THE MURALS OF BELFAST

Politics and Conservation

A Dissertation submitted for

Masters of Science in Architectural Conservation

University of Edinburgh

By Caroline Engel

SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE
EDINBURGH COLLEGE OF ART

2010-11

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

SUMMARY

Through the extent of this dissertation, I aimed to study, understand and evaluate the complexities of commemoration in urban environments either in a transitional phase or an ongoing identity crisis. With a heavy focus on Belfast, Northern Ireland, my curiosity was first peaked by the political murals and I asked what role they played in the ongoing process of healing and reunification after 30 years of civil war. Starting with academic articles, journals and books, I gained a strong knowledge of The Republic of Ireland's and Northern Ireland's political history, as well as a second-hand view of the situation as it sits now. I followed this with interviews with Professor Bill Rolston, who has written extensively on the murals and the politics of Belfast; Amberlea Neely, who works for PLACE Architecture and thus provided me with a working planners insight and opinions on the practicalities of reunification in the city; former Belfast police officer James Crawford, who explained the gradual emotional, family and religious divisions that played into the start of the Troubles and ongoing distrust felt between various groups in Belfast; and Robin Wade, who designed the permanent Derry Museum exhibition dedicated to the Troubles with delicacy and honesty while under heavy criticism from all angles.

This paper is structured in a similar fashion, giving the reader an overview of the political history and situations leading up to the events of the Troubles that permanently changed the built environment of Belfast. I then outline the changes that were made and the difficulties architects and planners now face in their efforts to reverse some of these divisive changes.

A large section of the paper is devoted to the analysis of the murals, giving the history, development and current situation of both the loyalist and nationalist murals. This section closes with a short description of the more recent collaborations by muralists of these traditionally opposing sects.

Continuing on with the theme of regeneration and collaboration, I looked into other recent efforts for renewal and reunification, highlighting both their successes and failures, and why each effort met these outcomes. Using São Paulo as a comparative study, I looked into the ways that the built environment of a city can fuel sociological divisions, which I then compared to the structural changes made in Belfast leading up to, during, and after the Troubles. Reunification is not only a matter of structural reorganization, but is also a matter of the mind, whereby I analysed the 'Us vs. Them' mentality I found embedded in many of the people I spoke with., I focused the much attention on the Re-imaging Communities project, which aimed to replace the threatening imagery from the murals with new murals designed by the relevant communities.

The final section of the paper is devoted to the politics of remembrance and commemoration, using Hiroshima and the Berlin Wall as main case studies. Here, I look into who decides what to commemorate, how to commemorate it, and what affect this has on the local community.

INTRODUCTION

> "It is through our experience and understanding that we engage with the materiality of the world. These encounters are subjective, predicated on our *being in* and learning *how to go on* in the world. The process by which we make landscapes is never pre-ordained because our perceptions and reactions, though they are spatially and historically specific, are unpredictable, contradictory, full of small resistances and renegotiations. We make time and place, just as we are made by them."[1]

In many shared spaces around the world, ethnic, ideological, religious or linguistic diversity reaps tensions, territorialisation, seclusion and polarization rather than an embracement of cultural differences. Socio-political conditions can have massive effects on the formation of architecture, public spaces and infrastructure, creating a clear-cut physical representation of segregation. As is evidenced in our case study city, Belfast, these tensions materialize into walls, fences, gates, a patchwork of closed homogeneous neighbourhoods, duplication of services, and subtle but visible territorial markers that exist only to differentiate spatial properties and dissuade entrance from outsiders. Established by policing units, grassroots groups, local citizens, militaries or the government, the built environment of cities is clearly shaped by societal fears and beliefs, and in turn, continually shapes the peoples' perception of safety, their preferred movement patterns throughout the area, and the type and amount of communication the competing groups share with each other. "We cannot simply preach neighbourliness between warring social groups when a wall literally prevents visual and acoustic encounters. Likewise, we cannot simply knock down a fence and hope people will automatically start liking each other."[2] The cities with contested and violent histories like Belfast, Derry, São Paulo, and Hiroshima cannot simply be forced to sort out their differences encouraging tolerance of cultural diversity and by enforcing cohabitation, but it is important to understand the socio-political mechanisms, motivations and power struggles behind the circumstances in an effort to ameliorate, rather than aggravate the situation in these places.[3] As we have found in Belfast, it is much easier to put up a wall than to tear one down, but the solution to socio-political division in Northern Ireland will not be healed solely through sensitive urban planning, but is one of the many tools in the overarching effort needed to rework the pervasive fears, whether real or imagined, that govern and legitimize the actions of certain sects of citizens. The built environment in a contested city "reflects and shapes the struggle over identity, memory, and belonging", thus the situation must be approached with regard to materiality in its physical

---

[1] Barbara Bender, introduction to *Contested Landscapes: Movement, Exile and Place*, ed. Barbara Bender and Margot Winer, (New York and Oxford: Berg Publishers, 2001), 1-18.

[2] Ralf Brand, "From the Guest Editor: The Architecture of War and Peace," *Journal of Urban Technology*, vol.16, issue 2-3 (2009):1, http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10630730903278504 (accessed July 6, 2001).

[3] Ibid., 2.

form as well as its numerous associations socially and culturally, and how these associations can be shaped to promote a sense of individuality as well as a binding community identity.[4]

HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE DIVIDE

As I moved through Belfast conducting research during the week of June 20th, 2011, it became acutely apparent that, in Belfast, history is not a documented memory relegated to the pages of academic texts, but is alive and contested, albeit often without a strong understanding in the sectarian events, representations and riots in certain districts throughout the city. On Wednesday, July 22nd, a riot, predominantly of loyalists, broke out in East Belfast with its threats focused on the lone and fully surrounded Catholic community of the Short Strand. Three officers and one journalist were shot; no wounds were fatal, but a message was sent. Peace has not come to Belfast, and it seems as though some residents are avidly fighting it. War and unrest have been a part of the culture of what is now Northern Ireland since the placement of English and Scottish plantation owners in the 17c, but at what point does this culture of violence need to be suppressed and of what value are the cultural representations of violence when it comes to conservation?

Two stories of the past are currently told in Northern Ireland, one held true by the nationalists/Catholics and the other by the loyalists/Protestants. Within these stories are numerous variations with inconstancies of tone and emphasis. The histories have found representation in a variety of media, including wall murals in Northern Ireland housing estates, professional academic historic accounts, film, dramas, fictional accounts, and the rituals and commemorative parades.

The nationalists' narrative begins over 800 years ago, when the native Catholic Irish people first witnessed oppression under English colonialism. It is a story of endurance, survival and resistance. With reference to the violent colonization practices of the 16th and 17th centuries, the eventual overthrow of the British after the Republican Revolution[5] is viewed as a heroic Irish success. The Irish Republican Army (IRA) defended the new free Ireland against Britain in the 1919-21 War of Independence, leading to the formal British recognition of the independent Irish Free State (later renamed the Republic of Ireland in 1949), consisting of 26 of 32 counties on the island. The 6 remaining counties were siphoned off by the British in 1920 to create the statelet of Northern Ireland. Staunch nationalists see this agreement as a partial and incomplete success, an 'unfinished revolution'. According to Graham Dawson, this is the story that inspired the resurgence of an armed, revolutionary Republican force in Northern Ireland from 1969 onward.

The loyalists' narrative begins with their settlement on the island in the 16th and 17th century, where they were met with what they see as unnecessary hostility and extreme violence from the native Irish population. The loyalists still retain that it was a legitimate settlement under legal auspices of

---

[4] Ibid., 3.

[5] Themes of commemoration often place heavy emphasis on the earlier events of the Easter Rising and the Proclamation of Irish Independence in 1916.

the English Crown. The settlers endured a long struggle to remain faithful to the English Crown, their Protestant faith and their British Identity. Rather than assimilating, they fought to defend their civil and religious liberties and to withstand "engulfment and destruction by an alien and feared Irish Catholic culture".[6] The loyalist Orange Order was established in 1795, followed by the Ulster Unionist Movement of the 1880s, which guarded against the threat of Home Rule for Ireland. In 1912, the first paramilitary organization was established, the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF), which gathered male Protestants of all denominations and class and mobilized a popular loyalist preference to armed resistance. After five centuries of ownership, work and contribution to the society in Northern Ireland, loyalists today feel they have a legitimate right to their way of life and a legitimate right to defend it by any means necessary.

Myths v. History

In the first chapter of Graham Dawson's book, *Making Peace with the past? Memory, Trauma, and the Irish Troubles*, he defines the difference between myth and history. Myths, he states, are "damaging misconceptions and falsehood about the past, embedded in popular consciousness, which fuel the atavistic political identities of Ulster Unionism and Irish nationalism, and stir up political violence". Histories, on the other hand, are a "more objective and truthful knowledge about the past produced by apparently disinterested professional historians, whose task is to challenge and deconstruct those myths".[7] He purports that a myth fosters 'obsession' and 'perpetrates the closed mind', and is used to refuse facing the historical facts.[8] In 1989, Jack Magee, a historian and educator, argued that "Irish are not preoccupied with history but obsessed with divisive and largely sectarian mythologies acquired as part of their political or religious experience."[9] Although that statement was made 21 years ago, the subtle prevalence of mythology in many aspects of life is still strong and affects the mindset and actions of the people, Catholic, Protestant or non-religious. In his book, *Dancing to History's Tune,* Brian Walker asserts that the uncritical acceptance of myths has served political purposes as needed and "prevented us from seeing our situation and problems in a realistic light and from appreciating the real impact of our past".[10] Walker points out that in inter-community conflicts, arguments over history only create a stalemate as one side's historical grievances can always be countered with the other side's. Dawson explains that some individuals and groups subscribe to the myths with such intensity and fervour that their experience with the stories becomes more akin to a religion. People feel it is their duty to represent these stories publicly and to remind their community of their past, keeping the myths engrained in the family

---

[6] Graham Dawson, *Making peace with the past? Memory, Trauma, and the Irish Troubles* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), 34.

[7] Dawson also quoted T.W. Moody's definition for myth from his 1977 essay, 'Irish History and Irish Mythology', which is defined as "received views that derive.... from popular traditions, transmitted orally, in writing and through institutions." 36.

[8] Dawson, *Making peace,* 36.

[9] Ibid., 38.

