THE BERLIN WALL AND THE URBAN SPACE AND EXPERIENCE OF EAST AND WEST BERLIN, 1961-1989

by

EMILY PUGH

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Art History in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York

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April 18, 2008	Dr. Kevin Murphy
Date	Chair of Examining Committee
April 18, 2008	Dr. Kevin Murphy
Date	Executive Officer

Dr. Rosemarie Haag Bletter

Dr. Stuart Liebman

Dr. Paul Jaskot
Supervision Committee

THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Abstract

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Emily Pugh

Adviser: Professor Kevin Murphy

Divided Berlin provides an ideal case study for an investigation into the relationship between political ideology and a city's built environment and furthermore, the effect of this relationship on the construction of national identity. Throughout the 1950s, 60s, 70s and 80s, both East and West Germany sought to articulate ideologies and values in built form as part of an effort to establish legitimacy vis-à-vis the "other" Germany. This study considers the processes by which such ideas were communicated through architecture, as well as the degree to which the resulting buildings were accepted and/or acknowledged as symbols of a shared, national culture in either East or West. By looking at specific projects, such as the Berlin State Library (*Staatsbibliothek*, Hans Scharoun, 1967-78) in West Berlin and the Palace of the Republic (*Palast der Republik*, Heinz Graffunder, et al. 1973-76) in East Berlin, this dissertation considers how and to what extent architecture helped to forge a sense of national identity in either country and in doing so examines the other kinds of divides that resulted from the physical and political division of Berlin.

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INTRODUCTION

Capital cities are special places; here is where national politics is made, here is where national identity in its most tangible form is rooted. However, if the capital represents symbolic space, it is also an ordinary town in which rubbish must be collected.[1]

-- Hartmut Häußermann and Elizabeth Strom

In a January 2006 article in the *New York Times* on the concrete "security fence" now under construction in Israel, Nicolai Ouroussoff calls the structure, "on a fundamental level, a piece of architecture," and thus his article examines the intense architectural debate it has sparked:

> That debate has pitted strategists who mine the leftist architectural theories of the 1960's for ideas on contemporary urban warfare, against architects who see the barrier as a perversion of those ideas ... And it presents a vision of the wall as a system of complex, interweaving spaces—some concrete, some invisible—that is far from our normal perception of an international border.[2]

Likewise, the Berlin Wall was not an international border in the conventional sense. Erected in August 1961, it was built to serve a purpose very similar to the current barrier in Israel, though there are obvious differences between the two and the conflicts they represent. Also called a security barrier, the Berlin Wall was intended to create a clear and definitive dividing line between East and West geographically, but also culturally and politically. However as Ouroussoff points out, clarity in physical space does not always translate into clarity in more intangible realms.

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[1] Hartmut Häußermann and Elizabeth Strom, "Berlin: The Once and Future Capital," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 18, no. 2 (1994): 335.

[2] Nicolai Ouroussoff, "Architects and Israel's Barrier: A Line in the Sand" *New York Times*, 1 January 2006, Section 2, p 1. In the volume of essays published in protest against Israel's "security fence," entitled *Against the Wall: Israel's Barrier to Peace* (2005), the book's editor, Michael Sorkin, does not mention the Berlin Wall by name, but references it in the closing sentence of his introduction by paraphrasing Ronald Reagan's 1987 speech in West Berlin: "Mr. Sharon, tear down this wall." Yet another modern-day equivalent to the Berlin Wall is the 700-mile "border fence" on the U.S.-Mexican border, which is currently under construction by the Department of Homeland Security. Israel's barrier is slated for completion in 2010. (Sorkin, x; David Stout, "Bush, Signing Bill for Border Fence, Urges Wider Overhaul" *New York Times*, 27 October 2006, Section A, p 16.)

Just as Israel's barrier has raised questions concerning both the feasibility and implications of creating impermeable borders in what are "complex, interweaving spaces," I propose to raise similar questions in relation to the Berlin Wall. Specifically, in this study I examine how the division both enforced and represented by the Wall effectively created two competing Berlins and how architecture was used as part of this competition to construct an urban image that (it was hoped) would resonate with East/West Berlin's citizens, inspiring their allegiance. This investigation will, I believe, lead to a deeper understanding of the other kinds of divides, beyond the merely physical, that result from materialized political borders like the Israeli barrier and the Berlin Wall.

Though we often think of Germany's division and its subsequent reunification as absolute, the divisions between East and West Germany did not end with the "fall" of the Berlin Wall on November 9, 1989 any more than they sprung up on the night of August 13, 1961, when the Wall was built, or even in 1949 when East and West Germany were formally established. The question is therefore how, after political and physical division of Germany had been established, cultural and social divisions were similarly established during the period of the country's division. In short, how was a sense of East and West German national identity as distinct and in dialectical opposition to the other created *despite* a shared history and cultural heritage? In what ways was Berlin constructed, both literally and figuratively, as an important site for the creation and negotiation of these identities? And finally, how did East/West Berlin's identity as a city (its urban image) function in relation to national identity/identities?

The question of German identity or identities has been a recurring one, raised throughout Germany's history since the nation was founded in 1871 and taking on new

significance with the 1949 declaration of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG, West Germany) and the German Democratic Republic (GDR, East Germany). At the center of the Cold War conflict in Germany, Berlin was a key site for the formation, reformation and contestation of various German identities. Furthermore, given the larger East-West conflict of the Cold War, the struggle over identity (national, political, urban) that both unfolded in and was represented by this city had a significance that went beyond these two countries' borders. Still today, identities forged during the Cold War affect Germany's image as a country, and its citizens' self-images. In 2005, for example, the lingering divisions and sense of pessimism following the period of reunification became the impetus for a national media campaign that aimed to forge national solidarity by featuring faces of a variety of individuals fronted by the slogan, "You are Germany!" ("*Du bist Deutschland!*").[3] In a global sense as well, Cold War narratives that cast the United States as a victorious and "freedom-loving"[4] nation have played a role in, for example, U.S. foreign policy in Iraq.

Though much has been written about German national identity, the great majority of this literature deals understandably with either the Nazi era and the Holocaust or the post-reunification period. In terms of architectural histories, two prime examples of these kinds of studies are Barbara Miller Lane's *Architecture and Politics in Germany, 1918-1945* (1968) and *Capital Dilemma: Germany's Search for a New Architecture of Democracy* (1998) by Michael Z. Wise.[5] More recently, books like Deborah A. Barnstone's *The Transparent State: Architecture and Politics in Postwar Germany* (2005) have dealt with the period between

[3] Richard Bernstein, "Germans Told to Cheer Up. 'Why Should We?' Some Say," *New York Times*, 6 December 2005, Section A, p. 4.
[4] This phrase was used, for example, by Ronald Reagan in his 1985 speech at the American air base at Bitburg and has been used also by Presidents George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton, and George W. Bush.
[5] Barbara Miller Lane, *Architecture and Politics in Germany, 1918-1945* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985). Michael Z. Wise, *Capital Dilemma: Germany's Search for a New Architecture of Democracy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Architectural Press, 1998).

1949 and 1990.[6] However, as is often the case with such studies, Barnstone's book focuses more or less exclusively on West Germany, despite its title, and as a result does not address the issue of *competing* German identities or how this competition may have influenced, for example, West Germany's effort to cast itself as a "transparent state." In terms of Berlin in the 1961-89 period, there are a number of texts that deal with specific architects or with particular buildings of the East and West but fewer that discuss them in relation to one another.[7] Furthermore, histories of East and West German architecture and planning often employ different methodological approaches: while histories of East German architecture tend to examine buildings from the standpoint of politics and economics to the near exclusion of stylistic developments, the reverse is true for histories of architecture in West Germany/West Berlin.[8]

In general, there is very little in the way of close, comparative analyses of identity formation in the realm of Cold War cultural or architectural production in divided Berlin, despite the fact that a comparative approach is, I would argue, essential in terms of addressing this question. Not only did East and West Germany's shared history and cultural heritage tie the two nations together, their central role in the global political struggle of the Cold War also tied the two Germanies together, even as it was the reason for their division. Because of this political and social relationship, East and West Germany each relied on the other to define itself, even when official rhetoric attempted to deny or ignore the other's

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[6] Deborah A. Barnstone, *The Transparent State: Architecture and Politics in Postwar Germany*. (London and New York: Routledge, 2005).

[7] For example, Werner Durth, Jörn Düwel, and Niels Gutschow. *Architecture und Städtebau der DDR*, 2 vols. Frankfurt: Campus, c1998. Also Wolfgang Pehnt, *German Architecture, 1960-1970*, trans. E. Rockwell (London: London Architectural Press, 1970) (Though its title suggests otherwise, Pehnt's book deals only with West German architecture.)

[8] Joachim Palutzki's *Architektur in der DDR* (Dietrich Reimer Verlag: Berlin, 2000) is an example of a East German history that focuses primarily on politics and economics, while Pehnt's *German Architecture* and Peter Blundell-Jones' monograph on Hans Scharoun, *Hans Scharoun* (London: Phaidon Press, 1995), are both examples of West German histories that take a formalist approach.

existence and legitimacy. The complex political and social relationship between the two countries means that one cannot simply treat either East and West Germany or East and West Berlin as autonomous nations or cities, completely separate and distinct from one another.

One reason for both the tendency to discuss either East or West Berlin/Germany but not both, and for the lack of scholarship on the period from 1961 to 1989 is, I would argue, the Berlin Wall itself. As both a physical structure and a symbol of the Cold War, the Wall grew so iconic that it dominated the urban images of East and West Berlin and, to some degree, East and West Germany. This continues to be the case; one can hardly think of Berlin during this period without conjuring an image of the graffiti-covered western side of the Berlin Wall. Part of the Wall's importance lies in the fact that it gave physical form to a political and ideological divide that was already conceived of in spatial terms. Built fifteen years after Winston Churchill's famous speech, the Wall was viewed as the objective correlative of the "iron curtain," and in this way seemed to confirm the West's view of the East and of the Cold War as a whole. It is because of this, in part, that the Wall itself is thought of in terms of a single and definitive division that remained impenetrable and unchanged throughout its twenty-eight year existence.

In fact, the Wall, which was actually two walls, evolved as both a structure and as a symbol throughout the 1960s, 70s and 80s. Not only did the GDR government build, rebuild and reconfigure the entire system of enclosure and surveillance of which the westernmost wall was just one part, but with changing East-West political relations, the Wall as a barrier became more and less passable. However because of the Wall's iconic status, it is too often viewed as an inviolable fact and one that is both the cause of the East-West divide and proof of it. This is another point of commonality between the notion of a Cold-War "iron curtain"

and the Berlin Wall: both became political metaphors that, once created, were accepted as fact but also changed in meaning and significance over time. The term "iron curtain," for example, evolved from a metaphor that was intended to suggest the protection of the West from the East, in the way an iron curtain protected a theater audience if fire broke out on the stage, to a metaphor that conjured images of unbending domination.[9] As concepts, the Berlin Wall and the Iron Curtain not only *described* the political, social and cultural realities of Cold War Europe, but in many ways came to *dictate* the perception of these realities, of East versus West. In relation to the Wall, the goal of this study is therefore to consider the Wall as piece of architecture that changed in form and meaning throughout this period, but also consider the other kinds of borders the Wall, as a physical barrier and symbol, engendered. The Wall reconfigured and politicized physical space but also, as a symbol of the Cold War divide, spatialized aspects of culture, politics, and society. Even when it was not directly addressed in, for example, politicians' rhetoric, it was always an influence on the construction of identity in East versus West Berlin and East versus West Germany.

