

Antipodean Naivety in the Contact Zone of Berlin

New Zealand writers in Berlin before and after the fall of the Wall

By

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Abstract

The Man from Nowhere & Other Prose by James McNeish (1991), *Berlin Diary* by Cilla McQueen (1990), *To Each His Own* by Philip Temple (1999), and *Phone Home Berlin: Collected Non-fiction* by Nigel Cox (2007) are all texts written by New Zealand writers who either visited or lived in Berlin before and after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. Their texts chronicle their experiences in Berlin and capture their observations of and reflections on the city, its people and their place as New Zealand writers in Berlin. This thesis discusses the texts they wrote while in Berlin, focussing particularly on the images of war, walls and the idea of ‘antipodean naivety’. My introductory chapter provides a brief history of New Zealand writers in Berlin. The chapter addresses key historical events which took place in Berlin and how they gave rise to artistic and cultural initiatives, providing the opportunity for McNeish, McQueen and Temple to be in the city. In the second chapter, I consider the images of war found in the writers’ texts. McNeish, McQueen and Temple focus particularly on Berlin’s Second World War history and to a lesser extent on the Cold War. I examine the reasons why they focus so heavily on this part of Berlin’s history, especially when the city has a much longer and broader military history that is ignored by the writers when they address issues of war and conflict in their texts. My third chapter addresses images of walls. For the artists and writers resident in Berlin before the fall of the Berlin Wall, the Berlin Wall is a prominent feature in their texts. But as foreigners to the city and country, they encounter other ‘walls’ such as language and cultural barriers. These metaphorical boundaries are examined further in my fourth chapter which discusses the idea of ‘antipodean naivety’. I apply Mary Louise Pratt’s theory of the ‘contact zone’ in reverse to the experiences of McNeish, McQueen and Temple in Berlin. In my fifth and final chapter I contrast the work of Nigel Cox who was in Berlin ten years after the fall of the Berlin Wall and for a different purpose. Perhaps surprisingly Cox nevertheless responds to Berlin in similar ways to the other New Zealanders. I argue that as New Zealanders these writers come to Berlin from a small country on the other side of the world with a less grandiose history to a country they think they know. In reality, the way the writers interpret their surroundings and the things on which they focus in their texts - almost always Berlin’s twentieth century history - illustrates how little they know about the city, but also suggests how unsettling the experience of the contact zone is, especially when it is such a historically and ideologically-loaded place, and how it makes them aware of their place of origin and their own naiveties and anxieties.

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Introduction

Author David Clay Large, in his 2001 text *Berlin*, describes the city as ‘open, brave and honest’ (157). He argues that these are some of the reasons many artists have been attracted to the Berlin in recent decades. This thesis investigates the experience of four New Zealand writers who found themselves in Berlin, the way they have responded to their experiences in the city, and how these experiences are represented in their texts. I argue that the images of Berlin generated by Nazism and the Cold War always dominate what they perceive.

In this introductory chapter, I provide a brief overview of the city’s strong literary tradition in order to place the New Zealand writers in Berlin’s literary history. I discuss some of the key historical events of the twentieth century which were centred in Berlin and attracted German and foreign artists to the city. These events also gave rise to artistic and cultural fellowships in Berlin during the latter part of the twentieth century and particularly during the Cold War. I address the ways in which four New Zealand writers took up opportunities to visit Berlin and how the New Zealand literary connection with the city has developed further in the last decade. Finally I provide a brief account of the four New Zealand writers and their texts considered in this thesis and the personal circumstances which brought them to Berlin. The following chapters examine the individual texts in close detail.

The motif of Berlin in literature encompasses a range of themes too broad to cover in this study alone. Instead, I have chosen to focus on the two themes which occur most often in the texts

produced by these writers: Wars and Walls. How are wars and walls represented in their texts? The fourth chapter addresses the idea of ‘antipodean naivety’ and the extent to which the writers’ nationality and culture colours the way they view Berlin. The final chapter discusses a collection of essays by author Nigel Cox. His essays act as a comparison against the works of the three other New Zealand writers: James McNeish, Cilla McQueen and Philip Temple, all of whom went to Berlin as the recipients of writing fellowships. What differences, if any exist between Cox’s essays, written by someone who went to Berlin to work at the Jewish Museum, and the writers who were in the city as recipients of writing fellowships? Do these works pay any attention to Berlin’s long and glittering literary tradition, and if so, how?

Since the eighteenth century literature has played ‘a significant role in Germans’ understanding of their culture and identity’ (Gerstenberger 2). Berlin, capital of the now reunified Germany and of the former German Democratic Republic (1949 - 1990), the Third Reich Germany, the Weimar Republic, Imperial Germany, and the Kingdom of Prussia, and a city in which some of the key historical events of the twentieth century took place, has in its own right a strong literary tradition within Germany. Proof of that literary tradition is evident by the centrality of Berlin in over two centuries of German literature. Nineteenth century, Prussian-born German writer Theodor Fontane (1819-1898) wrote eleven so-called ‘Berlin novels’,¹ including three of his most well-known: *Effi Briest* (1894), *Frau Jenny Treibel* (1892), and *Irrungen und Wirrungen* (1888). Although these novels are not set entirely in the capital, Berlin is the backdrop (Garland vii). During Berlin’s tumultuous history of the twentieth century, the city continued to feature in the writings of some of Germany’s most renowned authors, including Alfred Döblin, Kurt Tucholsky, Joseph Roth, Bertolt Brecht, Christa Wolf and Hans Fallada.

Innovative, experimental artistic movements such as the Expressionism and Dada, and political activism and ideologies across the spectrum found a home in Berlin throughout the twentieth century.² Visitors have been attracted to Berlin because they found the city to be “open, brave, and honest, especially regarding sex” (Large 157). The exploits of Christopher Isherwood and other English-speaking writers in Berlin during the inter-war years are well known and

¹ Fontane’s other ‘Berlin novels’ include: *Vor dem Sturm*, *Schach von Wuthenow*, *L’Adultera*, *Cecile*, *Stine*, *Die Poggenpuhls*, *Mathilde Möhring*, and *Der Stechlin*. Further discussion of Fontane’s ‘Berlin novels’ to be found in Garland’s *The Berlin Novels of Theodor Fontane* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980)

² For the purposes of this thesis, only some of the key artists and periods have been mentioned. Fuller discussions of artistic and political movements can be found in the following two comprehensive histories of Berlin: David Clay Large, *Berlin* (New York: Basic Books, 2000); and Alexandra Richie, *Faust’s Metropolis: A History of Berlin* (London: HarperCollins, 1998)

documented.³ It was not until the late twentieth century that New Zealand writers followed in the footsteps of these.⁴ Their arrival in the city can be viewed within the continuum of Berlin's broader literary tradition.⁵

The first two decades of the twentieth century saw the outbreak of the First World War, the abdication of Kaiser Wilhelm II in 1918 and the establishment of the Weimar Republic. Physician and writer Alfred Döblin witnessed all three of these events. During the First World War, he enlisted in the German army serving in military hospitals in Alsace-Lorraine. He returned to Berlin in November 1918 after Germany's surrender to become a prominent writer during the Weimar Republic years of 1919 to 1933 (Roland Dollinger 2, 8). Döblin's most well-known work, published in 1929, is *Berlin Alexanderplatz: Die Geschichte vom Franz Biberkopf* (1929), a novel set in the city's working class areas surrounding the square named in the title. Not only is it set in Berlin, it offers a panoramic view of the city (literally from the tramlines to the slaughterhouse to the advertising hoardings) and effectively represents it as a living organism in its own right. A quotation from this novel was displayed for some time on the facade of a building near *Alexanderplatz* formerly known as the *Haus der Elektroindustrie* (The Electrical Industry Building), which now bears the name *Alfred-Döblin-Haus* (Alfred Döblin House).⁶

Berlin in the 1920s reflected the decadence and excess of the 'Golden Twenties' (Richie 326). The city developed a reputation for decadent and seedy nightlife (Large 179). Furthermore Large notes that the aspects of cosmopolitan Berlin which were deplored by the Nazis such as 'homosexuality, avant-garde art, left-wing politics, jazz, lascivious cabaret' were the very aspects that attracted W. H. Auden and Christopher Isherwood (227). Isherwood's semi-autobiographical short novel *Goodbye to Berlin* (1939) is an example of how the city's reputation attracted young artists.

³ For further detailed discussion regarding images of sexuality in Berlin literature and factors attracting English-speaking writers to Berlin, see John J. White's chapter "Sexual Mecca, Nazi Metropolis, City of Doom: The Pattern of English, Irish and American Reactions to the Berlin of the Inter-War Years" in *Berlin: Literary Images of a City Eine Großstadt im Spiegel der Literatur*, Derek Glass, Dietmar Rösler & John J. White Eds. 1989

⁴ Katherine Mansfield was an early New Zealand writer to spend a period writing in Germany in 1909 although most of her time was in Bavaria.

⁵ My discussion of this 'literary continuum' should not be viewed as a comprehensive account of twentieth century Berlin literature. Its aim is to provide a snapshot of key writers who were in the city during Berlin's significant episodes of history, leading to the period in question when New Zealand writers began coming to the city.

⁶ 'Die Erinnerung an Alfred Döblin verblasst in Berlin' www.news.de/DPA (2011), accessed 28.02.2012 <<http://www.news.de/medien/8552394/die-erinnerung-an-alfred-doeblin-verblasst-in-berlin/1/>>

Not all were pleased by Berlin's reputation as a 'cosmopolitan metropolis' that was 'open, brave, and honest, especially towards sex'. The Nazi party began working in Berlin during the mid-1920s, when *Gauleiter* (Area Leader) Joseph Goebbels was sent to take over the district of Berlin-Brandenburg in 1926. Goebbels was apparently not pleased with his assignment, describing the city as a "sink hole of iniquity" (225). German-language writers like Joseph Roth wrote accounts of Berlin during this period. A collection of his impressions is translated in *What I Saw: Reports from Berlin 1920-1933* (2003). This collection illustrates Roth's unease with the political situation emerging in Berlin at the time. Foreign writers also began to document the rise of the Nazi party, in particular the American journalist William L. Shirer, who documented the Nazi party's rise to power in his journal *Berlin Diary: The Journal of a Foreign Correspondent 1934-1941* (1941).

The National Socialist party came to power in Germany in 1933. As with many marginalised groups during the Nazi period, free-wheeling artists came under the scrutiny of the party's severe policies. Its policies only allowed for art that conformed to their own values, such as glorifying the racial strength and purity of the Aryan people, espousing the importance of national unity and discipline, or promoting the cult of a strong leader. Naturally these policies seriously impinged on artistic and personal freedom and seem likely to have impacted on writers' desire to come to Berlin during this period. In 1933 numerous book burnings took place around Germany. These were held at universities by student supporters of the National Socialist policies implemented by Hitler's government. These book burnings were supported by the Nazi government. Their aim was to rid Germany of so-called "un-German" literature.⁷ In 1937 Goebbels' reaction is representative of the party's stance on the capital city. In 1937, an exhibition was held in Munich entitled *Entartete Kunst* (Degenerate Art). It was held to exhibit art which the Nazi government determined to be un-German, Jewish or Bolshevik in nature (Richie 449). In this period many artists left Berlin, seeking refuge in other European countries or further abroad such as the United States of America.

One author who found himself particularly marginalised, especially during the period of the Nazi rise to power, was Kurt Tucholsky. Tucholsky was born in Berlin in 1890, the son of an affluent Jewish merchant. During the 1920s, he worked as a journalist and often published scathing articles attacking Nazi policies which saw him fall out of favour with party officials (Poor 188). By 1933, the now Minister for Propaganda, Joseph Goebbels, campaigned against Tucholsky and

⁷ Further information regarding 1933 book burnings see: Large *Berlin* 273 or Richie *Faust's Metropolis: A History of Berlin* 447

his work (Grenville 24). On 10 May 1933, Tucholsky's works were blacklisted and his books included in the book burnings at that time. He was stripped of his German citizenship later that year after being accused of anti-German activities. He committed suicide in Sweden on 20 December 1935, shortly after his application for Swedish citizenship was declined.⁸ After the Second World War and the establishment of the communist German Democratic Republic, Tucholsky became a communist martyr, a victim of fascism (24-5).

Following Germany's defeat in the Second World War in 1945 the country was divided into four zones (and Berlin into four sectors), each of which was governed by one of the occupying powers. In 1948 the Soviets, governing the eastern sector of Berlin, brought the Berlin Blockade (the Blockade) into effect. The Blockade severely restricted access to the sectors of the city under Allied control which lay deep within the Soviet zone of Germany, thereby requiring them to rely on the Soviets for supplies and enabling the Soviets to gain fuller control of Berlin. The Blockade lasted less than a year after the western powers successfully implemented the Berlin Airlift, in which aircrews supplied food and fuel to Berliners in the western sectors of the city on a daily basis. The Blockade was a precursor to the foundation of two separate German states. The American, British and French zones were joined to form the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) in 1949. In the Soviet zone of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) significant numbers of Germans soon began fleeing the country for the West, named *Republikflucht* or desertion of the Republic. To stem the flow of numbers leaving, authorities erected the Berlin Wall (the Wall) in 1961. At 155 kilometres in length the Wall encircled West Berlin completely reducing the city to an exclave of the FRG within the GDR. The Wall stood from 1961 until late 1989, during which time four major changes were made to the Wall to ensure it was almost impossible to pass. During the time of divided Berlin state authorities the Arts were heavily sanctioned. Two writers in the GDR who enjoyed success during that time were Bertolt Brecht and Christa Wolf and were seen as leading literary figures in the GDR.⁹ Brecht was not a member of the Communist Party but held Marxist views which for a time he had studied. Christa Wolf was a member of the *Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands* (Socialist Unity Party of Germany or SED) and had also worked as an informant for the *Stasi*. However she was not seen as a

⁸For further discussion on Tucholsky see: Bryan P. Grenville, *Kurt Tucholsky: The Ironic Sentimentalist*, German Literature and Society, vol 1 (London: Oswald Wolff, 1981); Michael Hierholzer *Kurt Tucholsky, 1890-1935: Aspects of the Man and his Works* (Bonn: Inter Nationes, 1990)

⁹ For further discussion of Brecht's reception in the GDR see "Recent Brecht Reception in East Germany (GDR)" by Marc Silberman from the *Theatre Journal*, Vol 32 No. 1 Mar 1980 pp95-105 The Johns Hopkins University Press.

reliable informant and was then watched closely by the *Stasi*. Despite this she still enjoyed success in the GDR and supported the policies of the state.

It was while Germany was still divided between East and West that the New Zealand literary connection with Berlin began to develop. The substantial body of work created by New Zealand writers visiting and writing about Berlin did not emerge in isolation or independently of outside forces. Various causes enabled its development: government policies, both inward and outward looking by New Zealand and Germany and a desire by writers to engage in something new and in a totally different environment to New Zealand. By the 1980s, there was a strong drive to encourage the arts and artistic freedom in the divided city supported by initiatives in the West German capital of Bonn. State sponsorship of the arts in West Berlin was one of numerous initiatives by Bonn to encourage activity in the divided city. Language and culture were seen as a 'safe' rallying point for German identity - tainted by its negative association with the Nazis, the Second World War and the Holocaust (Large 464). McNeish, McQueen and Temple took advantage of the writing fellowship and funding opportunities on offer, one of them being the *Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst Berliner Künstlerprogramm* (German Academic Exchange Service or *DAAD Artists-in-Berlin Programme*) and more recently the Creative New Zealand Berlin Writers' Residency (CNZ Writers' Residency). And like the emerging body of New Zealand literature on Berlin, these fellowships did not emerge in isolation or independently of outside forces.

