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# Citizenship without community: time, design and the city[2]

**Abstract**

This paper engages with the concept of design as a way of re-working the standard understanding of citizenship as what takes place within a political community. In doing so, the paper draws on recent attempts to rethink citizenship as 'acts' rather than status (Isin &Nielsen, 2008) and seeks to bring that work together with attempts at reimagining community as 'encounters' and 'confrontations' rather than that which is contained within a bounded space (Nancy, 1991, 2003). Specifically, the paper argues for an approach that is attentive to ideas of time and seeks to open up an idea of community that avoids the requirement of commonality. Using a focus on citizenship as a temporal phenomenon, the paper suggests that designers have engaged with ideas of time as multiple, fragmented and splintered, and these form useful material for reworking ideas of community beyond representation. The paper offers a study of two sites of memory drawn from the city of Berlin, Daniel Libeskind's *Jewish Museum* and Peter Eisenmann's *Memorial for the Murdered Jews of Europe*, and an art installation by the artist Gustav Metzger called 'Flailing Trees', exhibited at the Manchester International Festival of 2009. Gathering material offered by these designs, and a tradition of writing the city as a splintered social space, the paper explores the different forms of community that circulate and are instantiated at these 'sites of memory' and argues for an understanding of community beyond unity.

**Citizenship, community, and sites of memory**

It is difficult to walk far in the city of Berlin without coming across a site of memory. Such sites range from organized, state supported museums, that are part of powerful, global financial networks, to experimental and improvised works of art that are built to pass rather than last. They all engage with questions of citizenship, albeit in different ways. Acknowledging Berlin as the capital city of National Socialism, and the central point from which the Nazi regime's programme of violence was orchestrated, they remember the way in which particular citizens were stripped of citizenship, dignity and life and suggest that today's citizens need to be aware of the past. Many evoke the assumption that in remembering, we might become better citizens, and at first glance, such an aim must appear as a good thing. Yet these sites can also compel us to think more critically about the way in which we engage with questions of citizenship. Drawing on her experience of visiting the Imperial War Museum in London and the Holocaust Museum in Washington, Debbie Lisle demonstrates such an approach by pointing out that we often leave these exhibitions having re-affirmed the view of the world that we already held in entering. She asks: why is it that we often already know what we expect to find at war museums? (2006) In an attempt to challenge a 'view of the world that we already hold', this paper asks, how might such sites move us to think differently about citizenship, or affect us to think about politics in ways we might not have imagined otherwise?

The paper investigates this question by asking: what might citizenship look like without the assumption of political community? R. B. J. Walker notes that 'with very few exceptions, notions of citizenship are still overwhelmingly tied to the concept of political community and to the idea that citizenship is something that occurs in bounded space.' (1998, p. 198) The particular form of political community has of course changed considerably, from the idea of the Greek polis, to the cities of medieval Europe, to modern states. Citizenship has nevertheless remained central to Western political philosophy in that it suggests 'a right to being political, a right to constitute oneself as an agent to govern and be governed, deliberate with others and enjoin determining the fate of the polity to which one belongs' (Isin, 2002, p.1; see also Pocock, 1998). The significant dimension of *modern* citizenship is the assumption that this right to be political can only be realized in a state. Citizenship therefore becomes associated with a particular understanding of community as spatially bounded and sharing in a national, temporal journey, as Michael J. Shapiro explains:

> While [citizenship] is conceptually located in a legal, territorial entity, within which it is associated with the privileges of sovereignty and the rights of individuals, it is also understood in terms of the historical process by which peoples develop shared characteristics (2000, p. 7).

My question, then, is what might politics look like when we don't approach 'it' as something that takes place within a bounded, developmental community? The paper

suggests that an attentiveness to the *design* of sites of memory in Berlin can offer some material for recasting our understanding of citizenship, and move away from the idea that this is a 'thing or a static condition' (Walker, 1998, p. 172; see also Nyers, 2007). I explore another understanding of community, which refuses the assumption that communities share in a common timeframe, or in what Michael Shapiro calls a 'national time'. In contrast to the sense that community forms a container or backdrop for the staging of politics, I investigate how ideas of time as discontinuous, ephemeral and multiple may prompt a different imagining of community.

