

Thinking Walls: Reflections on a theme by C. P. Cavafy

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In 1896 Constantine Cavafy wrote a poem encapsulating the experience of social isolation:

ΤΕΙΧΗ

Χωρίς περίσκεψιν, χωρίς λύπην, χωρίς αἰδῶ
μεγάλα κ' ὑψηλά τριγύρω μου ἔκτισαν τείχη.

Καί κάθομαι καί ἀπελπίζομαι τώρα ἐδῶ.
Ἄλλο δέν σκέπτομαι: τόν νοῦν μου τρώγει αὐτή ἡ τύχη

διότι πράγματα πολλά ἔξω νά κάμω εἶχον.
Ἄ ὅταν ἔκτιζαν τά τείχη πῶς νά μήν προσέξω.

Ἄλλά δέν ἄκουσα ποτέ κρότον κτιστῶν ἢ ἦχον.
Ἄνεπαισθήτως μ' ἔκλεισαν ἀπό τόν κόσμον ἔξω.¹

Most often this poem is interpreted as the homosexual's ostracism in 19th century Alexandria. But like most of Cavafy – and this is, of course, what makes him such a good poet, and what makes his poetry so translatable – this poem is not confined within the limits of its author. It expresses universal human experiences: of all of those deliberately cut off from society. This is a poem that could just as easily have been written today, by any one of millions of people in a whole range of shamefully isolating scenarios, across the globe. This paper will touch on just a few of these.

¹ Κ. Π. Καβάφης, Ἄπαντα Ποιητικά. Αθήνα: Ὑψίλον / βιβλία, 1990. The English translation I have used here is "Walls": "With no consideration, no pity, no caring / they've built walls around me, thick and high. / And now I sit here feeling hopeless. / I can't think of anything else: this fate gnaws my mind – because I had so much to do outside. / When they were building the walls, how could I not have noticed! / But I never heard the builders, not a sound. / Imperceptibly they've closed me off from the outside world." C. P. Cavafy *Collected Poems*. Translated by Edmund Keeley and Philip Sherrard, edited by George Savidis. London, UK: Hogarth, 1975.

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An image scored on my brain from Roman Polanski's *The Pianist* is the speed with which the Nazi regime walled in the Warsaw Jews.² Almost overnight the ghetto was sealed off: twelve foot high bricks, mortar and broken glass marking the systematic desecration of a third of the city's population. The terrible fates of the thousands locked behind the wall remains one of the most gruesome scars of our recent history.³

*With no consideration, no pity, no caring
they've built walls around me, thick and high.*

Sixty years and two thousand miles away, another wall is being built: twice as high, eventually to run for more than 200 miles. A Palestinian ghetto on the West Bank. The Israeli Government maintains this is necessary protection from terrorism. Palestinians feel caged. It cuts through their land, between homes and farms, separating families, standing in the way of work, education and health facilities. And claims in stone what is disputed in diplomacy.⁴

This same process is being enacted in Western Sahara, where the Moroccan fortified wall is so effective that the entire Saharawi administration is locked outside its own land, in Algerian refugee settlements. This make a very tangible reality out of Morocco's claim to the occupied territory.⁵

These are walls of demarcation: Us and Them. This side of the wall – where we are – is Us; the other is Them. Such walls make us feel safe, physically and psychologically: protected from the unknown, and included amongst the familiar. They make us feel powerful, because we are masters of our own delineated domain. And they give us a certified locus of perspective, territorially defined.⁶

² *The Pianist* (2002), directed by Roman Polanski, writing credits. Wladyslaw Szpilman (book), Ronald Harwood (screenplay).

³ For more information on the Warsaw Ghetto see Yisrael Gutman, *The Jews of Warsaw 1939-1943*. Brighton, UK: Harvester, 1982.

⁴ See, for example: Saree Makdisi, "Diary", *London Review of Books*, Vol. 27, No. 5, March 3 2005: 34-35, Josh Mitnick, "Security fence hits political wall", *The Washington Times*, July 16 2003; Geraldine Bedell, "Set in stone", *The Observer*, June 15 2003.

⁵ See, for example, Chris Brazier, "Country Profile: Western Sahara", *New Internationalist*, 374, December 2004: 36.

⁶ This is beautifully outlined with relation to Israel and the Palestinian Wall by Ilan Pappé, "Fortress Israel", *London Review of Books*, Vol. 27 No. 10, May 19 2005: 17.