[10] Dawson, *Making peace,* 38.

identity, generation after generation. The question is how to get Northern Ireland to a point when neither side feels their identity is under threat any longer, and thus no longer feel the need to keep the war stories alive through voice, action or physical representation.

The current situation

> "The history of Belfast during the past two hundred years is something of a paradox. On the one hand, in economic matters the city developed rapidly by being as modern and progressive as any other of the great industrial centres in the United Kingdom (and unlike anywhere else in Ireland). Belfast had much the same urban social problems too, and its municipal government expanded in a similar way to tackle them. On the other hand, it developed patterns of community division and conflict, based on religion, which in their severity and permanence have rendered it unique among the cities of the British Isles." W.A. Maguire, *Belfast*[11]

The 1998 Good Friday Agreement achieved the disbanding of paramilitaries and the removal of British soldiers; it ended a three-decade deadlock and established a shared-power government, but it did not achieve peace. The city is instead moving steadily forward with a relative lack of violence, with partitions instead of reconciliation and an increased level of segregation. Neil Jarman, director of the Institute for Conflict Resolution, asserts that there are huge amounts of segregation in daily lives, especially for the working class, which is not a result of the walls, but has preceded the walls and has increased since the peace process. Democratic Unionist leader, Ian Paisley Junior, has nonchalantly acknowledged this, stating, "Separation is a fact of life... we've had 35 years of trouble and mayhem and people aren't going to get over that very very quickly or easily."[12]

The city and its violence

During the economic boom of the first years of the 21st century, Belfast was like any other European city in its aspirations for globalization, modernization and rejuvenation. Belfast developed a thriving shopping scene and student culture downtown, redeveloped Victoria Square, and began work on the development and promotion of the historic Titanic Quarter, while outbreaks of violence had become fewer and further between. The violence and fear of violence may have dissipated from the foreground but in the observations of newly transplanted University of Ulster Professor Ralf Brand, the new reality was only a reality at the surface, masking the roots of a conflict that was still alive and well.[13] Though many were prospering from the strong economy, Brand observed that the

---

[11] Aaron Kelly, "Terror-torial imperatives: Belfast and Eoin McNamee's Resurrection Man," in *The Cities of Belfast*, eds. Nicholas Allen and Aaron Kelly. (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2003), 168-182.

[12] "Walls of Shame: Belfast," last modified November 26, 2007, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X2d4NPNmSf

[13] Ralf Brand, "Urban Artifacts and Social Practices in a Contested City," in *Journal of Urban Technology* vol.16, vol.16, issue 2-3 (2009) : 35.

affiliations with identity seemed most vital to those whose manual labour held less value in the highly technological 'knowledge economy'. Residents in working class enclaves, like the Shankill and Lower Falls areas, have clung to the sectarian single identity more fully and widespread than other districts. Daily life in these areas is still riddled with mistrust, verbal abuse, harassment, intimidation and physical harm.[14]

The murals, surveillance cameras, look-out posts, and other security installations, what Jarman dubbed 'scars on the landscape', are present in communities with similar cultures of fear. Richard J. Williams assessed the extent to which violence or the fear of violence influenced the architectural styles and urban planning of São Paulo in the 1960s and 1970s. Williams argues that the economies of violence include real and imagined elements, of which the boundaries can be hard to decipher, whereby the imaginary may influence the real or replace it. The reactionary fantasies of imagined violence thus, have the capability to inform the behaviour of citizens and the development of a city. São Paulo has a culture of self-generated violence, by the people and within the city limits; a social climate which the local journalists dubbed the 'undeclared civil war'. In 2006, a series of attacks carried out by the Primeiro Comando da Capital (PCC) resulted in the paralysation of police forces, the death of a number of policemen, and the blocking of main highways by setting fire to city buses. Two days of chaos ensued, at which the police staged a counter attack. In the end, the combined death toll reached 172 people. Williams argues that the violent society in São Paulo is, in part, influenced by the Brutalist styled architecture that was essentially invented in the School of Architecture at the University of São Paulo, and now pervades the city. Buildings are among our most overt representation of our fear about urban life, and if one looks closely, small architectural elements can be indicators of the social condition of a city. The decline of São Paulo's public realm coincided with the end of the Brutalism movement, marked by the degradation of pavement in public plazas, appearance of vast amounts of graffiti, the instalment of metal grills on domestic buildings and metal roller shutters on commercial storefronts, and the quasi-legal closure of streets to create private realms.[15] All of this caused a change in the behaviour of residents.[16]

In reaction to the inner-city violence, Alphaville, a name which occludes to its creators' ostentatious and naive intentions, was built just 30 kilometers west of São Paulo and adjacent to the established

[14] Ralf Brand, "Urban Artifacts and Social Practices in a Contested City," in *Journal of Urban Technology* vol.16, vol.16, issue 2-3 (2009) : 36.

[15] Richard J. Williams, "Architecture and economies of violence: Sao Paulo as a case study," in *Globalization, Violence, and the Visual Culture of Cities*, ed Christoph Lindner (Oxon: Routledge, 2010), 22.

[16] Architects designing in the Brutalism style approached design with the shared notion that cities are essentially cruel, thus their architecture tends to have an inward facing design protecting an inner sanctuary with an abrasive, hard outer shell. Often taking a bunker-like, defensive aesthetic, the structures are massive, oppressive and largely built of untreated, rough concrete on the exterior with few revealing windows. The interior may be full of natural light, delicate in construction, and lush with greenery, often with an attempt to bring the essentials of the city inside where it is safe and protected.

city of Baueri, but completely separated from it by a 6 meter steel wall. With a population of 15,000 people, it is one of the largest gated communities in the world. The city was built on the principles of New Urbanism, seeking to revive old-fashioned notions of civility. In plan, it has all the infrastructure of a healthy civic life, such as hospitals, schools, health care centres, public parks, an aesthetically pleasing environment, a bustling commercial district and an interconnected pedestrian-friendly layout. Yet, as Williams pointed out, its very existence is a direct result of the fear of violence, and the city sells itself primarily on its ability, or perceived ability, to provide a secure environment for families through the use of the check points, CCTV surveillance, and guards. Although these precautionary measures and utilities may be give residents a peace of mind, the gates, guards, cameras, and so on are physical representations of violence and keep the perceived threat of violence at the fore in one's mind. In the 1980s, repressed teens living in Alphaville took to violence to express frustrations by stealing cars, abusing drugs and alcohol, and violence which extended to rape and murder. By 2005, Alphaville had 96 psychologists or psychotherapists – 3,000 times the number per person compared to residents of São Paulo. This case goes to show that there is an upper limit that can be exceeded in community protective measures, which when exceeded, induces a backlash akin to the deposing of a totalitarian government.

Around the same time, São Paulo experienced a reduction in violent activity. In 2000, the homicide rate was 37 in 100,000 (approximately 8,000 per year), but by 2006, the rate had decreased to 15 in 100,000, and was predicted to decrease further in the coming years. The decrease resulted from a variety of factors, such as clever and skilful policing strategies, increased enforcement against gun crime, higher rates of incarceration, and better rates of crime resolution.[17] The increasingly aggressive policing strategies, what Williams called the 'Alphavillization' of São Paulo, may have given inhabitants the notion that the streets were safer, thus businesses and restaurants began to stay open later, more people were in the streets, and less felt the urgency to rush home to safety. The economic prosperity and relative stability of the time could also have played a role in the decrease in violent activity. The increased surveillance has shown to have a positive effect on life in São Paulo, but at what point does government intervention become overbearing or divisive?

The first so-called peace lines in Belfast were of barbed wire and were established by the British Army between warring communities in 1969. Now there are 41 deliberate barriers across Belfast and an estimated 50% of these have been heightened or extended since the peace process, of which, the most notorious is the wall between the Protestant Shankill and the Catholic Falls areas. Recently, the wall around the Short Strand has been a flashpoint for violent activity. This area just east of downtown Belfast has become known as the 'shatter zone'; massive concrete motorway flyovers and a lack of buildings due to the destructive nature of an interface zone have made this a no man's land with little to be proud of and no neighbourhood surveillance.[18]

---

[17] Williams, "Architecture and economies of violence," 30.

[18] Like Belfast, the city of São Paulo was restructured and further segregated by a set of motorways that tore though the city fabric. Built by a military regime, the motorway in São Paulo was

The recent re-emergence of balaclava-clad youths and petrol bombs have made international news and tarnished the rebranded image of a city of heritage that Belfast was trying to promote through the new Titanic museum and neighborhood redevelopment plans. The conflict has been attributed to the growing membership of the loyalist paramilitary group, the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF), in East Belfast. Owen Bowcott, journalist for *The Guardian*, attributed the paramilitary's re-emergence to the current socio-economic situation, stating, "High youth unemployment, reinforced by Ireland's severe economic downturn, has also left a pool of recruits susceptible to paramilitary influence. To a younger generation that missed out on the worst of the Troubles, tales of past paramilitary deeds told in late night bars can be deceptively beguiling."[19] The Short Strand was also the site of the 2002 riots, the worst since the peace process began, reportedly incited by the hanging of bunting in a Catholic churchyard for the Queen's Jubilee. A strong distrust and hatred for the alternate population runs high in these communities, especially in those families who choose to live right along the peace walls, as expressed by Greta Abbot, a Protestant citizen living along the wall of the Short Strand, who asserted, 'I'm not gonna justify anything else. I love my country; I love my culture, and that wall is staying where it is. Amen.'[20]

The Belfast of today is more divided than it was in the 1950s. The communities of upper North Belfast were 'mixed' before the Troubles; Protestants and Catholics lived side by side, along with a significant Jewish population and a variety of sects and post-war refugees. There were strongly Catholic or Protestant communities, but they were just naturally more Catholic or Protestant based on the religion of schools in the area and did they strive to deter anyone from settling there for religious reasons.[21] "Cultural diversity died in the early riots, and throughout the intimidation, bombing and assassination campaigns of the 70s and 80s", leaving the urban environment

---

constructed both to encourage economic growth and movement of goods throughout the city, but also to demonstrate the regime's formidable tyrannical power.

[19] Owen Bowcott, "Belfast riots: a setback for area barely reshaped by peace process," *The Guardian*, June 22, 2011, accessed June 24, 2011, http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2011/jun/22/belfast-riots-setback-peace-process.