The *DAAD Artists-in-Berlin Programme* was established in 1963 by the Ford Foundation. The Ford Foundation was established in 1936 by Edsel Ford, son of Henry Ford, the founder of Ford Motor Company. In 1949, the Foundation published a report detailing the types of activities it would support.¹⁰ The Foundation recommended support for organisations that:

Promise significant contributions to world peace and the establishment of a world order of law and justice; secure greater allegiance to the basic principles of freedom and democracy in the solution of the insistent problems of an ever-changing society; advance the economic well-being of people everywhere and improve economic institutions for the better realization of democratic goals; strengthen, expand and improve educational facilities and methods to enable individuals to realize more fully their intellectual, civic and spiritual

¹⁰ H. Rowan Gaither, *Report of the Study for the Ford Foundation on Policy and Program*, (Detroit: Ford Foundation, 1949), <http://www.fordfoundation.org/pdfs/about/Gaither-Report.pdf>, accessed 28.02.2012

potential; to promote greater equality of educational opportunity; and to conserve and increase knowledge and enrich our culture; and increase knowledge of factors that influence or determine human conduct, and extend such knowledge for the maximum benefit of individuals and society.¹¹

As guests of the *DAAD* Artists-in-Berlin Programme, artists were deemed to be at the ‘frontline’ of the Cold War in Berlin.¹² 1963, the year in which the *DAAD* Artists-in-Berlin Programme was established, is also the year that United States President John F. Kennedy visited Berlin at the height of the Cold War and delivered his famous “*ich bin ein Berliner*” address outside the *Rathaus Schöneberg* (Schöneberg Town Hall) in Berlin. The establishment of the Programme should be interpreted through the lens of the Cold War and its origins in American philanthropy. During the Cold War, there was much investment in cultural programmes as a form of ‘soft’ power used against the Soviets. The *DAAD* Artists-in-Berlin Programme must be seen in the context of a much larger Cold War strategy (Trommler 260).

The *DAAD* took over administration of the Artists-in-Berlin Programme in 1965. Initially named the “Academic Exchange Service”, the *DAAD* was founded on 1 January 1925 in Heidelberg, promoting an exchange between German and American students studying social and political sciences. It was then registered as the German Academic Exchange Service in 1931. In 1933, the *DAAD* was subject to the *Gleichschaltung* policies of the Nazi regime, which sought to align organisations’ activities with Nazi doctrine. The German Academic Exchange Service ceased activities in 1943 after all *DAAD* files were destroyed due to bombing.¹³

After the FRG was founded the German Academic Exchange Service was re-founded at the suggestion of the British (Hellman 174). It is unclear if this suggestion was at the urging of the British government or the British Allied authorities governing part of Germany at the time. However, the *DAAD* of the post-war era had similar aims to its pre-war predecessor. It aimed to promote international exchange and act as an intermediary for the implementation of foreign cultural policy and national academic policy.

¹¹ Overview - Ford Foundation, 2012, <http://www.fordfoundation.org/about-us/history>, accessed 28.02.2012

¹² Profile - Berliner Künstlerprogramm, http://www.berliner-kuenstlerprogramm.de/en/profil_ge.html accessed 28.02.2012

¹³ *DAAD - History*, 2009, <http://www.daad.de/portrait/wer-wir-sind/geschichte/08945.en.html> cessed 1.03.2012

Although the city was divided in 1945 and borders between East and West existed, citizens were able to cross freely between sectors. In the 1960s, West Berlin officials decided to focus on the city's historic strength as a cultural hub. Authorities realised that the construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961 would limit the appeal of Berlin to artists, as historically the city had done before. The restrictions on individual liberty were counter to Berlin's liberal artistic reputation in the past. Subsidies and initiatives needed to be put in place to encourage artists to come to Berlin. After the construction of the Wall, the historic centre happened to be situated in East Berlin. Naturally this meant that new buildings fit for consumption of the arts in the capitalist, consumer society of the West needed to be constructed. This led to the building of the *Kulturforum* (Cultural Forum) in the 1960s - a collection of cultural buildings (Large 471). The *Kulturforum* consisted of the *Berliner Philharmonie* (Berlin Philharmonic) designed by Hans Scharoun and constructed between 1960 and 1963; the *Neue Nationalgalerie* (New National Gallery), designed by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and built in 1968; and the *Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin (Haus Potsdamerstraße)* (Berlin State Library (Potsdammer St. Building)) also designed by Scharoun and completed in 1978.

To complement those new cultural buildings, West Berlin also required cultural institutions that fostered the arts. The *DAAD Artists-in-Berlin Programme* was only one among many, including: the Film and Television Academy, the Institute for Educational Research, the Berlin Academy of Art, the Berlin Literary Colloquium, the Berlin Festival Weeks, and the Berlin Film Festival (Large 474). Under the Programme artists, including writers, visual artists and composers were to spend twelve months in Berlin at the invitation of the German Federal Foreign Office, the Berlin Senate and the *DAAD*. The Programme concentrates on creative freedom and artistic dialogue. One of the aims of the programme is to enable artists to devote themselves fully to their work, "free of market mechanisms and censorship"(Schayan).

The current director of the Programme Katharina Narbutovic has stated unequivocally that the programme expects "nothing at all" from its guests in return for being awarded the fellowship. Guests are simply expected to find "the greatest possible freedom for their artistic work in Berlin."¹⁴ This may be a trend in post-War Germany to avoid heavily prescriptive arts policies – a reaction to the tight control of the arts under the Nazi and communist regimes. In more recent

¹⁴The *DAAD Artists-in-Berlin Programme* "Interaction with the German Art Scene" http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/EN/Aussenpolitik/KulturDialog/Initiativen/Aussenwissenschaftsinitiative2009/Bildungspartnerschaften/November/Bildungspartnerschaften-November_node.html Updated 1.11.2010; accessed 29.01.2013

years, the Artists-in-Berlin Programme regarded the fall of the Wall as a “commission to reinforce the freedom of art and the word.”¹⁵ Moreover, it is a reminder of the centrality of the arts to both historic and contemporary understandings of Berlin.

McNeish, McQueen and Temple, the three New Zealand writers discussed in this thesis, participated in the Programme prior to the fall of the Wall. All three of their texts address at various points issues of freedom and liberty, especially in the context of the Cold War and the civil liberties of East and West Berliners. As stated, all three of these authors were in Berlin before the fall of the Wall. However, after the fall of the Wall and during the 1990s, the period in which Germany became reunited, there was a distinct lack of New Zealand writers who went to Berlin. In response, Temple put forward a new initiative to encourage his fellow writers to connect with the city.

In 2000, Creative New Zealand established the CNZ Writers’ Residency. Temple, who by the end of the 1990s had enjoyed a long association with the city since his first writing fellowship provided by the *DAAD* Artists-in-Berlin Programme in 1987, argued for the creation of such a residency. There is no doubt that his experiences in Berlin had a deep impact on him. He wrote about how it had affected him on two separate occasions and also in his semi-autobiographical novel *To Each His Own* (1998). Temple made the suggestion to the Chair of the Arts Board, Chris Finlayson, who enthusiastically championed the idea. An Arts Board Meeting paper states that the CNZ Writers’ Residency “was devised in response to a suggestion from New Zealand writer Philip Temple, with the strong support of the Chair of the Arts Board.”¹⁶ In a 2002 review of the Berlin residency, Creative New Zealand noted that Berlin had been identified as a strategic location for artists with good access to Europe.¹⁷ Apart from Berlin’s strategic location, Creative New Zealand also noted some of the other benefits offered by the CNZ Writers’ Residency, including:

the impact of a new physical environment; cross fertilisation of ideas from mixing with residents of another culture; increased awareness in Germany of New Zealand writers and New Zealand literature; other professional development opportunities e.g. invitations to give

¹⁵*Berliner Künstlerprogramm des DAAD*, 2012 http://www.berliner-kuenstlerprogramm.de/en/profil_druck.php 17.01.2012

¹⁶ Arts Board Meeting Item 5.4.2, dated 21-22 May 2001

¹⁷ Arts Board Meeting Item 2.2, dated 13 February 2003

lectures and interviews; possible translation opportunities; and contribution to the development of New Zealand literature.¹⁸

The CNZ Writers' Residency has several similarities with the *DAAD* Artists-in-Berlin Programme. In many ways, the New Zealand fellowship mirrors the ethos of the German. Both were created after it was recognised that cultural exchange had slowed down in some way and out of a desire to allow peoples to re-connect and re-engage via a literary platform. The CNZ Writers' Residency offered to New Zealand writers has similar expectations to the *DAAD* Artists-in-Berlin Programme, which is to be present within a cultural forum provided by the city.

James McNeish went to Berlin on two occasions to write. The first time was in 1983 as a guest of the Artists-in-Berlin Programme where he intended to undertake research into the New Zealand athlete, Jack Lovelock, who had won a gold medal at the 1936 Berlin Olympics. The goal of McNeish's research was to discover whether there was any connection between Lovelock's time in Berlin and his untimely death in New York in 1949. McNeish's second visit to Berlin was in 2009 as the Creative New Zealand writer in residence. In an interview, McNeish noted that during his first visit to Berlin he had a fascination with a place that "reeked of history". At that time there was an anniversary of the *Machtergreifung* or seizure of power by the Nazi party in Germany which was of particular interest to him. He noted that this may have been the beginning of his interest in the 1930s.¹⁹ Although McNeish was intrigued by Berlin's 'open, brave, honest' reputation, his main attraction was the opportunity to conduct research about a famous but mysterious New Zealander. The reason he started in Berlin was because it seemed to be the beginning of Lovelock's story (McNeish 3). His research centred around Lovelock's death in New York thirteen years after being in Berlin for the 1936 Olympic Games. *The Man from Nowhere* was first published as a German translation in 1986 by the *Literarisches Colloquium Berlin: Berliner Künstlerprogramm des DAAD* (Literary Colloquium Berlin: *DAAD* Artists-in-Berlin Programme). It was published again in 1991 in *The Man from Nowhere & Other Prose*, a collection of writing by McNeish which, as he states in its preface, "should reflect 'a sense of space'" (vii). At the time McNeish was in Berlin, the city was still divided and very highly charged politically.

¹⁸*Searching for Funding Opportunities* "Creative NZ Writers' Residency: Purpose and Objectives" <http://www.mch.govt.nz/funding-nz-culture/search-funding?detail=802121/B> Updated 12.07.2010; accessed 29.01.2013

¹⁹ *Sunday with Chris Laidlaw* Radio New Zealand National. Chris Laidlaw interview with James McNeish, 19.04.2009 <http://www.radionz.co.nz/national/programmes/sunday/20090419>

McNeish noted in the 1991 edition of the text, an updated edition being published in 2009, that his interest in the society was the “background and feel of life, the language and diversity of the streets, rather than any political or economic landscape” (vii). On closer reading of his text, it is clear that it was almost impossible for him to avoid writing about the political environment of Berlin in 1981.

Philip Temple was drawn to Berlin after many years of deeply held prejudice against Germany. This changed in the 1980s, when Temple made friends with Gunter Bennung, a German living in New Zealand. As detailed in the endnote to his 2006 novel *I Am Always With You*, he soon realised that the pair shared very similar experiences but for the fact that they had been on opposite sides during the war and this enabled him to reassess his former prejudices (222). His first visit to Berlin was as a guest of the *DAAD* Artists-in-Berlin Programme in 1987, after which he published *To Each His Own*, a semi-autobiographical account of his time in city before the fall of the Wall. The novel focuses on Martin (a character who resembles Temple) as he comes to terms with his past prejudices and how they were formed as a child born in England during the Second World War.

Cilla McQueen went to Berlin in 1987. She was encouraged to go to the city by her friend and fellow poet Hone Tuwhare who had been a guest of the *DAAD* Artists-in-Berlin Programme in 1985. In 1990, she published *Berlin Diary* which chronicled her time in the city; as well as observing the divided city and its people, McQueen also reflects on her family and loved ones in New Zealand, often detailing her homesickness but also determination to make the most of her experience in Berlin.

In 2000, Nigel Cox moved to Berlin to work at the Jewish Museum. At the time, Cox had not published any major works in thirteen years. He took up writing once again when he was in Berlin. In total he spent approximately five years living and working in the city. During this period, he published several short stories which appeared in the periodicals *Sport*, *Listener*, and *Sunday Star Times*. He also worked on two novels while in Berlin. *Tarzan Presley* was published in 2004 and *Responsibility* was published in 2006. His essays were published in a collection called *Phone Home Berlin: Collected Non-Fiction* in 2007, a year after his death. This writing focussed on daily life in the city which was now the capital of a reunified Germany. It deals with his work at the Jewish Museum, the difficulties his family experienced living in a different country and cultural observations.

This thesis explores the point at which New Zealand literature intersects with major historical and political events in Berlin and furthermore becomes part of the city's strong literary tradition. McNeish, McQueen and Temple all arrived in Berlin in the period just prior to the fall of the Berlin Wall. I ask how Berlin, as a geographic and cultural space, and the centre of those major historical and political events, is interpreted by the New Zealand writers. The following chapter focuses on how war is portrayed in the texts of McNeish, McQueen and Temple and asks if the writers are capable of seeing past that part of Berlin's history.

Images of War

Berlin is a city strongly associated with war and conflict. The history of conflict taking place in Berlin is long and not only limited to World War Two and the Cold War. In 1871, the year of the foundation of the German Empire, Berlin was the location for grandiose displays of military prowess imbued with Prussian pomp and ceremony. During one such display celebrating the unification of the German states, 40,000 soldiers marched past Brandenburg Gate to the Royal Palace (Large 1). The unification of the German Empire was prefaced by several mostly Prussian military victories, which were showcased not only via the aforementioned military parade but also illustrated vividly for the public to see, depicted on an awning stretched out over Unter den Linden, Berlin's famous central boulevard (2).

The story of Wilhelm Voigt, the so-called *Hauptmann von Köpenick* (Captain of Köpenick) is emblematic of the cult of the military in Imperial Germany, which was later revived by the Nazis. In 1907, Voigt, an ex-convict stole the uniform of a Prussian soldier and was able to eventually confiscate a sum of money from the Köpenick town hall, using the authority associated with the uniform to his advantage. Voigt's escapade was immortalised in Carl Zuckmayer's 1931 play, also entitled *Der Hauptmann von Köpenick*, and takes place in the town of Köpenick, situated to the east of Berlin and other parts of the city.