Historically, our walls had kept us in and the Other out, their defensive properties of superior concern.⁷ We marked our space in policeable quarters, patrolling the interior.⁸ Threats were, by definition and practice, confined to the outside world.⁹ Post-Enlightenment bravado has us gather the Other and wall them in. So convinced are we of our ability, our right, to control the world, we believe that every threat can be corralled behind bars, leaving us outside in safety.¹⁰

It doesn't work, of course. The truth is, we don't actually wield that much control. For all our science and knowledge and wealth and insurance payments, life still surprises us. Disease, accidents, acts of God and the weather and other people catch us constantly unawares. But we keep on trying; and in our desperation, reach ever new irrationalities.

Proof of the dangerous nature of those behind the walls is in their being on the other side – even though we put them there. Thus, for example, the prisoners at Guantanamo Bay have been deemed guilty, by definition; even though there's nothing as yet with which they've been charged. This was illustrated most poignantly in John Howard's persistent refusal to agitate for the two Australians held there to be tried on home turf; his refusal based on the fact that they had committed no crime under Australian law, and would, therefore, be released.¹¹ Evidently mistaking Joseph Heller's *Catch-22* for reality, Howard held the men's incarceration as demonstration of their guilt.¹² If they weren't guilty they wouldn't have been incarcerated. Since they were incarcerated, they were clearly guilty – of something. If there was nothing in Australian law with which to try them, then they must

⁷ Consider, for example: the city walls of Athens, Jerusalem or York; Hadrian's Wall, separating Romans and Barbarians; or the Great Wall of China, serving both defensive and symbolic functions, distinguishing the cultured Chinese from the Mongolian nomads.

⁸ Even the practice of walling in convicted criminals is comparatively recent – from 17th century Europe. Previous preferences were for capital or corporal punishment, public shaming, sale into slavery, deportation or exile. For further discussion, see Edward M. Peters, "Prison Before the Prison: The Ancient and Mediaeval Worlds", in Norval Morris and David J. Rothman (eds), *The Oxford History of the Prison: the Practice of Punishment in Western Society*. New York, New York, USA: Oxford University Press, 1995: 3-43.

⁹ Not only threats from human enemies, but also disease and moral pollution. See, for example, Mary Douglas, "Witchcraft and leprosy: two strategies of exclusion", *Man*, Vol. 22, 1991: 723-736.

¹⁰ Alison Bashford and Carolyn Strange also interpret this process as part of the new understanding of freedom: "the invention of 'liberty' as an inalienable right created the very possibility of its denial as a new form of punishment" (2003: 3). See "Isolation and exclusion in the modern world: An introductory essay", in Carolyn Strange and Alison Bashford (eds) *Isolation Places and Practices of Exclusion*. London, UK: Routledge, 2003: 1-19.

¹¹ Mark Riley and Sean Berry, "Howard rules out home trial for accused pair", *The Sun-Herald*, July 20 2003.

¹² Joseph Heller, *Catch-22*. London, UK: Cape, 1962.

be left to some other legal system, which will find something of which they can be convicted.¹³

Such illogic leads to our investing the boundaries between Us and Them with unreasonable properties: Them on the other side dehumanised, distinct from Us in fundamental ways, purely because of their being on the other side. We see this across the board, from international politics to popular culture. *Big Brother* contestants around the world are Them in a televised zoo. With the move to the other side of those locked doors, fundamental rights are renounced. We remove their autonomy, divesting them of all control over food, space, leisure activities, self-expression. We commodify their humanness, including their sex lives and relationships. In 2003, the *The Sun* offered £50,000 to the first (heterosexual) pair in the UK house to have sexual intercourse on camera.¹⁴ In the American house, former partners of five of the contestants were suddenly moved in, without those contestants' knowledge or consent.¹⁵ In 2005, a baby was born in the Dutch house.¹⁶ Monitored twenty four hours a day, the contestants' self-exposure becomes our entertainment, in ways we consider intolerable – indeed illegal – treatment of Us outside. The simple step from one end of the television camera to the other has become a stupendous move in social identity, from part of the collective subject to alienated object.

