, at least from the Eastern perspective, required active policing.[48] However, these railway lines did not become completely obsolete. The stations on the BVG-West lines under East Berlin (today's U6 and U8 Lines) and

[36] Robinson, West Berlin; Reif, "Mobilität für alle", 10.

[37] B. Hardy, *The Berlin U-Bahn*, Harrow Weald, 1996.

[38] Robinson, West Berlin.

[39] E.R., Berlins schönster U-Bahnhof fertiggestellt, *Neues Deutschland*, 8 January 1950, 6.

[40] T.H., Schönster Bahnhof: "Thälmannplatz", *Berliner Zeitung*, 19 August 1950, 6.

[41] See M. Azaryahu, German reunification and the politics of street names: the case of East Berlin, *Political Geography* 16 (1997) 479–493; Merrill, *Excavating Buried Memories*.

[42] C. Kaiser, Clara-Zetkin-Straße fehlt, *Berliner Zeitung*, 11 March 1950, 2. All translations in this article are by the author.

[43] BVG-West displayed the former names of renamed West Berlin stations in the same way.

[44] W. Irmgard, Warum noch "Kaiserhof", *Berliner Zeitung*, 22 August 1951, 4.

[45] H.A.E., Darum noch "Kaiserhof", *Berliner Zeitung*, 26 August 1951, 8.

[46] F. Taylor, *The Berlin Wall*, London, 2009; Wilke, *The Path to the Berlin Wall*.

[47] Taylor, *The Berlin Wall*, 162.
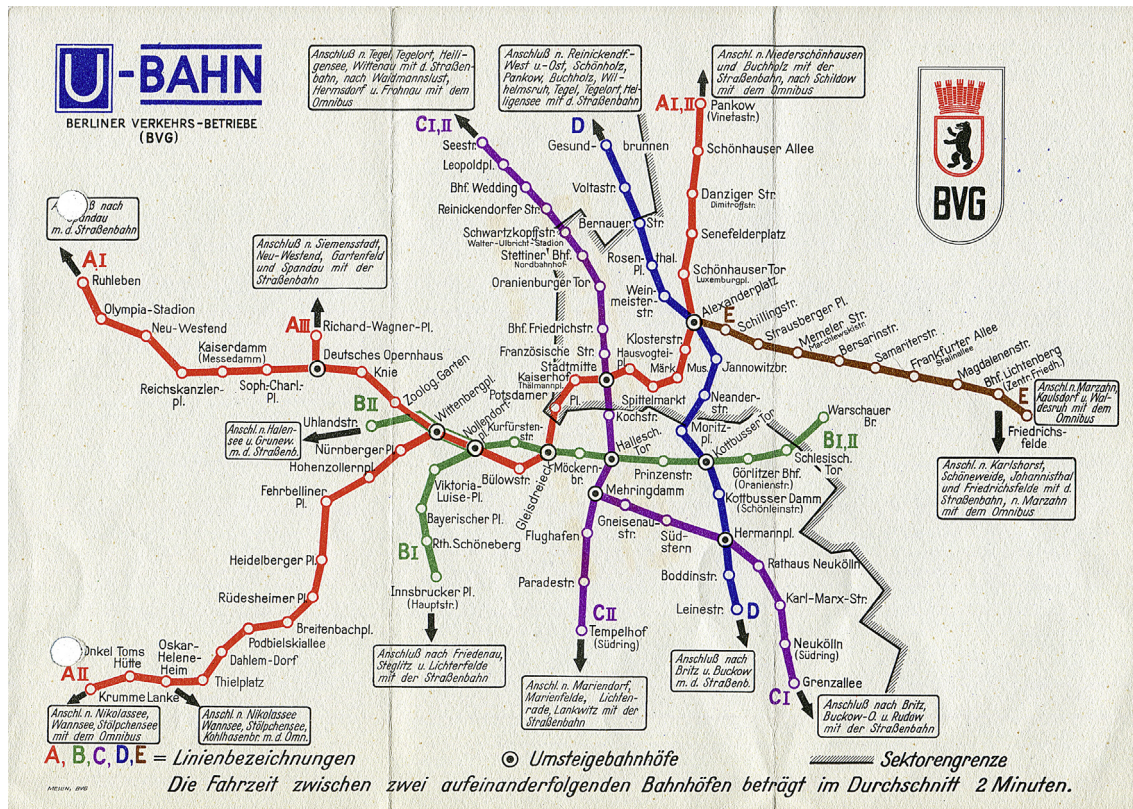
[48] Moss, Divided city, divided infrastructures.

Fig. 1. The January 1952 BVG-West U-Bahn map showing the sector border for the first time. Source: BVG Archiv. Reproduced with the permission of BVG.

those of the S-Bahn lying close to the border or beneath West Berlin (today's S1 and S2 Lines) were secured by the installation of watch-posts and the removal of obstructions to sightlines, but otherwise their architectural fabric was left to slowly erode, and they soon became known as *Geisterbahnhöfe* [ghost-stations].[49] Until November 1989 these stations were populated only by the DDR border guards and transport police, who were observed as spectral figures (hence ghost-stations) by passengers in the BVG-West trains that were required to travel through the stations at maximum speed.[50] Thus the Wall's defences were extended to the subterranean border, where it dissected operational and abandoned tunnels and track. East German citizens used these inter-sector railway lines in a number of escape attempts, but, above-ground, access to their subterranean stations was blocked and their signs removed making it almost impossible for the public to reach the tunnels.[51] The closure and camouflaging of the stations was pursued to such an extent that reference to them on East German maps was eliminated, thereby facilitating forms of collective amnesia amongst the East Berlin population, particularly those who moved to the city after 1961.