I address the possibilities for a reworking of community through a study of the design of two sites of memory in Berlin: the Jewish Museum by Daniel Libeskind and the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe by Peter Eisenman, and a temporary art installation designed by Gustav Metzger for the Manchester International Festival, 2009.[3] I don't read the sites for the narratives they tell or the representations that they offer, but for the way in which the *designs* invite a focus on politics as confrontations and the 'acting out' of community (and perhaps disunity). This is in contrast to an understanding of citizenship as something to be achieved in time, extended in space, or that may be passed to, handed out, or taken away from communities that are understood to pre-exist politics. The paper therefore takes inspiration from Isin and Nielsen's recent work on rethinking citizenship as 'acts', and argues for a focus on those moments through which identities, allegiances, and associations are formed, and what takes place when we encounter, engage with and attach ourselves to others.

The next section of the paper outlines briefly how this approach differs from some other critical writings that have sought to detach the notion of citizenship from the political community of the nation-state (Benhabib, 2004, 2006). Much of this literature has focused on the possibilities offered by the European Union and has involved investigating ways of supplementing what is a predominantly economic based notion of community with either a deeper sense of commonality or an extended set of political and social rights (Aradau, Huysmans & Squire, 2009).[4] My approach is quite different: rather than address community as a concept that needs to be deepened or extended, I explore an understanding of community which may not adequately be described by the term 'community' at all.[5] This is a task that is especially apt to be thought through the city of Berlin, given that the National Socialist regime largely justified their acts of violence and brutality through appeals to a fundamentalist understanding of community as unity. But Berlin also forms an interesting point of departure as the site through which many Twentieth Century writers have sought to recover an understanding of community as multiple, fragmented and splintered, and therefore as something that exceeds or escapes unity. This is a thinking of community that refuses the 'praise of purity' that 'has upheld and upholds crimes' (Nancy, 2003, p.280). Drawing from the work of Jean-Luc Nancy, I suggest that the city forms a site for thinking about community as 'the locus of a *melée*'. Significantly, there is nothing 'unitary' in a melee; rather, 'there is countervalence and encounter, there's resemblage and distancing,

contact and contraction, concentration and dissemination, identification and alteration (2003, p.282).

**The time of citizenship**

Seyla Benhabib argues that there are new modalities of citizenship emerging across the world which reveal that the boundaries of the nation-state are inadequate for regulating membership in a political community (2004, 2006). Benhabib is rightfully concerned about the way in which modern nation-states regulate membership according to the category of national citizenship, defining 'some as members [and] others as aliens' (2006, p. 1); she attempts to find a way around the tension between the rights, obligations and identities we hold as citizens in nation states, and the rights, obligations and identities we feel we share with others as part of a common humanity (see also, Linklater, 1998). Benhabib is keen to go 'beyond' an understanding of citizenship that is attached to the political community of the nation-state. However, the problem with Benhabib's attempt to imagine citizenship beyond the state is underpinned by a notion of time as one that can carry all differences on a common journey. Whilst this paper shares Benhabib's broad aims, to try and think beyond 'the unitary model of citizenship….and its hold on our political imaginations' to anticipate 'new modalities of political citizenship' (2006, p. 47), I suggest that this task requires working with another set of creative tools, and specifically, another understanding of time. This is because the basic building blocks that Benhabib utilises for imagining another form of citizenship in a supranational political space are wrapped up in a statist ontological framework.

For example, although Benhabib shifts the grounds for membership in a political community, and the conditions for citizenship, from being based on notions of national attachment and belonging to a focus on the *rights* of each individual, my argument is that this shift is inadequate to the task of seeking alternatives. Keeping in mind that the idea of modern citizenship emerged through the twin notions of an ethnos that shares in a progressive temporal journey and a demos that shares the privileges of sovereignty in a bounded space, we don't necessarily succeed in re-designing citizenship by shifting the emphasis from one of these notions to the other. Indeed, this shift from a discourse of belonging to a discourse of rights, in its challenge to the state, continues to draw and build on many of the assumptions that make the state such a central part of our political imaginations (Walker, 1998, p. 177). For example, the notion of 'rights' as the property of a modern, self-determining individual that can achieve its freedom in time is a firm feature – and promise – of the modern state system. When Benhabib says that we must focus on the recognition of the individual 'as a being who is entitled to moral respect' and 'whose communicative freedom we must recognize', she affirms one of the central pillars of statist thinking: the idea that sovereign citizens achieve their identity, reason, full capacities and freedom in a political community (2004, p. 141-2).[6] This is a position that understands citizenship as 'an important stage in the progress of humanity…[and] a desirable condition for all of humanity, in principle if not always just yet in practice, and also to be associated with civilization and improvement' (Hindess, 2004, p. 308). The

temporal aspect of citizenship is not only assumed in the sense of a people that share characteristics, such as we find expressed in a nation. It is also assumed in the idea that a people can realize their full capacities and rights within a larger, higher, or improved political community. Both these assumptions rely on an idea of time as progressive, linear and unified, in the sense that political life is deemed to follow a distinct journey. This is what Walter Benjamin described as 'homogenous empty time' when time can only assume a single direction (1968).