In considering both East and West Berlin in terms of their similarities, I hope also to critique myths and stereotypes which have their origins in Cold War propaganda efforts and which to some degree still influence studies of East and West Germany. Because it emerged from the Cold War on the victorious side, the West is often treated as a standard by which the countries of Eastern Europe are measured. In relation to post-1989 histories of East Germany, for example, historian Thomas Lindenberger points out that the "seemingly untainted success" of West Germany, meant that its national past "served as an unquestioned model and yardstick with which to evaluate the East German past...it went without saying that old West Germany was the past future, which East Germany had missed out on and

[9] Patrick Wright, *The Iron Curtain: From Stage to Cold War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 18, 65ff.

which it now had to catch up with, with the not wholly unselfish assistance of West German 'experts'."[10]

In terms of architectural history, this bias manifests itself when critics discuss "bad" Eastern European architecture, judged as lacking when compared to "good" Western examples. In a 1999 article in *The New Yorker*, journalist Jane Kramer paints the following picture of East Berlin seen by Western eyes in 1989 for the first time: "...East Berlin turned out to be a messy, deteriorating place, a shabby police-state capital not so different from most of the other Eastern-bloc capitals."[11] To be sure, such images have a basis in reality, but they also convey the notion, either explicitly or implicitly, that the built environments of East German cities as well as those of other former-communist countries are all the same and all without merit. Such wholesale indictment of Eastern architecture as a whole also means that critics can dismiss specific examples of East German architecture out of hand, without further elaboration.[12]

The scope of this work is limited to Berlin partly to avoid such general and totalizing assessments of either East or West German architecture, but also in order to achieve a more thorough understanding of the construction of East and West German identity. As part of this, I argue that as cities, East and West Berlin had more in common with each other than is generally thought. West Berlin, for example, was not officially part of West Germany and so, though the two entities were undoubtedly closely tied, they cannot be thought of as completely synonymous. East Berlin, though geographically and politically contiguous with

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[10] Thomas Lindenberger, "Everyday History: New Approaches to the History of the Post-War Germanies," in *The Divided Past: Rewriting Post-War German History*, ed. Christoph Klessmann (New York: Berg, 2001), 43-4. The concept of a "regime of borders" in relation to GDR history was first described at length in Richard Bessel and Ralph Jessen, eds., *Die Grenzen der Diktatur: Staat und Gesellschaft in der DDR* (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1996).

[11] Jane Kramer, "Letter from Europe: Living with Berlin," *The New Yorker*, 5 July 1999, 52.

[12] Kramer, for example, calls the East German Palace of the Republic "incontestably ugly." Kramer, "Letter from Europe: Living with Berlin," 50.

the rest of East Germany was, like West Berlin, under special purview. Moreover, unlike any other city in East Germany (but just like West Berlin) the "other" Germany was continually present in East Berlin by virtue of its proximity to the city on the other side of the Wall. Finally because of the Wall, both East and West Berlin were considered showcase cities for the East and West respectively, and as a result enjoyed a variety of special dispensations that were not afforded other cities in the GDR or the Federal Republic.

In terms of architecture and urban planning specifically, East and West Berlin were unique within East and West Germany and similar to each other in that neither experienced suburbanization of any real significance.[13] The Berlin Wall was a political and physical barrier that cut through the middle of Berlin and reoriented both East and West Berlin towards what had been the edges of the city. At the same time however, and despite prevailing notions, the Wall was somewhat permeable. From West Berlin one could easily see into East Berlin by virtue of viewing platforms set up adjacent to the Wall for that purpose. Television and radio signals were accessible to both sides, and one of West Berlin's subway lines traveled under East Berlin for a portion of its route.[14] For all these reasons, East and West Berlin were perhaps not as completely divided as Cold War rhetoric and images would suggest, making their points of commonality as interesting as their differences.

As parts of Germany's former—and in the East its then-current—capital, East and West Berlin shared yet another point of commonality in terms of the formation of German identity. Of course capital cities are always key sites for the formation and representation of national identity; what is unique about Berlin is that its designation as capital has been repeatedly questioned and that its relationship to any sense of unified "Germanness" has been

[13] Häußermann and Strom, "Berlin: The Once and Future Capital," 340.
[14] In addition, after 1971 those traveling between East and West Berlin could use the elevated S-bahn.

an uneasy one. Indeed, historian Andreas Daum and others have made the point that Berlin's importance as a city that represents German culture and identity has been to some extent a myth rather than a reality.[15] As a result, the various German regimes that have ruled from the city could not take Berlin's centrality for granted, but have had to construct the city as the capital of Germany very deliberately and consciously. During the period of its division, this meant using specific architectural styles and approaches to quite literally build a "democratic" city in the West and a "socialist" one in the East. This also meant constructing Berlin in a figurative sense, making it a symbol of democratic or socialist values and ideals, but also explicitly designating its role vis-à-vis the rest of East and West Germany as either the capital, in the former case, or capital-in-waiting, in the latter. As part of this study, I trace the history of this effort to construct Berlin in nationalist, political terms, and examine how these regimes used the city as part of the construction of national identity.

However in addition, precisely because the city's role was so consciously and strenuously constructed, it is important to consider the degree to which the symbolism assigned to Berlin resonated with citizens in East and West Germany or Berlin. An important focus of this study is therefore the confrontation between what might be thought of as the "mundane" or everyday East and West Berlin, and the government-endorsed image of the city that was imposed onto it from above. Too often, studies of Berlin as Germany's capital have focused on the latter and have failed to measure the vision of the city as imagined by its government against the vision imagined by its people, and, furthermore, against the realities of daily life in the divided city. This consideration is particularly important in the context of

[15] Andreas W. Daum, "Capitals in Modern History: Inventing Urban Spaces for the Nation," in *Berlin-Washington, 1800-2000: Capital Cities, Cultural Representation, and National Identities*, ed. Andreas W. Daum and Christof Mauch (Washington D.C.: German Historical Society and Cambridge University Press, 2005), 3-4, 14.

the Cold War struggle, wherein each government's legitimacy was predicated to a large extent on the degree to which the government's vision of East or West Berlin matched up with the peoples', as well as with reality.

Given its unique situation, divided Berlin is the exceptional case that will, I believe, shed light on the larger context of which it was a part. Not only was Berlin's urban space used to make arguments about national identity within East and West Germany, it was a, if not *the* primary site of confrontation between the Eastern and Western powers of the Cold War, led by the U.S. and Soviet Union. However, this is not to suggest that what was true in East and West Berlin can be directly transferred to the East and West as a whole or even East and West Germany. In fact, it is the points of convergence as well as divergence which are the focus of this study. Regardless, because divided Berlin was the crucible in which these two separate national identities were forged, focusing on it will help to foreground details which I would argue are lost when one considers the East-West Cold War confrontation on a larger scale.

In focusing on the specific example of Wall-era Berlin, I will employ the methodological approach known in the discipline of social history as "microhistory" (*micro-historia*).[16] In the context of divided Berlin, this approach is useful because it takes into account both "normative structures" such as the state, which dictate individuals' actions as well as their "constant negotiation, manipulation, choice and decisions" that variously accommodate or subvert the impositions of the normative structures. The small-scale focus of microhistory and its attention to both governing influences and individual agency are useful because they help in avoiding overarching and static frameworks that often lead to

[16] Giovanni Levi, "On Microhistory," in *New Perspectives on Historical Writing*, ed. Peter Burke (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992), 106.

totalizing interpretations of history. Instead, the model for understanding the world and a person's behavior in it is based on "action and conflict." This model takes into account changes over time and within different contexts and also considers discrepancies between general patterns and the anomalies within these patterns. Society is not studied "as an object invested with inherent properties," writes historian Giovanni Levi in his essay "On Microhistory," "but as a set of shifting interrelationships existing between constantly adapting configurations."[17] The microhistorical approach therefore allows one to consider not only the interrelations between individuals and the state in East and West Berlin, but the way in which this relationship was affected by specific political, economic and social changes of the 1960s, 70s, and 80s. The result, it is hoped, will be a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between the built environment and identity formation in divided Berlin and Germany.

In an essay entitled "Everyday History: New Approaches to the History of the Post-War Germanies," historian Thomas Lindenberger discusses how the German iteration of microhistory, *Alltagsgeschichte* ("everyday history"), is the most appropriate approach for writing histories of East Germany because of its focus on action and conflict, rather than on "normative structures" alone. In the case of the GDR, the "official" policies and ideologies espoused by the government were often rejected by individual East Germans, though they may have paid "lip service" to such policies or made an outward show of their belief in or adherence to official GDR doctrine. Thus it does not make sense to gauge societal values or historical trends by considering only the GDR government or its leaders. As Lindenberger writes, "[East Germans'] lives, their behavior, their commitments and passivity, are important factors of the historical entity 'GDR'... both structures of power and domination *and* social

[17] Levi, "On Microhistory," 94, 110.

practice and experience have to be studied and debated." In particular, Lindenberger argues that historians should use the *Alltagsgeschichte* approach and conceive of the former East Germany in terms of a "regime of borders" (*Diktatur der Grenzen*),

> ...referring both to the outer geographical boundary protected against transgression by arms, concrete and barbed wire, and to the multitude of invisible boundaries pervading the body social, producing an inner landscape of relatively isolated units at the bottom of society. The typical political conflict between ordinary GDR citizens and the SED was *not* about political issues and basic tenets of the ideology, but about transgressions of one of these invisible boundaries, e.g. when someone took the ideology literally and tried to act it out on his own, outside the social place accorded to him by the party's omniscient wisdom.[18]

Though to be sure, West Berlin was not ruled by a totalitarian regime, I would argue that a similar approach to its history is appropriate. As in East Berlin, official doctrine in West Berlin was of supreme importance and a similar distance between governmental policy and individual belief or action characterized the everyday life of West Berliners. This is because of the city's physical isolation, its unique political status and significance as a symbol of the Western world, all of which made West Berlin important as a showcase city and thus made a show of solidarity and economic success so important for western governments in the context of the Cold War. For example, West Berlin could be discussed as the "capital of the free world" and a model of free-market capitalism, though it never had a truly independent economy and was heavily subsidized by West Germany.[19] As in the case of the GDR, a consideration of power structures alone does not result in a complete picture of life in West Berlin during the period of its division. Using the same methodological approach to the history and architecture of East and West Berlin, and one that takes daily life into account will also help to mitigate the influence of those Cold War myths this work hopes to

[18] Lindenberger, "Everyday History," 45, 56.
[19] Wolfgang Ribbe, *Berlin 1945-2000: Grundzüge der Stadtgeschichte*, ed. Wolfgang Ribbe, Kleine Schriftenreihe der Historischen Kommission zu Berlin, vol. 6 (Berlin: Berliner Wissenschafts-Verlag, 2002), 132.

critique. Furthermore, considering both East and West Berlin in terms of literal and figurative boundaries is particularly useful in a study of the relationship between identity and the built environment. One can see how both tangible and intangible boundaries were an essential part of personal and group identity formation in the sense that negotiating them was a way of establishing one's individual beliefs and values, and of determining one's actions in relation to those endorsed by the state. Moreover, the notion of a "regime of boundaries" foregrounds the importance of both physical place and "social place" in the formation of identity and suggests the way in which architecture and urban planning were an integral part of identity formation.