These networked ruins − dormant places lying within webs of still functioning transport routes − were not restricted to East Berlin.[52] The interruption of the A Lines led to the closure of two western U-Bahn stations in the early 1970s, but the physical impact of division on West Berlin's railway infrastructure was most marked on the S-Bahn. The city's iconic Ringbahn was split in two and a number of radial interregional S-Bahn lines projecting from West Berlin into the East German Brandenburg were also cut, creating an isolated western S-Bahn network run by the East for the West. A West Berlin boycott of the S-Bahn was quickly established as a political gesture and a means to withhold foreign currency from the DDR.[53] The boycott, buoyed by popular slogans like 'Every West Berliner S-Bahn passenger pays for the barbed wire' persisted for twenty-five years, with the result that the DDR reduced its investment in the network (Fig. 2). The boycott provides yet another example of how the diverging identities of West and East Berliners were constructed around physical transport infrastructure and the policies of those responsible for it. A later strike by West Berlin S-Bahn employees in 1980 led to numerous redundancies and the decision to decommission nearly half of the S-Bahn network in West Berlin.[54] The decommissioned tracks and stations quickly fell into disrepair, as illustrated by photographs of the time, and the S-Bahn, 'once a synonym for exemplary transport, became a negative term.'[55]

The city's reunification from 1989 created new networked ruins. Given the Cold War politics of infrastructure, the West Berlin

[49] This term is now used in cities across the world, but in Berlin − where it seems to have originated − it triggers particular Cold War connotations that resonate with interpretations of the city as inhabited by the spectral traces of Germany's negative twentieth-century pasts. See B. Ladd, *The Ghosts of Berlin: Confronting German History in the Urban Landscape*, Chicago, 1997; Till, *The New Berlin*.

[50] Hardy, *The Berlin U-Bahn*.

[51] See G. Sälter and T. Schaller, Fluchtversuche durch die S- und U-Bahn-tunnel, in: G. Sälter and T. Schaller (Eds), *Grenz-und Geisterbahnhöfe im geteilten Berlin*, Berlin, 2013, 100−112.

[52] Merrill, *Excavating Buried Memories*; cf. M. Qviström, Network ruins and green structure development: an attempt to trace relational spaces of a railway ruin, *Landscape Research* 37 (2012) 257−275; S. Jasper, Phantom limbs: encountering the hidden spaces of West Berlin, in: Gandy (Ed), *Urban Constellations*, 153−157.

[53] Calls to boycott the S-Bahn in West Berlin began in the 1950s but it was not until the construction of the Wall that they gained widespread popular support.

[54] W. Zach and K. Evers, Der Berliner schnellbahnnetze − ihre entwicklung und ihre funktionen, *Berlinerstatistik Monatsschrift* 3 (2003) 266−294.

[55] Zach and Evers, Der Berliner schnellbahnnetze, 280; See A. Behrens and V. Noth, *Berliner Stadtbahn Bilder*, Berlin, 1981.

Fig. 2. The boycott of the S-Bahn at the Berlin Zoologischer Garten S-Bahn station in West Berlin in September 1961. Source: Foto Archiv Alex Waidmann. Photograph by Alex Waidmann.

senate's transport plans relied on U-Bahn and road construction. From the mid-1950s it embarked on an ambitious plan to extend the former to 200 km of track, relying partly on the resurrection of the F Line, which dated to the 1920s. Sections of the F Line, or the U10 as it was later known, had been pre-emptively constructed in the 1930s, and in the 1970s further sections were built in connection with motorway construction and the expansion of other U-Bahn lines.[56] Much of the U10 was planned to run parallel to the one of the few sections of the S-Bahn still functioning in West Berlin. As a result, when the West Berlin senate and East German magistrate negotiated the hand-over of the West Berlin S-Bahn to BVG-West in 1984, the plans to construct the U10 were shelved and the rehabilitation of the West Berlin S-Bahn was prioritised.[57] German unification sealed the U10's fate, leaving its incomplete vestiges to represent the cycles of transport investment that had been determined by the city's geopolitical division.[58] The consequences of unification for the rest of the city's municipal railway networks, including East Berlin's ghost-stations and the S-Bahn system in West Berlin, were arguably more positive. These stations' reconnection and BVG's rebranding acted as symbols of and windows into the political and social changes that the city experienced in the years after 1989, and the ways in which these changes were reflected in the municipal and individual identities of that time.

(Re)connections

The reconnection or (re)membering of the city's U- and S-Bahn networks reflected the euphoria and shocks associated with the immediate and then protracted processes of unification. The truncated, bypassed and consolidated spaces of the Cold War U-Bahn were only completely reversed and its networked ruins fully reintegrated into a working system when the final gap in the network, which isolated Warschauer Strasse U-Bahn station from the U1, was closed in October 1995. Prior to this the incompatible electric polarities used by what were by then known as BVB in the east and BVG in the west had delayed the U2's return to full service until November 1993.[59] The S-Bahn's reconnection was even more drawn out, as illustrated by the gradual return of the Ringbahn over the course of more than a decade. The reintegration of the two systems' subterranean ghost-stations, and particularly those of the U-Bahn, was more rapid, with the result that the two networks can be read as individually having indexed the divergent durations of the city's reunification. The U-Bahn's fortunes mirrored the more immediate, 'heady' experiences and rapid decisions of unification, while those of the S-Bahn better symbolised the prolonged realities of a city that nearly ten years after the fall of the Wall was still popularly conceived as 'unified but not united.'[60]

Explorations and encounters

The Wall's fall triggered an intense period of exploration as East and West Berliners rushed to rediscover the parts of the city that had previously been prohibited to them including the networked ruins of Berlin's municipal railways.[61] In the period between November 1989 and the ghost-stations' return to service (as outlined below) their derelict state and previously restricted status attracted the attention of numerous individuals, including transport enthusiasts and photographers. The moments in which Berliners reacquainted themselves with the hidden subterranean connections between their respective halves of the city are evocatively captured in the

[56] J. Gallico, Geschichte der U10, in: J. Gallico and C. Rekade (Eds), *U10 von hier aus ins Imaginäre und wieder zurück*, Berlin, 2011, 192–198. In 1966 BVG-West allocated numbers to all its U-Bahn lines.

[57] Gallico, Geschichte Der U10.

[58] Jasper, Phantom limbs.

[59] Hardy, *The Berlin U-Bahn*. BVG-East became the state owned *Kombinat Berliner Verkehrsbetriebe* [Combined Berlin Transport Service] (BVB) in 1969 allowing BVG-West to revert to BVG.

[60] P. James, The new Germany eight years on, in: P. James (Ed), *Modern Germany: Politics, Society and Culture*, London, 1998, 5.

[61] T. Book, The urban field of Berlin: expansion − isolation − reconstruction, *Geografiska Annaler Series B, Human Geography* 77 (1995) 177−196.