In seeking to shift the focus from the national to the supranational, and from a community based on belonging to a community based on the rights of individuals, Benhabib attempts to mitigate the tension between our commitment to sovereign self-determination and a commitment to human rights. However, as Bonnie Honig argues in her response to Benhabib's essay, international institutions do not dispense with the need for membership in a political community: they simply change the venue for it (2006, p. 107). Benhabib doesn't offer a way of disaggregating the concept of citizenship from its attachment to the modern state; rather, she offers us a super-state, which may in some instances provide an opening or another course of appeal for marginalized groups, although there are no guarantees that this supranational community might not similarly discriminate or exclude 'others' in uncompromising ways. The point is that membership in a political community remains an important component, and Benhabib's notion of citizenship is still very much tied to the concept of a bounded political community: 'Membership in bounded communities, which may be smaller or larger than territorially defined nation-states, *remains nevertheless crucial*.' (Benhabib, 2006, p. 20) In contrast, I seek another way of imagining being-with-others, which involves more than recognizing or accommodating differences and instead seeks to trace the contours at which relations between selves and others, citizens and non-citizens take place.

A focus on time allows for another understanding of community, which disrupts the assumption that citizenship must be tied to the idea of a political community within which we must agree a common identity or a common understanding of being political. The designs of these sites are interesting because they suggest an understanding of time as plural and uncontainable within a unified narrative or bounded political community. They draw attention to the plurality of ways in which we might be in time, without necessarily sharing in a common start or end point. These designs therefore offer material for exploring an idea of citizenship that rejects the idea that differences, disagreements and otherness must be contained within a common community and suggest instead an approach to citizenship that is attuned to the 'appreciation of an uneasy coexistence of subjects', which don't necessarily share a commonality *or* share in a common historical journey, as Michael Shapiro outlines:

> the being-in-common of citizenship need not take the form of finding a common discursive ground within which different interests can be communicated… If we acknowledge disjoint forms of presence, a politics

of citizenship will require a continuous renegotiation of the aggregation of difference, an appreciation of an uneasy coexistence of subjects who live in overlapping but different temporal traces (2000, p. 84-5).

**The time of the political**

Nationalist and state-led practices of commemoration and remembrance tend to rely upon, and reproduce, a linear narrative of time, or what, following Shapiro, we might call 'national time' (2000, but see also Edkins, 2003). The 'imagined community' of the modern nation works by remembering and forgetting events from the past to create the image of a continuous community that has travelled steadily through history. The practice of national commemoration therefore also acts as a form of national communion (Nancy, 1991) where remembering the dead becomes at the same time a way of affirming the endurance of the nation. However, Shapiro and Edkins remind us that this sense of sharing in a common temporal journey is not the result of an innocent process, and that the state must *manage* a multiplicity of historical narratives, and 'impose coherence on what is actually a series of fragmentary and arbitrary conditions of historical assemblage' (Shapiro, 2000, p. 80; Edkins, 2003, p.1-20).

A focus on the city, and on Berlin in particular then, suggests a way in which we might consider the relationship between community and time as plural. Whilst a national idea of community relies on the idea of a community as 'one', and sharing in a common temporal journey, the image of the city presents many tempos. David Frisby (1985) has pointed to Baudelaire as a key figure that tried to capture this 'metropolitan' idea of time (which is of course not an experience that is exclusive to the metropolis, and which may also inform the nation – as Homi Bhabha makes clear, 2004). Frisby argues that Georg Simmel and Walter Benjamin shared Baudelaire's ambition to unpack this particular temporality of the city (see also Berman, 1983). Both Simmel and Benjamin were concerned with capturing what Frisby describes as 'the discontinuous experience of time, space and causality as transitory, fleeting and fortuitous or arbitrary - an experience located in the immediacy of social relations, including our relations with the social and physical environment of the metropolis and our relations with the past' (1985, p. 4). In contrast to an emphasis on continuity, progressiveness and evolvement, this Baudelarian 'city time' accentuates breaks, change, disruption, upheaval, randomness, and unpredictability. Both Benjamin and Simmel sketched this experience of time in the context of living, writing and reflecting about Berlin.