*they've built walls around me, thick and high.
And now I sit here feeling hopeless.*

Such alienation of object from subject is a basic transaction in fear; and therefore power. Patriarchal systems – of which just about every human structure has been built – depend upon fundamental rules of divide and conquer.¹⁷ The Other is objectified, dehumanised, commodified;

¹³ These Kafkaesque arguments are further emphasised by the very nature of the detention centre, being under USA control but without USA sovereign territory. This effectively exempts non-USA detainees from any protection by the USA Constitution, and, since the USA refused to ratify the treaty establishing the International Criminal Court*, the detainees are not protected by any legal system or judicial processes. They are completely at the mercy of the USA administration and its whims. For further discussion, see Nicholas McNally, "Illegal Imprisonment at Guantanamo Bay", *NSW Law Society Journal*, Vol. 42, April 2004: 78-82.

(*May 6 2002, see the Human Rights Watch report, "United States 'Unsigning' Treaty on War Crimes Court": <http://hrw.org/english/docs/2002/05/06/usint3903.htm>, downloaded 6/11/05)

¹⁴ Ciar Byrne, "Sun offers £50k for Big Brother sex", *The Guardian*, May 20 2003.

¹⁵ [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Big_Brother_\(USA_TV_series\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Big_Brother_(USA_TV_series)), downloaded 4/11/05

¹⁶ "Big Brother' watches over Dutch birth", *ABC News Online*, Wednesday October 19 2005 7am, <http://www.abc.net.au/news/newsitems/200510/s1485343.htm>, downloaded 4/11/05.

¹⁷ See, for example: John Hoffman, *Gender and Sovereignty*. New York, New York, USA: Palgrave, 2001; Carol J. Adams, *The Sexual Politics of Meat*. New York, New York, USA: Continuum, 1990; Mary Daly, *Beyond God the Father*. Boston, Massachusetts, USA: Beacon, 1973; Shulamith Firestone, *The Dialectic of Sex*. New York, New York, USA: Morrow, 1970.

constructed as *absent referent*. And above all vilified, as malevolently competitive.

The more successful the objectification, the greater the disassociation from the Other. When the walls of division themselves have become the very demarcation, then our alienation is complete. We find ourselves again in Heller Land, believing that an alteration of enemy lines on paper will change the realities of war. The signifier has become all important, and the signified effectively disappeared.

This sort of superstitious reverence for the boundary between Us and Them creates and demarcates celebrity; and is itself fed by celebrities' apparent breaches of the line. In July 2003, the British Prime Minister's wife Cherie Booth entertained a journalist from *Marie Claire* inside their home.¹⁸ Through the magazine's lens, we saw Ms Booth upon the first couple's bed, among the jumble of family mess, hanging out in her *kinky* boots. After a lifetime's fearsome defence of her family's privacy, this exposé was tendered as an honest revelation: the Prime Minister's private life laid bare.¹⁹ Of course, nothing could be further from the truth. From designer suit to cartoon character mug, the photos of Tony with his mate Bill Clinton, and the casual mess – even a pair of knickers on the dressing table – every inch of this carefully scripted pictorial was merely deeper veneer; and we all knew this. But the mere gesture, of crossing that Us-Them barrier, transgressing limits previously adhered to in defining the two respective sides, has a power of its own. Seeing the colour of their bedspread told us nothing about Mr Blair's probity. But it did reinforce that he's not one of Us, because none of Us have this sort of gesture at hand to make – we've no such boundaries to even pretend to shift.

Opening a temporary window in the wall reveals the wall's great depth, reinforcing its impenetrability: those on the inside really are Other. In this case Mr Blair hoped his Otherness would exempt him from common censure: since he is not one of Us, he may play by different rules. An obviously desperate tactic, but not necessarily politically unsuccessful.

In other cases walls are shifted in the exercise of greater power, such as Europe's gradual expansion. From the 1957 Treaty of Rome, we now have

¹⁸ See Sandra Smith "Cherie Blair's home photos", *The Guardian*, July 31 2003.