Fig. 3. The S-Bahn Potsdamerplatz ghost-station shortly before its restoration began in March 1990. Source Landesarchiv Berlin. Photograph by Henk John Hipfel.

periodicals of both eastern and western transport enthusiast societies, which during the early 1990s recurrently featured photographic exposés of ghost-stations and sometimes even entire tunnel courses.[62] As the Berlin State Archive's records testify, numerous photographers took advantage of the aesthetic properties of ghost-stations during the small window of opportunity afforded by German unification and the uncertainty it caused about who was responsible for the securitisation of these places (Fig. 3). Theatre producers also took advantage of the particularities that offered easier access to places previously — and today once more, albeit for different reasons — out of bounds. In June and July 1990, for example, the disused Potsdamer Platz S-Bahn station hosted a theatre production called *Straße aus Papier* [Streets of Paper], written by the young East German playwright, Michael Peschke.[63]

In these years youths also began to explore the city's working railway network in new ways. Train-surfing, the highly dangerous act of climbing onto the outside of moving trains for enjoyment, was first reported in Hamburg in 1988 but soon became prevalent in Berlin, where the S-Bahn's out-dated rolling stock and low staffing created a train-surfing 'paradise'.[64] In Berlin, *S-Bahn Surfen*,

as it was known, was arguably a further consequence of the ambiguous moments and protracted process of unification: whereby the landscape of the city's railway infrastructure offered new opportunities for its youths to adopt rebellious subjectivities and identities while pushing at, and overcoming, previously accepted boundaries during a period when they were increasingly exposed to the payoffs of anti-authoritarianism. But as the music video to The Puhdys' 1992 song *Wie Ein Engel* [Like an Angel] demonstrates, these transgressions could be as debilitating as they were intoxicating. The video ends with the death of a Berlin train-surfer reflecting the fact that between 1989 and 1995 train-surfing caused forty-one accidents, including eighteen fatalities, in the city, the vast majority on the S-Bahn.[65]

The more mundane but most common form of 'exploration' people undertook after 1989 was simply using the rail networks in order to (re)discover the other half of the city. These everyday explorations led to encounters between East and West German citizens and identities. As Barnstone notes, after 1989 'East and West Germans found themselves looking at each other without any of the protective devices that had hitherto been in place', a condition that she described as 'facing the other and looking him or her in the face.'[66] Some of the earliest opportunities for Berliners to look each other in the face were afforded by the city's railway infrastructure and were acutely evident within the carriages of the U-Bahn due to

[62] See D. Bohrer, Impressionen vom S-Bf. Potsdamer Platz, *Berliner Verkehrsblätter*, August 1990, 177; M. Reimer, Untergrundentdeckungen, *Verkehrsgeschichtliche Blätter*, January 1991, 18.

[63] Anonymous, Schüsse im schacht, *Der Spiegel* 26 (1990) 169.

[64] Anonymous, König der linie, *Der Spiegel* 15 (1988) 114–115; H. Strauch, I. Wirth, and G. Geserick, Fatal accidents due to train surfing in Berlin, *Forensic Science International* 94 (1998) 119–127.

[65] Strauch et al., Fatal accidents due to train surfing in Berlin.

[66] Barnstone, *The Transparent State*, 89.

Fig. 4. Passengers facing each other and waiting to depart the recently reopened Bernauer Strasse U-Bahn ghost-station in April 1990. Source: Bundesarchiv. Photograph by Thomas Uhlemann.

their seating arrangements and the lack of distracting passing scenery along their mostly subterranean routes (Fig. 4). The interactions between East and West Berliners, and the early meeting of their associated identities, were further intensified in the enclosed landscape of the U-Bahn because BVG granted East German citizens free use of its network until 1990. The resultant overcrowding was particularly marked during the opening of the former ghost-stations.

The Jannowitzbrücke U-Bahn station was the first ghost-station to reopen, on a Saturday, just two days after the Wall fell. Customs officers and railway clerks soon gave up taking payment and inspecting identification papers from the three thousand people who had waited over four hours to board the first U-Bahn trains to West Berlin.[67] That weekend 800,000 East Germans visited West Berlin, BVG-West carried around 2.6 million more passengers than usual and some U-Bahn stations had to be closed due to overcrowding.[68] The U-Bahn, then, perhaps more than any other part of Berlin's public transport infrastructure, reflected the initial euphoric experiences and hopes that accompanied German unification.

Shock therapy

Further ghost U-Bahn stations were reopened in December 1989 and April 1990, and the ghost S-Bahn stations on today's S1 and S2 lines were all returned to service by 1991, with the exception of Potsdamer Platz station, which remained closed until March 1992.[69] However, the greatest number of station reopenings in a single day took place on 1st July 1990, when the final seven ghost-stations on the U8 and U6 returned to service.[70] The choice of date

was not accidental. It was the same day that the German Economic, Monetary and Social Union, the first of the four accords that officially brought about unification, came into effect. As such it illustrated how acts of infrastructural reinauguration could, like inauguration, be used to help construct and institutionalise desired collective identities in association with wider political processes, while also helping to mask underlying ruptures. Although various means of pursuing monetary union were initially debated, by January 1990 the BRD government had decided on a 'shock therapy' approach that quickly established the parity of the two German currencies. Thus, on the same day as large crowds congregated on the platform of the former Alexanderplatz U8 ghost-station to celebrate its reopening, along with film crews, the West Berlin senator for transport and services and the mayor of East Berlin, the average income of East Germans became roughly equal to one-third of that of their western neighbours (Fig. 5).[71]

The shock of economic unification was reflected in the changes to Berlin's public transport ticket prices, where confusing fare structures reinforced divided identities for many years, even as a more gradual process of equalisation attempted to soften the blow of factory closures and soaring unemployment in East Germany. To begin with East Germans could use BVG services for a standard fare of 2 EDM, if they bought their tickets in advance, while West Germans and non-German citizens paid 2.70 WDM. At the same time the standard cost for using BVB services remained just 20Pf. In August 1991 fares were standardised across BVG and BVB when both, together answerable to a unified Berlin senate, introduced a standard 3 WDM fare with a special 1.8 WDM fare for those who could prove that they were residents of the former DDR.[72] Only in January 1995 did all Berliners start paying the same standard fare.