[20] "Walls of Shame: Belfast," last modified November 26, 2007, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X2d4NPNmSf

[21] James Crawford, a former Belfast police officer, lived in such a community in North Belfast, and remembers when the peaceful coexistence began to drain away. Born to a Protestant father and a Catholic mother, his parents had what is dubbed a 'mixed marriage', something which is still relatively uncommon today. Having children from a previous Catholic marriage, Crawford's mother asked his father if he preferred his sons to be raised as Protestants, but his father replied, 'No, there is enough division in this community without introducing it into this family. Although Crawford was raised as a Catholic, the family kept in close contact had contact with their Protestant relatives. Later in life, Crawford married a Protestant woman, at which point he converted to Protestantism. His children went to Protestant schools and the Protestant church, but kept close ties to their Catholic relatives. It was not until their mid-teen years that they asked their father why there had been so much conflict between the religions, and having relatives on both sides, they couldn't understand the mistrust and hatred.

completely changed by the 1990s.[22] In Gerald Dawe's own experience of the city, he reflected that, "those who had lived in the inner reaches of the city had clearly fled to the suburbs or left the city for good. What I saw was the physical (psychic?) impact of political failure, a failure inscribed in the actual fabric of the place."[23] [24]

THE MURALS OF BELFAST

> "At times it seems that every inch of Belfast has been written-on, erased, and written-on again: messages, curses, political imperatives, but mostly names or nicknames – Robbo, Mackers, Scoot, Fra – sometimes litanized obsessively on every brick of a gable wall, as high as the hand will reach and sometimes higher, these snakes and ladders cancelling each other out in their bid to be remembered. *Remember 1690. Remember 1916.* Most of all, *Remember me. I was here*."

> - Ciaran Carson, *School boys and idlers of Pompeii*[25]

As the citizens of Belfast look optimistically toward a future of peace and progress, the murals loudly and forcefully remind both citizens and foreigners of the city's troubled past. The murals are at once detested and regarded for their significance as they have become a source of tourist revenue. I was first attracted to the situation by the seemingly incongruous functions of the murals, acting as important historic artefacts, public art, graffiti-like political messages often with a prejudiced and offensive tone, and now as profit-making tourist attractions. While Belfast's citizens and politicians detest the crass stereotyping in the mainstream media's representation of the city, they acknowledge that it has also created an interest by outsiders in the post-Troubles Belfast, and most notably in the threatening political murals most often shown as backdrops to news reports. Citizens of any city relate identity to place and community, and citizens of these communities do not necessarily want their identity tied to the messages painted on their walls without permission. Barbara Bender made the point that "we need to be alert to whose stores are being told, and to be

---

[22] Gerald Dawe, "The revenges of the heart: Belfast and the poetics of space," in *The Cities of Belfast*, ed. Nicholas Allen and Aaron Kelly (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2003), 199.

[23] Dawe, "The revenges of the heart," 200.

[24] Dawe charts the fallout of the city by breaking it into the four directional sects – North, South, East and West. The North, he states, became a lethal no man's land entered at one's own peril; the Southern districts of upper Ormeau, Ravenhill, and Rosemount attempted to hold onto shared non-sectarian Belfast codes and knowledge, the East withdrew further into itself, and the West – 'West Belfast' – became a city in itself. (Ibid., 200).

[25] Nicholas Allen and Aaron Kelly, "Introduction," in *The Cities of Belfast*, ed. Nicholas Allen and Aaron Kelly (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2003), 7.

aware that they naturalize particular sorts of social relations."[26] When freedom of expression impends on the quality of life of others, should something of a contested heritage value be destroyed and banned? How do we rank one group's cultural values over another's? Some supporters of the murals would say they are an expression of a minority's values, however, Doreen Massey counters this argument, contending that these otherwise quiet voices may become more audible in that particular community or society, but "we need to be wary of romanticizing these voices – of turning them into victims, dissenters, purveyors of radical alternatives."[27] Landscapes, both built and natural, are a collectors of history; it is the people who decide which stories to tell, how they will be evoked and interpreted, and thus how they continue to be an active presence in the present-future.

Loyalist Murals

Leading up to and through much of the early days of the Troubles, loyalist murals tended to focus on their historic legitimacy and right to the lands of Northern Ireland. Another popular theme was the Battle of the Somme, wherein the 36th [Ulster] division suffered 5,533 casualties, of which about 2,000 were deaths. From the summer of 1986 onward, the loyalist murals increasingly become used as territorial markers, with the iconography of paramilitaries all but replacing earlier Orange imagery of unity, history and legitimacy. It reached a point where few other themes were painted, of which, each was governed by whichever paramilitary group had dominant control over each particular area. For instance, the iconic Sandy Row mural which states, 'You are now entering Loyalist Sandy Row, Heartland of South Belfast' was as much a message to the subordinate loyalist group of the area, the UVF, as it was to the nationalists and Republicans. The muralists began to paint year round, rather than just in preparation for the loyalist celebration of the twelfth of July. The militaristic murals rarely showed artistic creativity or novel political viewpoints, but rather recycled imagery of masked gunmen with military references in the slogans. By the time of the 1994 cease-fire, few loyalist murals existed that celebrated anything other the paramilitary powers, and after the cease-fire, these types of murals increased in proportion and explicitness. Bill Rolston explains this contradictory reaction as the paramilitaries' [the UDA's and the UDF's] way of reassuring the local communities that they were still active and still upholding their 'no surrender' stance. The continuation of intimidating imagery was also a message to the new political parties created as a result of the peace process, reminding politicians of their loyalist roots and warning them not to politically concede to Republicans. At that time, Rolston argued that the loyalists had yet to become fully involved in the political process because, ultimately, a cooperative political system equalled a compromise, and thus submission. He explained, "Defence is the ultimate *raison d'être* of loyalism. Paradoxically, therefore, the IRA cease-fire threatens to undermine loyalism by implying that there

---

[26] Barbara Bender, "Introduction," in *Contested Landscapes: Movement, Exile and Place*, ed. Barbara Bender and Margot Winer (New York and Oxford: Berg Publishers, 2001), 5.

[27] Bender, "Introduction," 5.

is no more need for defence. The appalling vista of the demise of loyalism cannot be admitted; therefore loyalists have to point to the continuing need for 'defence'."[28]

In an article entitled, *Defeatism and Northern Protestant 'Identity'*, Andrew Finlay deduces a change in the way the outside world perceives Northern Ireland Protestants through exposure to academic literature and the media, and equally how they see themselves, moving from being indentified with modernity, triumph, and rationalism, to an identity based on terms of tradition, defeat and its associated emotions like alienation, fatalism, confusion, resentment, fear, anxiety and paranoia.[29] Finlay believes these defeatist characterizations of Northern Ireland Protestants became common after the Anglo-Irish Agreement of 1985, and that the image of the fearful Protestant has mushroomed throughout the peace process. In literature, Finlay concluded that there are four main aspects to northern Protestant defeatism, the first being a strong sense of alienation. A study by Dunne and Morgan (1994) asked a group of middle-class Protestants what the term 'alienation' meant to them in terms of their current situation. For most, they felt an alienation from the British government by way of constitutional changes, most notably the Anglo-Irish Agreement, which was largely seen as a betrayal, and legislative changes, such as the fair employment laws, which were perceived as an attempt to appease nationalists. Second is the popular nationalist-held stereotype of the confused and irrationally fearful protestant, which works to lessen the significance of protestant opposition to a united Ireland. Third, some view the Protestants' current identity crisis as an expression of a singular pathological mentality that is more concerned with the past than the current reality, whereby Protestants are struggling with a 'deflated superiority complex'. This sense of defeatism can then be deliberately used by paramilitary leaders to mobilise a backs-against-the-wall siege mentality in loyalists in order to contest change. Finally, anthropologists argue that what may seem irrational to outsiders is often rational when in context. Finlay found that the impression one gets from academic literature is that "...mentalities, tradition, or identities forged in the seventeenth century continue to exercise a tyrannical hold over the northern Protestant imagination such as to prevent them comprehending their present circumstances".[30] However, he suggested that "the contemporary protestant defeatism is less the product of a pre-existing identity than symptomatic of the absence of a northern Protestant cultural identity and, perhaps, of an ongoing attempt to get one."[31]

Nationalist Murals

---

[28] Bill Rolston, "Changing the Political Landscape: Murals and Transition in Northern Ireland," *Irish Studies Review*, vol. 11, issue 1 (2003): 8, http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0967088032000057861#preview (accessed June 7, 2011).

[29] Andrew Finlay, "Defeatism and Northern Protestant 'Identity'," *The Global Review of Ethnopolitics*, vol. 1, issue 2 (2001): 3, http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/ethnopolitics/finlay01.pdf (accessed June 5, 2011).

[30] Andrew Finlay, "Defeatism and Northern Protestant 'Identity'," 4.

[31] Idem.

The nationalists, on the other hand, did not paint murals until the 'hunger strike' of 1981. Up to that point, the streets had been policed by a dominant Unionist political party and police force, which prevented any public display of Republican politics or culture. In support of the hunger strikers' demand for political prisoner status, countless murals sprung up throughout Catholic and Republican districts. Though the IRA murals were not without the threatening hooded gunmen imagery, that sort of iconography did not come to dominate nationalist murals like it did the loyalist murals. In the mid-1990s, nationalists found inspiration in the political movement, using murals to convey their optimism for a future free from oppression by the British State. After the peace process, nationalists found it difficult to commemorate the lives lost by military activists and acknowledge their contributions while simultaneously publicly recognizing that the military phase was over.

In 2002, the Ballymurphy Mural Project Committee commissioned seven new murals to commemorate some of the victims of the Troubles. The Republicans had ceased painting paramilitary murals after the August 1994 ceasefire, and commemorative murals gave the community a topic they could relate to that was not threatening to anyone outside the community. One year earlier, leading to the formation of the Ballymurphy Mural Project Committee, a mural commemorating Jim Bryson and Patrick Mulvenna, two local men who were shot and killed by British soldiers on 31 August 1973, was unveiled to a large gathering with an atmosphere that was part festival and part Irish Wake. It was this aspect of the event that convinced Bill Rolston that these types of murals would not launch a reawakening of paramilitary action, but were instead, a healing tool for the community.[32] As such, the murals emphasized the 'ordinariness' of the victims, not any sort of military pride or strength. Sinn Féin President, Gerry Adams, stressed that the event was about remembering friends, family members and neighbours while respecting others' rights to do the same.[33]

Observer columnist, Henry McDonald, criticized the Ballymurphy unveiling event as an attempt to rewrite the past, saying Adams edited out any reference to the IRA atrocities of the Troubles. Rolston argues that Adams' speech reveals a deeper complexity to the purpose of the new murals, some of which is referenced in Gerry Adam's speech at the unveiling ceremony where he stated that, "Republicans freely acknowledge the grief of all those – enemies as well as friends – who have lost loved ones in the conflict... armed aggression is met with armed resistance, particularly and especially where there is no alternative. That is what the IRA was about, but none of us here are carried away with notions of romanticism which frequently ignores the cruelty and horror of war... I

---

[32] Bill Rolston, "Changing the Political Landscape," 6.