Considering the representation of particular buildings and of urban space in general will be an important way situating divided Berlin within the context of shifting sets of social relations, and therefore defining East and West Berlin as *places*. The term "place" is a contested one, having no single definition despite the prevalence of its use. In her book *The Power of Place*, architectural historian Dolores Hayden calls the term place, "one of the trickiest words in the English language, a suitcase so overfilled one can never shut the lid."[20] Perhaps the most useful definition of place in relation to a study of East and West Berlin, is the one offered by political geographer John Agnew in his book *Place and Politics: The Geographical Mediation of State and Society*. In the chapter entitled "A Theory of Place and Politics," Agnew defines place as an amalgam of the following:

> *locale*, the setting in which social relations are constituted (these can be informal or institutional); *location* the geographical area encompassing the setting for social interaction...; and *sense of place*, the local 'structure of feeling.' Or, by way of example, home, work, school, church and so on form nodes around which human activities circulate and which *in toto* can create a sense of place, both geographically

[20] Dolores Hayden, *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995), 15.

and socially.[21]

An individual's feeling about a particular place, what Agnew terms "sense of place," is explored by cultural geographer Yi-Fu Tuan in *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience*. For Tuan, it is experience, which he defines as "the various modes through which a person knows and constructs reality," that creates in one a sense of place and distinguishes place from that equally tricky term, space.[22]

Particularly in recent years, the understanding of what the term "space" means has shifted considerably, from one which defines space as a vessel that exists independent of its contents, to one in which space is a construct that results from specific social, cultural and political contexts.[23] In relation to notions of place, the two terms are of course related and at times overlap in meaning. For this reason, Tuan does not in his book attempt to give a concrete or exhaustive definition of either but suggests how each word has a different if related set of connotations. Space, for example, is a more abstract notion than place and evokes notions of movement and distance.[24] Place, on the other hand is "a pause in movement," through which meaning is allowed to coalesce around particular spaces and thereby differentiate them from other spaces, by, for example their function or significance for an individual or group.[25] Thus, for example, a path or road might be associated with space, while a home would be associated with place. In relation to the current study of

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[21] John A. Agnew, *Place and Politics: The Geographical Mediation of State and Society* (Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1987), 28.
[22] Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience*, 4th ed. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), 8.
[23] Denis Cosgrove, "Landscape and *Landschaft*: Lecture Delivered at the 'Spatial Turn in History' Symposium, German Historical Institute, February 19, 2004," *GHI Bulletin* 35 (Fall 2004): 58. This notion of space was of course first described in Henri Lefebvre's seminal study *The Production of Space* (1974) and Edward Sonja discussed its implications in terms of the "reassertation of a critical spatial perspective in contemporary social theory and analysis" in *Postmodern Geographies* (New York: Verso, 1989).
[24] Tuan, *Space and Place*, 6, 51-2.
[25] Tuan, *Space and Place*, 138.

divided Berlin, both Agnew's and Tuan's definitions of place and space will serve as a guide in the usage of the two terms.

These definitions are useful because they take into account the physical aspects of place as well as the intangible realms of social relations and personal feeling, all of which influence both personal and group identities. In the field of environmental psychology, the relationship between place and identity is studied within the sub-field of "place-identity." The term place-identity refers first to the way place influences an individual's self-concept or identity. For example, places can create a sense of belonging or alienation and can become a means of defining self or differentiating oneself from others. Individuals may describe themselves as "city people" or "country people," by which they mean to communicate their values and priorities based on those associated with the city versus the country. But places themselves can be said to have "identities" that are both reflections of the values of the groups that live there and an influence on the formation of their self-identities. John Agnew, for example, describes how shared meanings and values, "can be *projected* onto [a] region or a 'nation' and give rise to regionalism or nationalism," thus assigning a national identity to a particular place or set of places.[26] The city, particularly the capital city, is a primary example of this and suggests a subset of place-identity: urban identity.

As with the more general term, urban identity relates both to the influence of urban life on individuals' identity or self-concept, and to how the city as a whole is defined. An example of this latter aspect of urban identity would be Berlin's long association with unrest and social critique, traced by historian Belinda Davis in a 2005 essay entitled "'Everyday'

[26] Agnew, *Place and Politics*, 28.

Protest and the Culture of Conflict in Berlin, 1830-1980."[27] However at the same time, literal images of the city, defined either in terms of the individual's visual experience of the city or representations of urban space in art and/or popular culture, are also a part of defining urban identity. This aspect of urban identity is what Kevin Lynch traces in his influential book *The Image of the City* (1960). In it, Lynch asserts the importance of both the city's appearance, its "clarity or 'legibility'" and the "mental image" of the city held by its citizens. Urban identity is created out of "the overlap of many individual images" that are both individually and collectively held.[28] These images, and thus the urban identity of Berlin, are closely examined in this study so as to understand how the power structures of East and West Berlin attempted to assign the city particular identities as well as the subsequent reception of these efforts on the part of those who lived in the city.

While methods drawn from the social sciences and from the discipline history inform this study, it remains a work of architectural history. Architectural and urban historian Nancy Stieber has discussed the approach of microhistory particularly as it relates to histories of the modern city, noting that the difference between its use in architectural history as opposed to social history is that "[t]he visual and material rather than the social and political are foregrounded...and examined for the ways they interact with other systems of meaning and social discourse." The city in its concentration of people, architecture, and capital, is a locus

[27] Belinda Davis, "'Everyday' Protest and the Culture of Conflict in Berlin, 1830-1980," in *Berlin-Washington, 1800-2000: Capital Cities, Cultural Representation, and National Identities*, ed. Andreas W. Daum and Christof Mauch (Washington D.C.: German Historical Society and Cambridge University Press, 2005), 263-84.
[28] Kevin Lynch, *The Image of the City* (Cambridge, MA: M.I.T. Press, 1960), 46, 2-3.

of social discourse and is thus, as Stieber points out, "a place of making meaning."[29] Architecture and the urban environment as a whole not only represent and reflect these meanings, but help to shape shared meanings and transform social values. Therefore, just as microhistory treats society not as an "object" but as "a set of interrelationships" so too will architecture and the urban environment in general be considered as part of a shifting system of meaning.

Specifically, this study uses selected examples to investigate Berlin's role in the formation of East versus West German national identity. Specific projects, such as Hans Scharoun's State Library in West Berlin (1967-78) and the Palace of the Republic (1973-6) in the East, are examined not only in terms of their relationships to stylistic developments, but also in terms of their social, political and economic contexts. Using materials culled from the German national and Berlin municipal archives as well as from architects' papers, I consider how these buildings and other architectural initiatives were discussed by their designers, sponsoring regimes, and the critical establishment. In many cases, the chosen examples are ones that have been interpreted in specific and singular ways. The Palace of the Republic, for example, has often been described as "ugly" or "shabby," viewed as a product of the East German building economy that produced prefabricated housing settlements like the infamous Marzahn development.[30] However, in detailing the larger context of these buildings, my goal is to avoid such incomplete or monolithic interpretations and provide new perspectives on

[29] Nancy Stieber, "Microhistory of the Modern City: Urban Space, Its Use and Representation," *The Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 58, no. 3 (September 1999): 385, 387. Stieber holds up David Van Zanten's *Building Paris: Architectural Institutions and the Transformation of the French Capital, 1830-1870* (Cambridge University Press, 1994) and Daniel Bluestone's *Constructing Chicago* (Yale University Press, 1991) as examples of successful microhistories of a single city from an architectural approach. She cites James Duncan and David Ley's *Place/Culture/Representation* (Routledge, 1993) and Derek Gregory's *Geographical Imaginations* (Blackwell, 1994) as examples of works that bring cultural geography together with discussions of representation to trace histories of urban spaces and images. (Stieber, "Microhistory of the Modern City," 385, 388.)

[30] Discussions of both the Palace of the Republic and Marzahn are included in Chapters 3 and 4, respectively.

not only buildings, but also on individual architects. At the same time, the influence of cultural and architectural institutions is also discussed, since organizations like West Germany's Foundation for Prussian Cultural Heritage and the East German Building Academy had an important role in shaping architectural policy and thus national and urban identities.

In addition to considering the formal qualities of particular buildings and the circumstances of their construction, I also examine their representation in visual culture. Visual representation of urban space must be included because it allows one to assess the changing significance of a piece of architecture as the society around it changes. For example, the World Trade Center (New York; Minoru Yamasaki, 1966-77) was both a product of a particular economic order and an emblem of that order. It goes without saying that its symbolic status and meaning changed significantly after its destruction on September 11, 2001. The use of the building's image in, for example, films and television programs helped to establish its symbolic significance prior to September 11th and the power of its image after 9/11 is reflected in the decision by some networks and studios to erase or otherwise eliminate the building's image from televisions shows like *Law & Order: Special Victims Unit* and films such as *Zoolander* (Ben Stiller, 2001).[31] As this example shows, architecture's representation in visual culture helps to define its meaning and therefore its relationship to the values, beliefs and history of a particular country or social group. Furthermore, examining the representation of the city including its built environment helps in understanding the aggregate of images, all of which help to form a particular city's public image and thus urban identity.

Such images help to further an understanding of East and West Berlin's urban

[31] Paul Brownfield, "Panel Lets Industry Prepare for its Role," *Los Angeles Times*, 27 October 2001, F1.

identities, but they are also part of assessing the distance between official and heroic visions of the city and more "mundane," everyday ones. In the case of the Federal Republic, these images are largely drawn from representations of the city in mass media publications as well as, in the case of particular projects or initiatives, the institutional and popular reception of specific buildings or groups of buildings. Of course in the GDR, mass media was tightly controlled by the government and as such is not revealing in terms of popular opinions or collectively held urban images. Instead, articles such as those published in the party's newspaper *Neues Deutschland* are within this study considered part of official rhetoric. Insights into daily life and popular images of East Berlin are instead drawn from the body of "everyday-literature" (*Alltagsliteratur*) relating to East Germany, such as those books written by former GDR citizen and historian Stefan Wolle.[32]

As Nancy Steiber has pointed out, some would argue that visual representations are in fact what defines a city, and that "the 'city' as such exists only as representation since the material artifacts and functional acts that constitute any city are in constant flux and the city as a whole can be encompassed only by the representational terminologies of the spatial and visual disciplines."[33] Accordingly, images of Berlin that filled the international press are considered, as are the images that filled televisions screens in East and West and, in particular, filmic representations. As one of the twentieth century's most important forms of visual culture, film has played a central role in the representation of space and, more specifically, in both communicating and helping to shape perceptions of urban identity. In the early twentieth century, for example, the genre of "city films" made the connection between the film medium and urban space explicit, with films like Walter Ruttmann's *Berlin:*

[32] Chiefly, *Die Heile Welt der Diktatur* (1999) and *Damals in der DDR* (2006), with Hans-Hermann Hertle.
[33] Nancy Stieber, "Microhistory of the Modern City: Urban Space, Its Use and Representation," *The Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 58, no. 3 (1999): 387.