The special fare structure for East Berliners reflected in microcosm the transfer payments made by the German Federal

67 Reuters, 'Ghost station' opens, *The Observer*, 12 November 1989, 10.

68 P. Hauschild, Neue grenzübergänge nach Westberlin, *Verkehrsgeschichtliche Blätter*, January 1990, 22.

69 F. Neubacher, Wiederinbetriebnahme des Nord-Süd-S-Bahn-tunnels, *Berliner Verkehrsblätter*, April 1992, 76–78.

70 The two East Berlin U-Bahn lines were also allocated numbers on this day.

71 Colomb, *Staging the New Berlin*.

72 Proof of residence was required as DDR citizenship was no longer valid and its associated identity papers and passports were being replaced.

Fig. 5. The crowded platform of the Alexanderplatz U8 platform on the day of its re-opening. Source: Landesarchiv Berlin. Photograph by Ingeborg Lommatzsch.

Government to the former DDR, which in effect replaced pre-unification DDR state subsidies.[73] As such it no doubt fuelled resentment between so-called 'Wessis' and 'Ossis', with the former considering the latter opportunists that placed a strain on the country's economy and the latter resenting the former's wealth. Thus, even after the integration of BVG and BVB in 1992, continuing fare discrepancies stretched divisions between Berlin's identities beyond the Cold War that had created them. In fact, Berlin's public transport fare structure may have reinforced, and not only stretched, opposing identities after unification, as arguably the very idea of 'Wessis' and 'Ossis' only became real once these two groups encountered each other more. This fare structure relied on 'zones' that created cartographic echoes of the city's physical division (see Fig. 8) and continued to govern the performance of identities until 1995 — as passengers using special fares were asked to prove their (former) East German status — whereas other indicators of East Berlin identity disappeared from the map far more quickly.

Toponymic de-commemoration and cartographic Incorporation

The de-commemoration of the former DDR's toponymic heritage, as illustrated by the renaming of countless streets during the early 1990s, was echoed and in some instances preceded in Berlin's transport network, thanks to administrative and bureaucratic conditions that allowed renaming decisions to be made and resolved rapidly.[74] While street renaming decisions were the preserve of Berlin's individual district assemblies, U-Bahn station names fell under the jurisdiction of the freshly unified senate elected in December 1990. In July 1991 politicians started to note that in this realm of public life 'the senate did not have to wait for the district assemblies and could accelerate the elimination of Stalinist names from the streetscape through their own actions.'[75] Subsequently,

plans were made to rapidly rename ten U-Bahn stations so that the de-commemoration of their associated DDR personalities would coincide with the commemoration of the first anniversary of German unification. Arranged by the new senator for transport and services and Christian Democrat Union (CDU) member, Herwig Haase, without any official public consultation, the name changes sidestepped the intense public protest that surrounded the renaming of streets.[76] Although the name changes were made in such haste that some station signs were misspelled, an autonomous women's organisation was able to successfully resist the renaming of Rosa-Luxembourg-Platz U-Bahn station. Because of wider protests over the renaming of streets, only one of the nine stations renamed at this time reverted to its previous name. Instead the CDU-led senate took advantage of the U-Bahn's institutional context to introduce new station names that shifted their functional reference to alternative streets (Fig. 6). Thus toponyms were replaced in a way that also created an atmosphere more conducive to the renaming of the streets that the stations had previously referred to. Due to the S-Bahn's different management structure its stations reflected similar impulses slightly later, and Ernst-Thälmann-Park S-Bahn station remained in use until mid-1993.

BVG-West's maps, which, unlike BVB's, never omitted reference to the railways on the other side of the Wall, also became an invaluable tool for those encountering the other half of the city for the first time in late 1989. Enlarged copies were hastily attached to the walls of the Jannowitzbrücke U-Bahn station when it reopened to enable DDR citizens to orientate themselves within a network that must have appeared to have increased in size from around 26 km to 135 km of track overnight (Fig. 7). Soon a newly designed map published in January 1990 'cartographically incorporated' the two halves of the city.[77] On this map BVG's cartographic design principles subsumed those of BVB, resonating with the view that

[73] Barnstone, *The Transparent State*.

[74] Azaryahu, German reunification and the politics of street names.

[75] Anonymous, Umbenennung von Bahnhöfen gefordert, *Neue Zeit*, 17 July 1991, 22.

[76] See J. Meyer-Kronthaler, U-Bahnhofs-umbenennungen, *Berliner Verkehrsblätter*, October 1991, 212–213.

[77] Book, The urban field of Berlin.

Fig. 6. The changing U-Bahn station signs that highlight the de-commemoration of Otto Grotewohl and the reemphasis of the nearby Mohrenstraße. Source: Landesarchiv Berlin. Photograph by Rolf Zöllner.
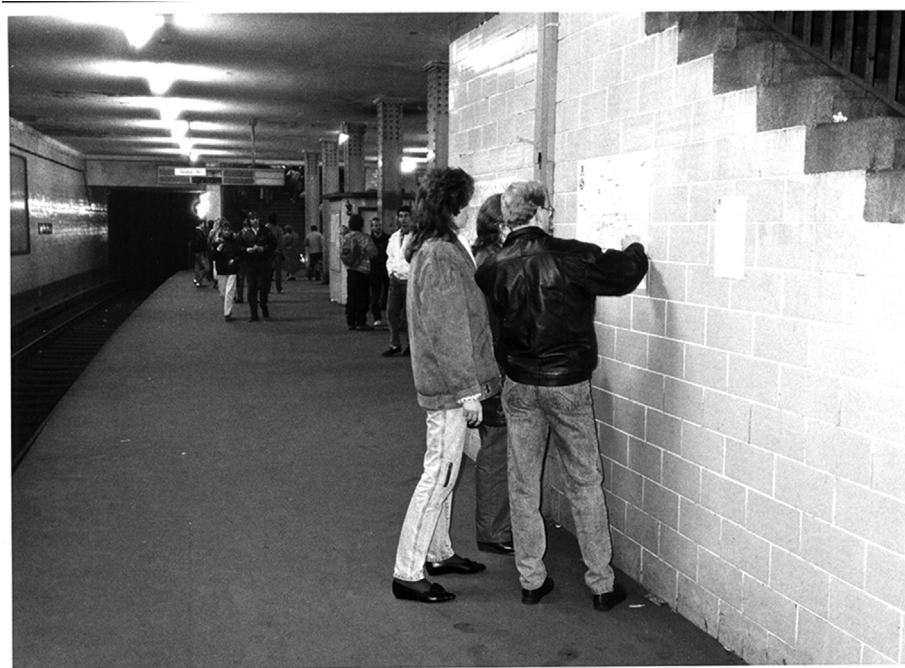
Fig. 7. Passengers consult a BVG-West map in Jannowitzbrücke U-Bahn station the day after the Wall's fall. Source: Landesarchiv Berlin. Photograph by Ludwig Ehlers.