In 1914, from the balcony of the Royal Palace and before large crowds of Berliners, Kaiser Wilhelm II declared Germany to be at war (Richie 266). At the end of the First World War battle-weary German soldiers returned from the front through the city's Brandenburg Gate (Large 155). Towards the end of the Second World War, with the Allied Forces gaining ground

and Hitler's demise becoming more certain, it was in Berlin that the Nazi *Führer* sought refuge in his bunker and where he eventually took his own life (Richie 599). With the spoils of war to be allocated, the Allied Forces not only divided Germany into zones but also the capital city of Berlin into sectors, with the most prominent sector border between East and West at Checkpoint Charlie in *Friedrichstraße*, between capitalism and communism, between 'freedom' and dictatorship.²⁰

It is not historical events alone that create the image of Berlin as a city associated with war and conflict. The image of Berlin as a city of war and conflict is propagated through the countless academic histories of the two World Wars and the Cold War which either focus on, or show links to Berlin. Moreover, since the end of the Second World War, the influence of popular culture cannot be overlooked in perpetuating the image of Berlin as a city associated with war and conflict. John Le Carré's *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold* (1963), depicts the world of Cold War espionage in 1960s in the city after the erection of the Berlin Wall. The German film *Der Himmel über Berlin* (1987) by Wim Wenders, set in the divided city of 1980s Berlin, tells the story of the angel Daniel who has fallen in love with a lonely trapeze artist. Wenders uses poignant West Berlin locations for the scenes to represent the contemporary conflict of the Cold War but also to remind the audience of the significance of war in Berlin's history. One of the film's opening scenes takes place in the *Staatsbibliothek* of West Berlin as a reminder of the need to establish cultural facilities (*Kulturforum*) in West Berlin as most of the existing cultural buildings were located in East Berlin.²¹ A character walks in the desolate land near the Wall and reminisces that this area was *Potsdamer Platz*, once one of the busiest junctions in Berlin (Richie 461). Another character walks past the now defunct *Anhalter* train station with its façade the only thing remaining. It was once one of Berlin's major train stations (Richie 139).

Thoughts of the city easily stir up ideas of war, battle scars and in the latter part of the twentieth century the city used as a bargaining chip by victors. These ideas, already planted by the pervasive images of the Second World War found in twentieth century popular culture, seep further into the minds of those who come to view the city. The visitor is reminded that Berlin was the stage and backdrop for much of the twentieth century's experience of conflict.

²⁰These are some of the main examples of Berlin as a city associated with war and conflict and should not be viewed as an exhaustive list. For further discussion on aspects of war in Berlin see Large.

²¹German cinema also played an important role in the dissemination of Cold War propaganda to both East and West; many of these films were set in Berlin. For further discussion see Thomas Lindenberger's chapter "Looking West: The Cold War and the Making of Two German Cinemas" in *Mass Media, Culture and Society in Twentieth-Century Germany* by Karl Christian Führer and Corey Ross Eds.

This chapter addresses the New Zealand writers' interest in the subject of war in Berlin. In particular, it focuses on the battle scars of war left on the city landscape. The layers in the history of Berlin's military association are reflected through the city's architecture and topography. Such Berlin landmarks are spread out around the city, serving as a reminder to Berliners and tourists alike of the city's military history. The Wall, dividing Berlin between East and West for nearly thirty years, is an unequivocal symbol of the Iron Curtain and Cold War. The heavily bombed *Gedächtniskirche*, by coincidence named the Memorial Church, is a stark reminder of the damage sustained in the Second World War.²² However the city's military history is often overshadowed by these twentieth century events and other landmarks around the city invoke thoughts of events in Berlin's history stretching further back than the Second World War. For example the *Rathaus Köpenick* (Köpenick Town hall) can be associated with the militarism in *Wilhelmine* Germany. The *Siegesssäule* (Victory Column) is a symbol of the wars of German unification. The Quadriga on the Brandenburg Gate conjures memories of Napoleonic Wars and the monument to Frederick the Great conjures thoughts of the wars of Prussian expansion. As stated these various landmarks serve as reminders to Berliners and tourists of the city's military history. In this chapter I examine which layers of military history McNeish, McQueen and Temple recognise, which is the most important to them, and which of the authors see past the Cold War to the legacy of the Nazi period and beyond.

Throughout *Berlin Diary*, McQueen refers to Berlin as a 'living organ', particularly as a heart with scars left by war and conflict. She is hypersensitive to these scars, often acknowledging those Berliners who helped rebuild their city by hand after the devastation of the Second World War, including those who were responsible for shifting rubble to *Teufelsberg*.²³ She also continues to remind the reader throughout her text that Berlin 'has been bombed and razed and restored to life, and bombed again', and despite all the conflict which has taken place in the city 'people have doggedly kept on living in Berlin' (McQueen 88, 30, 49).

McQueen's comments on Berlin being bombed and then bombed again are curious. Berlin was not 'bombed again' after the Second World War as she states and therefore it is unclear to which

²² The *Gedächtniskirche*, constructed in the last decade of the nineteenth century, was dedicated to Kaiser Wilhelm I as a Memorial Church. It sustained damage during a Second World War bombing raid and was restored after 1945 but with much of the bombing damage left as a memorial.

²³ *Teufelsberg* or Devil's Mountain is a manmade hill in the west of Berlin built from the rubble left in the city after the Second World War.

event she is referring. It may be that she is referring to other events which left battle scars across the Berlin landscape much like the effect a bombing would have. For example, after the Second World War the way in which the city was so crudely divided into sectors could be seen as causing just as much damage as bombings. McQueen describes Berlin as a living organ and this dissection of the city is a great trauma to the landscape and topography. Alternatively she could be referring to buildings and landmarks which were demolished by the GDR authorities after 1945 such as the *Berliner Stadtschloß* (Berlin City Palace) or the *Versöhnungskirche* (Church of the Reconciliation) in the name of communist ideals. These acts were viewed by those in the West as political moves simply to remove buildings which did not represent communist values. The *Berliner Stadtschloß* was a symbol of Prussian militarism and imperialism. The *Versöhnungskirche* stood as a symbol in stark contrast to the anti-religion ideals of Communism. The *Berliner Stadtschloß* was heavily bombed during the Second World War. It could have been restored but this was deemed prohibitively expensive and the *Berliner Stadtschloß* was demolished in 1950 to make way for the new GDR seat of parliament, the *Palast der Republik* (Palace of the Republic). In The *Versöhnungskirche* sustained some damage in the Second World War but was largely intact. The church was located on *Bernauerstraße* (Bernauer Street), a street which ran along the border between the Soviet and French sectors. However the church itself was situated on the Soviet side of the border and when the Wall was erected in 1961 the church was cut off from its parishioners who were located mostly in the French sector. It stood in No Man's Land behind the Wall until 1985 when it was demolished and the rubble left where it fell. The GDR authorities' explanation at the time for demolition was to increase security along the border. McQueen may view these kinds of events as assaults on the landscape of Berlin and has sympathy for the citizens of the city who were forced to deal with these events long after the Second World War had come to an end.

It is these people McQueen to whom she pays respect: the old Berliners who have stayed on despite the hardship of enduring the twentieth century conflicts which took place in their city (77). One of the most obvious scars of war and a legacy of the Second World War is the Wall. Although McQueen discusses the Wall frequently throughout her text, her treatment of it is contained within the context of the Cold War and what it means to the citizens in the present day. She associates the Wall with guards, watchtowers and spy exchange points like *Oberbaumbrücke* (Oberbaum Bridge) (38). She makes no direct connections between the Berlin Wall and its legacy from the Second World War as a symbol arising from defeat in 1945 and the erection of the Wall in 1961.

In McNeish's *The Man from Nowhere* reminders of war feature prominently through his intense focus on events taking place before the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin and in the lead up to the Second World War, as part of his research project on Olympian Jack Lovelock. This focus on that period in Berlin's history is intensified by that fact that McNeish arrives in the city in 1983, the year in which commemorations are held marking the fiftieth anniversary of the Nazi party's *Machtergreifung* (Seizure of Power). As a guest of the DAAD, McNeish has the opportunity to attend events and exhibitions relating to the *Machtergreifung* and feels swept up in a 'wave of social and political soul-searching' (McNeish 21). McNeish attempts to unlock some of the mysteries surrounding Lovelock's death and believes that the Olympian may have suffered some kind of mental illness or breakdown leading to his untimely death in New York some years later, the source of which was in Berlin (5):

Lovelock's victory in the 1936 Berlin Olympics against the greatest field of mile-runners ever assembled is still a classic in the history of the event. Yet his life remains a mystery. Nobody knows why he died under a subway train in New York at the age of thirty-nine. There is a fundamental riddle, and unless I am mistaken the key to the riddle is somewhere in Berlin. That at all events explains why I am here. Where to start?

McNeish focuses on the period leading to the Second World War with almost tunnel vision, convinced answers to the mystery of Lovelock's death are to be found in Berlin. McNeish writes that "the key to the Lovelock riddle [...] lies in a moment of history when the free world came to Berlin and sat at Hitler's feet. It should have shunned Hitler. Instead it applauded, and that has always puzzled me" (6).

This question of what the visitors saw could just as easily be directed at McNeish himself, especially during early 1980s Berlin. The idea of showcasing Berlin lives on during the Cold War when McNeish visits, particularly in the West as can be seen through his descriptions of the city. As McNeish arrives in Berlin images of 'light and pleasing colours' feature strongly: 'the city is bathed in apricot light' and 'Berliners are out walking and strolling, moving towards the light'. As McNeish crosses into Berlin from the Harz, the mountain range marking the border between East and West Germany, the lights of the city begin to turn on for him as if to mark his arrival (4, 5).

Just as Nazi officials were able to manipulate the Olympic Games to suit, so too were officials of the Federal Republic of Germany able to take advantage of West Berlin in order to showcase it (as more enlightened) to the East. McNeish is not completely blind to the politics of the Cold War, acknowledging that there is 'too much to do and see in the West, too many concerts, too much of everything...' and further noting that the federally funded DAAD is a 'powerhouse of the arts'. McNeish's experience of sensory overload mirrors what was on offer for Lovelock in the Olympic village. Entertainment of every kind was 'imported into the village to discourage the inmates from leaving it'. Furthermore the example of the Olympic village can just as easily be compared with Cold War East and West Berlin. McNeish describes the Olympic village as something akin to East Berlin with its 'anti-fascist' protective wall: surrounded by trees, beyond which was a perimeter fence with patrolling guards and designed, constructed and supervised by the military. McNeish's analogy here is somewhat tenuous. It was perhaps attractive to him because he was searching for ways of identifying with Lovelock. However his analogy papers over the huge gap in geopolitical contexts between 1936 and 1983. In West Berlin, young Germans were encouraged to move to the city with the opportunity for rental subsidies, exemption from military service and the chance to live in a vibrant city into which the federal government pumped large sums of money and resources (25, 9).

Temple's protagonist, Martin, in *To Each His Own* has a strong interest in the Second World War and like McNeish the images of this war feature prominently throughout the text. In particular, the idea of guilt associated with the actions of war and fruits of victory are paramount for a number of characters including Martin, Uschi his German lover and the retired Royal Air Force (RAF) pilots Martin encounters on a visit to England. Martin's own guilt stems from his upbringing in England. He was indoctrinated to believe the worst about Germans and that the servicemen who were killed in action had died for Martin's freedom (Temple 30). When he arrives he admonishes himself for leaving it so long to visit, taking in the view of Berlin and noticing the old *Reichstag* which had not been repaired when Martin was in the city (7). When making his way through East Berlin he notices the structures with strong militaristic overtones. The East Berliners drive along *Unter den Linden*, the famous Berlin thoroughfare along which many German battalions marched, and in the shadow of Frederick the Great, who led the Prussian Empire into battle many times (10):

In a cold dimming dream they pass the Museum Island and its ruins of short-lived empire.
Then back to the future of Trabbis sweeping down Unter den Linden, plastic cavalry

beneath the black hooves of Frederick the Great. At the Neue Wache, shrine for the victims of militarism, guards goose-step and present arms.

A glimpse of East Berlin also offers him the opportunity to consider those living behind the Iron Curtain. He discusses the socio-political aspects of living in East Berlin with Renate, a new acquaintance, and begins to understand the difficulties of living behind the Wall. Glancing at the piece of greenstone that Martin has brought for her from New Zealand, she is saddened by the fact that she is unable to travel abroad. Martin and Renate both react differently to the restrictions placed on those living in the GDR. Renate is restrained and resigned to the fact that this is the way things are in her country. Martin, a baby boomer and brought up in a western society which made allowances for a certain amount of protesting, reacts in anger, raising his voice and banging the table. He does this in full sight of all patrons in the café where they eat their lunch. He is angered more by the fact that Renate's real grievance "lies in her challenge to those might overhear" (10, 11).

The quest for consumerism also creates a divide between the Berliners living in the West of the city. Martin meets with a history professor at one of the universities in Berlin, discussing the difference between West Germans living in the Berlin enclave and those living in the rest of the country. There is a distinct sense of abhorrence from the West Germans of West Berlin for their countrymen in the rest of the Federal Republic of Germany, for example, those in Düsseldorf where there is apparently a large amount of conspicuous consumption (74).

Martin is on a bus tour of West Berlin with his language class and views yet another section of society, also victims of war in Berlin. He takes note of Kreuzberg, a suburb in Berlin which abutted the Berlin Wall. With its close proximity to the Wall, tenements in this area were less desirable and attracted immigrants, largely from Turkey, students and anarchists. The suburb was made accessible to these groups of people because of the Cold War and its derivative, the Berlin Wall. For certain groups of people, they would only have been there because it was near the Wall and therefore affordable. Martin sees decay and dilapidation in Kreuzberg, perhaps a sign that the suburb was not maintained very well or that the buildings still show damaged from the Second World War (15).

One of the most important victims of the Second World War that Martin encounters is his own lover Uschi. When there are problems with their relationship progressing, Martin is oblivious to

the fact that the issue lies with the secret he is trying to find out about her. During their time together, Martin finds an old picture in Uschi's photo album of a man in uniform. He is uncertain who this is and decides to circumnavigate Uschi for the information. He is informed by Renate that the man in the photo is a member of the *Schutzstaffel* (SS or protection squad of the Nazis). The person is also Uschi's father. Later in the novel Uschi explains the story of how her father was arrested for his deeds during the Second World War (197). It is here that she explains her difficulty with trusting people after knowing what her father did. But she feels she can begin to trust Martin because he too has his own secrets which he must address. Through their shared suffering from opposite sides of the War, they begin to reconcile their differences (199):

I knew I could trust [Martin] with this even after what he had done. He wanted to face those questions, find some way of understanding. So we work at it slowly and carefully. This is where we really begin the journey, in our hearts and in our heads, until later we make that final real journey together and find that special understanding... Versöhnung... reconciliation...

Although Martin encounters all of these characters in Berlin who have suffered from the outcomes of war (both Second World War and the Cold War), he himself and his own countrymen too are victims of the same war. Martin is so deeply affected by the Second World War that he has avoided visiting Germany up until now, which illustrates what a negative impact it has had on him. Once he finds himself in Berlin he is drawn in by the city and his lover and is able to confront his past demons. Whether he comes to terms fully with these past demons is left open-ended at the novel's conclusion. It is clear that for Temple writing *To Each His Own* was a cathartic experience. In his memoirs and his other main text he wrote extensively about the impact his experience in Berlin had on him. The outcome for Martin (Temple's alter ego) in the text is slightly ambiguous and this is likely due to artistic licence. However the main idea which comes forth in the conclusion of the text is that Martin has at least confronted his demons and the experience of being in Berlin allowed him this opportunity and the desire to move forward.

While he is in Berlin, Martin decides to travel to England to visit his relatives. He meets his stepfather Jack and is keen to hear accounts he may have of the Second World War, especially his and his fellow air force colleagues' missions with the RAF. They are reluctant at first but finally relent once there is an audience and a drink at their local returned servicemen bar. Jack's colleague George recounts with some bravado the actions he took during the War in response to

another airman who claimed he had no thoughts about bombing German civilians, only ‘targets’ (111):

I knew what we were doing all right. Bombing ’ell out of ’em, like they’d bombed ’ell out of us. My brother was killed in the Blitz, my father and mother bombed out, down Bermondsey. When I went ’ome on leave I’d say, “Mother, we bombed ’ell out of ’em again.” Never regretted it...