Symphony of a Big City (1927) and Dziga Vertov's *Man with a Movie Camera* (1929) translating the experience of the city into film.[34] Film can provide a way of understanding how a particular city is defined in the public imagination, but also the role architecture and the built environment play in the formation of urban identities. Moreover, in both East and West Germany, film was afforded a particular significance in relation to national identity. In West Germany, for example, New German Cinema in particular became for the government a "crucial artistic medium for the manifestation of national identity" in the 1970s and 80s.[35] Also in East Germany, following Lenin's famous dictum, film was considered the "most important of the arts" and a crucial way of defining East German values and culture.[36]

Chapters are organized chronologically so that political, economic and social developments can be considered in relation to the built environment and its representation. Chapter 1, "Berlin Before the Wall, 1871-1961," provides a summary of the city's architectural and urban development before 1961, focusing on the major projects of the immediate post-World War II period. In particular, it explains how the rebuilding projects of the 1950s, the Stalinallee development in East Berlin and the International Building Exhibition (Interbau) in the West, set the precedent for how architecture was used in the East and West to make *political* arguments that were then transmitted to a global audience. For example, while historicized decorative motifs were used in the design of the Stalinallee buildings to create luxurious "apartment palaces" for the workers of the GDR, the style of Modernism, as it was defined in the late 1950s, was used in the buildings and entertainment

[34] Of course Walter Benjamin famously pointed out the connection between film and the urban experience in "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" (1936).
[35] Hanno Joachimsen, 'Film in Grundgesetz' *Berlinale Tip*, no 10 (1982), p 7. Quoted in Thomas Elsaesser, *New German Cinema: A History* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1989), 29.
[36] Horst Claus, "Rebels with a Cause: The Development of the '*Berlin-Filme*' by Gerhard Klein and Wolfgang Kohlhaase," in *DEFA: East German Cinema*, ed. Seán Allen and John Sandford (New York; Oxford, UK: Berghahn Books, 1999; reprint, 2003), 94.

venues of Interbau to tie West Berlin visually as well as economically to the Western world in general and the US in particular.

Chapter 2, "Division to Détente, 1961-71," focuses on the construction of the State Library in West Berlin, examining how the building was used in part to connect West Berlin to the rest of West Germany. West Berlin could not serve the Federal Republic in any official capacity as it was not technically part of it, though the two were of course inexorably tied. The city was therefore fashioned as an important center of West German culture, and its *Kulturforum* (of which the library is a part) was a key site for the construction of all aspects of that identity. As the project was begun in the mid-1960s after the Wall's construction, the Federal Republic was still enjoying the fruits of its "*Wirtschaftswunder*" ("economic miracle") and was internationally acknowledged, while East Germany's economy, having never recovered after World War II, was still faltering and the country itself was largely ignored by the global community. The construction of the State Library will therefore be examined in relation to East Germany's efforts to raise its global profile through the construction of Berlin's historic center and in relation to the changing diplomatic relationship between East and West Germany, which began to warm with the advent of *Ostpolitik* ("East politics").

As West Germany's, and by extension West Berlin's, period of prosperity began to wane, East Germany entered its so-called "golden years." Chapter 3, "Protest and Prosperity, 1971-81," will deal with how the Palace of the Republic (Heinz Graffunder, et al., 1973-6) was both a result of and influence on East Germany's increased national pride and relative prosperity in the early years under the rule of Erich Honecker, who took power in 1971. The Palace was significant as an architectural "prestige project" but also because of its function as

a venue for public events and leisure activities; the concerts and performances held in the Palace brought much-needed positive publicity to East Germany. In contrast, West Berlin during this period was characterized by its increasingly marginalized, politically radical population. No longer a glamorous capital of "high" culture, West Berlin gained a reputation as a haven for misfits and center of social critique, which was reflected in the images of squatters occupying graffiti-covered apartment buildings that filled the international popular press during the 1970s and 80s.

The final chapter, "Revitalization and Reunification, 1981-90," will discuss the events surrounding the 1987 celebration of Berlin's 750th birthday, focusing on the International Building Exhibition or IBA in West Berlin and the GDR's concurrent effort to restore the city's historic districts, such as the medieval Nikolai quarter. In both East and West Berlin, the renewed interest in the city's history, and specifically in its historic buildings, was of course related to the city's anniversary, but was also part of a reaction against the Modernist city planning and architectural policies that had held sway since the postwar period. How East and West Berlin framed their roles in relation to Berlin's history therefore provides insight not only into the continued battle for legitimacy, vis-à-vis the Cold War, but also offers a view of how each participated in the architectural discourse of the 1980s.

In relation to the Israeli barrier, Ouroussoff refers to its power to destroy space for "those who refuse to divide the world into good and bad, civilization and barbarity."[37] In Berlin, the attempt is now being made to recreate space, to depolarize the city by, among other ways, simply destroying the legacy of the divide. For example the Palace of the Republic is currently being dismantled, regarded by many as an "emblem of a failed ideology," even while it is defended by those who do not view the building in terms of the

[37] Ouroussoff, "A Line in the Sand," 1.

Cold War divide.[38] It is clear that though the Berlin Wall no longer constitutes a physical divide, the myriad of other divisions it engendered cannot be as swiftly or completely collapsed as the Wall itself was.

A detailed investigation of this period is particularly appropriate in the current historical moment, as Berlin is once more being actively and consciously reconstructed as the capital of a united Germany. The current reconstruction effort is at least in part an attempt to create a single city, physically *as well as* ideologically and symbolically, from what had for thirty years been in effect two cities. Furthermore, because contemporary debates about urban planning and construction (or reconstruction) are often framed within the context of "restoring" a pre-Wall Berlin, it has become important to examine the roots of this notion and how it may have evolved during the period of the city's division.

[38] Nicolai Ouroussoff, "Trying to Save Berlin Relic From the Dustbin" *New York Times*, 9 January 2006, Section E, Column 2.

CHAPTER 1: BERLIN BEFORE THE WALL

The founding of Berlin is usually dated to 1237, when the city is mentioned in a municipal document along with its twin settlement Cölln. It was not until the mid- to late-nineteenth century, however, that the city constituted a significant force in either the political, social, or cultural realms of what would become Germany. By the start of World War II, the city had been transformed from a small, provincial capital within the politically and geographically fragmented region of central Europe, to a world-class metropolis on par with Vienna, Paris, and London.

The relative lateness of the founding of the German nation in 1871, the rise of its modern, industrial economy, and the rapidity of both developments would have implications well into the twentieth century and had a profound effect on Cold War Berlin. This is true first because Europe's German-speaking lands remained separate political entities and were to a large degree autonomous for so long, that there was little to no sense of a centralized, German national identity. Thus, when Berlin was made the German national capital, the city became an important part of defining this identity. Secondly, the swift and thorough industrialization of the city meant that the problems of urbanism were more pronounced and, to some degree, more severe there than in other cities in Europe or even Germany, leaving many of Berlin's politicians and intellectuals ambivalent about the city itself: while some viewed the city and its connection with modernity in a positive light, others reviled Berlin for precisely this reason. Thirdly, the profound social changes that accompanied nationhood and unprecedented economic growth led to a unique and volatile relationship between politics and culture in the early twentieth century, and the legacy of this contentious relationship would prove a major factor in the rebuilding efforts of the postwar period. Therefore, to

understand the implications of the construction of the Berlin Wall for the development of city's built environment as well as its urban character, it is important to trace the history of Berlin's development as a social, political, and economic entity. In particular, one must consider how architecture and urban planning were linked with political ideology and why the issue of identity (national, urban, individual) was so important for Berliners as well as Germans, not just after World War II, but in the century preceding it.

The Growth and Development of Berlin: 1815-1945

The areas of central Europe that would eventually form the nation of Germany were fractured into many different kingdoms, principalities and free-cities ("small states" or "*Kleinstaaterei*"), which since the medieval period had existed as connected yet distinct domains of power. One of the largest of these was Prussia, a kingdom which, after the defeat of Napoleon in 1815, rapidly consolidated its political and economic might,. After defeating Austria in the Wars of Unification in 1866 and France in the Franco-Prussian War (1870-1), many of these formerly-autonomous lands were annexed by Prussia, which eventually united all of the German-speaking areas in central Europe, excluding Austria, into the nation of Germany, which was declared in January of 1871.[1]

Berlin and the German "Identity Problem"

Having for so long been divided into autonomous states with strong regional identities, the issue of cultural identity was a central concern from the early nineteenth century and came to a head with the founding of the German nation. Architecture and urban planning became important ways of constructing such identity and one of the first architects to grapple with this issue specifically as it related to architecture was Karl Friedrich Schinkel

[1] Mary Fulbrook, *A Concise History of Germany*, 2nd ed., Cambridge Concise Histories (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 69, 101, 127.

(1781-1841). Schinkel dominated Berlin's architectural and urban development throughout the first half of the nineteenth century and influenced German architecture in general and Berlin's in particular, for decades after. Though he had held a prominent position in Berlin's building office since 1810, with the defeat of Napoleon in 1815 and the subsequent burst of building activity, Schinkel took a more prominent role in Prussia's architectural development.[2]

Schinkel strove to create architecture that would support Prussia by appropriately reflecting the waxing economic and political power of the newly-enlarged state. Beyond his influential role in remaking central Berlin, Schinkel also hoped to create an urban environment that would inspire within Prussia's middle class an interest in its cultural heritage, a sense of civic responsibility and to initiate a process of "cultivation" or *Bildung*. Influenced by the work of Wilhelm von Humboldt, Schinkel wanted his buildings to be the instruments of this cultivation, with the ultimate goal of creating a conscientious citizenry who would actively participate in the democratic, constitutional monarchy he hoped Prussia would soon become.[3] Thus, Schinkel was concerned with how national identity might be articulated in built form, as well as with the political and social function of his buildings and how they might shape the lives of those who visited them.

Prussia's power and influence grew throughout the 1850s and 60s, culminating in the Franco-Prussian War and the subsequent establishment of the German nation. Under Kaiser

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[2] Barry Bergdoll and Erich Lessing, *Karl Friedrich Schinkel: An Architecture for Prussia* (New York, NY: Rizzoli, 1994), 40, 46; Hermann G. Pundt, *Schinkel's Berlin: A Study in Environmental Planning* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1972), 123ff. Bergdoll notes that Pundt's *Schinkel's Berlin* is more reflective of the concerns of the author's time, that is the 1960s and 70s, than of Schinkel's own time. (Bergdoll and Lessing, *Karl Friedrich Schinkel*, 9.)

[3] This notion is discussed at length in Steven Moyano, "Quality vs. History: Schinkel's Altes Museum and Prussian Arts Policy," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 72, no. 4 (December 1990): 585-608. It is also discussed in at length in Chapter 2 of Bergdoll's *Karl Friedrich Schinkel*, "Building and the Ethos of Bildung: Schinkel's Public Architecture and Humboldt's Ideal," 45-101.