[33] Speaking to the *An Phoblacht/Republican News* on 23 May 2002, Patrick Mulvenna, father of the memorialized son of the same name, stated, 'We wanted this tribute to portray our dead in a human way. For too long the British and our political enemies portrayed republicans as "faceless gunmen" in the attempts to criminalize the struggle, so we decided that we would present our dead as real human beings.' (Rolston, "Changing the Political Landscape," 6.)

want once again to stress to unionists that we want to build upon the opportunity for peace that exists... It takes bravery to wage war but it takes a special courage to sue for peace."[34]

Adams' speech enables the community to take pride in the military accomplishments of the IRA, but sternly reminds them that the past is the past and a better future will only be attained by acknowledging that fact. In the Ballymurphy murals, Rolston believes the community was able to effectively commemorate the past without dwelling on it by acknowledging that the past efforts and losses were invaluable in terms of reaching the current state. Adams then provided the binding communal faith that non-violent political leadership was the way to bring about the future the community sought.

Collaborative murals

Some muralists have begun to alter their message from one of blatant territorialism to one of explanation, of universal human loss, and of unity. Danny Devenny, a Catholic muralist has found influence in the sectarian conflicts of the West Bank and the Palestinians tradition of carrying photos of the dead during funeral processions. He remembered how it made him ask, 'Who was he? Why did they die? What did they represent?' In turn, he now looks to create murals that make people stop, look at the faces and wonder, 'Why? What was it about?' Mark Ervine, a Protestant muralist who has begun to work with Devenny, is determined to use murals as a force for unity – using writing on the walls to break down virtual walls.[35] A unified voice from within the communities is likely to represent a more widely held view, but may rouse disapproval and distrust from the hardcore sects of nationalists and loyalists. It may also help to remind communities, day in and day out, that life in Belfast could be different. Commenting on the collaboration, Ervine remarked, "It's absolutely a sign of the time that we're living in, because this wouldn't have been possible 10 or 15 years ago... I would have never considered the notion. It has only been made possible though the work that our people have done on the ground. It's just carried on through myself and Danny, which is an engagement that needs to happen at every level of society... trying to change people's mindsets, of course, that's where the barriers exist; in the mind."[36]

REGENERATION

"Our challenge throughout is to conventional versions of Belfast that themselves inflict a representational harm upon the city. Belfast is commonly understood to be a place familiar precisely because of its unfamiliarity: its representation is supersaturated with

---

[34] Rolston, "Changing the Political Landscape," 6.

[35] "Walls of Shame: Belfast," last modified November 26, 2007, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X2d4NPNmSf

[36] "Walls of Shame: Belfast," last modified November 26, 2007, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X2d4NPNmSf

images of strangeness, anomaly and deviance. This is because urban space threatens the social cartographies and restrictive special visions of Irish nationalism and unionism, both rooted in a rural idealism that limits representations of place and society in Irish culture. Cities can be places of unregulated attachment, of chance meeting, where the stranger can become an unknown within a properly constituted public space, in which identities are renegotiated and re-affiliated according to historical change."[37]

New developments and the continuation of divisions

I asked Amberlea Neely, manager of PLACE Architecture in Belfast, what she saw as the greatest hindrance to a reunified Belfast, to which she replied was the way the city has been designed recently, or as a result of the Troubles. The divisions that are built into the city's fabric – highways, cul-de-sacs, gated communities – have, in a sense, been designed like that to keep communities apart. Neely pointed to the new housing developments as examples of divisions that are not being called divisions. The walls around these communities are not peace walls, but they divide the population none the less. Also, some of the main arterial roads in the city centre have been designed so they are quite difficult to cross, with as many as four lanes of traffic to cross without pedestrian bridges.

Similar to the São Paulo inner-city motorway, the West Motorway Connection, built in stages from 1962 to 1968, has changed the way people move about Belfast, especially for residents walking from the Falls Road. This division has created something of a second city in West Belfast, both being self-removed and forcefully cut off. As Neely put it, "...I think, for the people living in those communities... they feel safe perhaps; it is their community and it isn't easy to access." The entrance to these areas is often marked by paramilitary murals allocating the identity of the residents or advising others to stay out. Upon first embarking on this research, I imagined the murals to cause divisions within the city, but since, I have found that the complications and divides run much deeper and through many other aspects of life in Belfast.

The centre of Belfast suffered nearly 20 years of abandonment during the Troubles, closed to vehicles for fear of car bombs, and abandoned at night for fear of personal safety. Since the peace agreement of 1998, this zone, for which no one staked claim, has been the focus of non-sectarian regeneration. Void of any flags, colourings or markings denoting any affiliation to the British or Irish government (aside from the flag flown outside city hall), the centre has become a place safe for anyone of any religious or political affiliation to meet, dine, or shop. Though far from complete or perfect, the steps made in the city centre have been in the right direction. During the construction boom of the late 1990s and early 2000s, numerous large apartment complexes were built around the downtown area with little or no regard to the historic fabric of the city. Any investment was viewed as good progress for a city anxious to move away from its torrid past, and "things happened

---

[37] Nicholas Allen and Aaron Kelly, "Introduction," in *The Cities of Belfast*, ed. Nicholas Allen and Aaron Kelly (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2003), 8.

in a mix-matched way without being well thought out".[38] In turn, these housing complexes were all geared toward a young generation, fresh from university, flush with new earnings and not yet needing family accommodation. It worked for a time, but when the bubble burst and the economy crashed, this generation no longer had the means to afford such high-end accommodations. The multi-person families who needed and could afford downtown accommodation were ignored, even though they would have provided a long-term settled population to the area which still struggles to keep people after nightfall. The city also failed to provide community necessities such as grocery stores, schools, and doctors within walking distance. What could have become the heart of a progressively reunified city became a failure due to the city's eye toward capital gain rather than a dedication to providing what the population truly needed.

Figure 1 *The Missing City*, FORUM for Alternative Belfast. Map indicates vacant spaces within a 20 minute walk from the Belfast city centre in red.

---

[38] Amberlea Neely, interview by Caroline Engel. *Manage of PLACE Architecture Centre* (June 21, 2011).

Post-industrial Belfast is dictated by motorways and industrial housing. During and after the Troubles, Belfast became the worst housed city in Western Europe.[39] Housing was administered along established sectarian lines, only further solidifying the divisions. The Northern Ireland Housing Executive's [NIHE] physical planning and actual buildings were designed along a notion of 'defensible space' along with ideals of neighbourliness and renewal. The NIHE succeeded in designing the best public housing schemes in the United Kingdom while simultaneously driving the sectarian and political differences into the everyday life experiences of more residents. The new developments around the city centre were surrounded by ample greenery and a lack of graffiti, but the compact clusters of housing were oriented around cul-de-sacs and closed alleyways, giving a formidable defensive back to the outside communities. These gated estates and enclosed apartment blocks became the new face of 'defensible space'. In Brett's opinion, "these developments and their imagery demonstrate the shallowness of the normalization process". The New York style warehouse loft renovations, the 'traditional style' courts in neo-vernacular brickwork (The Cloisters), the neo-Georgian terraces (Rugby Square), and the 'modernist' blocks in the Village and Sandy Row all emphasise the social and economic differences in the society. Most of the available land was within the Loyalist areas of the inner city, which lead to the creation of more security walls and peace lines. According to Colin Graham, the South Side Studios are "Belfast's most blatant attempt by a developer to move young, middle-class professionals into a working class area" but only with the promise of underground parking, electronic locks and an upper courtyard hidden behind a 20 foot wall. The new developments, in effect, have created a new layer of barriers based on a new grid of income-related defensible spaces.[40]

In 2008, the Good Relations Unit of the Belfast City Council commissioned a study to examine the role public space currently plays in the life of the citizens of Belfast and how public space might be used to bring people together. The authors distinguish between 'borders' and 'boundaries', defining a border as "porous, adaptable and positive" while boundaries are defined as "hard-edged, inflexible and negative."[41] With this in mind, the authors suggested a development of shared spaces between the divided areas to facilitate movement between and lessen the hard-edges of the boundaries. Further, it is hoped that safe shared spaces can facilitate feelings of "antipathy to empathy, if not enmity to amity."[42] A shared public space could force the separate but equal

---

[39] David Brett, "Geologies of site and settlement," In *The Cities of Belfast*, ed. Nicholas Allen and Aaron Kelly, (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2003), 23.

[40] The largest of the normalization projects is the Lagenside Development, which was one part of an attempt by citizens to reclaim the waterfront. However, the lack of an active population outside the gated community leaves the Lagenside disconnected from the city, especially after dark.

[41] Frank Gaffikin et al., "Public Space for a Shared Belfast: A research report for Belfast City Council," January (2008):vi, http://homepage.ntlworld.com/g.rafferty38/data/resrep-PublicSpace.pdf (accessed August 25, 2011).