Martin sees reminders of the Second World War and the Cold War in Berlin not only through mental and emotional remnants but also through the physical remnants in the city. The Berlin Wall is still in place, one of the defining symbols of the Cold War and a lingering symbol of the outcomes of the Second World War. On the tour bus with his language class he sees Schöneberg Town Hall and thinks of President Kennedy, who in 1963 visited Berlin, and gave his “*ich bin ein Berliner*” speech before that very town hall. Then the bus travels to the memorial to allied aviators who died during the Berlin Airlift. Martin finds it curious that the guide fails to mention Tempelhof airport which is close by. He then thinks to himself, “it must always be remembered that the Nazis left nothing behind but ruins”. Perhaps the guide prefers to remember the allied aviators and their efforts during the Berlin Airlift. Tempelhof airport may be one of the remnants of Berlin’s war history that the guide would rather forget. Tempelhof was where the Allied planes landed during the Airlift which is why the memorial is close by. It is not clear why Martin associates it only with the Nazis. The Nazis used it, but it was already in use during the Weimar Republic, thus illustrating Martin’s inability to see far beyond the layer of Second World War history in Berlin (14, 15).

Berlin is represented in these texts as a city still coming to grips with its past and present as a ‘city of war’. The most obvious memorials to conflict are from the Second World War and it is that conflict that is referenced in the more contemporary Cold War memorials featured in the text. As visitors, these writers are confounded by the array of memorials to the war and by how the locals seem oblivious to them. While the ‘city of war’ is omnipresent to these visitors and an important motif in their texts, the obliviousness of the locals suggests that war has not coloured their view of everything. In many cases, in particular Temple’s work, it is difficult to identify if it is Martin projecting his own ideas of victimhood on the people around him or whether these characters particularly care about their circumstances.

Images of Walls

The Berlin Wall (the Wall) is one of the most powerful images of the twentieth century, symbolising geographical and philosophical boundaries, division, separation and conflict. Almost immediately after the Wall was constructed in August 1961 there was a swift response from German writers opposing it. Since then it has been used frequently as a literary motif by both German-speaking and English-speaking writers alike (Bullivant 164). The New Zealand writers McNeish, McQueen and Temple all spent time in Berlin during the Cold War and while the Wall features prominently in their texts, images of other kinds of walls, divisions, borders and barriers proliferate.

Separation from family and home as well as feelings of alienation through cultural clashes all play their part while the writers are in Berlin and are illustrated throughout all three texts. All three writers reflect on New Zealand while they are in the city but it is McQueen who suffers the most when separated from her home and family. Martin, the protagonist in Temple's text endures a personal crisis in Berlin because of his extra-marital affair which creates a major divide with home and family. McNeish is much more engaged in his own personal endeavours to experience a major longing for New Zealand but it certainly enters his thoughts as he reflects on what he observes in the city. Metaphysical lines crossed include the transgression of ethical boundaries, none more obvious than Martin's affair with his teacher. McQueen has the most difficulty coming to terms with her new surroundings largely due to her overwhelming longing for home but her determination to make the most of her experience challenges her to push through these feelings of homesickness. She illustrates this vividly with an image of breaking through the surface of water, a motif which occurs throughout the text until it becomes clear she is

comfortable in the city and in her own skin while there. In terms of the Wall itself and the city limits, all three take risks and push boundaries in East Berlin or near the Wall, including *schwarzfahren* (travelling without appropriate documentation) in East Berlin; overt displays of frustration with East German policies on travel; and behaving in a manner which can be viewed as suspicious by East German border guards. Islands and water are motifs seen across all three texts but are used especially by McNeish and McQueen, most apparently by McNeish who admits to viewing West Berlin as an island within East Germany (McNeish 25). McQueen, who also refers to the idea of West Berlin as an island (McQueen 22), is fascinated with other islands such as New Zealand or the Outer Hebrides, which for her illustrate separation and disconnection from family and the familiar.

McQueen's *Berlin Diary* chronicles her journey from New Zealand to Berlin, her experience in the city and in particular the personal growth she undergoes while in Berlin. In her opening passage when she describes breaking through the surface of the water she questions whether she came 'out into the air, or not' and touches on one of the key motifs in her text, relating to emerging, metamorphosis, and change (5). McQueen describes other kind of boundaries throughout her text such as division of the city, her separation from home and family, the city as a living organ of two parts, and islands, all of which are illustrated most vividly in the following passage (34):

A and not-A. Fragile flesh. Apocalypse. Two ventricles. West blood fast beat pump [...] No man crosses freely. Look up, look over [...] within defined by without. Click, somewhere in history, a moment of division, when one becomes the other [...] presence by absence. Exile, ash, erosion. Infinitesimal meniscus, the tiny coastline of sand grains, fractal, shifting with the tide's pulse.

The final sentence refers to a coastline which shifts by the strength of the tide. Island images feature prominently in McQueen's text, including the island of West Berlin within East Germany, New Zealand and Hirta, St Kilda. Before reaching the so-called island of West Berlin, McQueen describes other islands, their coastlines and the way in which the islands have changed, especially the island of Hirta in the Outer Hebridean archipelago of St Kilda, once inhabited by her forefathers. While flying over Australia, she recalls the journey her ancestors made from the Outer Hebrides to Australia before eventually arriving in New Zealand, described as 'a green spined land parted by water' (7). Her Hebridean ancestors 'clung to their island' but eventually

had to leave because ‘civilization had seeped in from across the sea and corroded their safety’. Later McQueen refers to the metal reinforcement in the Wall corroding and cracks beginning to appear (7, 53).

These examples of corrosion illustrate rot setting in from opposite directions. In the example of Hirta, civilization slowly crept in around the island until the inhabitants were forced to leave due to hardship and isolation from the mainland. Their only protection from the elements and outside world was ‘little more softness than kisses and puffin down’. The attempt to protect East Berliners from fascism is ultimately in vain. The rot sets in from the island of West Berlin, compounded by the ‘shit metal liable to decay’ in the Wall’s construction (7, 123).

As an extension to the island theme, McQueen also focuses on an image of separation by water. When mentioning leaving her partner and New Zealand, her ‘green spined land’, she remarks simply ‘parted by water’ referring to either herself being separated by the distance of oceans from her partner or New Zealand as a set of islands and the stretches of water that separate them (7).

McQueen describes this protective wall against fascism as a belt or as a python, snaking its way through the city and constricting those held within. In these examples, McQueen views the Wall like a lover constricting its partner with a paternalistic love to save them from the dangers of the West (30, 33). This paternalistic love serves as a reminder of the official East German rationale for building the Wall. Touted as an anti-fascist protection barrier (Major 193), its real purpose was to stem the flow of East Germans moving to the West, who prior to 1961 had simply walked across the border into the West in their millions (Gearson & Schake 97). Just as the Wall should protect East Germans from the dangers of fascism, McQueen encases herself in her own protective barrier, which she describes as a cocoon, against the uncertainties of being so far from home and the familiar (McQueen 14).

Personal growth and change play an important role in the way McQueen experiences Berlin. The key theme of emerging through personal growth is woven through the text from beginning to end. While she is keen to experience something new, seeing herself perhaps like her forebears who left the island of Hirta, ‘[the fledglings who] test the world’, she is also anxious about being away. On her flight to Germany, she clutches her greenstone adze which should act like a ‘thread of ink to trace [her] path, spoor, to Hansel and Gretel [her] back’ (8, 9).

Her personal growth is played out through her dreams, many of which include homes. When she first arrives in Berlin the dreams are uncertain. When she is first in Berlin she dreams a house is being bought or sold and she may or may not have been there already (31). She is confronted by closed doors and stairways, not knowing where they lead (37). Initially the people who appear in these dreams are from home (16). Towards the end of the text, once she has settled into Berlin, she is more adventurous and this is illustrated in her dreams. In the later dreams she crosses new thresholds, leading to new places (50). With this growing familiarity she lets herself get lost in the city as a way of getting to know Berlin, “from the inside” (67).

Dreams convey a sense of simultaneity throughout the text, running parallel to the main storyline. McQueen blurs the lines between reality and the imagined. Not only does the writer blur the line between the real and imagined, she also mixes thoughts and ideas freely creating fluidity between images. While travelling on her flight to Germany she is thinking of Al in her garden at home. She walks out into the garden and the next thing she sees is ‘[daylight] over Switzerland’ (15). McQueen also describes simultaneous occurrences in Berlin between East and West and also between Dunedin and Berlin. The sounds of the city play out simultaneously with the sounds she hears from her flatmate’s room (27). After a night out with friends she calls Al in New Zealand. Feeling intoxicated, she is unsteady on her feet in the telephone booth. In that same moment, Al is also unsteady due to a minor earthquake at home in New Zealand (82). McQueen views the city itself as one entity of two parts, existing simultaneously, referring to the city as an organ like a heart with two chambers (36). However she learns from Berliners that they do not necessarily see their city as divided. To them there are two separate cities, contiguous and ‘foreign to each other’ (37).

Whereas McQueen’s focus on New Zealand is due to an intense homesickness and longing for her partner, McNeish focuses on New Zealand as part of his research purposes in Berlin. There is some cross-over in the two texts where both writers both yield to the city in some way that they did not necessarily expect when they first arrive. Despite her initial trepidation McQueen decides to ‘enter into complicity’ and begins to feel a part of the city (64). McQueen lets her guard down at a party, allowing herself to become intoxicated and ‘dissolving into homesick tears’ (81). One of her classmates takes advantage of this and forces himself on to her. McNeish receives advice from a friend warning him against becoming too involved with the experience of being in the city. Rather he should be like the ‘smart lover’ who departs before the experience becomes too intense. McNeish and his wife seem almost cheated by the city, when, at Christmas,

they decide to spend their final days in Berlin only to find everyone has disappeared (McNeish 65).

Images of walls and barriers in McNeish's text *The Man from Nowhere* are related to the idea of façades, which are both figurative and literal. The first façade belongs to Lovelock. McNeish has come to Berlin with the intent of uncovering a mystery about the athlete. He believes the answer to that mystery lies in Berlin. But Lovelock himself seems, as McNeish puts it, to be extremely guarded (12). How, therefore, does he really expect to be able to find out more when Lovelock is unlikely to have shared personal thoughts, opinions or experiences? Furthermore the passage of time creates its own kind of barrier to finding out any information. People who might have been in contact with Lovelock are likely to have passed away themselves, or if still alive, these memories may have faded. However, he says he must remind himself that nothing necessarily "happened" to Lovelock when he was in Berlin (14). Furthermore, he states that any clues to unlocking the mystery of Lovelock's death could lie in any of the cities he lived in – Oxford or New York. McNeish is resigned to the fact that he must start somewhere and that place is Berlin. A happy coincidence of the *DAAD Berliner Künstlerprogramm* and Lovelock's association with the city enable him to be in Berlin.

McNeish discusses another of Lovelock's façades, noting that when Lovelock was in Berlin he was a so-called 'man of the world' but this was only the case after he had had his rough antipodean edges polished during his time at Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar. He describes how Lovelock arrived in Oxford with his broad New Zealand accent, a young student from the small country town of Reefton, "shy and self-conscious" and "gauche". By the time he had finished in Oxford, he had refined his accent and manners, though McNeish believes beneath that new veneer was still a "shy and innocent young man". McNeish has in his possession Lovelock's diaries for the years 1933 to 1935 and notes that they only contain information about his running. Nothing contained in these diaries relates to Lovelock's personal and private life and thoughts. Naturally the diary for 1936, the year in which he is most interested for his research purposes, is missing. He must consider several factors when it comes to Lovelock's engagement with the politics of the city when he attended the Olympic Games. A colleague questions McNeish as to whether Lovelock was political, Jewish or gay, attributes would likely put him in conflict with those of dominant Nazi ideology. He rules out Jewish but political or gay are possibilities. Although McNeish finds no firm evidence supporting the theory that Lovelock was homosexual, he cannot rule out that possibility (17)

McNeish arrives in Berlin, surveying his new accommodation and particularly noticing that the apartment acts like a cocoon for him shielding him from the busy West End. The street is away from the lights and noise of the busy *Kurfürstendamm*. Although in the centre of the city, he feels completely enclosed and protected by the double-glazing of his apartment and the leaves of the trees outside. He notes that Lovelock himself would have “welcomed a house like this as a bolt hole”. The Olympic village where the athletes were housed would have also been a type of gated community. The village was surrounded by pines and beyond the pines was a fence and there were guards. Everything was provided in order to keep the athletes (or as he describes them – inmates) inside this community. He considers what Lovelock would have seen of Berlin, had he been able to move beyond the confines of his fenced and guarded village. Would he have seen the façades for what they were? As he points out ‘every disfigurement, every eyesore, every beggar, every anti-Semitic slogan had disappeared’ (5, 8, 9).

McNeish does not stay within the confines of his neighbourhood to conduct his research. He visits archives and libraries and comes across local public notices published during the time in which Lovelock was in Berlin. The articles are highly prescriptive of appropriate conduct to promote an acceptable image of Germany. In particular, those citizens whose conduct does not fall within the boundaries of these prescriptions will suffer harsh consequences. The policies and prescriptions draw a clear line for citizens and show how one could be on the right or wrong side of the law and what is acceptable. As many Olympians would be housed privately, the rules around tasteful souvenirs and things portraying an image of peace extended not only to public places, but to private homes as well. Lovelock too has his façades, which is to be expected from someone shrouded in so much mystery. He shared almost nothing of his training plans and when he did, people didn’t believe him. At Oxford he trained at night under the cover of darkness. Lovelock came to Berlin a year before the Olympic Games and wrote an article for a London newspaper. McNeish claims that people thought Lovelock went to Berlin specifically for the purpose of writing that article when in reality it was a type of reconnaissance mission to check out a piece of land near the Olympic village to be used for training (10, 12).

Aside from the Wall which separates him physically from East Berlin, there are a number of other psychological, cultural and bureaucratic barriers preventing McNeish from visiting and experiencing East Berlin. As a New Zealander, he has had the experience of friends and acquaintances who have claimed they will visit him in New Zealand but ultimately never do.

Although the desire exists to visit, somehow it never comes to fruition. And though distance has a large part to play in the fact that his friends might not make it to New Zealand, McNeish admits that there is a similar attitude to visiting East Berlin. Distance does not play a part but he has to make a conscious decision that he will make the effort to visit the capital of the German Democratic Republic. McNeish makes it clear that he is overwhelmed by the arts and culture in West Berlin and feels there is too much to see and do, prioritising this over visiting East Berlin. He rationalises his reluctance to visit East Berlin by claiming that there is too much to do in West Berlin (25).

Martin in *To Each His Own* like McNeish is in search of answers, in both Berlin and his country of birth, England, but admits that in Berlin he is ‘cocooned by antipodean language and experience’. The image of being in a cocoon occurs in both the McQueen and McNeish texts, a symbol of a protective barrier in which something is waiting for the right moment to emerge, which highlights their common experience of emerging from their shells and developing while in Berlin. Paramount to his search for answers about his father’s RAF service and the impact it had on forming his views about Germany, is overcoming his own prejudices which have impeded any travel to Berlin for so many years and being in Berlin is the first step he makes towards this goal. He spends equal amounts of time in East and West Berlin in order to get to know both *Ossis* (East Germans) and *Wessis* (West Germans). Most importantly, however, he crosses an ethical and emotional Boundary: he has an affair with his German teacher, who like him struggles to come to terms with her country’s part in the Second World War. Like Martin, she too has a relative who played an active role in the Armed Forces. It is easy to see how Martin becomes so seduced by the city and his new lover. At first he sees only the excitement of Berlin. He describes his home life as simply mundane. Pam plays the role of diligent and supportive housewife. Their sex life has also become a usual routine and it is almost as if Pam is disinterested and surprised by his continued sexual interest. His New Zealand routines illustrate how safe and secure, and perhaps boring, he has become. If they were to change, this might cause a disruption of his habits and emotions. First he is overcome by how raw the city is. Then he meets a sexually liberated European woman with totally different values about relationships, which is completely alluring. He feels intoxicated by West Berlin and asks himself why anyone would want to leave this city (23, 29). Berlin is not necessarily a barrier but a bridge towards the city described by Large.