the West determined the unification process.[78] The cover featured a photograph of the Brandenburg Gate – a symbol in both East and West Germany of different versions of the country's unity – and the Wall, through which both East and West Berliners pass and come into contact with one another.[79] Given the gate's location in East Berlin it had been absent from the list of tourist attractions advertised on the BVG maps of the 1970s, which instead emphasised West Berlin tourist sites, some with a Cold War significance

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[78] On this view, see Blacksell, Partition, *die Wende*, and German unification.
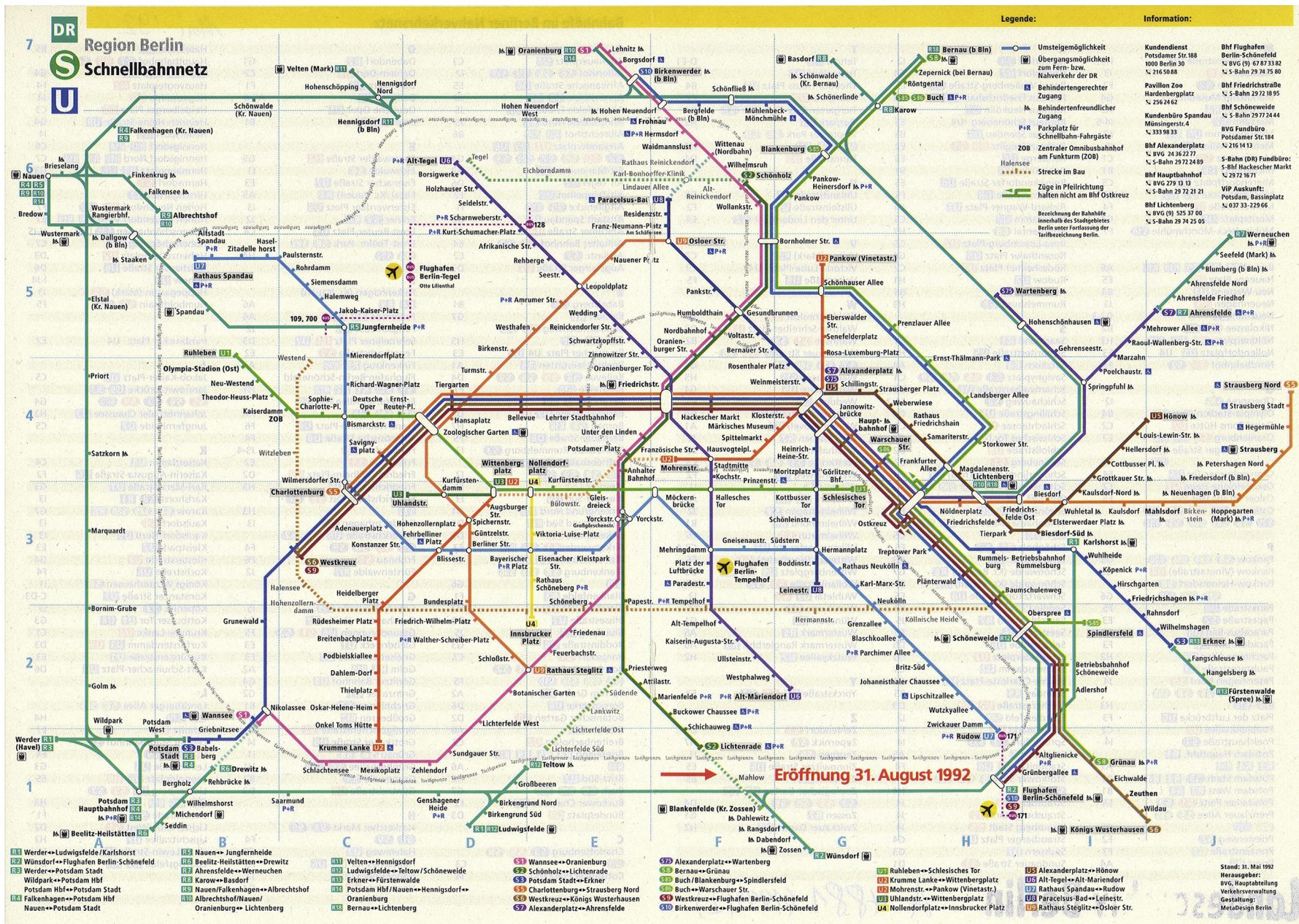
[79] See Ladd, *Ghosts of Berlin*.

Fig. 8. Spiekermann and MetaDesign's May 1992 map showing a tariff border that echoed the course of the Wall. Source: Landesarchiv Berlin. Reproduced with the permission of BVG.

such as the 1951 memorial to the victims of the 'air bridge' that had supported West Berlin during its blockade. Since 1990 the Brandenburg Gate has once again become a defining symbol of the city and of the process of German unification as a whole. This is evidenced by its use in official city marketing campaigns. It is the centrepiece of the logo for the *be Berlin* campaign that was launched in 2008 by *Berlin Partner*, originally formed as *Partner für Berlin* [Partner for Berlin] (PfB) in 1994: a public-private partnership of over 200 companies committed to the global promotion of Berlin.[80] As a member of *Berlin Partner*, BVG today includes the *be Berlin* logo on its trains, buses, trams and ferries, and since 2008 it has used an anti-vandalism covering featuring the Brandenburg Gate on the windows of its vehicles to prevent them being defaced by scratching. In fact, however, BVG instigated its own post-1990 rebranding process, outside the confines of wider city marketing strategies, in a bid to establish its corporate identity. This rebranding process, whose consideration helps complicate and enrich the history of Berlin's centralised branding and marketing, was one of the earliest avenues for the construction of a unified Berlin municipal identity.