Wilhelm I (King Wilhelm I, 1862-71; Kaiser Wilhelm I, 1871-88) and Kaiser Wilhelm II (1888-1918), Germans grappled with the implications of the country's unification, and in particular with the issue of national identity, referred to as the "consciousness-" or "identity-problem" (*Das Bewußtseinsproblem*). While many Germans were excited by the possibilities that national unification seemed to promise, others were concerned with the issue of "self-recognition." As we have seen, the issue of regional versus national or "German" identity was not a new one, but the declaration of a single German nation presented new challenges. Deciding on national symbols, for example, proved problematic; the country did not have a flag until 1892.[4]

In the absence of a singular national identity, Prussian identity became increasingly conflated with German identity. This was in part due to the hegemony of Prussia, a state which controlled two-thirds of Germany's population and land area, and provided the administrative model for the national government.[5] Unification had been achieved primarily through the efforts of the Prussian Prime Minister, Otto von Bismarck, who subsequently became Germany's first Chancellor. Moreover it was the Prussian king, Wilhelm I, who became emperor of united Germany. As a result of this political dominance, as well as its military successes throughout the late nineteenth century, it was Prussia that increasingly defined what was German and figures like Bismarck who became *national* heroes.[6] However, even as Prussia played a decisive role in the effort to forge a collective German identity, rival states with strong regional identities, such as Bavaria, resented the power of Prussia. Prussia came to be associated with militarism, anti-individualism, authoritarianism and conservative

[4] Gordon Alexander Craig, *Germany, 1866-1945*, Oxford History of Modern Europe (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 56-8.
[5] E. J. Feuchtwanger, *Imperial Germany, 1850-1918* (London ; New York: Routledge, 2001), 62.
[6] Craig, *Germany, 1866-1945*, 59.

social politics and, after World War II, even the Nazi party.[7] As Prussia's capital, Berlin was often the lightening rod of this anti-Prussian sentiment.

Berlin's Rapid Growth and the Hobrecht Plan: 1840-1918

Berlin's development from the 1840s to the early 1900s is characterized by its almost unimaginably rapid economic and physical growth as well as its increasing political and cultural significance for Germany as a whole. Throughout the 1840s, 50s and 60s with its munitions factories churning out materials in support Prussia's wars, the city became the center of Germany's machinery production and railroad industry. After the German nation was declared in 1871, the political importance of Berlin was solidified, and the pace of the city's economic and cultural development quickened. The country's two largest electric concerns, Siemens and *Allgemeine Elektrizitätsgesellschaft* (AEG) were headquartered in Prussia's capital, and by 1895 a third of all employees who worked in this sector of the German economy were in Berlin.[8] After a sharp economic downturn, the country's industrial development moved forward at breakneck speed, increasing its output of manufactured goods in the 1870s and 80s by five times.[9] The growth of industry, especially big business concerns, was facilitated by cartels, which were allowed to flourish in the absence of anti-trust legislation. While in 1887 only seventy German cartels existed, 143 had been established by 1895, mostly in the iron, steel, and coal industries.[10]

As the city's economy grew, so did its population, which doubled overall from 1849

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[7] Hans Hecker, "Preußen—Staat der Grenzen. Ein Versuch über Voraussetzungen und wirkung staatsbedingter Tugenden" in *Geistiges Preußen, preußischer Geist*, Gabriele Hundrieser and Hans-Georg Pott, eds. (Bielefeld: Aisthesis Verlag, 2003), 16-7. Hecker points out that the adjective "prussian" is also associated with positive qualities, such as self-discipline, thrift, honesty, and the appreciation of culture.

[8] Michael Erbe, "Berlin im Kaiserreich (1871-1918)," in *Geschichte Berlins*, ed. Wolfgang Ribbe (München: C.H. Beck, 1988), 723-5.

[9] In comparison during the same period, England increased its manufacturing output during the same period by a factor of two. (Fulbrook, *A Concise History of Germany*, 137-8.)

[10] Feuchtwanger, *Imperial Germany*, 99.

to 1871.[11] In 1871, the population of the city's central district and outlying communities stood at 932,000, while in 1900 it numbered 2.7 million and by 1919, 3.8 million. As these statistics show, by far the sharpest increase in Berlin's population during this period was from 1871 to 1900, as those in eastern, agricultural regions such as East Prussia moved to Berlin to find jobs.[12] The need for open spaces in which to build factories and house the influx of industrial workers encouraged the expansion of the city outside of its old city walls. The Borsig rail works, for example, was founded to the northwest of the *Mitte* district in 1837 just outside the Oranienburger Tor, but only twelve years later had relocated further west to Moabit, a district to the northeast of central Berlin, which at the time was not part of the city proper. Indeed at this time, with the exception of a few suburbs to the north, incorporated in 1841, Berlin was for the most part still contained within its old walls and at only 13.5 square miles, was extremely small compared to other European capitals. This changed significantly in 1861, when Moabit, Wedding, and the northern parts of Schöneberg and Tempelhof, were incorporated into the city, in one stroke increasing Berlin's total land area by 70% to 22.8 square miles.[13] In 1920, by annexing large neighboring towns like Schöneberg and Wilmersdorf "Greater Berlin" was created. This made Berlin the third largest city in the world, raising the total land area from 22.8 to 340 square miles, and the total population to 4

[11] Günther Richter, "Zwischen Revolution und Reichsgründung (1848-1870)," in *Geschichte Berlins*, ed. Wolfgang Ribbe (München: C.H. Beck, 1988), 660-1. The population in old quarters of the city, *Alt Berlin* (Old Berlin) and *Alt-Cölln* (Old-Cölln, collectively known as "*Mitte*"), actually decreased. This is most likely because of the *Mitte* district's aforementioned transition from a center economic activity to one of cultural and political significance.

[12] Erbe, "Berlin im Kaiserreich (1871-1918)," 693-5; Feuchtwanger, *Imperial Germany*, 99. The population of other European cities, such as Paris and London, also grew drastically during this period, however unlike Berlin they were already major population centers by the late nineteenth century. Greater London, for example, already had a population of over 3 million by 1871. In fact in terms of England, Berlin's rapid growth more closely mirrored that of cities like Liverpool and Manchester, rather than the capital. (Garside, 226-7; Evenson, 265-7) Patricia L. Garside "West End, East End: London, 1890-1940, 221-58; Norma Evenson, "Paris, 1890-1940," 259-87.

[13] Richter, "Zwischen Revolution und Reichsgründung (1848-1870)," 657-9, 662.

million (Figure 1).[14]

Already in the late 1850s, plans were underway to regulate Berlin's rapid growth in the form of a comprehensive urban plan. After the incorporation of new land in 1861 came the need for new maps and land surveys, as well as an improvement of the city's infrastructure, which was ill-equipped to handle the population increase. A "young and inexperienced" planner, James Hobrecht, was chosen to draw up this plan and the result was the 1862 Hobrecht Plan.[15] Influenced in part by Georges-Eugène Haussmann's recent plan for Paris, Hobrecht's plan featured extremely broad boulevards interspersed with large squares laid out on a grid comprised of very large, 4,300-square-foot blocks which were to have been subdivided into smaller streets. After speculators rushed to buy these plots, however, they were more interested in reaping a profit from their land than in adhering to the overall urban plan.[16] In the absence of any real city building regulations, the blocks were densely built up with the *Mietkaserne*, or "rental barracks" for which Berlin would become infamous.[17]

Mietkasernen are comprised of several stories of large apartments blocks arranged around comparatively small interior courtyards, or *Höfe* (Figure 2). The size of these *Höfe*, seventeen feet square, was dictated by an 1853 building code which stipulated that courtyards need only be wide enough to accommodate the turning radius of a city fire wagon.[18] Several such buildings occupied one block, with more prestigious accommodation located nearest the

[14] Daniel Stewart Mattern, "Creating the Modern Metropolis: The Debate over Greater Berlin, 1890 to 1920" (Ph.D. diss., The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1991), 5.
[15] Brian Ladd, *Urban Planning and Civic Order in Germany, 1860-1914*, Harvard Historical Studies (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990), 80. Ladd notes that the choice of an inexperienced planner no doubt reflects the lack of prestige and importance accorded urban planners and urban planning in general at this time.
[16] Ladd, *Urban Planning and Civic Order in Germany*, 133, 81-3.
[17] Horst Matzerath, "Berlin, 1890-1940," in *Metropolis 1890-1940*, ed. Anthony Sutcliffe (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 294-5.
[18] Ladd, *Urban Planning and Civic Order in Germany*, 81. A Prussian foot is slightly longer than an English foot.

street and less desirable apartments located toward the interior of the block, accessible only by walking through the linked *Höfe*. The apartments themselves were on average very small, usually consisting only of a parlor and a kitchen. Even in 1918, 40% of these apartments were one-room dwellings, and only a fifth of these had a kitchen. Some apartments had toilets, but in most, the residents on a floor shared a single toilet, located in the hallway. While most had running water, few had electricity or gas. Those that did were generally the apartments of the relatively better off tenants; for example in 1903, 21% of the street-side apartments had gas while only 6% of those on the interior were so equipped.[19]

As large numbers of people moved into Berlin in the 1870s-90s to find work in factories located there, the city's infrastructure buckled under the pressure of the population influx. The *Mietkasernen* grew hopelessly overcrowded, with some tenants even renting out their beds during the times they were not in use. In the winter, sickness and death were rampant as many of the apartments did not have heating of any kind.[20] Because of the conditions of life in these tenements, Berlin was often cited as the worst example in a nation-wide housing crisis.[21] In 1930, Werner Hegemann's book *Stony Berlin: History of the Largest Rental-Barracks-City in the World* (*Das steinerne Berlin: Geschichte der grössten Mietskasernenstadt der Welt*) confirmed this reputation, helping to establish the image of Berlin as a poorly planned, overbuilt city that would inform its municipal building policy for decades thereafter.[22] The history behind Berlin's development also helped to create the impression that the city was driven by asset accumulation rather than by social or aesthetic concerns, since the very physical form of the city had been the result of speculation rather

[19] Erbe, "Berlin im Kaiserreich (1871-1918)," 702, 704.
[20] Erbe, "Berlin im Kaiserreich (1871-1918)," 704.
[21] Ladd, *Urban Planning and Civic Order in Germany*, 151-2.
[22] Werner Hegemann, *Das steinerne Berlin, Geschichte der grössten Mietkasernenstadt der Welt* (Berlin: G. Kiepenhauer, 1930).

than a systematically implemented urban plan. In an 1899 essay on the city, for example, politician and native Berliner Walter Rathenau (1867-1922) described the city in derisive terms, lamenting its "American" character and claiming it to be driven by industry and capital, lacking a distinct urban tradition of its own.[23]

The poor living and working conditions workers experienced upon moving to Berlin encouraged them to join labor unions and the Social Democratic Party (SPD), and the membership rolls of both the union and party increased markedly during this period. The city's leaders, though they had embraced economic modernism, looked suspiciously on the prospect of political modernism given their deep-seated fear of the lower classes.[24] Conservative policies therefore held sway, facilitated in part by the strict hierarchy of Prussian society and the 1871 German constitution, which while nominally democratic ultimately preserved the power of the monarchy and the conservative, land-owning classes.[25] This social conservatism and lack of democratic representation would lead to the 1918 revolution that followed Germany's disastrous involvement in World War I. The leaders of the politically and economically weak Weimar Republic, founded in 1919, would prove unable to bridge this gap between the German elite and the working-class population they feared. Thus the 1920s and 30s were characterized by the rise of political extremism and the politicization of virtually every aspect of German society, above all culture.