¹⁹ There is no question that the purpose of the *Marie Claire* spread was to build bridges to a disillusioned electorate, becoming increasingly convinced that their Prime Minister had lied in taking them to war and, possibly worse, contributed to the death of David Kelly. See, for example: Neil Mackay, James Cusick and Torcuil Crichton, "Blair on brink as Kelly family point finger", *Sunday Herald*, July 20 2003; Patrick Wintour, "We lost your trust, Blair admits", *The Guardian*, July 31 2003; John Lanchester, "Unbelievable Blair", *London Review of Books*, Vol. 25, No. 13, July 10 2003.

a twenty five-nation state. As the boundaries stretch, they become no less formidable. In whatever form Europe is defined, internal concerns – population, trade, justice, social development – are facilitated; and external interests decried. Increasing the members of Us brings no lessening of difference between Us and Them. On the contrary, polarities are strengthened; a wider Europe demands tighter extremity controls. For all her rhetoric of hospitality²⁰, Europe's focus is on containing unwelcome Others. Plans such as asylum seeker "protection zones" in the Horn of Africa or Croatia show this emphasis on curbing perceived threat: another means to gather Them behind walls.²¹

Such walls, of course, have been perfected in Australia. As a fairly isolated island, we do have an unfair geographical advantage over border control.²² Even so, it's taken a great deal of costly commitment to become the world leaders in walling in the Other.²³

— Since 1992 all unauthorised arrivals in Australia have been compulsorily detained. Currently about 900 people are held in our immigration detention centres.²⁴ All children and family groups were released from detention at the end of July 2005.²⁵ Prior to this, thousands of

²⁰ See, for example, the European Union's publication *Unity in Diversity*; Jürgen Habermas, *The Inclusion of the Other: Studies in Political Theory*. Edited by Ciarin Cronin and Pablo De Grieff. Oxford, UK: Polity, 1998; Jacques Derrida, *The Other Heading: Reflections on Today's Europe*. Bloomington, Indiana, USA: Indiana University Press, 1992.

²¹ Ian Black, "EU urged to rethink asylum policies", *The Guardian*, June 18 2003; Martin Bright, Paul Harris and Dominic Hipkins, "Secret Balkan camp built to hold UK asylum seekers", *The Observer*, June 15 2003.

²² It is not only in border control that white Australia has excelled in walling in the Other. Until full legal assimilation in 1967, white Australia made frequent use of offshore island and mainland reserves, as ways of walling in Aboriginal people. Many of these, especially in Queensland and Western Australia, had justice systems separate to those for the non-Aboriginal community outside, adding greater emphasis to the Us-Them divide. Not even British Justice, that unifying hallmark of the civilising empire, could breach these racist walls. See, for example: Mark Finnane and John McGuire, "The uses of punishment and exile: Aborigines in colonial Australia", in *Punishment and Society*, Vol 3 No. 2, 2001: 279-298, Prue Joske, Chris Jeffery, and Louise Hoffman, *Rottnest Island: A Documentary History*. Nedlands, WA: Centre for Migration and Development Studies, University of Western Australia, 1995; Commissioner Elliott Johnston, *Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody National Report*. Volume 2, Chapter 10.7: "Detention Patterns". Canberra, ACT: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1991; Thom Blake, "Deported ... At the sweet will of the government": The removal of Aborigines to reserves in Queensland 1897-1939", in *Aboriginal History*, Volume 2: 1988: 51-61.

²³ Mandatory detention costs about \$50,000 per detainee per year. Border controls cost hundreds of millions each year: including \$36 million annually just for the camp on Nauru. "Detention centres costing \$36m annually", *The Age*, November 1 2005; Senate Estimates, Legal and Constitutional Legislation Committee, 28-29/5/03: <http://www.aph.gov.au/hansard/senate/commtee/S6464.pdf>, <http://www.aph.gov.au/hansard/senate/commtee/S6465.pdf>.

²⁴ <http://www.immi.gov.au/detention/facilities.htm>, correct for 21/10/05. At 7/11/05 there are also two asylum seekers still in the camp on Nauru, who have been there for more than four years.

²⁵ Karen Barlow, "Children released from Immigration detention", *The World Today*, ABC Radio National, July 28 2005, 12:14pm. <http://www.abc.net.au/worldtoday/content/2005/s1424872.htm>

children had been held in detention centres. Most were locked away for years.²⁶ Numerous studies have illustrated the detrimental effects of long-term detention upon mental and physical health, especially of children.²⁷ Boredom, uncertainty and alienation breed depression, fear and hatred. Self-harm and serious despair are rife.²⁸

*they've built walls around me, thick and high.
And now I sit here feeling hopeless.
I can't think of anything else: this fate gnaws my mind*

One of the cruellest aspects of imprisoning asylum seekers is that it crushes all hope. Taking flight against persecution is an extraordinarily optimistic action, sprung from deep-seated belief in preferable options. Asylum seekers are, by definition, people of faith in the existence of good; and energy to apply themselves to the search for it. The demoralising impact of indefinite detention is remarkable: people with the inner resources to resist oppression and travel half the world to find a place of safety reduced to self-destruction. In their own words: "I've lost everything: I lost my mind, my life, my love. ... People are asking god hundred times, please kill me god".²⁹