At one point he is travelling on a city commuter train taking in as much of the scenery as possible. He refers to it as a “ghost train” perhaps referring to the idea of ghost stations, the stations at which East Berlin trains were not permitted to stop because they were in parts of West Berlin. Or it could be a ghost train which suspends citizens of East and West Berlin in their artificial sectors created by the spoils of war. Or perhaps it is Martin’s own ghost train which leads him through a city which for many years was forbidden to him by his own prejudices. This train allows him to travel through the city with all its many remnants of a war which helped forge his prejudices. In any case, for whatever reason, his mind has opened somehow and he wishes to take things in. As he asks himself why it has taken him so long to come to Berlin, he points out one of the enduring remnants of the Second World War in the city, the Reichstag, and thinks about how the cupola was never replaced after the War (7).

As New Zealanders in Berlin, all three writers are immediately outside their usual comfort zones. Common to all three writers is the idea of a cocoon. McQueen uses her cocoon as a protective barrier. All three writers are acutely aware of their background and heritage which is the main contributor to the language and cultural barriers they experience. Coming from New Zealand and the Southern Hemisphere is for them their point of difference, and the thing which sets them apart from their surroundings. Experiencing severe homesickness for New Zealand and her family, it takes McQueen some time to become comfortable in the city. Until she settles in to the city she constantly refers back to New Zealand. McNeish and Temple’s protagonist Martin do not suffer from as much homesickness as McQueen. This could be due to the fact that McNeish is in Berlin with his wife and feels very comfortable in Europe or that Martin has come to Berlin with the intention of addressing his past prejudices about the country. Furthermore, he is going through what appears to be a mid-life crisis with the breakdown of his marriage and the excitement of a love affair.

While McQueen describes the theme of a cocoon in a far more positive way, often in terms of a protective barrier (McQueen 14), McNeish and Martin are quite hyper-sensitive about their heritage referring to “the ignorance of an Antipodean” (McNeish 6) and being “cocooned by antipodean language and experience” (Temple 23). It is almost as if they are in some way ashamed of being New Zealanders in the very cosmopolitan Berlin.

All three texts address the difficulties of experiencing life in a foreign city and being far from home and the familiar. McQueen and Temple’s protagonist Martin, and to a lesser extent

McNeish, suffer from homesickness and being separated from family and friends. As foreigners they are only too aware of the barriers which separate them from their surroundings through language and culture. But this hypersensitivity to their own 'otherness' as foreigners also enables them to see other kinds of barriers and walls as they experience Berlin. Through his research McNeish establishes two kinds of façades: that of the image projected during the Olympic Games in Berlin and secondly the curious Lovelock, who almost never let his guard down. They all refer to the island of West Berlin as an exclave of the FRG surrounded by the GDR. For McQueen this conjures up thoughts of New Zealand's three main islands but also of her ancestors of the Outer Hebridean islands. However the overwhelming theme which comes through in all three texts is that despite these walls and barriers they all display a real desire for personal growth and to challenge themselves while they are in Berlin. McNeish and Temple's Martin are both in search of answers and hope to break down barriers in order to gain more insight into their research projects. McQueen demonstrates courage and determination to integrate herself into her new surroundings. They arrive in Berlin all cocooned in their way of seeing the city and through their experience of being somewhere foreign they are able to push through those personal barriers of their so-called 'antipodean ignorance'.

Antipodean Naivety

Berlin Diary, *The Man from Nowhere* and *To Each His Own* can be described in one way or other as forms of travel writing. The authors of these texts go to Berlin for various reasons and document their travels and experiences through their writing. In her influential 1992 text, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, Mary Louise Pratt proposes the idea of a ‘contact zone’ and the role it plays in travel writing. The contact zone is ‘the space in which peoples geographically and historically separated come into contact with each other’. She uses the examples of colonisers from Europe encountering indigenous peoples in the other parts of the world to illustrate interactions between groups in those contact zones. I apply Pratt’s theory in reverse to McNeish, McQueen and Temple as New Zealanders coming to Europe. One phenomenon of the contact zone is ‘transculturation’ in which Pratt describes how a subordinate group adopts materials from the dominant or metropolitan culture within the contact zone. Furthermore, she argues that during this process the dominant or metropolitan culture ‘tends to understand itself as determining the [subordinate group]’ and is blind to the ways in which the subordinate group defines the dominant (6).

In applying Pratt’s theory to this study, I suggest that the New Zealand writers envisage themselves as the dominant group seeing themselves as determining and interpreting the situations they encounter in Berlin. However, like the dominant groups that Pratt describes, the writers also underestimate how much of the Berlin experience defines them, how their experience and background determines their interpretation, and exemplifies their own naivety as New Zealanders. I describe this way of viewing Berlin through a New Zealand lens as ‘antipodean naivety’. The term is taken directly from McNeish’s text in which he refers to

himself as having the 'ignorance of an Antipodean', explaining that his 'experience teaches him nothing of the past' (McNeish 6). How do the writers represent Berlin in their writing and to what extent does it illustrate their antipodean naivety? How does their knowledge and experience as New Zealanders affect the way in which they interpret and understand situations in the contact zone of Berlin? Finally do the writers show an understanding of Berlin's history which is broader than just the twentieth century?

All of the writers focus primarily on the subject of war, both the Second World War and the Cold War. They are educated, knowledgeable, interested in the wider world, and well travelled. They are not blind to other aspects of history in Berlin but it is these enormous historical events that primarily shape their view of the city. The characteristics common to these texts and authors are misreading, misunderstanding and unawareness. They share an inability to see past Berlin's Second World War history and similar views of the Cold War, East Berlin and the regime of the German Democratic Republic. Of the three authors, McNeish is the most knowledgeable about Berlin. He has been to the city before and has the benefit of a German wife who can act as an interpreter for him. McNeish and Temple's protagonist Martin Stephenson in *To Each His Own*, in comparison to McQueen, come to Berlin with a clearer idea of what they intend to achieve. McNeish, McQueen and Temple are each in Berlin on a temporary basis and the recipients of writing fellowships. Their texts display a sense of hope and anticipation. McNeish sets out on a research project about Jack Lovelock, confident that the answers are to be found in Berlin. McQueen leaves her partner and daughter in New Zealand, embarking on an adventure to a new country. Temple's protagonist Martin has intentions of resolving past issues of personal prejudices he held against Germany and its people. The writers and characters differ in age. There is nearly a twenty year difference between McNeish and McQueen, the former being born eight years before the beginning of the Second World War in 1931 and the latter four years after the War in 1949. Temple was born in 1939.²⁴ McNeish is the only writer who was born in New Zealand. McQueen and Temple, although they have lived in New Zealand for many years, were both born in the United Kingdom. All of these differences and similarities between the writers colour what things they see and how they see them in Berlin.

²⁴ Temple's novel *To Each His Own* is semi-autobiographical. The story of Martin Stephenson largely mirrors Temple's own experience in Berlin. The author and his character are similar in age and background, both born in England and moving to New Zealand as young adults. Both have a stepfather involved in the RAF and experience difficulties relating to their parents. To a large extent Temple and Martin are one in the same character.

In *Berlin Diary* McQueen is out at a nightclub with friends. A friend tells her that the club is very trendy but all she sees is a cramped and dilapidated room with cracked marble tables, beaten earth floor and bare concrete walls. Her friends are enjoying themselves in the club but she feels disconnected from them and unable to engage. She nods and smiles until her face is stiff but in the end feels defeated and gives up trying to comprehend: 'I don't know what they're talking about'. After her evening feeling lonely she latches on to the things she knows. She encounters a taxi driver who speaks English and assumes he finds Berlin exciting like her friends do when they are out that night. He is less than enthusiastic, describing the city as a fish tank (27, 28).

She often refers to *Teufelsberg* (Devil's Mountain), the man-made mountain in West Berlin. Although she is aware that many Berliners in post-war Germany worked as labourers helping to rebuild the city, she does not mention its other link to the Second World War. It is built on the former Nazi military academy designed by architect Albert Speer. Initially the plans were to demolish the academy but its structural integrity was so strong that finally it was decided that rubble should be dumped on top of it. There is no mention of the military academy which lies beneath the war rubble. However she does notice the American listening station on the mountain, consistent with her attention to signs of the Cold War in Berlin at the time (29).

Being surrounded by so many reminders of war in Berlin, and feeling a saturation of memorials and remnants, McQueen states that it is "forbidden to forget the past". The subject of Germans and Berliners dealing with and addressing their past is a complex issue. To say that it is forbidden to forget the past does not capture the complexity of the issue as it applies to everyday Berliners. While at first she is overwhelmed by the numerous reminders, as time goes by McQueen has a chance to engage with everyday Berliners and their struggle to come to terms with the actions of their parents and grandparents. She listens sympathetically to Anja who, in tears, explains that her own beloved grandparents were supporters of Hitler (26, 37).

For any visitor to Berlin in the 1980s, the city's most overwhelming feature was the Berlin Wall and the part it plays in the ongoing Cold War. Associated with the Wall were espionage (circulated in images and narratives to non-Germans by the many films and novels which have used the Wall as their setting), illegal border crossings and a great tension between East and West which played out in the city. It is unlikely the New Zealand writers could have avoided encountering or knowing about these tensions. Often when the writers or their characters come across protests or any kind of tense atmosphere in the city, it is attributed to Cold War issues.

However the Cold War is not the only source of pressure at this time. Other political movements such as the environmental and peace movements also caused tension. McQueen, out and about in one of West Berlin's busiest train stations, *Bahnhof Zoo* notices tensions rising (53):

On one corner, about twenty youths looking for a fight. On the other, about twenty cops. Riot time! The youths dash across, tussle whack whack [...] West Berlin's young men are exempt from military service, so that a strong and virile front can be shown to the East. This is street-aggro to let off steam [...] Regular Saturday night catharsis.

She attributes this tension to the concentration of people living in the pressure-cooker of West Berlin, its boundaries tightly secured by the Wall.²⁵ Her description of the scene in this passage is sharp and punchy. There are brief statements as if she is a journalist reporting on the situation. She states the location: *Bahnhof Zoo*. Then she describes the opponents, each in a corner. Each concise statement adds to the rising tension which finally comes to a head: 'Riot time!' The actual confrontation is over almost as quickly as it begins. Although she believes that this scene is probably a kind of catharsis and occurs on a regular basis, she is drawn into the situation and describes it with detail and intensity. By contrast, she observes that the Saturday night Berlin crowds only 'stand and watch for a moment, and flow on'. Her final statement of the passage stands alone, as if realising this is a normal occurrence for Berliners, she takes in what she has witnessed, and exhales.

McQueen has travelled outside New Zealand before going to Berlin.²⁶ However there are some instances in which she seems taken aback or inexperienced in a large metropolitan city and she can appear somewhat provincial. When she first arrives in Germany she attempts to strike up a conversation with the taxi driver in German. She is rebuffed when he responds to her in English and when she arrives in Berlin itself she seems overwhelmed by the pace of the city (15, 16).

Whereas McQueen endeavours to find her way in the city, learning as she goes. McNeish has a slightly different approach in *The Man from Nowhere*. He has a clear purpose and objective to come to the city and uncover information about the mysterious Lovelock. He is inquisitive and welcomes debate about his research, acknowledging that Lovelock is a great unknown. After the

²⁵ During the mid-1980s when McQueen was in Berlin there were a number of large movements throughout Germany. The protestors could have been just as aggressive and volatile; they need not necessarily be attributed to Cold War tensions.

²⁶ In her text she mentions travel to both the United States and French Polynesia.

athlete faded into obscurity following his Olympic triumph, he became unknown to many outside New Zealand. At first glance, McNeish finds that Berlin has little to offer on the subject. His publisher finds the interest in an athlete curious and difficult to understand, as does Wieland Schmied, the head of the *Berliner Künstlerprogramm*, and an American friend of McNeish's writes to him in Berlin and asks after his research but more importantly asks "who the hell is Lovelock?" (McNeish 12). McNeish is bemused that the southern German city of Munich should have a road named after Lovelock when he ran in Berlin.²⁷ McNeish meets with Wieland Schmied of the DAAD; he is curious and open to any new ideas which might help him to uncover information about Lovelock (McNeish 6):

I could say that I am attracted to the mystery; that I am [...] simply a bloodhound *manqué*. But that is too easy. The answer probably lies in my ignorance, the ignorance of an Antipodean whose experience teaches him nothing of the past.

Like his fellow New Zealanders he sees himself as 'inexperienced and trusting'. Bringing these attributes with him to Berlin, they colour the way he views the city. Despite his experience in years and as a writer he still finds himself taken aback by certain situations (17):

We are a trusting people, we New Zealanders – inexperienced and trusting and easily shocked. It is something I recognise in myself. Even returning to Berlin in middle age and enjoying the gaiety and sensual pleasures, the eccentricities which are so well catered for, I can be shocked by echoes of the past: by the ambiguity, the reminders of terror, the hint of brutality and efficiency that lies beneath a surface.

However, of all the writers McNeish is the most adroit in the way he navigates the city and conducts his research. Despite being the most confident of the New Zealand writers in Berlin, McNeish is still taken aback at times by some of the things he discovers.

The thing that seems to affect him the most, perhaps because it has a strong link with his own research topic is the *Machtergreifung* anniversary. He acknowledges from the outset that he was not aware of the anniversary and it is quite by chance that he should find himself in Berlin that particular year. He notes that there is no acknowledgement of such an anniversary back in New

²⁷ It is correct that Munich has a walkway named after Lovelock. It runs through the Olympic village in Munich, likely named in the lead up to the 1972 Games.

Zealand. The other aspect of the anniversary which surprises him is the age of the people attending the many events and exhibitions commemorating it. McNeish visits one of the many exhibitions about the *Machtergreifung* noting those in attendance are ‘not only young but angry’. The people he sees who appear to be responsible for this “wave of social and political soul-searching” are young and mostly under thirty-five. This most likely refers to the *68er Generation* who were a group of young people responsible for questioning the actions of their parents’ generation.²⁸ If they are thirty-five and under they are likely to be the post-war generation who, by the time they reached the age of attending university, decided to question their parents and search for answers about the Second World War (20, 21).

At other times he is sidetracked from his research by the many distractions in the city: cafes and restaurants, libraries, archives, the *Tiergarten*, East Berlin, and the Wall to name but a few. Throughout the text McNeish writes just as much about his extracurricular activities as he does about his struggle to find answers about Lovelock. He says himself that there is simply so much to do in West Berlin and there are so many attractions. When a postcard arrives from friends asking how it feels to ‘live on an island within a sea of Socialism realised’, he is quick to comment that the Wall is not the only exciting thing about Berlin. He is drawn to the many cultural attractions including art galleries, theatre, music and the DAAD sponsored events. To him the cultural events are the ‘chief excitement’ but in terms of his work they are probably the ‘chief danger’. Even though McNeish has more of an interest in West Berlin’s cultural attractions than the Wall, he does appreciate the part it has to play. He says that West Berlin is like any other city where people carry out mundane tasks as much as they would in other cities around the world. However, he admits that the Wall brings an otherwise provincial town to life with its concentration of people and attractions. This makes the experience within the centre of the city even more intense and that much harder to avoid (25, 26).