[42] Ibid,. vii.

development agencies of Protestant and Catholic neighbourhoods to intimately interact and together work towards a better future for Belfast as a whole.[43]

> "The perpetuation of ethno-sectarian conflicts reminds us that, despite the onset of globalisation, cultural 'homogenisation' and mass consumption, the links between ethno-sectarian separation and fear remain central to the logic and the explanation of violent enactment and cultural polarisation. Without doubt, the potential of localised, nationalist and anti-pluralist doctrines to determine the reproduction of residential segregation using particularistic discourses of 'truth' and the reconstruction of history remains ever present."[44]

The reconstruction and redevelopment of communities within Belfast are undeniably influenced by the ideas, ideals and practices of segregation. Peter Shirlow found that it is the 'lived experiences' that create the subjective interconnections and emotions that drive these urban moralities of segregation, thereby to understand segregation is "not merely to determine the nature of contact between spatially separate populations but to also designate how ideas, beliefs and behaviours are reinforced by their social milieu".[45] Yet, such ethno-sectarian strongholds should not be misconceived as homogenous. Though influential in its homogenous sense of affiliation and belonging, it does not convert nor account for everyone in these communities. Many residents within these communities may not subscribe to the narrow notion that their way of life is threatened by the opposing community and culture. However, this does not necessarily mean that they are not content live with the dominant political representations that exist within their community, such as murals, flags, and other visual symbols of political and cultural alliance. The violent cultural and political acts, likewise, are not supported by the whole of the residents in segregated communities. Along with the sectarian imagery, violent threats - imagined or real - deter outsiders from entering the community, but also engender fear in the residents, which, consequently, assists the reproduction of segregation.

'Us and Them'

Aside from sectarian and political divisions, Belfast suffers from an 'us and them' complex, resulting from a lack of communication between groups – Protestants and Catholics, as well as between those actively involved in the conflict and those who see themselves as above it. Many people have distanced themselves from religion, politics and the whole of the conflict in order to move on, as well as to remove themselves from the tarnished image created by mass media. Many citizens were never involved in the conflict first-hand, have no relatives to mourn and thus are frustrated with the tribe-like battles that every so often still disrupt life in the city. Citizens who fall into these various

---

[43] See the appendix for full sections of the Public Space for a Shared Belfast report.

[44] Peter Shirlow, "'Who Fears to Speak': Fear, Mobility, and Ethno-sectariansim in the Two 'Ardoynes'," *The Global Review of Ethnopolitic*, vol. 3, issue 1 (2003): 76, http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/ethnopolitics/shirlow03.pdf (accessed June 5, 2011).

[45] Shirlow, "'Who Fears to Speak'," 76.

groups, often dictated by economic levels, rarely meet or converse, leading to a misunderstanding of motives and values. In talking with Neely about the freshly painted terrorist murals in East Belfast, I asked what may have caused their re-emergence after a relative period of peace and decline in the popularity of such threatening imagery, to which she replied, "I suppose it is maybe something that is important to those people. It is like the identity of their area and it is what their ancestors fought for and they want to hold on to that. I'm just guessing." While Neely's intentions are meant well and she strongly hopes for a united future for Belfast, her comment typifies the outlook of many of the people in position to make the changes necessary. Whether from fear of confrontation, distrust or a general lack of regard for the people who choose to live along the interface zones, I have gotten the impression that city officials and planners are not approaching the citizens of the areas witnessing the most violence and vice versa. Explaining her decision to live in a strongly Loyalist area, though having been brought up in the Catholic faith, Neely reveals a hope for more interaction between the groups, but also a common arm's-length understanding of the drive behind the continuation of riotous acts.

> "...maybe 20 years ago I wouldn't have even dreamt of living and buying a house, and investing in this area, but now it is like I completely feel at home and I'm made to feel very welcome but... maybe if I was brought up to be the type of person that would be rioting, then maybe I wouldn't go and live there. I don't know. I think people's mindsets need to change and I think that people are still living in tight little communities and their stories are being passed down through generations, not just stories, but even, I'm sure these people really believe they are doing a good thing and that they are fighting for something, when they are just wrecking their own area, but it is the way they have been brought up and it is the way everyone else in that area works."[46]

In response to the problem of reunification, Bill Rolston responded, "If I was a benign dictator and allowed to do one thing only, I would integrate the schools tomorrow. That would have a profound ripple effect right through the whole society." Though resistance to integrated schools is intense, he believes it is what would make the greatest difference most quickly. Currently, almost all teachers and students are of the same religion at least through secondary school and often through college depending on each individual's choices. After graduation, it is likely that that graduate will move into a community that is prominently of the same religion, leaving little occasion for casual meetings and conversation with anyone of other religions and views. In Rolston's opinion, integrated schools would provided these opportunities to converse with 'others' and find a commonality, and no one would have to abandon anything they believe in. The rippling effect will grow from these small common interests, possibly leading to more 'mixed' marriages between Catholics and Protestants, which will lead to a greater understanding of each other's cultures and an ability to see the other side as people, not just as the opposition. It is hoped that children of these marriages will grow up without the family grown mistrust, prejudice and feelings of forced alliance to the cause or guilt for abandoning it. In the late 1970s, the *All Children Together* movement worked to integrate schools,

---

[46] Neely, interview, (June 21, 2011).

with the first one, Lagen College, set up in 1981 in East Belfast. In the 1990s, the government passed a law that allowed citizens to set up integrated schools if they could prove viability and interest by students and parents, at which point, the government would allocate two years of funding for teachers' salaries and building upkeep. Bill Rolston, his wife, and five other sets of parents, set up such a school, finding the building, interviewing and hiring the teachers, and convincing parents to sign their children up. The schools had to meet a minimum of a 40% minority, whether it be Protestant or Catholic. If the schools still proved to be viable after two years, the government would build them a new state-of-the-art school with no expense spared. By the early 2000s, many Protestant/state schools were hurting badly for funding and parents began to complain bitterly. Rather than allocating money for the new integrated schools, the government decided to encourage the established Protestant and Catholic schools to reform. By achieving only a 10% minority in the next 10 years, a school could be deemed a 'transformed integrated school' and would thus be eligible for government funding. At this point, only about 6% of schools are integrated at a 10% minority.

Brett concluded that, in the case of Belfast, "Architecture and planning are absolutely powerless to prevent this [sectarian segregation] because the problem is political, and beyond that, constitutional, and beyond that, ultimately, a question of legitimacy. Belfast is not and can never be a normal city until all its citizens can walk all its streets."[47] I agree that normalcy cannot be achieved until Belfast's citizens no longer fear certain districts because of their political or religious affiliation, however, I do not see architecture and urban planning as powerless players in the reunification process. The structure and fabric of a city is a constant, firm, yet subtle educator of social norms, able to uphold traditions or re-educate its citizens on what behaviour is accepted and expected. I will argue that a more pleasant and peaceful future for Belfast lies partly in the hands of its planners and architects.

The Re-imaging Communities project - Arguments for and against the heritage value of murals

In June of 2009, Independent Research Solutions published a report that evaluated the Arts Council of Northern Ireland's pilot Re-imaging Communities programme.[48] Announced in July of 2006, the Re-imaging Communities programme was a three year programme, granted a £3.3 million investment funded through the Shared Communities Consortium (SCC). By removing or replacing divisive imagery, the programme sought to test the viewpoint that "...the current existence of community art and iconic displays, supporting and celebrating community separation and paramilitary influence, can be transformed in artistic ways that are positive, inclusive and non-

---

[47] Brett, "Geologies of site and settlement," 26.

[48] The Re-imaging Communities report covered the aims and objectives of the programme, the methodology of implementation, a background to government policies and initiatives, and quantitative and qualitative findings from the evaluation.

threatening, and that contribute to making people feel involved in a single wider community".[49] The programme provided provisions for communities to express their identities through public artistic media suggested by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, such as positive mural art, sculptures, artistic light installations or hand-crafted street furniture. The communities were encouraged to reflect on the meaning of their identity after the ceasefires, and then imagine ways to interpret this identity into a more positive visual form to replace the visual signs of sectarianism and inter-community separation.[50] The projects were viewed as an opportunity for all citizens to take part in the process of building "a shared future for Northern Ireland, which was peaceful, inclusive, prosperous, stable and fair, founded on partnership, equality and mutual respect as a basis of good relationships".[51]

The report listed multiple benefits witnessed in the early stages of the Re-imaging Communities programme. First, results of a survey of approximately 2000 people in 10 projects found that a majority of respondents indicated that the projects have improved the appearance of their areas and made them more welcoming to people from outside the areas. Second, those involved were encouraged to thoughtfully discuss the meaning of symbolism/imagery to people both inside and outside the communities, sometimes working on a cross-community or multi-cultural basis. This may have resulted in early development stages of new relationships, and in some cases, even lead to discussions of further collaborative work. Third, the report states that community cohesion was improved in almost all projects through the open-floor discussion format where everyone was welcome to comment. Researchers found that some residents felt a sense of empowerment by being able to contribute verbally or physically to the development of change in their local environment. Researchers also found that the images in question were not always there by permission of the local residents, but the Re-imaging programme gave them the support to take more control over their neighbourhood.

Although many of the Re-imaging projects were run by Councils in its early phase, 63% were managed by community groups, adding to the sense of community cohesion and empowerment. For many, this involvement was their first participation in an organization and lead to further involvement in neighbourhood renewal activities, such as planting greenery and neighbourhood clean-ups. In some cases, neighbourhoods received further funding for renewal projects, which increased the enthusiasm for community renewal as a means to achieving a different future. The programme generated a high level of good media publicity, in a light the murals have rarely, if ever,

---

[49] Independed Research Solutions, "Evaluation of the Re-Imaging Communities Programme: A Report to the Arts Council of Northern Ireland," *Arts Council of Northern Ireland* (June 2009): 2, http://www.artscouncil-ni.org/award/forms/FINAL%20EVALUATION.pdf (accessed June 15, 2011).

[50] The project was undertaken by a consortium of committees, including the Arts Council of Northern Ireland (ACNI), the Department of Social Development (DSD), the International Fund for Ireland (IFI), the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE), the Community Relations Council (CRC), the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI), The Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers (SOLACE), and the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM).

[51] Independed Research Solutions, "Evaluation of the Re-Imaging Communities Programme," 3.

been referenced. The media, in this case, created a positive snowball effect which may have encouraged other communities to become involved, but also advertised a new, positive image of a changing Belfast to the outside world.

Up to the date of the report, for the 51 completed projects, 6,893 residents participated in the workshops. In some projects, the individuals responsible for the negative imagery were recruited to design the replacement, and at the time of the report, these murals remained untarnished. Along with the administration staff, consultants, group members, volunteers and so on, the Re-imaging programme has employed 152 artists, who played a pivotal role in helping communities translate their ideals and identities into artistic expressions they can be proud of.