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[23] Lothar Müller, "The Beauty of the Metropolis: Toward an Aesthetic Urbanism in Turn-of-the-Century Berlin," in *Berlin: Culture and Metropolis*, ed. Charles W. Haxthausen and Heidrun Suhr (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1990), 39-40. Rathenau's charge of "Americanism" presaged similar critiques of West Berlin and West Germany in the postwar, leveled by the GDR as well as to some extent in the West. For a discussion of "Anti-Americanism" in West Germany, see Phillip Gassert, "Neither East nor West: Anti-Americanism in West Germany, 1945-1968," in *The United States and Germany in the Era of the Cold War, 1945-1990*, ed. Detlef Junker (Washington, D.C.: German Historical Institute and Cambridge University Press, 2004), 627-34. Anti-Americanism in East Germany is discussed later in this chapter.

[24] Fulbrook, *A Concise History of Germany*, 138, 133. This fear was in part a legacy of the 1848 revolution.

[25] Feuchtwanger, *Imperial Germany*, 108. *Junkers* were a landed-gentry class who, while not royalty, effectively controlled Prussian politics, culture, and society until the founding of the Weimar Republic in 1919. (Fulbrook, *A Concise History of Germany*, 138, 126.)

The Politicization of Culture: 1918-1945

The miserable conditions in the *Mietskasernen* would put Berlin at the center of a national debate that had preoccupied German intellectuals and critics since the 1840s and centered on the consequences of the rapid growth of German cities throughout the nineteenth century.[26] In fact, the perception that living conditions in Berlin were much worse than those in other German cities was not entirely accurate. Because of the rapid onset of industrialization and equally rapid growth in population, however, it is true that the deleterious effects of industrialization were perhaps more shocking and as a result seemed more acute in Berlin than elsewhere. Regardless, this idea of Berlin as a city characterized on the one hand by slums and a politically-active working class, and on the other by rampant speculation and the accumulation of massive wealth, was well-established by the late nineteenth century. This understanding of Berlin would influence attempts to construct and reconstruct the city throughout the 1920s and 30s, into the Nazi era and indeed well into the later twentieth century.

Though (or perhaps because) the Weimar era was a tumultuous one for Germany, the cultural output associated with it is now considered legendary. This is the Berlin many think of when they envision the city: the Berlin of Bertolt Brecht and Walter Benjamin, of cabaret in the Kit Kat Klub, and prostitutes on Potsdamer Platz. The period is considered by many to be the city's "golden age" (*Die Goldene Zeit*), and the political and social turmoil that characterized the period is often seen as a generating force behind many of the era's cultural innovations. Peter Gay famously described it as "a dance on the edge of a volcano," noting that "the excitement that characterized Weimar culture stemmed in part from exuberant

[26] For more on the so-called "Big Cities Debate" ("*Großstädte Debatte*") in Germany, see Andrew Lees, "Berlin and Modern Urbanity in German Discourse, 1845-1945," *Journal of Urban History* 17, no. 2 (1991): 153-80.

creativity and experimentation; but much of it was anxiety, fear, a rising sense of doom."[27]

During this period, debates about "modernity" and its implications for cultural production, combined with a general sense of liberation precipitated by the end of the old, imperial order, created a heady environment in which cultural and political debates provided the background for experimentation with new styles and approaches to artistic production. Already the most significant political and economic city in Germany, the 1920s and 30s were the period in which Berlin ascended to a place of cultural importance within Germany. Whereas historically other German cities, such as Dresden and Munich, had been considered more important as centers of the arts, in the early twentieth century they were eclipsed in this regard by Berlin.[28] In terms of architecture and design specifically, as Reyner Banham points out in *Theory and Design in the First Machine Age* (1960), "No other center in the early Twenties could have boasted, as Berlin could, more than a dozen progressive architects of more than average competence, sufficiently resilient in mental constitution to take in their stride a major aesthetic revolution..."[29]

This "aesthetic revolution" combined with Berlin's rapid and then-recent growth made it synonymous with those economic, political and social developments mostly closely associated with "modernity." As a result, this period not only cemented Berlin's cultural

[27] Peter Gay, *Weimar Culture: The Outsider as Insider*, 1st ed. (New York,: Harper & Row, 1968), xiv. Indeed, historians have often interpreted the Weimar Republic in the context of the Nazi regime that would follow, viewing the turmoil of the period as a prelude to the rise of Hitler. Works such as Fritz Stern's *The Politics of Cultural Despair* (1961) and George Mosse's *The Crisis of German Ideology* (1964) have been criticized for assuming that the Nazis' rise to power was inevitable, though later histories such as Gay's *Weimar Culture* (1968) corrected this bias somewhat. Cultural histories as well, most notably Siegfried Kracauer's *From Caligari to Hitler: A Psychological History of the German Film* (1947), have been similarly criticized for their overly teleological approach.

[28] This change began to happen specifically from 1910-12, when major artists groups relocated to Berlin and exhibitions such as *Die Neue Secession* (The New Secession) were held there.

[29] Reyner Banham, *Theory and Design in the First Machine Age*, 1st MIT Press paperback ed. (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1980), 265.

importance within Germany but also its reputation as the "symbol of modern urbanity."[30] Given the increasingly contentious political environment in Germany during this time, Berlin's associations with artistic experimentation as well as the transgression of social taboos made it an important symbol for both the left and right extremes of the political spectrum. While cultural critics and leaders from Germany's Social Democratic and Communist parties reveled in Berlin's modern character, representatives of right-wing parties like the National Socialist or Nazi party detested it, citing Berlin's social and cultural "deviance" as evidence of an overall decline in German culture and society.[31]

Perhaps no other institution in Germany in the early twentieth century exemplifies the set of debates surrounding cultural production, politics, and industrialization more than the *Deutscher Werkbund*. Founded in 1907 by a group that included architects, designers and at least one government official, its goal was to respond to the challenges presented by Germany's rapid, late-nineteenth-century industrialization, particularly as it affected cultural production. In considering the relationship between the artist and the machine, the Werkbund was at the same time attempting to regenerate a national culture that, in its opinion, had been adulterated by the advent of industrialization. In its early years, the group argued not that mass production was to be fought against but rather that trained artists should be used to

[30] Lees, "Berlin and Modern Urbanity in German Discourse," 153-4.
[31] Lees, "Berlin and Modern Urbanity in German Discourse," 164-72. It is important to note that, as has been the case with political histories of the period, histories of early-twentieth-century German architecture and design have tended to divide critics, artists and works into categories of either "proto-" or "anti-" Nazi. Formal developments have similarly been considered as a binary opposition wherein artists either embrace the machine, an aesthetic associated with liberal views, or reject it in favor of historicized, "decorative" styles associated with conservative views. It is important to remember, however, that in many cases critics who ended up on opposites sides of cultural debates and the political spectrum in the Weimar period, for example Walter Gropius and Paul Schultze-Naumburg, often started out in the same ideological camp in the pre-World War I era. Ultimately, it is perhaps more useful to trace the histories of various debates surrounding art and architecture in Germany from 1900 to 1945 and consider *how* and *why* these debates became politicized, rather than to view the period strictly through the lens of the Nazi era. Likewise, it is helpful to consider politics and style in this period in terms of a continuum with fascist/conservative on one end and communist/radical on the other.

improve the quality of the design of consumer products.[32] The organization initially looked to the social cooperative model of the Middle Ages, but the early 1910s saw the Werkbund turn away from this arts and crafts-inspired approach, taking the "modern entrepreneur" rather than the "medieval craftsman" as its representative figure.[33]

In fact, this debate around the relationship between art and industry, and the artist's role in production, would constitute a central concern for the Werkbund throughout its existence. The 1914 Werkbund exhibition in Cologne, for example, reveals the extent to which the artist-centered, medieval model coexisted with the so-called "new style" within the group. The exhibition included the now-famous Administration Building and Model Factory by Gropius and Adolf Meyer, which with its use of glass curtain walls and exposed steel frame seemed to embrace industrial production and the aesthetic associated with it. However, the same exhibition featured Bruno Taut's Pavilion for the Glass Industry, which with its prodigious use of colored glass and decorative mosaics has been associated with medieval legends and mystical traditions of the Near East.[34] Ultimately, Werkbund member Peter Behrens' work for the electrical concern AEG from 1907-14 exemplified the kind of relationship between art and industry by the group espoused in the pre-war period, as it seemed to unite the work of the individual with the processes of modern mass production.[35]

In terms of political affiliations, the Werkbund as a whole cannot be said to have been overwhelmingly either conservative or radical. The group's membership rolls included the

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[32] Frederic J. Schwartz, *The Werkbund: Design Theory and Mass Culture before the First World War* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996), 13-4.
[33] Joan Campbell, *The German Werkbund: The Politics of Reform in the Applied Arts* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), 52. In fact there was considerable debate within the Werkbund as to which was more important: standardization of types (*Typisierung*) or the individual expression of a single artist. The debate was never completely resolved before the Werkbund disbanded. (Schwartz, *The Werkbund*, 147-8.)
[34] These connections are developed in depth in Rosemarie Haag Bletter, "The Interpretation of the Glass Dream-Expressionist Architecture and the History of the Crystal Metaphor," *The Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 40, no. 1 (1981): 20-43.
[35] Schwartz, *The Werkbund*, 116-9.

names of Walter Gropius and Mies van der Rohe, now considered founders of the modern movement, as well as that of Paul Schultze-Naumburg who would later argue vehemently against avant-garde architectural styles. In terms of its stance on art and industry, the Werkbund's beliefs can be tied to the writings of Julius Langbehn, a cultural critic who argued for the return of lost values of craftsmanship as an antidote to the industrialization that in his opinion was eroding Germany's native culture. Langbehn's arguments were later taken up by the Nazis and were characterized as part of a "politics of cultural despair" in Fritz Stern's book of the same name. Regardless of its varied political associations, the Nazis would ultimately condemn the Werkbund as a "culturally bolshevist" institution.[36]

However, though the organization itself cannot definitely be associated with either the right or left, the Werkbund's members were on the whole not "apolitical." Individual members were very much politically engaged and explicitly tied themselves to particular political ideologies. For example, several members of the Werkbund were counted among the founders of the liberal German Democratic Party in November 1918.[37] In addition, other Werkbund members were associated with many of the artists' groups founded in the immediate aftermath of the 1918 revolution. Walter Gropius, for example, was a founding member of the socialist *Arbeitsrat für Kunst* (Workers' Council for Art) and was also a member of the leftist group *Der Ring* (the Ring).[38] Paul Schultze-Naumburg, on the other

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[36] Campbell, *The German Werkbund*, 26, 229; Barbara Miller Lane, *Architecture and Politics in Germany, 1918-1945* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985), 6. Critics have variously attempted to argue that the Werkbund was either more conservative or liberal. In his 1994 essay in the *Journal of Architectural Historians*, for example, Mark Jarzombek's focus on the conservative aspects of the Werkbund can in part be read as a reaction to earlier interpretations of the organization as primarily liberal and progressive. (Mark Jarzombek, "The 'Kunstgewerbe,' the 'Werkbund,' and the Aesthetics of Culture in the Wilhelmine Period," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 53, no. 1 (March 1994): 7-8.)

[37] Campbell, *The German Werkbund*, 110.

[38] Campbell, *The German Werkbund*, 112, 212; Lane, *Architecture and Politics in Germany*, 137. While many of these groups, can be associated with a generally leftist approach, they were not tied explicitly to any political parties, and their political views were often "vague." (Lane, *Architecture and Politics in Germany*, 42-3.)

hand, was a founding member of *Der Block* (the Block), a conservative organization intended to counteract the activities of the Ring and in the later 1920s penned books such as *Art and Race* (*Kunst und Rasse*, 1928), which applied Nazi racial ideologies to culture.