*I can't think of anything else: this fate gnaws my mind –
because I had so much to do outside.*

Mandatory detention also impacts upon Us outside. If we support the Government's policies, then our own right to residence becomes a certification of moral superiority. If we oppose them, then a mark of shame; forced into the role of undeserving haves. The walls containing Them become the founding definers of Us – as not-Them – whether we like

²⁶ Between 1/7/99 and 30/6/03, 2,184 asylum seeker children were detained in Australian detention centres, http://www.chilout.org/information/detention_stats.html, downloaded 31/10/05.

²⁷ For example: Zachary Steel, "The Politics of Exclusion and Denial: the Mental Health Costs of Australia's Refugee Policy", paper given at 38th Congress Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists, Hobart, 12-15 May 2003; Barbara Rogalla, "Modern-day torture: Government-sponsored neglect of asylum seeker children under the Australian mandatory immigration detention regime", *Journal of South Pacific Law*, Vol 7, No 1, 2003, "The Heart of the Nation's Existence: a Review of Reports on the Treatment of Children in Australian Detention Centres", by ChilOut, 2002, available at: http://www.chilout.org/files/ChilOut_report_to_DIMIA.doc.

²⁸ See, for example: *From Nothing to Zero. Letters from Refugees in Australia's Detention Centres*. Melbourne, Victoria: Lonely Planet, 2003; Heather Tyler, *Asylum: Voices Behind the Razor Wire*. Melbourne, Victoria: Lothian, 2003. A sample of the voices of despair, from these two texts: "Do not have hope that I am well. I am very tired of this agony place and I feel like life is over for me. I always think of my family and when I will be out of this place to have my own freedom There is not any hope at the moment that I will be out of this place. I'm really mixed up."; "They are keeping me alive but have taken away my youth, my freedom, my self-esteem and my dignity"; "In my country they shoot you with a gun. Here they take your life little bit by little bit."

²⁹ *From Nothing to Zero* 2003: 91, 99.

it or not. Constructing our identities in negative comparison with the Other, detention centre walls bind Us as tightly as they do Them, since without Them there is no not-Them, and thus no Us. We are identity parasites.

*When they were building the walls, how could I not have
noticed!
But I never heard the builders, not a sound.*

These defining walls are not just stone and razor wire. Far more significant is their underpinning propaganda. In the same way as anti-Semitism in Nazi Germany was fed through public miseducation³⁰, contemporary Australian xenophobia depends upon incomplete portrayals of asylum seekers, contrived by government and propagated by media.³¹ It only serves Us to be negatively defined as not-Them if the features thus imparted are desirable; if we view Them as undesirable. Thus asylum seekers in Australia are impersonal, immoral, inhuman: "people who would throw their own children into the sea".³² Containing such evil within the walls defines Us outside, in contrast, as good.

We saw the same techniques in recent public fulmination against homosexual marriage. Whereas the Pope proscribed such commitment as *deviant and immoral* and George W. Bush relied on the strength of his own beliefs, our Prime Minister's opposition centred on the propagating capabilities of heterosexuality.³³ While claiming that he is not opposed to the recognition of gay and lesbian relationships, Mr Howard maintained that marriage, "one of the bedrock institutions of our society", is about children: "having children, raising them, providing for the survival of the species", and on these grounds alone same-sex couples are excluded.³⁴ Putting aside the obvious holes in such argument – that many heterosexual unions do not involve procreation, that many homosexuals are engaged in rearing children, and that reproductive technologies have brought a significant division between reproduction and sex – this is pure boundary-building, more Us against Them. In this case, Us who are part of the social bedrock against Them who aren't. And following the implicit logic of such

³⁰ Such as the "Eternal Jew" exhibition, November 1937 - January 1938, exposing more than 400,000 people to the regime's racist persuasion. See, for example, David Welch, *The Third Reich: Politics and Propaganda*. London, UK: Routledge, 2002.

³¹ Mike Steketee, "Shocking delay in ending refugees' plight", *The Australian*, July 29 2003: "The Government has gone to extraordinary lengths to prevent Australians putting faces to those locked up in Australian detention centres" See also David Marr and Marian Wilkinson, *Dark Victory*. Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 2003; Patrick Weller, *Don't Tell the Prime Minister*. Melbourne, Victoria: Scribner, 2002.