The programme did run into obstacles, most notably a loss of momentum, a lack of flexibility, politics, and questions of sustainability. On the outset, the programme generated a high level of enthusiasm and community involvement, but a suspension of the programme due to a lack of funding forced a halt to all projects undergoing negotiations and applications. When funding was secured a few months later, some cases had dropped out completely, and others were only ensured financial backing for a short time longer. Of course, not everyone was supportive of the initiatives, feeling the re-imaging was a defacement and abandonment of the symbols of their community. Anxiety about change and disagreements over the use of certain forms of imagery caused many projects to proceed slowly and halt intermittently. The cases that experienced the most contention often dealt with some of the most divisive murals. Most participants agreed that the replacement murals should not make reference to any paramilitary groups or their symbolism, but felt it was enough to omit this sort of intimidating imagery to be considered a step forward. A few of the projects stalled due to highly emotive political allegiances or current political situations; some even halted as a result of statements made by political representatives or others. On the other side of the spectrum, some fear that a lack of ongoing funding will cause the steps made toward community renewal to fall into a state of disrepair.[52]

Rolston felt the key to creating successful substitute murals was to keep the politics, but lose the threatening imagery. He said, whether explicit or implicit, an overarching condition of funding was 'don't mention the war' and 'don't touch politics'. Elaborating on the point, he said, "...no matter what you say about the previous murals, even the worst of them... even if you say only a minority in the area wanted this mural or liked this mural, you have to admit that this mural represented something real in terms of a political idea, and you can't say that about some of the re-imaged ones, or a lot of the re-imaged ones. They don't represent any political aspiration or anything else. They're just sort of beautifying the area, or that's the intention. To me, the trick would be, keep the form,

---

[52] In recent years, a growing public awareness of the less tangible effects of prolonged violence and conflict on the individual and the society as a whole has become an increasingly audible concern. Among these concerns are the continuation of active and influential paramilitary groups; the disproportionate levels of disadvantages by communities; the comparative absence of active citizenship; the significant level of teen suicides; the high levels of drug and alcohol abuse; and the difficulties and inequalities experienced by women, minorities, the elderly, children and children in care. (Independed Research Solutions, 2009).

keep the politics, lose the offensiveness."[53] To his knowledge, at this moment, no one has conducted a questionnaire asking residents and citizens what they think of the Re-imaged murals. In his opinion, some are decent, some surprising, but he has issues with a lot of them, in particular, the digitally rendered images. In many of these sort of 'murals', the imagery is cluttered and the message is lost. He could not see any local person risking anything to defend these murals, and suspected they were more or less ignored. I saw one of these murals, a collage of pictures of local residents and local activities, and though it spoke of the community, the people, and represented a positive humanistic image of the neighbourhood, it lacked the personal touch one feels in the hand-painted murals. Regardless of the artistic ability, I feel the painted murals hold much more heritage value than those that could be easily replicated by any computer-savvy designer. Rolston commended the efforts of a Re-imaging muralist's work in the Hopewell Crescent in the Lower Shankill. The simple, yet powerful message, 'PLAY' is spelled out in the forms of children at play. In days past, UDA paramilitary leader, Johnny Adair, ran the area, using children as foot soldiers to run weapons, drugs, etc. Drawing up the imagery of George Orwell's *1984*, the children ran wild, dutifully following in step as his tiny henchmen, creating an environment of fear and one in which no one could be trusted. The fact that this new mural says 'children have a right to play' and has remained untouched for two to three years is highly symbolic of the changes that have taken place in that particular neighbourhood. However, the mural has been painted on free-standing boards masking a wall that has a long history of heavily militaristic images, testifying either to the community's fear of defacing the latest paramilitary mural or their fear of completely letting go of their public display of political alliance.

For Rolston, the people must be taught to re-imagine, not just resurface. Since the Republicans began painting murals at the start of the Troubles, they've called on a wide variety of topics. On the other hand, the sponsors of the loyalist murals often face a complete failure of vision when asked to paint something else. Their paradigm has become so narrow that they cannot identify themselves with any other imagery or symbols. Rolston believes the first step is to get them to say, 'Ok, if that period is over with – the guns and the masks and all; where are we now? Where do we fit now?' One direction they could take is to explore their history. At the moment, there is only one mural in North Belfast that relates to the plantations, a fundamental part of their history which ought to be their foundation as a group of people. The truth is, many of the people who support the paramilitary images are ignorant about that part of their history; a fact that Rolston called tragic, because these people are in an organization whose raison d'être is to defend that ethnicity and identity.

The recent installation of new loyalist UVF paramilitary murals in East Belfast, Rolston believes are reactions to the new murals commemorating the 30th anniversary of the Republican hunger strikers. In general, the quantity of new murals is on the decline. One no longer finds a mural in each small village as would have been the case in the 1980s. In Derry, beyond the Bogside Artists' murals on the 'Free Derry' corner, only 2-3 Republican murals and about a half-dozen Loyalists murals still exist. These murals were painted only for the communities in which they exist, and in the end, it is

---

[53] Bill Rolston, interview by Caroline Engel, (June 22, 2011).

up to the community to decide whether they stay or not. In Belfast, the murals are mostly relegated to the Greater Belfast areas where segregation and sectarianism still have a strong foothold. Rolston knows many loyalist men who have tried hard to change their organizations from the inside because ultimately, they know they cannot keep painting men with guns. Increasingly, these murals are painted with one eye toward the outside world, but Rolston had two things to say about tourism. First, nobody paints a mural just for tourists; the tradition could not be sustained on that motive. Second, tourists come to Belfast for the political murals, a fact the Arts Council neglected to see with the Re-imaging project. It is the politics that make the murals interesting, not the art. However, each new riot sets back the day when people will feel comfortable without the peace walls. The government has more or less resigned to the fact that the walls will stay until the people want else wise. All the euphoria about regeneration and shared space has been focused on the commercial areas, but a true mark of progress would need to be found in the working class areas of Greater Belfast, where there is not much progress to point to yet. "Logically, the question is to get to a point where those peace walls aren't there anymore. How the hell do you do that? That's not an exercise in planning... it's much deeper than that. People want these walls... If it was up to the government, they'd be down tomorrow. People would defend them bitterly. It's about fear, and the thing about fear is it doesn't have to evidence based – though sometimes it is. People are scared of what would happen if the walls came down."[54]

POLITICS OF REMEMBRANCE AND COMMEMORATION

Nations are built upon a consortium of a remembered history; a history that has always been malleable in the hands of the ruler and contested by citizens and subsequent powers alike. Historic sites are reinterpreted to suit current political or religious agendas, and can thus become points of contention or flashpoints of violence for dissidents. These monuments can also bind a nation together through its narrative, sometimes with imaginative and symbolic meanings. The public has been trained to regard any monument with a sort of reverence, seeing it as an embodiment of unity, universality and timelessness, yet the decisions about what to memorialize is often highly politicized.[55] For nations recovering from a mass trauma or civil war, issues of remembering verses forgetting are highly disputed and persevere usually until the last generation with first-hand experience in the conflict is no longer living. It is this period after the trauma and before wounds have healed that an instable government or political change will reawaken the tensions between the warring groups. Often a sort of amnesia is adopted by inhabitants as the price of peace after a civil war or the end of dictatorship regime.[56] In regards to the murals of Belfast, one could argue that

---

[54] Bill Rolston, interview by Caroline Engel, (June 22, 2011).

[55] Lisa Knauer and Daniel Walkowitz, "Introduction," in *Memory and the Impact of Political Transformation in Public Space*, eds. Lisa Knauer and Daniel Walkowitz (Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2004), 5.

[56] Knauer and Walkowitz, "Introduction," 8.

leading politicians of both sides place too much political importance on the murals and their message. Belfast is still an unsettled political hotbed, with both sides accepting what they achieved and gave up with the peace agreement, but neither side is satisfied. The people who are active in or support the paramilitaries feel their identity and culture is under threat; they use the murals to pronounce that they will not change, they will not meld, and they will not succumb. The artistic quality is only measurable on a case-by-case basis, with many murals being repainted every few years, but the cultural heritage value of the lot as a whole, being created by untrained local artists is arguably a unique heritage marker.

Irina Carlota Silber studied the post-civil-war reconciliation of El Salvador after the country witnessed a decade long bloody attack upon its citizens. There, citizens have turned to storytelling to subtly undermine the government's attempt to cover up the monstrosities of the war and carry on business as usual. In her study, Silber challenges the benefits and harm caused when democratization and reconciliation are founded on a government policy of forgetting the preceding violence and injustice of the recent past.[57] After the regime change of 1990, the new political power erased most visual markers of the ousted Sandinista era, most notably the lively community murals. The people retaliated by enthusiastically reviving Sandinista songs through live performances and public events. People will find a way to commemorate life-changing loss and chaos. In general, for more homogenous communities or ones that experienced conflict with outside nations, commemoration and tourism of war sites and events are often promoted as a potent healer and reunifying agent, while generating pride and economic benefits for the recovering community.

Hiroshima – a city shackled to the past

In some cases, the value of commemoration is enforced from outside the community, as is the case for Hiroshima. As the world's first site of a nuclear attack, Hiroshima is more renowned for the atrocities of the atom bomb than Osaka, Tokyo, and Kobe, and has thus been bestowed the onerous responsibility of commemoration while the other cities have been allowed to rebuild without such restrictions. Hiroshima has since become a Mecca for peace pilgrimages and all of its urban planning decisions must embrace this notion of world peace. In doing so, the city and its inhabitants are forced into a prolonged phase of mourning. In 1989, a city official and Expo promoter refused to promote the upcoming expo on the tired notion of peace. To his defence, he explained, 'Peace is too often associated with the atomic bomb... but the Expo should not offer an uptight image – it must be a festive occasion, a *matsuri*. I would rather like people to think about peace at the Peace Memorial Park [located near the hypocenter]; and at the Expo, people should genuinely enjoy themselves... We cannot forever rely on the Atom Bomb Dome [the preserved ruins of the former Industrial Promotion Hall] or Peace Memorial Park. We are aiming to get rid of the gloominess.'[58] In

---

[57] Knauer and Walkowitz, "Introduction," 9.