Echoing Georg Simmel's observations on Berlin in the early Twentieth Century, Daniel Libeskind claims that in designing the Jewish Museum, he sought to work with 'the paradigm of the irrational' (1992, p. 82).[7] Reflecting on the history of the holocaust, he suggests that the 'best works of the contemporary spirit come from the irrational, while what prevails in the world, what dominates and often kills, does so always in the name of Reason' (1992, p. 82). The design of the Museum, situated on Lindenstrasse in the Kreuzberg district, works with this tension between the rational and the irrational, and

with what we might describe as two understandings of time: as continuous on the one hand, and as a series of disruption and breaks on the other hand. This is reflected in Libeskind's pet name for the project, 'Between the Lines', where 'one is a straight line, but broken into many fragments; the other is tortuous and complex, but continuing indefinitely.' (1992, p. 86) In thinking *between* rationality and irrationality, we are drawn to think between 'national time' and the fragmentary, splintered, and arbitrary conditions that make the image of a national community possible. This is a difficult task, because as Isin reminds us. 'modern social thought has been more concerned with order than disruption' (Isin, 2002, p. 261). However, in studying the city, specifically, social theorists have been forced to engage with change, upheaval and disruption. Indeed, Berlin is a city of transformations, 'being a place whose identity is not based on stability but on change.' (Richie, 1998, p. xvii) And Berlin experienced profound social changes from the time Libeskind won the competition to design this museum in 1989 to the time of its official opening on the 25$^{th}$ of January 1999: the fall of the Berlin wall, the reunification of the city and of Germany, and the decision to name Berlin as the capital of Germany once more. However, in designing this museum, Libeskind drew on the works of writers, composers and artists that embraced the idea of thinking about the social world through disruption and transformation rather than through notions of stability and permanence. This thinking of community as splintered takes a very different form to the idea of Berlin as a divided/reunited city.

This idea of time as broken into many fragments is captured in the design of the Jewish museum, and can be traced in the zigzag markings that characterize the zinc clad exterior, and which from the inside, appear as jagged, seared window panes. They reflect what we might describe as the time of the city. The sheer mass of peoples, commodities, images and stimuli suggests that time doesn't follow a straightforward course in the city, but involves multiple flows and offshoots. Following Simmel, it is a site that presents 'pronounced differences' on 'a single glance', is forever shifting, and profoundly contradictory (1971, p. 325). This idea of 'city time' evokes an understanding of community that refuses a sense of completion, fulfillment, or telos, and instead emphasises encounters, disruption and interruption. Echoing Shapiro, the city presents the possibility of 'diverse ways of being in time'. This is not a community that relies on an idea of bounded space, and it is therefore very different to the community that has supported the modern notion of citizenship. Importantly, this community doesn't amount to a *substance* that can be *accessed*, *deepened* or *extended*. It involves a different ontology, which draws attention instead to the moments, meetings and collisions through which communities are *enacted* (Isin, 2008).

This notion of time as discontinuous was developed by Libeskind from four starting points. He began the project by plotting a hexagonal figure, somewhat resembling the Star of David, and went about tracking the names and addresses of German Jewish citizens and people who would have identified themselves as 'Berliners': 'Kleist, Heine, Rahel Varnhagen, E. T. A. Hoffmann, Mies van der Rohe, Schönberg, Paul Celan, Walter Benjamin' (1992, p. 83). He drew from Schönberg's unfinished opera, *Moses and Aaron,*

which was written in Berlin; two telephone-book sized volumes containing the names of Jewish citizens, their dates of birth, dates of deportation, and the presumed places where they were murdered; and on Walter Benjamin's autobiographical writings in *One-Way Street.* The result is the 'physical manifestation of a matrix of connections pervading the site… The windows are the 'writing of the addresses by the walls of the Museum itself' (Libeskind, 2007, p. 27). Although these resources might be understood as building on a sense of an identifiable 'Jewish-German community', I want to suggest that the way in which Libeskind gathers his material, following this rather eclectic and improvised method, suggests a different understanding of community – as not only one that was brutally lost, but one which is also dispersed, plural, and scattered. It potentially suggests an approach to loss that refuses to transfigure the dead into the substance of community, 'be these homeland, native soil or blood, nation, a delivered or fulfilled humanity', and as one that embraces the idea that community can never be fully complete (1991, p. 15).