(Re)brandings

As of 1st January 1992 BVB was dissolved and its services merged with those of BVG in a process referred to officially as *Fusion 92*. A month earlier BVB's staff newspaper, *Signal*, was released in a redesigned format and under a one-off subtitle: 'the newspaper for the employees of BVG and BVB'.[81] The issue's number — zero — revealed that it related more to the prevalent rhetoric of the so-called 'Zero Hour' and its attempts to reset the clock after the interruption of division than it did to the notion of a shared future invoked by the fusion metaphor. A supplement that accompanied the issue answered employees' questions and made explicit the new identities that former BVB, more than former BVG, employees would be expected to adopt. A question from a BVB employee about staff uniforms was met with the clear response that, in the interests of constructing a 'uniform image', former BVB staff would be required to give up their old attire. Each page of the supplement featured the slogan 'Once again for the whole of Berlin: BVB + BVG = BVG'. On paper, the 'fusion' of the two transport authorities also reduced BVB's sum value to zero. The only element of the equation to suggest that the new BVG was any different from its West Berlin predecessor was that it was now rendered in a new typeface against a bold yellow square, BVG's new logo, as designed by Erik Spiekermann and his company, MetaDesign.[82]

The uniform image of BVG

During the 1990s Spiekermann and MetaDesign were increasingly called upon to communicate BVG's reunified status and its desire for visual consistency. Together they would deliver the uniform image of BVG's new brand that would come to be one of the earliest indicators of the city's new, post-unification identity. Besides the logo they also designed a new map and typeface, and developed a new standardised way-finding system for the network. A core element of all of these design strategies was the prevalent use of the colour yellow, which was echoed in the new livery of BVG's

trains, trams and buses. The colour was intentionally chosen in order to emulate the iconicity of New York's yellow taxis and London's red double-decker buses.[83] But it was also historically informed and cited the colour initially used by BVG to standardise the appearance of the tram companies that it took responsibility for when it was formed in 1928. This had been replaced during the National Socialist period by an ivory beige colour that remained on Berlin's buses and trams until 1990.[84] Thus the return of an 'electric' yellow served to reinforce, perhaps subconsciously, one of the few commonalities that bound East and West: their shared rejection of the National Socialist past. The spread of yellow throughout the city also found echoes in the earliest post-1989 place marketing strategies pursued by the Berlin senate before the founding of PfB, as testified to by its use in the city's bid, between 1991 and 1993, to host the 2000 Olympics.[85]

Spiekermann and Metadesign's new integrated U- and S-Bahn map, introduced in May 1992, used a new scale and geometry that pre-empted — and was therefore able to accommodate — the future reconnection of the city's municipal railways (Fig. 8). It functioned as an allegory for the city's continuing reunification as the dotted lines that marked sections of, mostly S-Bahn, track under reconstruction were recurrently replaced with the bold lines of operating routes. It visually represented the excitement that was felt, perhaps most persuasively, by Berlin's transport enthusiasts, at the prolonged physical reconnection of the network, which was only truly completed with the closing of the last gap in the Ringbahn in 2002. The Ringbahn's octagonal shape continues to underpin the map's composition today, reflecting the undivided whole of the city's central area. As Spiekermann has indicated, a design's cultural appropriation is a measure of its success and less than ten years after its introduction his map started to be playfully and creatively altered. One of the first alternative versions of the map, released to mark the U-Bahn's centenary in 2002, implicitly acknowledged the relationship of Spiekermann's design to the New Berlin by replacing its station names with humorous substitutes deemed to better reflect the German capital's cultural scene.[86] The map has since been acknowledged as an important symbol of German unification, and Spiekermann has claimed that 'the historical effort that fell to me and my agency was to bring together the two halves of the city.'[87] It should be noted, however, that their attempts to achieve this 'historical effort' were not guided by a comprehensive design programme in itself but instead relied mostly on their professional concern for consistency across numerous individual projects, which eventually combined to create a cohesive corporate identity.[88]

The design briefs handed to Spiekermann and MetaDesign not only reflected BVG's desire to communicate a newly reunified system but also their wish to convey a controlled environment. This objective was all the more significant given growing public concern over safety on the city's public transport around the time of German unification. In this sense Spiekermann acknowledged the reciprocal nature of working for BVG.

[80] See Colomb, *Staging the New Berlin*.
[81] *Signal*, 0, December 1991, Das BVG Archiv, Berlin.
[82] Spiekermann claims to have only refined an inherited logo although it could be argued that his refinements constitute a new design and that the inherited logo that he enhanced was itself only a short-lived replacement of an older logo. See R. Kinross, conversation with Erik Spiekermann, *Information Design Journal* 7 (1993) 29–40.

[83] L. Krüger, Die Berliner verkehrsbetriebe im wandel der zeit, *TypoJournal* 3 (2011) 54–62; G. Heinickel, Berlin: after the growth: planning mobility culture in an environment of dynamic stagnation, in: Institute for Mobility Research (Ed), *Megacity Mobility Culture: How Cities Move on in a Diverse World*, Berlin, 2013, 185–206.
[84] This colour can still be seen on the city's taxis to this day.
[85] See Colomb, *Staging the New Berlin*.
[86] See Anonymous, Exklusive: Hier ist der U-Bahn-Plan für das Neue Berlin, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 16 February 2002 (Berlin supplement), 1.
[87] J. Ansley, *Pioneers of Modern Graphic Design*, Hong Kong, 2004; quoted in Krüger, Die Berliner verkehrsbetriebe im wandel der zeit, 55.
[88] Quoted in Kinross, conversation with Erik Spiekermann, 32.

[M]ost of the people in this studio use public transport. So we design for ourselves. We are making the environment of, say, the underground system slightly more bearable.[89]

Thus he noted that his corporate design practice enhanced not only the image of public transport but also enhanced experiences of its use, specifically in relation to deterring vandalism. But concern over public safety, particularly within the U-Bahn network, was not simply the consequence of the appearance of disorder that vandalism embodied.[90] It was also connected to events and cultural representations that highlighted that the identities in transit that arose as a consequence of unification were not always benign.