[58] Lisa Yoneyama, "Taming the Memoryscape: Hiroshima's Urban Renewal," in *Remapping Memory: The Politics of TimeSpace*, ed. by Jonathan Boyarin (Minneapolis & London: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 100.

this statement, he was proposing a special segregation of commemorative historical representations and urban life whereby visitors and inhabitants are directed into spaces defined by their intended use and audience. In doing so, Hiroshima hopes to reconcile its future aspirations with its historical past that has, up to that point, pervaded every aspect of life in the city. The memory of the Atom bomb had placed a veil over the city, shielding it from redefining itself in a new image of its identity and society after the catastrophe. At the time, the government planning council was planning to build a new symbol of Hiroshima, a tower that was "a symbol of akarusa [brightness and joviality] and local prosperity".[59] Planned to be the tallest tower in the world, the top 'light of peace' would mark the height of the explosion above ground. Below, a shopping centre, entertainment plaza and youth centre were planned for the ground level. The planners responded to criticism in the local paper, Asahi Shinbun, saying, "We certainly do not mean to deny the Atom Bomb Dome. But isn't it about time to pursue not only the misery but also the pleasures of peace?"[60] Like Northern Ireland, the residents of Hiroshima struggle with 'survivor's guilt'; an antipathy to pleasure and gaiety are means of paying homage to those who lost their lives in to the atom bomb. Robert Jay Lifton, a scholar of Atom bomb survivors, has concluded that the "guilt-ridden survivors are caught in ambivalence of whether to continue to remember atom bomb destruction and remain faithful to the dead or to suppress the trauma in order to affirm and find pleasure in life".[61]

Lifton's thesis was reaffirmed by a retired railway worker and survivor of the atom bomb, who stressed the significance of didactic spaces created by retaining the visual representations in their original form.[62] "It is meaningful to have [the remains] preserved as they were bombed, in order for others to understand how destructive the weapon is. The role of the atomic ruins as witnesses to the bomb is becoming exceedingly important, especially when the human witnesses are aging. That which loses shape also loses spirit. When it disappears from our sight, it disappears from our memory. To take down the atom bomb ruins means to erase their history."[63]

Two personal accounts can be found in the appendix, which exhibit two polar opinions about the appropriate approach to commemoration in regards to the exceedingly modern and shifting urban environment in Hiroshima.

Defacement in the commemoration of the Berlin Wall

---

[59] Yoneyama, "Taming the Memoryscape: Hiroshima's Urban Renewal," 101.

[60] Yoneyama, "Taming the Memoryscape: Hiroshima's Urban Renewal," 101.

[61] Ibid., 102.

[62] When the Hiroshima Red Cross Hospital, known as the 'Atomic Bomb Hospital' after the blast, was scheduled for renovation and expansion, survivors and architectural preservationist organizations protested. The hospital was rebuilt shortly after the war, but a warped iron window frame and a white wall scarred by pieces of broken glass were retained in situ. Interfering with the expansion plans, these relics were to be donated to the Atom Bomb Museum, a plan that incited much contradiction.

[63] Ibid., 120.

On the 13th of August of this year, a new memorial was unveiled, marking the 50th anniversary of the erection of the barbed wire fencing that preceded the Berlin Wall. By August of 1961, 3,000 citizens of the socialist German Democratic Republic (GDR) were deserting for capitalist Western Germany each day, mostly through Berlin.[64] Rather than wage another war between the east and the west, both sides made a secret agreement to build a wall, successfully dividing the city in two. [65]

Designed by architect Günter Schlusche, the memorial is comprised of rusted poles reaching 12 feet in the air (the height of the wall) dotted along the original line that divided the city for 28 years. This was a dark moment in Germany's history that Schlusche wanted visitors to feel, not just observe. Famous photographs plaster the exterior walls of nearby buildings; Peter Leibing's photograph of an East German soldier weightlessly leaping over the barbed-wire to safety, photographs of German men, women and children risking and losing their lives to cross the border. Audio testimonies, videos and information stands dot the now almost invisible line where until 22 years ago, soldiers shot to kill. The memorial runs almost a mile long, with original sections of the wall interspersed between the rusted metal poles. In doing so, Schlusche attempted to 'remap' the wall rather than recreate it, which he believes would be an inauthentic representation.[66]

---

[64] "The Anniversary of the Berlin Wall's Construction: Better than a War," *The Economis*t, August 13, 2011, http://www.economist.com/node/21525972 (accessed August 13, 2011).

[65] Another very interesting project is the Iron Curtain Green Belt Project, headed by The World Conservation Union. The Green Belt runs along the former 'death zone' of the Iron Curtain, where nature was allowed to grow uninhibited. It is believed that a shared nature reserve, stretching from northernmost Europe to the southernmost region could aid reconciliation for the countries along its borders. I have included a few chapters in the appendix for further reading. The entire publication can be found at http://www.europeangreenbelt.org/005.database_publications_gbbook.html.

[66] Nicholas Kulish, "Recalling When a Wall Split a City Apart," *The New York Time*s, August 11, 2011, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/12/world/europe/12berlin.html (accessed August 11, 2011).
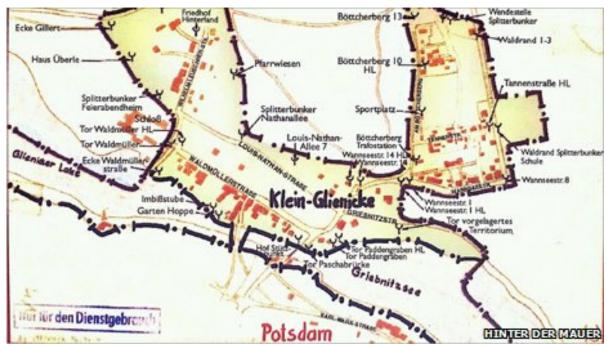
Figure 2 Map of Klein-Glienicke, an East German island within West Germany

After the wall went up, Dr Dietfried Mueller-Hegemann coined a term to describe an increased mental malady he witnessed in his patients at the East Berlin mental hospital where he worked as a psychiatrist. At one time, of the 1600 patients, 100 displayed symptoms of depression, listlessness, delusions of persecution, and repeated attempts of suicide, which he said all stemmed from a "very depressing life situation after August 13, 1961".[67] Today, some citizens who once lived along the wall still exhibit symptoms of 'Mauerkrankheit' – wall sickness. Gitta Heinrich was 20 when the wall went up outside her house in the village of Klein- Glienicke. In that particular area, the wall zig-zagged around the village, creating an East German island within West Germany. Having only one narrow road as an exit to the rest of East Germany, residents felt isolated and imprisoned by the oppressive confines. "The whole village was like a prison", said Heinrich in a recent BBC interview. "Wherever you went, you had to see the Wall." Even after the wall came down, Heinrich was still experiencing acute symptoms of anxiety. She explained it as "an illness with a deep impact on the psyche. It was this real feeling of narrowness."[68] The experience still affects her perception of spaces and crowds, having a strong discomfort with confinement. The wall may have helped Germany to dodge another war, but, as in Belfast, walls create barriers in the mind as well as in a physical sense.

As the interface of two defining world ideologies of an era, Berlin has been the subject of an excess of academic studies in the last two decades. Simon Ward has studied the way global violence

---

[67] Stephen Evans, "The Berlin Wall sickness that still lingers today," *The BBC News*, August 12, 2011, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-14488681 (accessed August 12, 2011).

[68] Evans, "The Berlin Wall sickness that still lingers today".

manifests itself on the urban environment of contemporary Berlin, and more so, how visual culture attempts to make the memory of violence visible through the process of defacement. Ward suggested that Berlin is still poised between the 'no longer' and the 'not yet', making it a blank canvas for artists and academics. Theories and artistic interpretations can be tested there, where they would not have that malleability nor acceptance anywhere is in the world. Ward was also concerned with the amnesiac effects of globalization and capitalism, in the way that an influx of capital often brings about rash building projects which violate the pre-existing spaces, erasing the residue of time. The Berlin Wall acted as a reminder of the Cold War, which passed its own 'architectural violence' onto the centre of the city. The towers at Bornholmer Strasse and many other parts of the wall have long been placed under conservation orders, but Potsdamer Platz, a location where a large portion of the wall had been visible, was late to receive such attention. In 1991, a design competition was held for the rebuilding of Potsdamer Platz. The new design had to negotiate with the potentially awkward 'memory value' of the remnants of the war and the wall, which in the end, was done by incorporating them into the commercial structures.[69] The remnants became exhibits in the architecture and of the square as a whole. Not being maintained in their original state, but incorporated into the new structures, the remnants took on an aura of artificiality, thus severed from the events that produced them. The signage accompanying the objects narrows their interpretation to specific definitions, preferring to highlight their historic value tied to WWII or the Wilhelmine Empire, rather than the post-war era. The vast employment of glass, representing traces of artefacts, also creates juxtaposition between history and the present, and between the real events and the sterilized and diluted meaning created in this sort of commemoration. To this point, Ward states,

> "The meaning of the remnants on Potsdamer Platz is thus fixed in a quite specific fashion: a remnant is an object behind glass. They have become intended monuments whose meaning, however, is exhausted in exhibition value. The glass exhibits the aura, but arguably dematerializes and neutralizes it. These remnants are no longer irritants in the smooth efficient functioning of an interchangeable abstract space, but belong to the exhibition spectacle that works against the potential for the trace as a palimpsest of historical processes as it fixes them in a musealized situation. What matters on Potsdamer Platz is the *image* of the past as fixed in the past and *incorporated* within the present face of the urban environment."[70]

In 2008, sections of the Berlin Wall were placed in a more organized fashion with alternating signs recounting the history and events of the wall. The importance of the wall in time and on people is

---

[69] At the time of the design competition for the new Potsdamer Platz, the space was not completely void of historic buildings and references. The Hotel Esplanade, the Weinhaus Huth, and a line of trees marking the former path of the old Potsdammer Strasse had to be maintained in any reconstruction plans, but how this was done was not defined.

[70] Simon Ward, "Globalization and the rememberance of violence: Visual culture, space, and time in Berlin," in *Globalization, Violence, and the Visual Culture of Cities*, ed. Christoph Lindner (Oxon: Routledge, 2010), 92.

dwarfed by the looming towers of the new corporate architecture. The fragments are out of context and out of time. In this way, it does not toy with co-existence in the present, but is a distinct and accessible ruin of the past.