As with views on the city in the context of the Big City Debates, cultural debates like those engaged in and inspired by the Werkbund tended to become more sharply politicized in the Weimar period, as did the styles associated with them. Such was the volatile environment of the time, however, that often a perception of a particular individual's political affiliation often proved more important than his actual beliefs. At the Institute of Technology in Berlin for example, Communist students tended to enroll in Hans Poelzig's seminars, while student-members of the Nazi party visited those of Heinrich Tessenow, despite the fact that both Poelzig and Tessenow claimed to be apolitical.[39] Though at times arbitrary, this tendency towards political labeling would continue into the post-World War II period, when an individual's, institution's, or even style's association with a particular political party, whether accurate or not, would prove an essential part of his success or failure throughout the 1950s and beyond.

Those members of the Werkbund who favored the left-leaning politics and/or avant-garde approaches to architectural design and urban planning are now associated with the development of the "new building" style (*Neues Bauen*) that is now commonly called Modernism. These architects and the institutions they founded, not only had a profound impact on architecture and city planning in Germany and Western Europe for the next several

[39] Campbell, *The German Werkbund*, 222. Other architects practiced *Neues Bauen* but were by no means politically radical or leftist, such as Mies van der Rohe whose "attitude" towards politics, according to biographer Franz Schulze, "was a conflicted patchwork of indifference towards national politics in general, hostility toward Nazi philisitinism in particular, dedication to architectural principle, and desire to build regardless of who asked him." (Franz Schulze, *Mies Van der Rohe: A Critical Biography* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 188.)

decades, but were also instrumental in implementing some of these new ideas in Germany the 1920s and 30s. In Berlin, largely due to the efforts of Martin Wagner, initially an official with the municipal building authority for Berlin-Schöneberg and after 1926 Chief City Planner of Greater Berlin, the city government financed a series of building projects in and around Berlin. The resulting complexes, examples of which include Bruno Taut's *Britz-Siedlung* (1928) and *Siemensstadt* (1929-30) by Walter Gropius, Hans Scharoun and others, were built in a stridently modern style, in part as an antidote to the dark, cramped *Mietkasernen* with their ornate, decorative facades.

Like Ernst May's *Das Neue Frankfurt*, Wagner created a magazine, *Das Neue Berlin* (*The New Berlin*), to publicize his efforts.[40] *The New Berlin* and publications like it attempted to bring the "new style" to the attention of the German public as a whole. As Barbara Miller Lane points out in *Architecture and Politics in Germany* (1968):

> Through a constant stream of books, pamphlets, articles, and speeches they impressed their views on the profession and on the public with the result that, although buildings in the new style represented only a minority of total construction in Germany in the twenties, both the general press and the architectural journals soon concentrated an exceptional amount of attention on the new architecture. Public discussion of the work and claims of modern architects thus become a fashionable and won the radical architects further popularity.[41]

Even in the 1910s, the public had demonstrated its interest in the debates surrounding the advent of "modernity" and its impact in terms of the big city and cultural production. The "Berlin General City Planner Exhibition," which featured the winning entries from the 1910 Greater Berlin Planning Competition, was visited by 40,000 visitors in three weeks, much to

[40] Lane, *Architecture and Politics in Germany*, 113. Wagner's use of the term "New Berlin" was the first of a series of invocations of this term, which was used in connection with the post-1945 reconstruction, the urban renewal efforts of the 1970s and 1980s in West Berlin, and the reconstruction of the city after it the unification of Germany in 1990 and Berlin's designation as the capital of the Federal Republic of Germany.
[41] Lane, *Architecture and Politics in Germany*, 125.

the surprise of the exhibition's planners.[42] Seventeen years later, the Werkbund's *Weissenhofsiedlung*, held in Stuttgart, attracted half a million visitors to its exhibition of housing design in the new style.[43] However, the visibility of the "new style" along with the support it enjoyed from selected government administrations ironically ensured its ultimate vilification under the Nazis regime. In particular, Nazis targeted those architects, institutions, and buildings that had received support from the SPD-led government. For example, it was the publicly-funded, working-class housing projects like those created by Taut, Wagner and May that created the most controversy and which were most aggressively targeted by the Nazis. This was in part because of the government patronage that such projects enjoyed but also because their design seemed particularly radical, and thus, it was argued, bore no resemblance to previous traditions of residential architectural design.[44]

Despite their condemnation of the work of Martin Wagner and others, the Nazi regime was by no means against all forms of modern art. As was the case throughout the 1920s and 30s, political labels were applied to particular styles and institutions often without regard to their appropriateness. In any case, Nazis were by no means uniform in their cultural policies and were almost as likely to sponsor modern buildings as to denounce them. In fact there was no clear "Nazi aesthetic," though there were a number of critiques, in general anti-urban and nostalgic, that attempted to prescribe what Nazi German architecture should look like. Critics like Richard Walter Darré with his "Blood and Soil" (*Blut und Boden*) doctrine, for example advocated the return to an idealized, communal life of the country, which was

[42] Mattern, "Creating the Modern Metropolis", 250.
[43] Campbell, *The German Werkbund*, 188.
[44] Lane, *Architecture and Politics in Germany*, 27-8, 39. In truth, however, many of the social housing buildings featured more traditional elements, such as the pitched roofs of Taut's *Britz-Siedlung,* also called the "horseshoe development" (*Die Hufeisensiedlung*) because of its distinctive shape.

contrasted with the supposedly immoral, individualistic life of the metropolis.[45]

Adolf Hitler was in fact known to have hated Berlin specifically, going so far as to declare in 1941 that, if British bombers destroyed the city it would be no great loss.[46] As historian Andrew Lees has argued, "[i]n a very real sense, the Weimar Republic was in the eyes of its opponents the Berlin Republic, and it was entirely plausible for the Nazis to conflate the beginning of their dictatorship with a conquest of a corrupt and chaotic capital."[47] Accordingly, Hitler's chief architect, Albert Speer, created a new urban plan for Berlin as the capital of Hitler's empire. The plan, which was officially unveiled in January 1938, would purge the city of those populations and buildings which did not fit into the Nazi worldview and, in so doing, recreate Berlin as a heroic capital, designed to communicate the Nazis' power through the use of monumental buildings executed in a spare, classical style (Figure 3).[48]

Again and again in describing the plan and its intended effect, both Speer and Hitler stressed its large scale and visual dimension. Speer was of the opinion that "impressive public buildings, like monuments, must be planned to be freely visible from all sides," thus heightening their visual impact. This impact would begin as soon as the visitor arrived in Berlin, entering the city through the South Rail Station that was to be built at the southern terminus of the central, axial boulevard: visitors exiting the station would, claimed Speer, "be

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[45] Lane, *Architecture and Politics in Germany*, 9, 153; Robert R. Taylor, *The Word in Stone: The Role of Architecture in the National Socialist Ideology* (Berkeley,: University of California Press, 1974), 10.
[46] Adolf Hitler, *Hitler's Secret Conversations 1941-44* (New York: Signet, 1961), 40. Quoted in Taylor, *The Word in Stone*, 46.
[47] Lees, "Berlin and Modern Urbanity in German Discourse," 170-4.
[48] As Paul B. Jaskot details in his 1996 article "Anti-Semitic Policy in Albert Speer's Plans for the Rebuilding of Berlin," Nazi ideology was not only reflected in the formal elements of the plan, but in the administrative policies that were necessary for its implementation. For example, the scale of the plan was a testament to Nazi delusions of grandeur, but also meant razing thousands of residential buildings along what would be the extremely wide, north-south boulevard. In an effort to evict tenants from those buildings slated for destruction, Speer and his office employed anti-Semitic policies such as depriving Jews of their tenant and property rights. (Paul B. Jaskot, "Anti-Semitic Policy in Albert Speer's Plans for the Rebuilding of Berlin," *Art Bulletin* 78, no. 4 (December 1996): 623, 626.)

overwhelmed, or rather stunned, by the urban scene and thus the power of the Reich."[49] Moreover, the unprecedented scale of the buildings and of the plan itself would help to express this power. The dome of the Great Hall, for example, was to be 954 feet high and the building itself would have accommodated 150,000-180,000 standing audience members.[50]

Clearly, the goal of Hitler's Berlin plan was to convey the power of the Third Reich in built form, but it was also intended to inspire a sense of pride and awe within those who visited or lived in the city, thus encouraging their allegiance to the Reich. As architectural historian Stephen Helmer points out in *Hitler's Berlin*, the monumental buildings like the Great Hall would help to create a "supportive psychic environment" that would foster adherence to Nazi ideals and encourage appropriate behavior on the part of German citizens. Accordingly, the plan was approached as if the city were a stage set on which the political drama of the nation and empire would unfold.[51] In this way, architecture was not a mere accessory of the Nazis' political designs, but an instrument of these designs, intended not only to express their values and beliefs but to instill them in their subjects.

Though so little of it was actually built, Speer's and Hitler's plan for Berlin would continue to have a profound impact on the city into the postwar period. This was in part because the plan had created a comprehensive, totalizing vision of Berlin, which with its powerful visual impact demanded a decisive counter-image to, in a sense, cancel it out. In addition, the connection between architecture and politics evidenced in Speer's and Hitler's plan, as well as the way it approached the city as venue for staging political theater are

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[49] Albert Speer, *Inside the Third Reich: Memoirs*, trans. by Richard and Clara Winston (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1970), 75, 133-4. Quoted in Stephen D. Helmer, *Hitler's Berlin: The Speer Plans for Reshaping the Central City*, Architecture and Urban Design No. 14 (Ann Arbor, Mich.: UMI Research Press, 1985), 18, 21.
[50] Helmer, *Hitler's Berlin*, 30-1.
[51] Helmer, *Hitler's Berlin*, 38, 39-40.

themes that would be picked up in plans for the rebuilding of Berlin in the later 1940s and 50s.

Indeed, the ideas and goals behind the urban development of Berlin throughout the first half of the twentieth century would inevitably be brought to bear on the postwar development of the city. As part of this, the image of Berlin in the German public's imagination was a fact with which the governments of East and West would have to contend in the postwar period. By the time Hitler took power in 1933, Berlin's reputation as a center of modernity in all its forms was firmly established, and, as described by historians Corey Ross and Deborah Smail, images of the city focused on

> ...quintessentially 'modern' themes of speed, commotion and traffic, masses of people moving to and fro, lights and nightlife, a new sexual permissiveness and shifting gender roles, the illuminated throngs visiting the film cinemas, and of course the American-style musical shows and 'girls' that simultaneously combined elements of militaristic display, factory precision and the idea of the independent, no-nonsense, sexually liberated 'flapper'.[52]

By this time as well, Berlin was well known as a center of counter-cultural protest and it was widely viewed that the city nursed what historian Belinda Davis has called a "culture of conflict," wherein Berlin's streets were the sites of regular clashes between its militant police force and large groups of malcontents.[53] West Germany's first chancellor, Konrad Adenauer, was known to have had a personal distaste for the city, which he considered devoid of

[52] Deborah Smail and Corey Ross, "New Berlins and New Germanies: History, Myth and the German Capital in the 1920s and 1990s," in *Representing the German Nation: History and Identity in Twentieth-Century Germany*, ed. Mary Fulbrook and Martin Swales (Manchster, UK and New York: Manchester University Press, 2000), 65. The association between the city experience, movement, and sensory overload had been established in part by scholars such as sociologist Georg Simmel in his essay "The Metropolis and Mental Life" (1903), in city films like Walter Ruttmann's *Berlin: Symphony of a Big City* (*Berlin: Die Symphonie der Großstadt*, 1927) and by Walter Benjamin with his essay "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" (1936). Such works also connected these tropes with Berlin specifically.