At around midnight on Friday 20th November 1992 a squatter and left-wing activist named Silvio Meier was stabbed and killed in the U5 Samariterstrasse U-Bahn station, after confronting a group of youths who outwardly identified with the far-right. Soon newspaper headlines highlighted the political nature of the murder and emphasised the escalating conflict between the city's right-wing and left-wing groups.[91] The press quickly framed the murder as an example of the countrywide wave of high-profile far-right violent attacks and a result of increased neo-Nazi organisational membership — phenomena that have since been interpreted as a consequence of German unification.[92] While racially and politically motivated attacks occurred in Berlin's transport infrastructure on both sides of the Wall before 1989, their increase in the early 1990s led the U-Bahn network to be increasingly perceived as a realm of fear and a site of social conflict between competing political, cultural and ethnic identities.

That such ruptures had particular resonance in the U-Bahn was illustrated by the network's frequent use, both at the time and retrospectively, as a setting for cultural representations that aimed to convey the social tensions evident in the years surrounding 1989. Thus, after 1989 the U-Bahn network was not only a landscape of euphoria: it also gained a reputation for being one of aggression and violence. This reputation was not altogether unwarranted, and statistics from between 1988 and 1993 show that the general increase in the number of 'aggressions' registered was more pronounced in the U-Bahn than in any other mode of public transport.[93] While this can be partly explained by the growth in ridership following the city's reunification, it was still perceived unfavourably by the public, as revealed by a 1994 BVG telephone survey. The survey's results showed that security at night was the second most negatively rated factor about the network after ticket prices. 47% of the women and 19% of the men surveyed said they did not use BVG services at night, and only 21% of respondents over 60 stated that they were not afraid to use public transport.[94] These were the perceptions that Spiekermann and MetaDesign were called upon to help improve.

Fears associated with underground railways were not, of course, unique to Berlin in the late 1980s and early 1990s.[95] But in Berlin these fears and social tensions were uniquely filtered through the lingering threat presented by Germany's National Socialist past and its echo in the increase of far-right violence after 1989. Even before unification, representations of the U-Bahn's landscape were infused with social anxiety. For example, the Grips Theatre musical Linie 1, first performed in 1986 and adapted into a film in 1988, used the U-Bahn to allude to an unresolved past and referenced the violence and fear that characterised the network at that time.[96] In one of its scenes a U-Bahn carriage becomes a site of political confrontation when four widows of fallen Wehrmacht officers extravagantly reinterpret Germany's Nazi past in a positive light, drawing the opposition of a solitary older female passenger who identifies with the alternative left. This is evidence of a German variation on what Johan Andersson has called an 'archetypal scene' involving the use of underground railways as a metaphorical and physical setting for confrontational social relations and interracial encounters.[97] Similar motifs continue to be used to invoke Berlin's tense atmosphere and the fears associated with its transport networks during the immediate post-unification period, as illustrated by more recent cinematic and literary representations. Andreas Kleinart's 1999 film Wege in die Nacht, for example, revolves around the post-unification nightly patrols of its three main characters, who search out and punish injustices that occur on the U- and S-Bahn, including acts of racism and intolerance. Meanwhile Yadé Kara's 2003 book Selam, Berlin employs a vision of Hitler travelling on the U-Bahn to personify the threat of a resurgent far-right that suddenly makes the book's main character, Hasan Kazan (a Berliner of Turkish descent), and others like him, feel more 'Othered', foreign and threatened within the social upheaval of Berlin's reunification.[98] Thus by no means was the city's transport infrastructure always considered as a positive symbol of the process of unification: it was also emblematic of its localised darker side-effects.

Conclusion

In the years after 1989 Berlin's municipal railway infrastructure, through its (re)connection and (re)branding, allegorically reflected the differing durations and protracted process of the city's reunification while providing platforms for the interaction of different groups of people in ways that, for Berlin and its populace, gave rise to and aided the construction of new and more unified forms of identity. In the same period, however, the U- and S-Bahn also indexed social conflicts connected to the broader geopolitical processes of Germany's unification. These ruptures showed that while processes at the municipal level emphasised the unification of identities, experiences of the infrastructures themselves often involved persisting divides. Thus these infrastructural landscapes helped to construct, but were also subverted by, the new identities that emerged against a broader background of ideological, political,

[89] Quoted in Kinross, conversation with Erik Spiekermann, 31.

[90] As framed by the then prevalent criminological theory of the broken window effect.

[91] See S. Fein, Links gegen Rechts: Der 1. Tote, Berliner Kurier, 23 November 1992, Front Page.

[92] See B. Westle and O. Niedermayer, Contemporary right-wing extremism in West Germany: 'The Republicans' and their electorate, European Journal of Political Research 22 (1992) 83–100; L. McGowan, Much more than a phantom menace! Assessing the character, level and threat of neo-Nazi violence in Germany, 1977–2003, Journal of Contemporary European Studies 14 (2006) 255–272; L. Weissbrod, Nationalism in reunified Germany, German Politics 3 (1994) 222–232.

[93] BVG chart of 'Aggressions against passengers and staff', Transport for London Historical Archives, LT000156/180/01. A peak of 612 'aggressions' against passengers was recorded in 1990.

[94] C. Jeschke, Angsträume in stadten öffentlicher nahverkehr und sicherheitsbedürfnisse, in: E. Giese (Ed), Verkehr ohne (W)ENDE? Psychologische und sozialwissenschftliche Beiträge, Tübingen, 1997, 165–172.

[95] In the same period the New York Subway became a symbol for the city's urban crisis. See M.W. Brooks, Subway City: Riding the Trains, Reading New York, New Jersey, 1997.

[96] On this and the other cultural representations mentioned, see Manicke, Berlin in Transit(ion).

[97] J. Andersson, Variations of an archetypal scene: the Paris Métro confrontation in Michael Haneke's Code Unknown, Environment and Planning D: Society and Space 31 (2013) 693–707. This scene can be traced to 1960s and 1970s American cinema before spreading to French cinema in the 1980s and 1990s.

[98] A similar device is used in C. Aridjis, Book of Clouds, New York, 2009; also see Pepe Danquart's Academy Award-winning short-film, Schwarzfahrer, which uses Berlin's tram network as a setting in which to consider the racist and far-right legacies of the country's past and older generations.

Fig. 9. A U-Bahn train on a viaduct above Schönhauser Allee in October 1991. In the foreground a newspaper banner advertises the New Berlin while in the background graffiti declares 'Speculators Out!' Source: SLUB/Deutsche Fotothek. Photograph by Gerd Danigel.

social and economic change.