The Derry Exhibition – the museumization of conflict

At the tail end of the worst of the troubles in Derry/Londonderry, Northern Ireland, Robin Wade was hired to curate and design a permanent commemorative exhibit at the Tower Museum. He said they of course wanted a neutral history of the Troubles, a request he said was impossible, but after about five years of conversations and negotiations, they reached a plan that pacified both sides. At one point, the Northern Ireland Tourist Board out of Belfast attempted to withdraw their funding because they had wanted a nice museum for tourists and did not see the need to put all the "nasty bits" in, as Wade put it. Brian Lacey, director of Londonderry's heritage and museum service said, "We made it plain we had no intention of not addressing [the Troubles]. After all, they started here and you could say they ended here, too."[71] The Catholics and the Protestants in the Derry government teamed up and argued for their right to display the events of the Troubles in any way they saw fit. In the end, the commemoration of the sectarian divide brought the two sides together.

CONCLUSION

The situation in Belfast remains highly politicized and deeply rooted. I agree with Bill Rolston in that banning politics from forms of personal expression is a naive and ultimately unsuccessful approach; it is not simply a battle over symbols and flags. Rarely will one find a people whose identity is not tied intimately to politics, religion or both, so the challenge in Belfast is to broaden the spectrum of ideals and ideas that the people derive their identity from. It is not the politics, but the violence tied to the politics that keeps the city rapt in its dark past and its citizens at odds. Rather than masking the differences, a spotlight on the cultural diversity, present and past, may aid the healing community more than an amnestic or blind-eye approach. It is human nature to express anguish, and these manifestations can be stunningly beautiful, as is Picasso's *Guernica*. Like the revival of traditional Sandinista songs in post-conflict El Salvador, people will find a way to commemorate their history and their losses. The commemoration of conflict in the built environment is not about forging a relationship between architecture and politics, but revealing it.[72] Each city is a palimpsest of histories, myths and personal stories; which is told is a matter of politics.

---

[71] Simon Tait, "Not afraid to face up to the facts," *The Times*, October 25, 1994.

[72] Fredric Jameson, "Is Space Political?" in *Rethinking Architecture*, ed. Neil Leach, (London: Routledge, 1997), 256.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Allen, Nicholas, and Aaron Kelly. "Introduction." In *The Cities of Belfast*, edited by Nicholas Allen and Aaron Kelly, 1-14. Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2003.

Bender, Barbara. "Introduction." In *Contested Landscapes: Movement, Exile and Place*, edited by Barbara Bender and Margot Winer, 1-18. New York and Oxford: Berg Publishers, 2001.

Bender, Barbera. *Landscape: politics and perspectives.* Oxford, 1993.

Bowcott, Owen. "Belfast riots: a setback for area barely reshaped by peace process." *The Guardian*, June 22, 2011.

Brand, Ralf. "From the Guest Editor: The Architecture of War and Peace." *Taylor & Francis Online.* Aug-Dec 2009. http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10630730903278504 (accessed July 6, 2001).

Brand, Ralf. "Urban Artifacts and Social Practices in a Contested City." *Journal of Urban Technology* 16, no. 2-3 (Aug-Dec 2009): 35-60.

Brett, David. "Geologies of site and settlement." In *The Cities of Belfast*, edited by Nicholas Allen and Aaron Kelly, 19-26. Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2003.

Dawe, Gerald. "The revenges of the heart: Belfast and the poetics of space." In *The Cities of Belfast*, edited by Nicholas Allen and Aaron Kelly, 199-210. Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2003.

Dawson, Graham. *Making peace with the past? Memory, Trauma, and the Irish Troubles.* Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007.

Walls of Shame: Belfast. Directed by Al Jazeera English. 2007.

Evans, Stephen. "The Berlin Wall sickness that still lingers today." *The BBC News.* August 12, 2011. http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-14488681 (accessed August 12, 2011).

Finlay, Andrew. "Defeatism and Northern Protestant 'Identity'." *The Global Review of Ethnopolitics.* December 2001. http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/ethnopolitics/finlay01.pdf (accessed June 5, 2011).

Gaffikin, Frank, Malachy McEldowney, Gavan Rafferty, and Ken Sterrett. "Public Space for a Shared Belfast: A research report for Belfast City Council." January 2008. http://homepage.ntlworld.com/g.rafferty38/data/resrep-PublicSpace.pdf (accessed August 25, 2011).

Gillis, Alan. "Ciaran Carson: beyond Belfast." In *The Cities of Belfast*, edited by Nicholas Allen and Aaron Kelly, 183-198. Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2003.

Independed Research Solutions. "Evaluation of the Re-Imaging Communities Programme: A Report to the Arts Council of Northern Ireland." *Arts Council of Northern Ireland.* June 2009. http://www.artscouncil-ni.org/award/forms/FINAL%20EVALUATION.pdf (accessed June 15, 2011).

Jameson, Fredric. "Is Space Political?" In *Rethinking Architecture*, edited by Neil Leach, 224-255. London: Routledge, 1997.

Kelly, Aaron. "Terror-torial imperatives: Belfast and Eoin McNamee's Resurrection Man." In *The Cities of Belfast*, edited by Nicholas Allen and Aaron Kelly, 168-182. Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2003.

Knauer, Lisa, and Daniel Walkowitz. "Introduction." In *Memory and the Impact of Political Transformation in Public Space*, edited by Lisa Knauer and Daniel Walkowitz, 1-18. Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2004.

Kulish, Nicholas. "Recalling When a Wall Split a City Apart." *The New York Times.* August 11, 2011. http://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/12/world/europe/12berlin.html (accessed August 11, 2011).

Neely, Amberlea, interview by Caroline Engel. *Manager of PLACE Architecture Centre* (June 21, 2011).

Rolston, Bill, interview by Caroline Engel. (June 22, 2011).

—. "Changing the Political Landscape: Murals and Transition in Northern Ireland." *Taylor and Francis Online.* 2003. http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0967088032000057861#preview (accessed June 7, 2011).

Shirlow, Peter. "'Who Fears to Speak': Fear, Mobility, and Ethno-sectariansim in the Two 'Ardoynes'." *The Global Review of Ethnopolitics.* September 2003. http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/ethnopolitics/shirlow03.pdf (accessed June 5, 2011).

Tait, Simon. "Not afraid to face up to the facts." *The Times*, October 25, 1994.

"The Anniversary of the Berlin Wall's Construction: Better than a War." *The Economist.* August 13, 2011. http://www.economist.com/node/21525972 (accessed August 13, 2011).

Ward, Simon. "Globalization and the rememberance of violence: Visual culture, space, and time in Berlin." In *Globalization, Violence, and the Visual Culture of Cities*, edited by Christoph Lindner, 87-106. Oxon: Routledge, 2010.

Williams, Richard J. "Architecture and economies of violence: Sao Paulo as a case study." In *Globalization, Violence, and the Visual Culture of Cities*, edited by Christoph Lindner, 15-31. Oxon: Routledge, 2010.

Wright, Frank. *Northern Ireland: A comparative Analysis.* Dublin: Gill and Macmillan Ltd, 1987.

Yoneyama, Lisa. "Taming the Memoryscape: Hiroshima's Urban Renewal." In *Remapping Memory: The Politics of TimeSpace*, edited by Jonathan Boyarin, 99-136. Minneapolis & London: University of Minnesota Press, 1994.

APPENDIX

Hiroshima – two survivor's opinions on commemoration[73]

Preservation meeting, student nurse at hospital during bomb 44 years earlier (6 Aug 1945 – ie. Quote 1989)

I was in my second year. In those days, we students were all suffering from chronic malnutrition. But the wartime tension kept our minds clear. As I stood facing the window that looked out over the courtyard, a yellow-white illumination, like burning magnesium, suddenly spread all over the window with a roaring sound. It was still as death. I probably stood up immediately. The ceiling had collapsed. The windows were broken. There was no one moving. A patient passed by.... We tried to rescue a student nurse who had been hospitalized. She was buried underneath a crushed wooden building. But we were unable to move even a leg. Like the rush of a tide, the wounded survivors rolled into the hospital. Soon, the medicine ran out.... With outside help, we cleared the inside of the hospital.

The town of Hiroshima fell into pieces so completely that I could even view the far-off station; and it began to burn. The buried students were unrescued; Hiroshima continued to blaze brightly.

...On the morning of the seventh, we gathered in the courtyard. Only thirteen of us were present among approximately one hundred and fifty students who were at the hospital. The wounded people packed into the entranceway began to die, one by one. In about a week, everyone was gone. We burned the corpses in the courtyard. We put in envelopes the bones that were still burning inside. It continued day after day.... At every footstep, bones cracked under our feet. The phosphorus flames continued to burn, as if people were calling to let us know that they had died there.

The defeat in the war was a great shock for us youth. Everything we received through education crumbled away. Only empty feeling remained. The ruins before our eyes and the pain of the deep wounds in our hearts – only from there, I believe, may grow an unyielding will never to repeat war and never to use the atomic bomb. I remember the white town I saw from the top of Hijiyama for the first time since I recovered from ten years of illness [caused by the radiation]. I remembered the town before it had burned. I also remembered the town that had turned into ashes. And I saw the streets today. I now wish I could have preserved the town of crumbling ruins, fencing it off with a chain. I wished I could have frozen the flames of phosphorus that continued to burn, reminding us that people were dying here. I wish so even to this day.

... All wars made people suffer, despite the differences in the gravity.... It is not easy to defend peace. The hospital shouldn't be completely renewed, but instead it must be handed on to the

---

[73] Lisa Yoneyama, "Taming the Memoryscape: Hiroshima's Urban Renewal," in *Remapping Memory: The Politics of TimeSpace*, ed. by Jonathan Boyarin (Minneapolis & London: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 122-24.

generation that did not experience the war.... We must make the right decision. For lives are at stake.

61 yr old man, atomic bomb survivor, Hiroshima

"My father, too, was lying beside the entrance hall of the hospital.... He died on the night of the ninth. As I close my eyes, I can still remember vividly the scene at the hospital entranceway. Several corpses were floating in the pond; nearby a few naked bodies of female students lay cold. As I stepped into the hallway, I saw an even more appalling picture. There were more dead people than those who were alive. It seems like a miracle that I could find my father in such apocalyptic circumstances.

But for me it is sufficient that the horrific scene is kept to my own memories. I do not wish to return to the spot. Moreover, I will by no means hope to explain to others about my father's condition. The atomic bomb misery has already been recorded in various ways. Isn't it better if the aging hospital should be drastically renovated so that it can serve those of us who survived? At least from watching the TV, the explanation given by the hospital management personnel sounds reasonable.... The Atom Bomb Dome alone is quite sufficient as a remains that records the atom bomb experience in Hiroshima city. (Chugoku shinbun, 29 January 1990)