³² John Howard, October 8 2001, "Tampa retrospective", *7 30 Report*, ABC TV, August 26 2002.

³³ "Vatican launches campaign against same-sex marriage", *Lateline*, ABC TV, August 1 2003.

³⁴ "PM weighs into gay marriage debate", *Lateline*, ABC TV, August 6 2003.

polarising: that those not with us are against us; against Them whose aim is to destroy the social bedrock. While specious, its effectiveness is breathtaking: with one self-professedly non-homophobic pronouncement the homosexual has become Public Enemy No 1.

*But I never heard the builders, not a sound.
Imperceptibly they've closed me off from the outside world.*

These are insidious walls: invisible, unacknowledged, and exceedingly powerful.³⁵ Their effect is not only to exclude – in that homosexuals may not participate in a *bedrock* institution – but also to impound: the enemy amassed into a single delineated target. And all the while those building the walls asserting that they are treating their targets “fairly and with respect”.³⁶

Nor are such walls necessarily in the best interests of Us outside. Marriage, as exclusive, is made desirable, and valuable: a deft incentive to sustain the institution. Which proves cheaper for the state, keeping care and responsibility within family units, and their overworked participants focussed on internal affairs.³⁷ In the context of current custody, childcare, maternity leave and maintenance provisions, the question does arise: just who on the side of the marriage wall are the ones locked in?³⁸

In his frequently misappropriated poem “Mending Fences”, Robert Frost asserts: “Before I built a wall I'd ask to know / What I was walling in or walling out”.³⁹ Confining the Other places limits on ourselves, in definition, agency, and behaviour repertoire; consequences often unexpected and often undesirable. The Warsaw Ghetto wall was built from Jewish labour.⁴⁰ We ought to be wary that our contemporary barriers are not unwittingly restricting ourselves as well.

³⁵ Consider these words of Queensland Senator Ronald Boswell, speaking for the Marriage Amendment Bill 2004: “The amendments to the Marriage Act contained in this Bill will make it absolutely clear that Australia will not recognise same-sex marriages entered into under the laws of another country, whatever country that may be. As a result of the amendments contained in this Bill same-sex couples will understand that if they go overseas to marry, their marriage, even if valid in the country in which it was solemnised, will not be recognised as valid in Australia.” *Senate Hansard*, August 12 2005: 26573: <http://www.aph.gov.au/hansard/senate/dailys/ds120804.pdf>.

³⁶ Bill Muehlenberg, Australian Family Association, Letters, *Sydney Morning Herald*, August 6 2003.

³⁷ See, for example: Lena Dominelli, *Women Across Continents. Feminist Comparative Social Policy*. New York, New York, USA: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991; Catharine A. MacKinnon, *Toward a Feminist Theory of the State*. Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA: Harvard University Press, 1989.

³⁸ Or, in the words of Groucho Marx: “Marriage is a wonderful institution, but who wants to live in an institution?”

³⁹ *The Complete Poems of Robert Frost*. London, UK: Jonathan Cape, 1951.

⁴⁰ See Gutman *op. cit.*

Half a century after the Warsaw Ghetto the world still wears its consequences, the legacies of a shattered generation. Knesset member Eitan Cabel's equating of opposition to the West Bank wall with the murder of Israeli citizens puts him in direct succession from those who walled in his Polish kin: history's repeating itself in the attempt to control our fears.⁴¹ The walls we build in bricks and mortar are founded in social division. Bringing down the bricks may be the work of a day. Rebuilding peoples is a different matter.

*With no consideration, no pity, no caring
they've built walls around me, thick and high.
And now I sit here feeling hopeless.
I can't think of anything else: this fate gnaws my mind –
because I had so much to do outside.
When they were building the walls, how could I not have
noticed!
But I never heard the builders, not a sound.
Imperceptibly they've closed me off from the outside world.*

⁴¹ Eitan Cabel, Labour member, Knesset June 17 2003, David B Green, “A wall of ambivalence”, *Prospect*. Issue 89, August 2003. It is ironic that Mr Cabel supports the walling in of Palestinian human beings but opposes that of animals for experimentation Tamar Nahari, “Protest against primate experiments exposed in the Hebrew University”, *Walla News Service*. November 27 2001.