The 'identities in transit' sketched by this article highlight the value of approaching infrastructure as landscapes that are both constructions and constructors of multi-levelled cultural identities – not just national but also municipal and individual. They also serve to demonstrate that the role of infrastructure in the production of cultural identities is anything but static and should not only be investigated during discrete moments nor solely with respect to uniform and abstract subjectivities. Of course, out of necessity this article has been selective in demonstrating its arguments primarily in relation to a particular and exceptional period, but at the same time it has attempted, where possible, to historicise its analysis. The investigation of additional pre-unification and pre-WWII examples can highlight further how Berlin's U- and S-Bahn have shaped and been shaped by the city's collective and individual identities, but these could not feature in detail due to space restraints. The competing infrastructural heritage projects carried out in West Berlin and East Berlin to mark the city's 750th anniversary in 1987 are a case in point. Similarly, the network's use by the National Socialist regime through, for example, prestige S-Bahn construction projects timed for the 1936 Olympics, the prevalent display, as in all public spaces and buildings, of the swastika or the racist controls that prevented public transport's use by Jews and other persecuted minorities, should not be ignored. Likewise, from the mid-1990s, these networks have continued to respond to and shape evolving manifestations of the New Berlin and its New Berliners in ways that reflect the city's contradictory status as a playground for not just counter-cultural creative experimentalism but also international capital investment and speculation (Fig. 9).[99] For example, in 1996 special fares were introduced for the Love Parade, the same year in which the electronic music festival that had taken place annually on the Kurfüstendamm since 1989 was relocated to the Tiergarten due to overcrowding. To aid the transition in 1997, the Tiergarten S-Bahn station was officially renamed Rave Garden, albeit only temporarily.[100] Another renaming, this time in 1996 saw the Kochstraße U-Bahn station become Kochstraße-Checkpoint Charlie as paid for by the American investment corporation that had purchased former borderlands in the area from the Berlin senate in 1992, in order to build the 'Checkpoint Charlie' business centre.[101] The project was abandoned in 1997, but the Checkpoint Charlie suffix remains on the station's signs today, aiding tourists but also subtly reminding passengers of the unfulfilled promises of the city's reunification.[102] The perspectives of the raver and the speculator, alongside those of the 'Wessis' and 'Ossis' outlined above, should be complemented by further analyses of other 'Others', ethnic and (sub) cultural, and be brought to bear on, and thus complicate through nuanced contextual and historical specificity, the previously favoured abstract identities and subjectivities of the passenger and commuter.

The process of reunifying Berlin's municipal and individual identities continues today, and after twenty-five years scholars still refer to the so-called 'Wall in the Head' – a phenomenon reflected by voting patterns in the last national election.[103] In fact, beneath the city's streets in some of the disused tunnels of the U-Bahn the subterranean Wall still stands, as insurmountable as it ever was, and elsewhere passengers fail to notice as they pass artistic

[99] U. Lehrer, Berlin: capital of contradictions, *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* (2013) virtual issue available at http://www.ijurr.org/virtual-issues/berlin-capital-contradictions/.

[100] Berliner Verkehrsblätter, Kurzmeldungen S-Bahn, August 1997, 167; for more on The Love Parade, see J Borneman and S. Senders, Politics without a head: is the "Love Parade" a new form of political identification, *Cultural Anthropology* 15 (2000) 294–317; S, Nye, Love Parade, please not again: a Berlin cultural history, *Echo: a Music-Centered Journal* 9 (2000) available from: www.echo.ucla.edu/.

[101] Berliner Verkehrsblätter, Kursmeldungen U-Bahn, June 1996, 120.

[102] For more on Checkpoint Charlie, see A, Luescher, Refashioning no-man's-land: urban image politics and the visual dimensions of democracy, *Cities* 19 (2002) 155–160; S. Frank, *Der Mauer um die Wette Gendenken: Die Formation einer Heritage-Industrie am Berliner Checkpoint Charlie*, Frankfurt/Main, 2009.

[103] See Barnstone, *The Transparent State*; Colomb, *Staging the New Berlin*.

installations that mark the old underground border. Susanne Ahner's hidden public artwork "Übergang zur Untergrundbahn" [Passage in the Underground], realised in 1999, marks the former subterranean sector boundaries that were crossed by the U8 and U6. At these points sixty-nine signs display words beginning with the preposition *über* in order to play on vertical imaginations and forge associations with the Wall and its fall. They include: *überall* (everywhere), *überwacht* (monitored), and *überholt* (obsolete).[104]

These historical and artistic traces act as physical, metaphorical and psychological barriers and markers in the city's unconscious — 'buried memories' of the network's earlier division.[105] They lend credence to Habermas and others' early concern that German unification relied too heavily on ideas of an assumed shared heritage, rather than the sharing of cultures with two different backgrounds.[106] The possibility of a single homogeneous municipal identity for Berlin, as argued above, is itself a trick of the mind, not least because of the growing multiculturalism experienced in West Berlin since the 1970s and across East and West since unification.[107] Perhaps, then, the city's transport infrastructure is one of the closest reflections of a shared identity, albeit it a shallow one, that Berlin and Berliners can ever expect to achieve. In this sense it continues to fulfil unifying and integrative functions, at least when it comes to the identities of former East and West Berliners. The U-Bahn's most recent extension, due to be completed in 2019, will connect an epicentre of the former capital of the DDR, Alexanderplatz, to the new governmental heart of the unified city via the U5, the only line to have been extended in East Berlin following WWII. This is a further effort to bring the East and its identities into the fold and an additional spatial metaphor for the continuing process of the city's reunification.

Acknowledgments

Dr. Samuel Merrill's current research interests include: the historical and cultural geographies, and urban and transport histories, of underground railways; the social memories and cultural landscapes of subterranean urban infrastructure; and the alternative heritages and counter-memories of online and offline subcultural groups and social movements.

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[104] See Berlin Senatsverwaltung für Stadtentwicklung, *Kunst im Stadtraum*, 2002.
[105] See Merrill, *Excavating Buried Memories*.

[106] J. Habermas, National unification and popular sovereignty, *New Left Review* 219 (1996) 3–21; Blacksell, Partition, *die Wende*, and German unification.
[107] See A. Huyssen, Nation, race, and immigration: German identities after unification, *Discourse* 16 (1994) 6–28.