East Berlin is an attraction in itself but one he must force himself to see, given he has more than enough to keep him occupied in West Berlin. And while all of these attractions are keeping him

²⁸The *68er Generation* was the next generation of Germans born after the Second World War. They demanded answers of their parents and their parents’ generation for the atrocities which happened in their country. They were active in demonstrations and events which called Germans to think on the War and the impact it had on them as a people as well as others around the world. For further information on this topic refer to Heinz Bude’s chapter “The German *Kriegskinder*: origins and impact of the generation of 1968” contained in *Generations in Conflict: Youth Revolt and Generation Formation in Germany, 1770-1968*. Ed. Roseman, Mark. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

busy, he also has to keep an eye on his research. McNeish finds many distractions in Berlin which can take him away from his work but the main reason his research does not progress as he first imagines is because he finds little information about Lovelock. He finds many leads and lots of speculative information but none of it proves his hypothesis that Berlin was the beginning of the end for Lovelock. Though he does appear slightly deflated by not proving his theory, there is a hint of optimism as he leaves the city. He thinks about the writers who went before him in Berlin like Nabokov, Isherwood and William Shirer and by implication the works they produced during and after their time in Berlin. Perhaps he sees hope for himself in producing such a text about Lovelock.²⁹ McNeish and his wife are so taken by the city that they decide to have the last week alone in Berlin for Christmas. They hope to eat at their favourite restaurants, take in the atmosphere of the city and really enjoy themselves now that work has finished. But as they say, the city has other ideas. After McNeish and his wife have been so intoxicated by the many attractions, they are left stranded in the city when Berlin's inhabitants have gone into hibernation and the New Zealand couple must make do on their own (McNeish 65). They make light of the fact that many secrets and mysteries remain hidden from them in the city: '[we] must be the only foreigners alive in the town who don't know the answer to this one. Some town! Some foreigners!'. McNeish and his wife illustrate Pratt's theory in reverse in two ways. First, like the other New Zealand writers they make the reverse voyage from a former colonised nation to the Old World of Europe. Second, instead of being the dominant group within the contact zone, they are more like the indigenous group from a place far away and with a much less grandiose history, to a civilisation that they think they know which in fact exposes just how little they know and in this way they are 'transcultured' (64, 66).

Despite his knowledge and awareness of Berlin's broader history, McNeish also demonstrates gaps in his knowledge about the city. He is surprised by the fact that his apartment building in *Keithstraße* has survived undamaged during the Second World War. More likely is that it was damaged and was part of the major rebuilding and reconstruction which took place in Berlin and around Germany after World War Two. There was huge drive in the 1950s for reconstruction in the city, especially in the area around the *Bahnhof Zoo* and the *Kurfürstendamm* (Large 424). It is likely that the apartment building he is occupying would have been rebuilt after the War if it had been damaged. Furthermore, by the early 1980s when McNeish was residing there, West Berlin would have been well on the way to being fully restored. McNeish has some historical sense of

²⁹ McNeish published *Lovelock* in 1987, a novel written as a fictional diary of Jack Lovelock, based on his research.

Berlin but less of its recent history. For him, it is primarily through the lens of the Third Reich (the Olympics, the rise of the Nazis, the Second World War) that he sees the city.

Whether a writer is familiar with a city's history or not, there is no escaping the difficulties of being in a foreign city if there are language issues. While in Berlin all three writers make concerted attempts to use German language. Their attempt to engage is genuine and open-minded. They illustrate a willingness to engage with people and language thus throwing off the idea that they are typical English speakers who do not attempt the language in any way. At the beginning of McQueen's stay, she is completely 'cocooned' within her English language thoughts but as time passes she becomes more confident about her German and comprehends much more about what is being said around her. With this confidence, she finds herself melding into Berlin society. She is mistaken for a Berliner in a supermarket when a saleswoman addresses her directly in German (46). She implicitly compares this, for example, to the intoxicated Scottish football fans or the wives of American servicemen posted to Berlin who fail to immerse themselves in German language McQueen encounters during her time in the city (97):

In the U-Bahn, a group of young American servicemen's wives chatter away in English, assuming nobody can understand them. They complain mightily about how grubby the city is, how they hate having to take the public transport.

For McNeish, the language issues he encounters are slightly different. His wife Helen is a German speaker who can translate or interpret things for him. Often this works in his favour but on one occasion the man McNeish is interviewing is more interested in conversing in German with Helen, leaving him feeling excluded and unable to ask his questions about Lovelock (McNeish 60).

Temple's character Martin also has the benefit of a partner who speaks German while in Berlin. There is a scene between Martin and Uschi after they begin their relationship where they discuss use of the informal second person singular pronoun "du" (the informal 'you'). She instructs Martin that he must call her by her first name during their private times and by implication use the informal 'you' with her in German (Temple 51). In English there is no such distinction and it may not have occurred to Martin to discuss the issue. As he is still learning the language, it might be something with which he is not completely familiar. But it also illustrates a difference in power in the relationship. Martin is the naïve New Zealander who expects much of the

relationship and becomes quite dependent on Uschi. She is the independent, sophisticated and cosmopolitan lover with more experience in relationships. She asserts her authority in the relationship by not only offering that they address each other informally first but also providing him with instruction on how they should address each other in private and in public.³⁰ For McNeish and Martin, with their partners at hand they have the opportunity to 'see' and understand more situations in Berlin, as opposed to McQueen who spends a long time coming to terms with the language before she starts to feel comfortable in the city.

Despite this advantage, both McNeish and Martin spend the majority of their time focussing on the aspect of Berlin's history which to them is the most important: the Nazi period. McNeish's interest is due to the nature of his research project and the year in which he visits, the fiftieth anniversary commemorating the *Machtergreifung*. McNeish struggles to understand the Nazi rise to power and how it could have come to pass. His research into Lovelock means he deals with much of the archival material of the time which provides him with a picture of the political situation in Berlin. He reads public notices in the *Lokal Anzeiger* which announce regulations which will be in place during the Olympic Games (McNeish 10). Still, with all of this evidence, he still finds it difficult to understand how it was possible for such a political party to come to power. Somehow the trusting and naïve aspects of New Zealanders - which he admits are part of his character - come forth and seem to cloud his judgement and objectivity with such clear evidence in front of him. From the information he has before him and from his general knowledge he can understand how this situation came to be. However given his major focus is 1936, it is no surprise that he does not gain any real insight about the reasons for the Nazi rise to power. To gain more insight into the Nazi rise to power would have needed to study the period immediately before they came to power, for example the late 1920s and the early 1930s. He touches on it with his line of interest in Christopher Isherwood but he does not follow through or make any connections between the Berlin when Isherwood visited and the predicament for German citizens living in hardship at the time in the city with the humiliation of defeat after the First World War. He is shocked by the fact that these people were so blind to what was going on: "how unaware they seem to be of events occurring beneath their noses"; and "nobody [...] made the connection that wherever one looked there were signs of military renaissance". Most Germans considered the military renaissance a good thing after the humiliation of the Treaty of Versailles, which had severely and in their view unfairly punished and weakened Germany. Once

³⁰ Traditionally the German informal 'you' is offered by the person in the relationship who is older or commands more respect.

again this is an example of one of the New Zealand authors focussing on one aspect of Berlin's history and not being able to see the broader picture and geopolitical circumstances which give rise to events like the rise in power of the Nazis (47, 28).

Even though McNeish believes he understands the history of how the Nazis came to power, he still seems shocked that such a regime came into being but this highlights the naïve way in which he views the political history of Berlin. The whole point of his research is to find out if anything happened to Lovelock in Berlin when he came to the Olympic Games. McNeish is fixated on the idea that some occurrence in Berlin led to a decline in Lovelock's mental wellbeing and to his death in New York a number of years later. He has read the official finding into Lovelock's death which states that Lovelock either fell or jumped in front of a train. The whole premise of his research is that something got to Lovelock while he was at the Games which could have led to his suicide. But even the narrator finds this hypothesis hard to believe somehow, saying that as a medical doctor Lovelock surely would have known jumping in front of a train was "messy business" (14).

McNeish's hypothesis is that something happened to Lovelock in Berlin and it may have had a connection with the Nazi Party. It seems difficult to believe McNeish's theory that Lovelock meant anything to the Nazi Party. Hitler used the Games to his advantage and Lovelock played a role in this by virtue of competing and winning a gold medal. According to McNeish, Hitler left his lunch early simply so that he could see Lovelock's winning race, but McNeish himself admits that this particular race meant more to that generation than it would do now. McNeish speculates whether Lovelock could have been in any kind of position of power, have been influenced or whether the Nazi Party cared at all about an athlete from New Zealand. McNeish and his wife are in the Tiergarten and wonder whether Lovelock had "a stray encounter, a rendezvous" or whether he was approached by someone who could have been political. The pair discusses an American athlete in Berlin with similar characteristics to Lovelock, who did manage to independently venture out of the Olympic village and visit the Tiergarten. However, they are unable to come to any conclusions about Lovelock's movements. McNeish meets with a political scientist who advises that it is unlikely Lovelock would have made any political contacts while in Berlin. This is exactly the kind of notion of Lovelock's political importance to which McNeish clings, which in itself a symptom of antipodean naivety (16, 18).

For the fictional Martin in *To Each His Own*, World War Two holds a much more personal meaning. His journey to Berlin is one of personal pilgrimage and this causes a kind of tunnel blindness. To him Berlin's history appears for the most part to be limited to the Second World War and the Cold War. He has struggled with the idea of visiting Germany up until now. One of the major themes of the text is Martin's long held prejudices against Germany and how he comes to terms with this during his trip. His opening thoughts in the text illustrate his dilemma clearly: "Why has he denied himself so long? Hasn't he always had the price of the ticket to this place?" (Temple 7). While he makes the first step in addressing his prejudices by visiting Berlin by choice, it is a visit to England which allows him to witness behaviour which may have influenced initial thoughts about Germany. Martin is with his step-father Jack, a serviceman in the Royal Air Force during the Second World War, when they meet some of Jack's former RAF colleagues. Martin enquires about their service and the operations in which they took part. Martin listens with disdain as Jack's colleagues recount their actions during the War. The tone of the conversation is full of pride, arrogance and ignorance (111):

'Think of what we were doing?' he says. 'We bombed industrial targets. Never went on an op when the target wasn't a factory or a power station or a railway yard.' As if he had always made the decision on that. 'We never thought about bombing people, we were hitting targets, the enemy's war potential. I mean, we knew we didn't always hit targets, of course... but that was war... look what they did to us...' [...]

Martin sees an obvious distance between himself and these men, especially as he has already taken great steps to address his former prejudices about Germany. He makes concerted efforts to speak German and engage with locals. He feels so much of a connection with the place that he even comments he could be mistaken for a German. However, later when it emerges that Uschi's father was a Nazi, he is unable to express any sympathy or understanding which may explain why she has kept this fact hidden (7, 183).

The outcome of Martin's story is ambiguous. It is uncertain whether he has been able to draw out all of the answers to his questions in Berlin. He begins his visit to the city with optimism, perhaps thinking naïvely that this visit will provide many of the answers to his questions. He seeks out reconciliation and understanding on so many levels: with his step-father, his wife after the affair, with Uschi after he discovers her father was a Nazi and even his reasons for moving to New Zealand. Although the story ends with Martin apparently reaching a kind of enlightenment,

Uschi paints a different picture. Throughout the text, Uschi maintains her position of authority. First she is his teacher of German and then when they begin their sexual relationship she is the more experienced lover. Finally as the affair progresses and Martin becomes more infatuated and obsessed, she must assume the role of the adult in the relationship. It is also clear that she is much more pragmatic with her approach to the affair, clearly considering it more of an affair than the beginning of a long term relationship. Martin is oblivious and is willing to throw away his home life for this (198, 147). In summing up Uschi makes these final comments which illustrate a difference of understanding about the real outcome of their relationship (Temple 199):

He wanted to face those questions, find some way of understanding. So we work at it slowly and carefully. This is where we really begin the journey, in our hearts and in our heads [...] and find that special understanding [and] reconciliation...

I am sad, after all, that we did not find ourselves a place... maybe our expectations were too much, maybe it is not the feelings that fail, and we are only betrayed by our expectations...

McNeish's quest for information about Lovelock in *The Man from Nowhere* is also left quite open-ended. McNeish spends the autumn of 1983 'sleuthing in Berlin' as one friend describes it. He spends his time searching libraries, records, and archives; interviewing anyone he can find and who is willing; and following up endless leads about Lovelock, all of which come to nothing. Like Martin, McNeish comes to Berlin with high hopes of finding the key to unlocking the Lovelock mystery. He is certain it lies in Berlin (McNeish 12, 15). By the end of his stay he knows little more about Lovelock than he did when he arrived. McNeish, feeling slightly deflated, decides at the last moment to stay one extra week in Berlin to celebrate Christmas in the city to which he has become attached. But his plans to enjoy a night out are also thwarted (66):

Fooled again. We leave tomorrow.

As if we don't have enough riddles to take along in our luggage already. We must be the only foreigners alive in the town who don't know the answer to this one. Some town! Some foreigners!

Despite being in the dark about Lovelock, McNeish, of all the writers is the most knowledgeable about different aspects of Berlin's history. As mentioned he focuses heavily on Berlin's World

War Two history but he is well aware of his surroundings and often various landmarks remind him of certain events in Berlin's history.

He displays an appreciation of the literary tradition of Berlin, which attracted foreign writers to the city in the early twentieth century. In the street next to him lived William L. Shirer, the American foreign correspondent who arrived in the city in 1934. Christopher Isherwood also lived in the general vicinity of his street when he wrote *Goodbye to Berlin*. Later he refers to Isherwood when walking through the Tiergarten (15).

He shows an interest in the local area in which he is living. The street in which he is living is named *Keithstraße* (8). He learns that the street is named after a Scottish soldier, who served as a Field Marshall under Frederick the Great in the mid eighteenth century.³¹ He also mentions that the *Landwehrkanal*, which runs perpendicular to his street, is the place in which the bodies of communist leaders Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht were thrown.

McQueen does acknowledge some other aspects of Berlin's history briefly other than only focussing on the Second World War history. She visits the Berlin Museum, to which the new Jewish Museum is now adjoined. Coincidentally she visits the museum the same year in which the Berlin Senate calls for designs for the new Jewish department of the Berlin Museum.³² She walks through the different exhibitions, noting changes in the feeling of the history presumably for each period in Germany's history, looking at different periods "moving from the Kaisers to the Weimar Republic to the Nazi era". Upon visiting *Schloß Charlottenburg* she wonders what memories the mirrors of the castle might have of the city (McQueen 49, 66).

All three writers take up the opportunity to visit East Berlin. Like McQueen, Martin in *To Each His Own* brings presents from the West to brighten up the lives of East Berliners (Temple 9). McNeish is willing to visit the East but admits that he has almost forgotten about it given there is so much to do in the West (McNeish 25). Although McQueen has reservations about the communist regime, she is aware of capitalism's weaknesses. She is in the *Kaufhaus des Westens*, a high-end department store in Berlin where she notices a couple making a purchase, wealthy and with an abundance of choice, they appear totally discontented (McQueen 28):

³¹ <http://berlin.kauperts.de/Strassen/Keithstrasse-10787-Berlin#Geschichte>, accessed 25/05/12.

