

Stitching the invisible: urban acupuncture across the heterogeneous landscapes of the Berlin Wall Corridor

Ewa Stachura

Cracow University of Technology, Faculty of Architecture

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This paper examines a structured method for selecting small-scale spatial interventions in complex, meaning-laden urban environments. Using the heterogeneous, spatially complex landscapes of the Berlin Wall corridor as a testing ground, it focuses on identifying and interpreting recurring spatial and social typologies and on translating fieldwork evidence and analytical findings into site-specific urban acupuncture proposals. Situated within the EAAE 2026 theme XS–S–M: Architecture of the Fitting, the study asked how carefully calibrated interventions could respond to historically charged urban situations in ways that were spatially precise, socially meaningful, and pedagogically productive.

Rather than treating the former Wall corridor as a single heritage object, the workshop read it as a stratified historic urban landscape composed of thresholds, seams, residual spaces, memorial fragments, and everyday routes. The first stage of the method was the identification and classification of recurring conditions in which the former border persisted as an experiential discontinuity or a governance-and-meaning conflict. The second stage consisted of an analytical toolkit that students used to evaluate selected micro-locations in terms of continuity, permeability, legibility, hospitality, and meaning coding. On this basis, design proposals were developed at the scale of the threshold, street segment, or block edge.

The paper argues that the value of this approach lies not in urban acupuncture itself, but in the structured relation established between diagnosis and intervention. In this sense, the Berlin case became both a design inquiry and a didactic model. It shows how the identification and classification of physical and social phenomena can inform the choice of intervention type, scale, and narrative role, and how architectural education can connect public-space analysis, heritage-sensitive transformation, and design action through an analytical-first framework transferable to other contested or historically layered contexts.