**Inbetween times**

This is not to say, then, that notions of linearity, measurability and progress are not also at work in the city. Writing at the turn of the Twentieth Century, Georg Simmel's essay, 'The Metropolis and Mental Life' (1903), presents two coexisting experiences of time in the modern city (1971). Firstly, there is the understanding of time as regularized, standardized and exact, such as is demanded by a money economy. This 'calculating exactness of practical life', he claims, transforms 'the world into an arithmetical problem and of fixing every one of its parts in a mathematical formula' (1971, p. 327). Simmel's notion of 'exactness' reflects the statist ontology that has heavily underpinned debates in the study of citizenship, and which dictates that citizenship derives from, and is organized within, bounded units of community. Warren Magnusson describes this statist ontology as that which 'rationalizes human relations by forming people into citizens of separate, sovereign countries', and warns that 'the order produced by the state system seems secure only if sovereign identities fill the whole world and give it a unique history. There must be no surplus, no messiness that disrupts the system' (2000, p. 80). However, and in contrast to the rationalising order that organises people into citizens of distinct political communities, Simmel portrays the city as a site that inevitably introduces this 'messiness' that haunts 'statist thinking'. It haunts statist thinking because, as Simmel's contemporary Max Weber would insist, rationality and irrationality go hand in hand and any quest to rationalise all aspects of social life only makes things appear more and more irrational. As Simmel concurs, if we were only able to understand time, and the organization of our daily lives, as straightforward, rational and linear, we would risk becoming 'swallowed up in the social-technological mechanism' (1971, p. 324). In recovering this mutual relationship of rationality and irrationality, then, we might suggest that Libeskind's design engages with a sense of being political that is 'not necessarily calculable and rational but may also be unintentional or affective' (Isin, 2008, p. 37). This means that we don't approach community straightforwardly, as something we inherit, or that organises a sense of

meaning for us, but that we approach community as a politics: as the lines at which different ideas of spirituality, faith and meaning intersect, and where we find ourselves differentially positioned as citizens, noncitizens, insiders, outsiders, aliens, strangers.

The scars on the shiny zinc-clad building of the Jewish Museum, designed to match the dull blue-grey skies of Berlin, offer us some interesting material for thinking community through multiple times. However, there are also instances in the museum where the idea of a bounded community that can realize its essence in time, reappears. The most vivid example of this is in the E. T. A. Hoffman Garden (or the Garden of Exile and Emigration) which forms part of the site, and contains a grid of 49 earth-filled, white concrete pillars. These 49 pillars are striking for their size and presence: the grid effect is slightly tilted, and plants grow from the tops of each pillar. This effect is echoed in another significant building in the city - the Federal Chancellery[8], where on either side of this white concrete and glass building, we also find two enormous white concrete pillars with green shoots growing from their tops, forming almost an exact replica. The pillars at the Jewish Museum garden are filled with the earth of Berlin, and their number is designed to signify the birth of the State of Israel in 1948; the additional one (the 49th) represents the city of Berlin and is filled with the earth of Jerusalem. This association between community, soil and continuity suggests a very different understanding of community to that which we have unfurled from the zigzag structure of the building. It evokes a particular relationship between death and community, suggesting that, as under nationalism, the fact of death is tempered by the attainment of a meaningful life in the community. In this part of the design, identities are territorialized into distinct units and Berlin does not appear as a contrasting idea of community, but as a nation that 'is purified of its heterogeneity' in order to serve as a basis for the nation-state. (Butler in Butler & Spivak, 2007, p. 32)

The pillars of the Garden, and the connections they draw between Berlin, Germany and the state of Israel, are therefore more suggestive of a politics of cultural 'diversity' than a politics of cultural 'melee' (Nancy, 2003). The difference is significant: diversity works according to what Nancy describes as 'quantitative discourse' – that is, a thinking of community as a substance, a calculation, or an accumulation. Whilst we are often reminded by liberal democratic governments that diversity contributes to 'mutual enrichment', the encounters of a melee 'escape diversity' (Nancy, 2003, p.282). This is because: 'Cultures – or what are called cultures – don't add up. They encounter one another, mix with one another, alter one another, reconfigure one another. All cultures cultivate one another: they clear one another's ground, irrigate, or drain one another, plough one another, or graft themselves onto one another' (Nancy, 2003, p. 282). Nancy's sense of cultures 'irrigating', 'draining', 'ploughing' one another suggests a very different understanding of the relationship between community, soil and continuity, which works against an idea of the community as one. It suggests another way of commemorating the dead, which draws on a different understanding of the relationship between time and community. Designs can serve to project a sense of national recovery and sovereignty, or, they can resist, complicate, and undermine that sense.