³² This Jewish department of the Berlin Museum later expanded to become the Jewish Museum designed by Daniel Libeskind, where fellow New Zealander writer Nigel Cox worked while he lived in Berlin. Nigel Cox's collection of writing produced while in Berlin is the subject of the final chapter of this thesis.

In the shoe department a rich young woman, watched by her husband, is trying on shoes. [...] She is a polished and well-kept woman, about thirty, expensively dressed, with the gloss of luxury about her. She has a disgruntled expression [...] her husband is perfectly bland. He produces a gold credit card.

McNeish and Martin have similar experiences of crossing over to the East. They treat the experience of crossing the border with some degree of respect but only in so far as they know they must comply in order to be granted entry into East Berlin. Otherwise, the general feeling of the writers appears to be that the regime lacks credibility and therefore they cannot take these procedures very seriously. McNeish finds it amusing that the border guard mistakes the shirt under his jersey as a priest's collar and all the questions the guard asks seem ridiculous to him. There is a similar situation when the narrator and his wife are trying to get a glimpse of a part of the former Olympic village, now located in East Berlin. Their interest arouses suspicion and border guards immediately begin to take action. Although they do nothing more to antagonise the guards, there is a sense that they find this slightly ridiculous because the guards saw Helen's camera around her neck and assumed she was spying (McNeish 56).

Antipodean naivety encompasses the idea that the writers, with their experience and knowledge, are only able to see certain characteristics or aspects of the city's history. How have these writers represented Berlin and illustrated their antipodean naivety? There is a heavy focus on Second World War history and this is understandable. Two of the writers are baby boomers and the other was born shortly before the War. In post war New Zealand the writers would have been exposed to a considerable amount of histories, stories and narratives of the war. The writers' focus on Second World War history also illustrates the lack of appreciation of Berlin's much greater and prouder history. German history stretches back many centuries yet in the minds of these writers their country is basically reduced to this terrible period between 1930 and 1989. In Temple's *To Each His Own* Martin encounters someone in Berlin who feels frustrated by foreigners' attitudes towards Germans. She exclaims that she was not responsible for those things that occurred. McNeish and McQueen experience similar reactions.

McNeish is hopeful when he arrives in Berlin. He is almost certain that answers to the mysteries surrounding Lovelock are in the city and that he need only look to uncover them. However, in the end he finds little. What he does find is in no way conclusive. The information does not

support his ideas about Lovelock and what he believes could have happened to him in Berlin. If anything, it opens up a can of worms which could lead his research off in any other direction. He leaves Berlin without any resolution in his research quest. Similarly, Temple's Martin leaves Berlin with unresolved issues. Martin arrives in Berlin expecting to address prejudices he held. While he does begin to address them he also encounters things he didn't expect, for example falling in love and beginning an affair with his language teacher. The relationship ends badly and it is unclear in the end whether he has fully come to terms with it. Both McNeish and Martin come to Berlin seeking answers to the past, expecting to find evidence of the War and not necessarily finding them.

The previous two chapters cover to a large extent the things McQueen, Temple and McNeish did encounter as expressed in their writing through the prism of two major themes: war and walls. This chapter has addressed the way in which the writers represent and view the city through the framework of Pratt's theory of transculturation within the contact zone. The contact zone is Berlin. However, this is not the contact zone of Westerners interacting with peoples in the New World but New World people coming into contact with a hereto imagined city and its people. The phenomenon of transculturation takes place within that contact zone, where the writers imagine that they define the situations they encounter. In fact it is outside factors how they define those situations – in particular the writers' experience and background as New Zealanders. Furthermore, their experience and knowledge also determines which situations are most apparent to them and how they will interpret them. Travel changes the writers in unexpected ways. As writers and New Zealanders they arrive in Berlin naïve and willing to learn about the city and its people. Naturally this exposes how little they know about the place. But they cannot know already what they do not know about Berlin and about its history. This is the process of transculturation.

Nigel Cox

The previous chapter addressed the idea of transculturation and the ‘contact zone’ of Berlin, with a particular focus on three New Zealand writers - James McNeish, Cilla McQueen and Philip Temple. The lens through which these writers frame Berlin is shaped by their cultural background and experiences as New Zealanders. In addition, any analysis of McNeish’s, McQueen’s and Temple’s work cannot overlook the fact that all three writers were in Berlin as recipients of writing fellowships. These fellowships place a certain degree of obligation on the writers to produce pieces of work that comment on Berlin, or at least there is an obligation for them to use the opportunity to develop themselves as writers. In contrast, Nigel Cox did not go to Berlin on a writing fellowship but to take up a position at the Jewish Museum. This chapter discusses Cox’s work to compare and contrast his writing with the work of McNeish, McQueen and Temple.

Cox arrived in Berlin in 2000 – a date that marked a period of 13 years since Cox’s last published work, the novel *Dirty Work*. During and after he was in Berlin he published four further novels: *Skylark Lounge*, *Tarzan Presley*, *Responsibility*, and *The Cowboy Dog* as well as a collection of non-fiction essays centred on his experience in Berlin. This chapter addresses that collection of work - *Phone Home Berlin, Collected Non-fiction (Phone Home Berlin)*, published in 2007. The obvious implication is that Berlin acted as a trigger for his writing after a long period of drought. The excitement of a new place and fresh experiences seem to have unblocked him, which in its own way is another kind of ‘transculturation’. The selection of this particular text allows for a comparison with the texts of McNeish, McQueen and Temple. Like those authors, Cox’s *Phone Home Berlin* is an account of his life in Berlin and the situations he encounters in the city, many of

which take place at the Jewish Museum.³³ The other authors do not mention the vanished Jewish population or the Holocaust as much as Cox. In this way Nigel Cox shows an awareness of further important layers within the Second World War story in Berlin. To be fair Cox has the advantage of working in an environment where this is very obvious to him but for such an important part of the German Jewish story in Berlin it is surprising how the other authors brush over this layer.

Just as McNeish, McQueen and Temple could not ignore Berlin's history in their writing, neither could Cox. As a new arrival in Berlin, the sense of history is awe-inspiring and cannot go unnoticed. This is reflected in how Cox writes about history throughout his text. One of the early essays in the collection, *Our Street*, explains a lot about Cox's engagement with Berlin's history, especially to do with the Second World War. It illustrates perfectly the way in which Berlin's history is woven into the fabric of the city and is impossible for the visitor to escape. As he observes, both the obvious memorials like the *Gedächtniskirche* and the *Neue Wache*, as well as the more subtle reminders of conflict in the city, are confronting (Cox 56-7).

Cox is walking down his street on a Sunday morning after some rain has fallen when something on the footpath catches his eye. It is a set of *Stolpersteine*, so-called stumbling blocks. The *Stolpersteine* are brass blocks set into the footpath and placed outside the apartment buildings of people who were deported from Germany during the Second World War. They are dotted all around Berlin and in other cities in Germany acting as a subtle reminder not to forget that dark period in Germany's history when Jews and other marginalised groups of people were deported from the country. Cox is completely fascinated with this find. He notes all the information down in his notebook. As he does so, he hears a person approaching and suddenly he is worried that he will be judged for being so fascinated with this aspect of Germany's past (57):

This is what I have been afraid of. 'Why are you focusing on Germany's terrible past? If you think it's so bad, why are you living here? That was more than fifty years ago, why can't you just forget about it? It's our history, not yours.'

³³ *Responsibility* is Nigel Cox's major 'Berlin' novel which tells the story of a New Zealand couple and their children living in the city, much like Cox's own experience. For the reasons outlined above this text has not been included in this study. An idea to be explored would be a comparison of his fiction and non-fiction works published in Berlin. What can and does an author write as himself and how does this compare to what he writes as fiction, in another version of himself? Unfortunately these questions fall outside the scope of this study.

In fact she didn't say anything [...] There was maybe the faintest break in her stride – this stranger, crouching in your doorway, noting something down – but maybe that was my imagination.

Cox, self-conscious about the fact that he is so interested in a part of Germany's history about which Germans feel ashamed, is fascinated by the way the city is able to exist with this living history woven into the fabric of the city. He is more conscious of these subtle reminders of Berlin's tormented past because of his employment at the Jewish Museum and how that museum interprets the treatment of Jews during the Second World War. While the Jewish Museum is not a museum of the Holocaust, this aspect of the Jewish experience in Germany cannot be overlooked in a museum of Jewish history. Cox in taking so much interest in the *Stolpersteine* makes himself conscious about being interested in something that is so acutely sensitive to Germans. He feels guilty and in some ways ashamed himself because of this complex *mix* of emotions that are generated. Furthermore his consciousness of these murky dimensions of war are not confined to his work but are also on the street and he knows there is no escaping the theme of war in his place of work. He tries to focus on the fact that the Jewish Museum where he works is not a Holocaust museum but an institution which explores Jewish German history. However, where Jewish and German history intersects during the Second World War is naturally a very sensitive topic, particularly for museum staff charged with interpreting that period. This means that Cox is often faced with the issue of the representation of that part of Jewish German history. As a New Zealander, he does not have the close connection to that history, unlike his German colleagues and Germans in general. Cox debates whether a hypersensitivity to such events is reflected in the behaviour of not only his colleagues at the museum but in the behaviour of all German people. One day while out riding his bicycle, he has an accident and falls to the ground. Concerned Berliners all around him stop by to see if he needs assistance; cars come to a complete halt so as to not run him over. Cox attributes this concern to "a special alarm here, when something happens". He presumes this is something built into the German psyche as an alarm when something goes wrong: "their history has made them anxious about events". Either that or there is an alarm caused by witnessing somebody hurt. Cox notices this hypersensitivity in the workplace too. Staff members are "highly anxious about making a representation of this troubled history". And so when he is faced with this issue in the workplace, where the way it is addressed is important for the success of the museum, his disconnection from this part of Germany's history is quite valuable. He and his colleague from

New Zealand can see things with objectivity. To a certain extent, he thinks this is valuable asset to his colleagues and the museum (68, 71).

While the museum curators may grapple with the portrayal of the Holocaust at a museum dedicated to the history of the Jewish people in Germany located in Germany's capital, *Eva from the Tyre Factory* is a short descriptive piece in which Cox addresses issues of re-unification in Germany. As Cox is in Berlin in the early to mid-2000s, the Cold War is long over, consigned to history. However, he catches a glimpse of the differences and difficulties which still exist between the former East and West Germany over ten years after the fall of the Berlin Wall. They all have roles to play: the West Germans are sophisticated, well-educated and critical; the East Germans less sophisticated, are likely to be less well-educated and lacking in confidence, especially in front of this group of Westerners. Cox is somewhere in between. He is more sophisticated than the East Germans, although not as much as the West Germans. And although he also looks down on the East Germans, he still takes some pity and sympathises with their plight. But he understands that since the fall of the Wall there is one Germany – West Germany. East Germany has become assimilated into the West because as he states “everything in the East was terrible – coffee, cars, buildings, all crappy, plus they had the *Stasi*, the secret police, who were mean low and dirty. No, best forget all that”. But as Cox has come to see during his time in Berlin and working at the Jewish Museum, the past is simply “not the German way”. This essay is proof that even after a decade of German reunification those old prejudices have not yet been put to rest (124).

Later in *Eva from the Tyre Factory*, Cox and his colleagues are going on an excursion to a town outside Berlin. As they are working in a museum dealing with a heavily marginalised group, they are interested in “exploring how minorities fare in contact with dominant cultures” (125). But it is clear almost from the very start that his colleagues are less than open minded about viewing the collections and institutions in the former East. As they reach the town they are visiting, Beeskow, the more Cox notices the landscape becomes a vision of the former (GDR). Cox already has an insight into the way his colleagues view their compatriots of the former East. Whenever interviewing candidates for positions at the museum, he has noticed a familiar refrain: “Ah, but he is from the former East” (124). He is alerted that the person will not necessarily have English as the first foreign language, his education a lesser standard than that in the West and that he will be inflexible. When they arrive they are greeted by Frau Gieslar who will show them a collection of paintings which were once displayed in official building of the GDR. This

says to Cox that these are pieces of “official art”, approved by the State but it does not necessarily denote quality. Already the atmosphere of the visit is different from other situations and experiences he describes in Berlin. There is a sense of pity for poor Frau Gieslar. First Cox describes her attire in painstaking detail. He even goes so far as to describe her makeup which makes her look ghostly. In contrast, his colleague, Inka, dresses in clothes which are ‘much more carefully chosen than Gieslar’s’. Cox is dressed in Gap clothing – a brand synonymous with the consumerism of the West. Then the West Germans’ feelings really come to the fore. The party from the museum is in a room filled with pieces of art. They have not been stored very well. His colleague, Inka, takes this opportunity to take a swipe at Frau Gieslar, certain she does not speak English. Later he discovers that Gieslar does indeed speak English (125, 124, 127, 132). It is hard to tell if Gieslar encourages these prejudices or whether the response Cox receives from his colleague is skewed based on real prejudice:

[...] I quietly ask Cilly Kugelmann, what does Frau Gieslar think of this? ‘I think she’s proud,’ says Cilly. ‘She was very reserved at first, until she was sure of what we thought. When she sees that we ask serious questions and are well-informed, then she starts to show that she has a regard. Not for all of it.’

There is a tone in the encounter between Cox and his colleagues and Frau Gieslar which does suggest she seeks approval from these Westerners. While they look at some particularly socialist paintings depicting workers, which are quickly dismissed as ‘department-store art’, he seems to feel encouraged to look harder at the paintings to see more layers in meaning. These paintings make him consider how life really was in the former GDR. He concludes that it was drab - “Many different colours but all from the same colour pallet” (130-1).

The final encounter of the visit to Beeskow is even more painful with the colleagues scarcely able to contain their displeasure and disdain for the exhibitions and people showing them around. Cilly is acting as translator for Cox while they are at a steel works. The guide who apparently used to work there as an engineer, has now been demoted to the rank of guide in the steel works. He explains the demise of the steel works from its most prosperous time when the plant employed 11,000 people to the present where it provides jobs for only 2000 workers. Cilly has no patience for this tale of woe and simply rolls her eyes instead of translating for him. However, Cox can read the situation very well through his acute observational skills despite his lack of language proficiency (133).

Most of the things Cox writes about in this collection of essays deal with cultural barriers and understanding different cultural issues in Berlin. It is here that it can be argued Cox is reporting on Berlin for New Zealanders unfamiliar with the city, either its past or its present. He struggles with the way in which Germans follow rules – to the letter. He and his colleagues have driven to a town outside Berlin in the former GDR. Apparently, they have parked their vehicle in the wrong place: “it’s easy to get things wrong in Germany; not a lot of she’ll-be-right in this country” (Cox 126). The inclusion of a colloquial New Zealand phrase suggests that fellow New Zealanders are the primary audience for his work *Phone Home Berlin* as does the title. It characterises the author and is a marker of his own position in Berlin as an expatriate. However, although he is writing for his compatriots, Cox shows how he attempts to integrate himself into German society by becoming a student of German language.

Cox freely admits that his proficiency in German is poor but he illustrates a real determination to overcome this language barrier. He attempts the language and is curious to know what things mean; “‘Chirurg’ which turns out to be ‘Surgeon’”. He often works in a German language situation. Many meetings are in German: “there will be a lunch, mostly in German, admittedly”. With this in mind he makes joking efforts to help remember new vocabulary. The Kreuzberg underground station *Geneisenaustraße* becomes “Knees Up Straße”. The announcement on the underground, warning passengers that the doors of the carriages, are closing becomes “‘Philip Liner Bitter,’ a Radio NZ brand of beer”. However, his method has its flaws. While proof reading texts which will be used in an exhibition he comes across the German phrase *zu lang* (too long) which denotes that the text has exceeded the borders of the template used. The typesetter being used recognises this immediately and the caution *zu lang* is printed next to the text. Once again this is something that Cox finds fascinating and becomes obsessed with the phrase, even going as far as to compare it to an addiction to cocaine. Saying this phrase repeatedly quickly becomes the chorus to a 1960s pop tune and while singing to himself at work he bemuses his German colleagues with his unusual methods of learning the language of his workplace (56, 58).

The challenge of learning a foreign language is a recurrent theme throughout the *Phone Home Berlin* collection. Cox is intrigued with German language and vocabulary. Although it appears that he has very limited proficiency, he is eager to learn more and is fascinated with the intricacies of the language. He refers to the hospital near his canal, the *Krankenhaus am Urban*, established by Dieffenbach, the surgeon after whom Cox’s street is named. The word *krank* “is

the most wonderful word for sick” he thinks (62). Out of all of the authors reviewed in this thesis, Cox is the only one who is so enthusiastic about really engaging with the language head on and so imaginative about it. It is as if it is the language and the city which has reawakened his imagination. However, all of the authors express frustration over their lack of German language ability. The *Berlin Diary* narrator is timid at first, her confidence and understanding growing gradually as she has more time in Berlin. McNeish of *The Man from Nowhere* uses his wife’s knowledge of the language as a crutch. Martin in *To Each His Own* is over confident often making grammatical and simple spelling mistakes which betray him as a non-native speaker. Nevertheless, such errors can also be seen as simply his way of attempting to really engage with the language.

The difficulties of not being able to speak German appear again in *Tyre Tracks* where Cox discusses the issues of living in another country from the everyday mundane to the unintentional. Even though he may live in the chaotic and exciting surrounds of Berlin, Cox still must suffer through the daily grind of work, meetings and travel (58). Moreover, these tales serve to illustrate how he engages with the people in the city and how he reacts to them – it is a way of recording those anonymous interactions and engagements you can have in a large metropolitan city, which can be positive or negative experiences, where people are enclosed in their bubbles going about their daily duties but ‘meet’ frequently through their regular activities. The positive experiences include seeing the hardened drinkers in the early morning. The irony of the bar’s name *Ohne Ende* (Without End) referring both to the sad and happy fact that the bar is actually open all hours of the day, and the depressing fact that these people are stuck in the rut of their addiction to alcohol. There is the young man with Down’s syndrome, on whom the Turkish supermarket owner, complete with droopy moustache, takes pity (62).

Tyre Tracks illustrates that Cox is very observant of his surroundings and the people he encounters. He acts both as a casual observer and commentator on Berlin and his engagement with the city and its people is primarily passive and distant. Cox is living in Kreuzberg, the suburb in former West Berlin which was very close to the Berlin Wall. In the 1980s, this suburb was full of young people, students, anarchists and immigrants, particularly immigrants from Turkey. Cox still notices something of this freedom in the suburb. Every morning he leaves his house as quietly as possible so he does not wake his family. And every morning he is greeted by the bleary-eyed patrons of the bar *Ohne Ende* who have been going all night (62). Berlin is a grimy city but it wears this with pride. Even the animals do not care. Cox is suddenly straitlaced and

judgmental, and looking at swans gliding down the grubby canal thinks “you’ll get dirty” or in the middle of winter when the canal is frozen over he thinks “your webbed feet will be frozen solid” (63). However, Cox himself doesn’t want to be judged. Every day he cycles past a woman who goes running. He has decided from his various encounters with her that she thinks herself to be an object of desire to the men she runs past. Cox is determined not to be included in these potential thoughts and cycles past allowing plenty of room to pass. The most irritating thing about this for Cox is that she keeps a similar schedule to him and they encounter each other every day.

On some things, Cox naturally finds it difficult to engage and locate a common understanding with Berliners. On sunny days, he notices that all benches along the canal are occupied. When he sees this, Cox simply thinks to himself: “Germans”. He sees this behaviour as nature worshipping and he cannot abide it. Perhaps for a New Zealander from rural Pahiatua, he has become complacent in his appreciation of nature. He has grown up with this and it has become a passive appreciation. However, he seems to see the behaviour of Berliners flocking to benches by the canal on sunny days as a very rigid example of re-creation, like a very structured form of worship. It seems as if there can be no appreciation of nature until they are “each in possession of their own bench, head slightly tilted back, eyes closed, face lifted to the sun”. And then it comes again, as if it is inescapable, the city and the people somehow unable to simply be themselves, living in a capital city in Europe. Once again, they must be the people and the city associated with that war. Even this simple act of appreciating their surroundings is associated with a national penance for the wrongs committed by their parents (64):

They feel that as a people they are ruined, that their culture and character once led them to evil, and the only thing left that is pure is nature, nature without thought, wordless nature, that has no sin. If only they could be just natural again...

With such rigid appreciation of nature’s beauty, Cox cannot help himself but swing completely in the other direction or perhaps he simply finds the adoration and piety too overwhelming. Germans take themselves too seriously. He feels compelled to inject some ironic kiwi perspective: “Myself, I like a tree. I love the colour the new green leaves cast in spring. But I like a good book better. Pass the chainsaw” (64).

Did Cox deliberately take on a role of ironic observer as he felt that as a New Zealander he was unable to fully comprehend the ramifications of Berlin's history? Indeed, the 'travelogue' style of writing can easily be seen a reflection of his intended audience – curious fellow New Zealanders. Cox acknowledges that Germany is a divided country but in which way? The former East and West Berlin and Germany are obvious. Other divides include that between rich and poor (homeless man on the bench); men and women (runner scared of being raped); Germans and immigrants (Cox as an immigrant in Germany); able bodied and disabled persons (the kind Turkish store holder and the Down's syndrome boy); alcoholics and non-alcoholics (the patrons of the Without End bar); dirty and clean (the grimy canal and the swans); and sin and absolution (those penitents seeking solace in nature). Even Cox confesses that his thoughts are divided over the people he encounters each day. But this daily commute is a chance for him to interact with these people and the city. Plus it seems to be an outlet for him before he has to get into work and really think about things instead of simply letting his mind wander: "This ride is one of the few open spots open in my day, when I can let my thoughts just wander, and as I go into the building where I work I am often dazed, as though I have too soon been forced to focus on the business of making a living" (65). Moreover, the observance of this juxtaposition illustrates how Cox is acutely aware of the diversity and divisions that exist in Berlin and German society.

Cox expresses feeling a certain amount of comfort from "experiencing life once removed". As a young man he could experience life through reading. He confesses "I live in Germany at a remove. There's the language gap – I just don't understand". He simply does not understand even though he deludes himself that he can understand the general themes of conversations if he only concentrates. And so he learns by observing and following those around him. The problem he finds is that language is all around him and this can be frustrating and depressing (66, 67, 68). In this situation he develops routines and ways about navigating through the city which become familiar to him. He coins the phrase "bubble of coping" to describe such circumstances. This is similar to McQueen in *Berlin Diary* who creates a cocoon around herself in foreign situations (McQueen). When he has the accident with his bicycle he crosses the threshold between coping and real world Germany where he must fend for himself in this foreign environment (Cox 68):

As I lay there, bruised, a clear thought came into my mind: 'You've broken through the bubble. Now you're really in Germany.' I saw myself trying to cope with the German medical system, explaining in sign language how my arm was broken, see, here, and could they fix it, I have insurance.

[...]

Most of the time I keep everything at a safe distance.

It is fair to say that Cox suffers from just as much tunnel vision as his compatriots while in Berlin. But then again this should be seen in the light that very reason he goes to Berlin is to take up a position at the Jewish Museum. As he reminds the reader, it is a museum of Jewish German history but the fact that Holocaust does play such a big role in the story of Jews in Germany means it would be difficult for him to avoid the topic. His work at the Jewish Museum very much shapes his experience in Berlin and acts as an anchor guiding his focus. This does not allow him the scope to focus on other aspects of history in Berlin. Therefore, *Phone Home Berlin* addresses a very limited period of history in the city. Cox even admits that he was not very aware of the Holocaust until he read *Schindler's Ark*, which he reviewed when it won the Booker prize. He does show a brief appreciation of the literary tradition in Berlin of foreigners coming to the city to write. As a young boy growing up in suburban Lower Hutt, the absolute antithesis of Berlin, he recalls his father reading William L. Shirer's *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich* (Cox 69). Other than that, the focus is on the treatment of Jews in the Second World War, remnants of Cold War ideas held by either side in current day Berlin, and Cox's family.

It is clear that Cox's time in Berlin at the Jewish Museum encouraged him to start writing again after a lengthy hiatus. Cox hints at the reason behind this period of productivity in a short essay, *What I Would Have Written*, included in the *Phone Home Berlin* collection. This short piece was written during a lull in completing his final novel, *The Cowboy Dog* and describes his journey as a writer and the things he has come to learn as a writer. He writes 'there was a point where I decided not to be too constrained by the notions of what I thought should be writing and my writing got better'. He discusses how in his novel *Skylark Lounge*, published just as he had arrived in Berlin, he had 'flirted' with fanciful notions of aliens but in the end played it safe and kept it 'very well within 'acceptable' boundaries'. It is clear from this comment that Cox experienced a major shift in his work after his time in Berlin. First, after more than a decade of hiatus he published a number of novels. And secondly, he felt more freedom to publish the kinds of works which were not necessarily 'safe' (260, 259).

Conclusion

In the context of this thesis, New Zealand writers James McNeish, Cilla McQueen, Philip Temple and Nigel Cox are all travel writers in so far as the subject of their work, whether it is fiction, non-fiction or poetry, takes place within the ‘contact zone’ of Berlin. This is not altered by the fact they were in Berlin either as recipients of writing fellowships, or in the case of Nigel Cox because he took up a role at the Jewish Museum. McNeish, McQueen and Temple each had in effect a state funded purpose and their time there was under the umbrella of the arts and culture policies of the Federal Republic of Germany, which sought to reinvigorate West Berlin as a cultural centre and shift its historical past to a new future and increase ties between New Zealand and Germany. However, whether in Berlin through the assistance of state funded fellowships as in McNeish, McQueen and Temple, or in Berlin because of a career opportunity like Cox, they all exhibit the characteristics of travellers in a strange new place.

The introduction addresses twentieth century events that took place in Berlin which led to these writers being in Berlin. Not only this, the introductory chapter also illustrates the city’s strong literary tradition and how these New Zealand authors are placed within the city’s continuum of literary tradition. It was through these major twentieth century events in Berlin that the opportunity for the authors arose and allowed them to be able to write in the city. In the years before the fall of the Wall New Zealand writers were invited by organisations such as the *DAAD*, its establishment which is discussed at length in the introductory chapter. After the fall of the Wall the number of New Zealand writers spending time in Berlin declined. However the connection between New Zealand writers and Berlin was revived in the late 1990s and early 2000s by Philip Temple. This mirrored the attempts made by German organisations such as the

DAAD in post-war Germany to connect with the wider world again. Although it may seem like a chance occurrence that New Zealand writers would be in Berlin, it is far from the case. As stated it was through these set of events outlined in the introductory chapter which allowed the writers to be in city and provides a basis for this thesis.

The key themes which come through in the texts of these writers relate to images of war and walls. In all texts the images of war focus heavily on the Second World War and the Cold War in Berlin. The images of walls are open to more interpretation and although the most obvious wall, the Berlin Wall features prominently, the writers also illustrate the various other physical and metaphysical walls and barriers they encounter in Berlin. As non-native German speakers language plays an important role and they can easily experience a strong sense of isolation within the city. However on a more positive note, they all express a real desire to overcome any obstacles and hurdles they encounter, most acknowledging that towards the end of their time in the city that they have at least come to know it better having taken the opportunity to explore the city and engage with its citizens.

It is the fact that these themes of wars and walls are so paramount which led to the idea that New Zealand writers could be prone to seeing the world from within the safety of their 'antipodean cocoon'. This relates to the idea that growing up and living in a country as remote as New Zealand their perspectives on the world have become slightly limited. Although they assume they know the world and as writers they relish the opportunity to live and write within a trendy and exciting European metropolis, the fact is this very opportunity exposes their own 'antipodean naivety'. I take this idea from Mary Louise Pratt's theory of the 'contact zone' in travel writing. This body of work by these New Zealand writers is essentially travel writing and Pratt's theory is that within the contact zone the dominant group (in her case European writers on indigenous peoples) presumes to believe it determines how the subordinate group (the indigenous people) is portrayed in its travel writing about them. Pratt argues that the dominant group is not cognisant of the fact that the subordinate group has just as much control over how they are being portrayed simply by virtue of the way in which the dominant group reacts to its encounter. My argument in relation to the New Zealand writers is that they see themselves as the dominant group determining how they see Berlin and its citizens. They see themselves as the dominants because of a kind of arrogance that they know the history of the city so well. This is not the case as is evidently clear in their texts. Their perspective of the city is very narrow and they focus on a limited period of the city's history. But it is this very arrogance in coming to the

city and presuming they know it so well from what they have read and have been taught which reveals how little they know of the city and furthermore their very antipodean naivety. Pratt's theory of the contact zone is reversed in several ways relating to the group of New Zealand writers. First the direction of travel is reversed. The writers come to Old Europe from a newly colonised country with its own group of indigenous people. Second, although they see themselves as dominants, it is clear that they are not because of their limited knowledge about the city. Finally, although they see themselves as dominant, their texts suggest that they are more like the indigenous group of people travelling to Old Europe. In these ways Pratt's theory is reversed in the case of these writers.

To provide a contrast to the initial writers who went to Berlin I discuss a collection of essays which Nigel Cox wrote while he was in the city. As a writer of a different generation and who went to Berlin both for different reasons and with his family in tow there was the possibility that he would view the city and his experiences in a different manner. Surprisingly his experience of Berlin is very similar to those of McNeish, McQueen and Temple. Cox, like his fellow New Zealand writers is just as interested in twentieth century Berlin history. However, Cox is at least aware that he is interested in this part of Berlin's history and feels some shame in his ghoulish interest.

All the writers share these characteristics with other travel writers in a new environment. But they are distinguished from other travel writers by the experiences they bring to Berlin as New Zealanders: the antipodean lens through which they view the city, its history and its people. They arrive in Berlin with already well formed ideas and preconceptions about the city and the country as illustrated by their tendency to focus on twentieth century events like the Second World War and the Cold War.

This thesis illustrates the mix of bewilderment and strangeness they experience in the contact zone but also the many preconceptions they have about the city. What they find in the city is different to what they expect, which changes them and prompts them to become aware of their own cultural origins and deficiencies to differing extents for each writer. To whichever degree it becomes apparent to each author it is in the contact zone of Berlin their antipodean naivety is revealed to them.

In conclusion, despite differences in circumstance or reasons for being in Berlin, this set of authors ultimately views Berlin with a set of blinkers. Their focus on Berlin's twentieth century events cloud their judgement of the city and do not allow them to see the city's much broader history through which they reveal their antipodean naivety in the contact zone of Berlin.

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