**Community without representation**

The difference between a community of cultural diversity and community as melee might also be described as the difference between a community as represented and community as something that escapes representation. This is the challenge of thinking community as something other than a 'thing', which is at the same time the challenge of thinking politically beyond representation - that is, without asking, whose community, which community or when was community, but thinking community 'without substance or ground': In this sense, it (community) 'is' not; rather: 'It happens, it emerges' (2003, p. 282). Peter Eisenman's *Memorial for the Murdered Jews of Europe* forms another interesting example of a *design* that works *against* representation, despite its brief.[9] The politics of community has been at the heart of this project from the first suggestion that there should be such a Memorial in 1987, to the open design competition (which had to be held twice), and to the opening ceremony on 10 May 2005. Serious and longstanding debates have revolved around the question of why a memorial for the Jewish community, specifically, and not for other identity groups that were the victims (as well as constructs) of the Nazi regime: the Sinti, the Roma, gay people, Jehovah's Witnesses;[10] and around the question of where the memorial should be located: whether the site chosen should be an 'authentic' site of suffering or not.[11] The resulting design works with a very different approach to community, as encounters, confrontations, collisions, disruptions, rather than something to be accessed, entered or refused from.

For example, the visitor doesn't enter this Memorial in the same way that one enters Daniel Libeskind's Museum. It forms an open site, in the former 'Ministry Gardens' of the Reich's foreign minister, 170 metres from the Brandenburg Gate, and adjacent to the new fortress that is the US embassy. The site was bombed in the air-raids of 1944-45, and later, with the development of the Berlin Wall, became part of the death-strip between East and West Berlin (Schlusche, 2005, p. 18). At the very heart of this city then, the visitor encounters a strikingly vast site (19,073m2) of 2,700 grey, concrete stelae, all of the same width (0.95m) and length (2.38m), but ranging in height from 0 to 4.7m, and tilting from 0.5˚ to 2˚. Some of the concrete stelae are taller than the visitor, others are smaller, and we are invited to walk among the columns along crossing paths that are only wide enough for one individual at a time. Eisenman insists that the field of stelae that forms this Memorial is not the structure of a labyrinth or a maze, because such structures continue to work with an assumption that there must be some way of working one's way *in* or *out*. In contrast, 'In this monument there is no goal, no end, no working one's way in or out' (Eisenman, 2005, p. 52). This reflects a refusal to think time as involving a single start and end point. It therefore implies a thinking of community without a point of origin or transcendence that the community can mourn or aspire towards. It works with a different mapping, where patterns of inclusion and exclusion transverse, and are multiple rather than absolute.

Similarly to Libeskind, Eisenman experiments with a design that reflects a plurality of tempos and the confluence of rational and irrational paradigms. For Eisenman, 'all closed systems of a closed order are bound to fail' (2005, p. 52). Remembering Magnusson's point about statist thinking (which echoes Nancy's idea of 'quantitative thinking') - a closed system that seeks to rationalise citizens into homogenous units is necessarily haunted by other, more open ways of imagining political community - Eisenman explores this point in the design of the grid structure. Although the difference between the ground plane and the top plane 'appears to be random and arbitrary', Eisenman explains that each plane is determined 'by the intersections of the voids of the pillar grid and the gridlines of the larger site context in Berlin' (2005, p. 52). His design works in tandem with the plurality of gridlines traversing the city, and the effect entails a 'slippage in the grid structure', 'causing indeterminate spaces to develop within the seemingly rigid order of the monument' and resulting in a multilayered experience of space and time (2005, p. 52). This results in a disorientating experience for the visitor, as the light and sounds of the city shift and accentuate according to one's position in the grid. Recalling the way in which the city offers us a different way of imagining community, and this experience of disorientation works against order, steady progress and clear meaning and suggests instead an imagining of community as the way in which we might be moved and thrown off balance by others. Rather than reproduce a statist ontology that works with an understanding of space as solid and bounded, and time as singular and progressive, forming a system within which citizenship can be achieved (and denied), Eisenman's design seeks to reveal the messiness of the system, by opening up 'indeterminate spaces', which in his words, might be traced in the blur, the trace, or in mediation (1992).

**The time and design of protest**

The difference between the topography of the ground and the top plane of stelae in Eisenman's design is also intended to denote a difference in time. Drawing on Marcel Proust's *In Search for Lost Time,* Eisenman distinguishes between a memory that is based on nostalgia for the past and a memory that is active in the present (2005, p. 52). This distinction is reminiscent of the way in which Walter Benjamin's proposed a different way in which we might understand the relationship between past and present. For Benjamin, 'homogenous empty time' seeks to tie the events of the past and present into 'a sequence of events like the beads of a rosary', where continuity is secured through the community; in contrast, he sought to imagine a conjoining of 'what-has-been' with the 'time-of-the-now', that would force a flash of a new understanding of both past and present (1968, p. 263). In fusing 'what-has-been' and the 'time-of-the-now', Eisenman's design evokes an understanding of community as 'displacements, hazards, migrations, clinamens, encounters, chances, and risks', which is how most people in the world experience the politics of citizenship (2003, p. 282). Such an approach does not look at citizens, outsiders, strangers and aliens as beings already defined (Isin, 2008, p. 39), but seeks to understand the processes and acts through which 'subjects constitute themselves as citizens' (2008, p. 2) or through which beings

come into being (2008, p. 37). This means that we don't necessarily know in advance where acts of citizenship take place as there is no substance of political community to identify. It may mean that we shift our understanding of the political to what happens at the border, to how citizens, nationals, strangers and aliens are produced at different sites, and at risk of different forms of violence.

Gustav Metzger's installation, 'Flailing Trees', also offers a very different reflection on the relationship between past and present, life and death, in a work that engages with the legacy of the holocaust, but in a way that is perhaps less explicit. The design was first displayed at the Manchester International Festival, from 3-19 July, 2009, by the Peace Garden, near to the Manchester Art Gallery. The installation was free to encounter for the duration of the festival and formed an interruption to people's everyday journeys across the city, challenging the security we seek from walking or driving the same streets everyday (MIF, 2009a).[12] This design is very different to the other two, in that it is designed for the shorter term, and is radically smaller in scale and costs.[13] It features 21 inverted willow trees, with their deep brown, dying roots facing towards the sky, forming the reversal of a canopy effect. Each tree is moulded into a concrete slab that forms a base, and there is no soil in this urban sculpture. The design is interesting for the way in which it again combines trees and concrete but in a radical disruption of the Romanesque, growing trees we encountered at the Jewish Museum Garden and at the German Chancellery. These trees are dead, they are buried into (rather than growing out of) concrete, and they will decompose further in time. Following Metzger's longstanding interest in the relationship between creation and destruction (as initiator of the *Destruction in Art Symposium* in 1966 in London), this installation doesn't present a straightforward idea of death and renewal, as we find under nationalism, or death as nihilism. Rather, new possibilities emerge in this meditation on the time of decay: the installation will continue to move and take shape, unlike a design that is finished and complete. Although some might find this display of decay objectionable, this conjoining of 'what-has-been' and 'now-time' forms a staging of protest: 'protest to me is the central intention of this work' (Metzger, 2009b).

The project reflects Metzger's deep concern with ecological politics, but also with the brutality of the holocaust, from which he escaped as a young boy arriving in London in 1939 with the help of the Refugee Children's Movement, having lost his parents and family to the Nazi terror. The significance of the design of this sculpture is that it responds in a way that refuses – or goes beyond – representation. The willows are deliberately selected for their 'representative' role, but in order to push against a romantic tradition as much as possible. Although each tree belongs to the same genus (a community in unity), they are turned upside down and destroyed. This sculpture is designed to *show* brutality, then, rather than respond to it. As the artist makes clear in an introduction to the project: 'This project is essentially about brutality. The brutality with which we human beings treat and mistreat nature. What is more brutal, than taking willow trees, favourites of so many poets, in so many languages, cutting off their

canopies, as we plan to do, sticking them into a concrete platform with their roots exposed to the sky?' (Metzger, 2009a).

Working against the politics of representation is a familiar theme in Metzger's works, as we also find in his *Historical Photographs* project, where he re-presents photographs of the highest Nazi command, but hides them behind galvanized zinc and wooden shuttering boards (Wilson, 2005, Metzger, 2007). In the first two works in this series, *Historic Photographs No 1: Hitler addressing the Reichstag after the fall of France, July 1940,* 1995 and *Historic Photographs No 1: Liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto, April 19 – 28 days, 1943,* 1995, Metzger deliberately selects photographs that have become deeply familiar and develops a political commentary on the way in which they have come to act as easily recognizable signs, prompting a 'sequence of events like the beads of a rosary', which require no further explanation. In response to Debbie Lisle's concern that the images, narratives and representations of the Nazi terror appear as what we expect or what we already assume to know, Metzger hides the photographs, and invites us to encounter them anew, and thereby question 'how social orders establish themselves as legitimate' (Weber, 2007, p.128). This work offers an alternative form of reflection on the holocaust, one which works with another 'form of perception' which counteracts, disrupts, undoes and resists the 'modes of destruction' that the Nationalist Socialists made their own. In doing so, Metzger offers a response to Jacqueline Lichtenstein's concerns about the relationship between forms of design and modes of terror:

> When I visited the Museum at AUSCHWITZ, I stood in front of the display cases. What I saw there were images from contemporary art and I found that absolutely terrifying. Looking at the exhibits of suitcases, prosthetics, children's toys, I didn't feel frightened. I didn't collapse. I wasn't completely overcome the way I had been walking around the camp. No. *In the Museum, I suddenly had the impression I was in a museum of contemporary art.* I took the train back, telling myself that they had won! They had won since they'd produced forms of perception that are all of a piece with the mode of destruction they made their own.' (Jacqueline Lichtenstein cited by Paul Virilio, 2006, p. 15)

Taking inspiration from design, and the city, this paper has sought to work with a different tradition of thought, which seeks to counteract an idea of community as identifiable, unitary and contained. This involves an imagining of community as less something that some of us have achieved and that we can extend or refuse to others, but as those encounters that distinguish and differentiate us, as well as the displacements that prompt new associations, gatherings and modes of being-together.

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[1] <Acknowledgments: to be completed following review.>

[2] I'm aware that Etienne Balibar also uses the phrase 'citizenship without community', but my approach to the two concepts, as outlined in the abstract and text, is slightly different to his (2004).

[3] I describe these as 'sites of memory' because they feature a mixture of artistic installations, architectural design, and exhibition spaces. I am not using the term in the sense that Pierre Nora develops in *Les Lieux de Memoire* or in the way that Jay Winter uses it (2003) but to signal that I'm interested in reading these sites as more than exhibitions. Interestingly although both sites include an exhibition space, the memorials have at different times been presented simply as 'designs': the Jewish Museum was opened first of all as a building without the exhibition; The Memorial for the Murdered Jews of Europe was not always expected to house an Information Centre, but this was later introduced in response to pressure from the federal government's cultural representative (Schlusche, 2005). For a different approach to the relationship between museums and communities, which engages with exhibitions as political arenas, and with the history of the museum as a nationalist and imperial enterprise, see the collection by Karp, Kreamer and Lavine (1992)

[4] This is of course a simplified account of a very broad literature. I have chosen to engage with one of those accounts in depth rather than offer a full survey of the field, which was beyond the scope of this paper.

[5] I agree with and follow Engin Isin's formulation of the problem: that a focus on the 'extent, content and depth' of citizenship 'arrives at the scene too late' and provides too little for interpreting acts of citizenship. See 2008, p. 37

[6] For an extensive, rigorous critique of Benhabib's work, from which I have drawn, see Honig, 2006, 2008 and Shaw, 2002.

[7] Libeskind is well-known as the designer of many internationally significant sites of memory, including the Imperial War Museum of the North in Manchester, the new Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto, and (with others) the design of the forthcoming Freedom Tower in New York City.

[8] Designed by Berlin architects Axel Schultes and Charlotte Frank.

[9] This site cost 27.6 million Euros, paid for by the German federal government. Eisenman's design wasn't the first to be selected, but formed the preferred choice of a second judging panel assembled in 1996. (Schlusche, 2005: 19) The idea for a Memorial was promoted by Society for the Promotion of the Memorial for the Murdered Jews of Europe, organised by Leah Rosh.

[10] Looking north, towards the Tiergarten, there now stands a Memorial to the Homosexuals Persecuted under the National Socialist Regime.

[11] Other sites of memory in Berlin which claim a connection with places of suffering include the memorial commemorating the deportations of Berlin Jews at the Gurnewald rapid transit station; the House of the Wannsee conference memorial on the Grosser Wannsee, where the Final Solution was agreed; the Topography of Terror exhibition at the former site of the Nazi Secret Police (Schlör, 2005).

[12] The installation will be on permanent display at the gardens of the Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester, following the temporary exhibition at the Festival.

[13] The installation formed the result of the Manchester International Festival's open commission call, submitted by CUBE (Centre for the Urban Built Environment) and Taylor Young (Urban Planners and Architects). See Programme notes, 2009a.