[53] Davis, "'Everyday' Protest," 263-4.

genuine culture in comparison with his native Cologne.[54] Though histories often discuss 1945 as decisive turning point—a "year zero" (*Stunde Null*) from which the city's history and indeed its urban development began anew—the city's socially-constructed character and the various plans that had been created and to varying degrees implemented before 1945 were an influential and important part of the postwar discourse around Berlin's reconstruction.

Architecture, Politics and the Rebuilding Effort, 1945-61

In both the East and West sections of the city, rebuilding plans were formulated with three main goals in mind. Firstly, the need to rebuild the all-but-destroyed city and in particular to provide much-needed housing, was of primary concern. This practical necessity was enhanced by the fact that the literal rebuilding of Berlin and of Germany was seen as symbolic of the rebuilding and reformation of the "damaged" psyche of the German people.[55] Secondly, the rebuilding efforts of East and West were one way in which the occupying powers sought to prove their commitment to the city and to show its citizens how they envisioned Berlin's development under their stewardship. As part of proving this commitment, the building plans created in the East and West were an effort to create a visual dimension for each ideology; that is, the plans were meant to define what a socialist or democratic society might look like. As we will see after 1949 and into the 1950s, the planning and reconstruction of Berlin was closely and explicitly tied to the political struggle over the city, as the governments of both East and West Berlin (and the foreign governments that supported them) sought to prove the superiority of their political, economic, and cultural values.

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[54] Jürgen Engert, "Berlin between East and West: Lessons for a Confused World," in *Living with the Wall: West Berlin, 1961-1985*, ed. Richard L. Merritt and Anna J. Merritt (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1985), 150.

[55] Jeffry Diefendorf, "The New City: German Urban Planning and the Zero Hour," in *Stunde Null: The End and the Beginning Fifty Years Ago*, ed. Geoffrey J. Giles (Washington, D.C.: German Historical Institute, 1997), 89.

Already in January 1944, Allied forces had been making plans regarding the postwar administration of Germany and had agreed that the country would be divided into three zones of occupation, to be administered by Britain, the Soviet Union, and the United States (Figure 4).[56] At the Yalta conference in February 1945, Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill confirmed these earlier plans with some amendments, for example adding France as one of the occupying powers. The decision was made to divide up Berlin as well, since the city was too strategically important to cede to just one of the four powers. It was further agreed that each of the Allies would exercise virtually autonomous control over its own zone, but that issues concerning the country as a whole and/or Berlin would be decided by a joint body called the Allied Control Council.[57] From the start, the fundamentally opposing views of the western and eastern forces of occupation were readily evident. Though all four countries agreed on the so-called "four-d" approach—denazification, demilitarization, decartelization and democratization—there was no consensus as to how these goals would be achieved. Moreover, because each country had control of its own zone, each was allowed to carry out its own policies in its zone of occupation. The result was that postwar administration in each of the four zones reflected the social, political, and economic values of its occupying force, thus starting Germany on the path towards its ultimate division.[58]

It was economic issues in particular that proved most divisive. In particular the issue of whether or not Germany should pay reparations and if so how much, as well as the question of whether the country should be left economically dependent on the Allies sparked heated debate. The Soviet Union felt strongly that Germany should be left dependent and that

[56] D. G. Williamson, *Germany from Defeat to Partition, 1945-1963*, Seminar Studies in History (Harlow: Longman, 2001), 3.
[57] Wolfgang Ribbe, "Von der Besetzung zur Spaltung der Stadt," in *Geschichte Berlins*, ed. Wolfgang Ribbe (München: C.H. Beck, 1988), 1036.
[58] Williamson, *Germany from Defeat to Partition*, 7-8, 11.

reparations in the amount of $20 billion should be paid to the Allied forces. While the United States and Britain were initially in favor of keeping the country dependent, they quickly realized this would mean a drain on their own economies and so changed their approach to one of helping Germany to become politically and economically self-sufficient. These divergent views were institutionalized in 1947 when the British and American zones were combined into a single economic (and ultimately political) entity called "Bizonia." The division was further entrenched by the announcement in June 1947 of the European Economic Recovery or Marshall Plan, and by the end of that year the country was clearly moving in two distinct directions: towards a capitalist economy in the West, supported by the U.S. and towards a socialist economy in the East, supported by the Soviet Union.[59]

On June 20, 1948 the *Deutschmark* was introduced in the Western sectors as part of a currency reform stipulated by the Marshall Plan. Three days later when the *Deutschmark* was introduced in West Berlin, the Soviets protested, insisting that the city was under their control since it was inside the Eastern zone of occupation. In order to gain control of Berlin once and for all, Stalin declared a blockade of the western part of the city beginning on the night of June 23-24, 1948. The western Allies, led by the U.S., responded with an airlift, flying food and supplies into the city throughout the blockade. Realizing the West would not back down, Stalin was forced to acknowledge the continued presence of western Allied forces in Berlin, and he lifted the blockade in May 1949.[60] This conflict proved irrefutably that the differences between Eastern and Western powers were insurmountable. Thus, the May 1949 foundation of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG; *Bundesrepublik*

[59] Williamson, *Germany from Defeat to Partition*, 8, 19-20, 26. Some historians now argue that the Marshall Plan was a deliberate effort by the United States to ensure the division of Germany and Europe. See "Special Forum: The Marshall Plan and the Origins of the Cold War Reassessed," *Journal of Cold War Studies* (Winter 2005), 97-181.
[60] Williamson, *Germany from Defeat to Partition*, 26, 29-30.

Deutschland or BRD) was the culmination of a longstanding divide, as was the foundation of the German Democratic Republic (GDR; *Deutsche Demokratische Republik* or DDR) in October of the same year (Figure 5).

The blockade solidified Berlin's importance in terms of the East-West struggle for hegemony and ensured that the city would be a continued source of contention; it also ensured the continued division of Berlin.[61] In 1948 the Soviet representative left the Allied Control Council and later that year the municipal government was split in two parts. In the wake of these developments, the question of Berlin's status, that is, whether it belonged to East or West Germany, or was an autonomous "free city," was a particularly thorny one. From the West's perspective, the four-power status of Berlin represented the western Allies' legal claim to the city and thus their presence was necessary to show their military and moral support for the city. However on a practical level, West Berlin's distance from the rest of West Germany made full integration difficult. In addition, most West German politicians did not support integration partly because of the lingering distaste for the Prussian tradition.[62] As a result, the 1949 constitution of the Federal Republic pointedly did *not* make Berlin a part of West Germany, continuing to recognize the Allied Control Council as the governing body of the city and thus maintaining the West's legal right to Berlin. The small town of Bonn was named West Germany's "provisional" capital, and Berlin was represented in the federal diet (*Bundestag*) by a non-voting delegate appointed by its municipal government.[63] For their part, East Germany and the Soviet Union continued to disavow Berlin's occupation by the

[61] Lawrence Freedman, "Berlin and the Cold War," in *The Berlin Wall Crisis: Perspectives on Cold War Alliances*, ed. John P. S. Gearson and Kori N. Schake (Basingstoke, Hampshire; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 3; Ribbe, *Berlin 1945-2000*, 84-5.
[62] Ribbe, *Berlin 1945-2000*, 88-9. Prussia had become associated with the Nazis, despite the Nazi party's roots in Bavaria.
[63] Henry Ashby Turner, *Germany from Partition to Reunification*, Rev. ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 37-8.

West, and, in 1949 when the GDR was founded, Berlin was made the capital of the new country.

Postwar Reconstruction: The New Berlin

The rebuiding effort in Berlin began with the removal of the thousands of tons of rubble under which the city was buried, and already in late 1945, a number of different plans were proffered for the reconstruction of the city (Figure 6). From the start, the various plans had a number of goals in common. All approached the razing of the city as an opportunity to correct the mistakes of past urban plans, in particular the infamous 1862 Hobrecht Plan and the *Mietkasernen* that it had inadvertently produced. All attempted to create a city that broke with past architectural, political and social orders, but also referred to or was somehow continuous with Berlin's and Germany's history, and all grappled with what this simultaneously "new" and "historic" city might look like.[64] At the same time, Berlin's reputation as a capital of modernity, and as a city with a strong tradition of both free-market capitalism and socialism, though not openly acknowledged, remained an influence on the reconstruction plans for both East and West, and indeed would continue to influence debates about architecture and planning in the city.

Given these concerns, the question of whether or not to use a Modernist approach, in terms of urban planning and in architectural style, was a central point of this debate as each side attempted to distinguish itself from the other. In the West, the postwar period marked the beginning of a period of ascendance for Modernist architecture. In particular, the kind of rectilinear, steel-and-glass style of *Neues Bauen*, as practiced by the Bauhaus after 1924 and

[64] Simone Hain, "Berlin Ost: 'Im Westen Wird man Sich Wundern'," in *Neue Städte Aus Ruinen: Deutscher Städtebau der Nachkriegszeit*, ed. Werner Durth Klaus von Beyme, Niels Gutschow, Winfried Nerdinger, and Thomas Topfstedt (Munich: Prestel Verlag, 1992), 35; Florian Urban, "Recovering Essence through Demolition: The 'Organic' City in Postwar Berlin," *The Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 63, no. 3 (2004): 354.

by architects like Mies van der Rohe, was endorsed by the International Congress on Modern Architecture (*Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne* or CIAM) and used in postwar reconstruction efforts of Western European cites like London and Rotterdam. CIAM, an organization made up of preeminent Modernist architects from all over the world, was in fact very influential in this postwar dissemination of Modernism, influencing not only the style of new construction in the postwar, but the overall urban plans for many cities, including West Berlin. Specifically, the Charter of Athens, drafted by CIAM in 1933, provided guidelines for Modernist urban planning, advocating zoning, that is partitioning urban space based on its function, and the use of technology to address and hopefully solve the problems of the modern city.[65]

Of course, the Modernist style had first come to prominence in the pre-war period, publicized in exhibitions like the *Weissenhofsiedlung* in Stuttgart in 1927 and by exhibitions in other countries as well, most notably the 1932 "International Style" exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. In addition, pre-war histories written by German émigrés Sigfried Giedion, Nikolas Pevsner, and Emil Kaufmann, together with exhibitions like "The International Style," had begun to frame the history and genealogy of Modernism in a particular way, placing the Modernist approach within an overall narrative, vis-à-vis European but also American architectural traditions.[66] In these histories, Modern architecture is posited as a response and challenge to earlier styles of architecture, particularly nineteenth-century historicized architecture, and is defined almost exclusively in terms of its formal

[65] "CIAM: Charter of Athens: Tenets," in *Programs and Manifestors on 20th-Century Architecture*, ed. Ulrich Conrads, trans. Michael Bullock (Cambridge: MIT Press), 137-45.
[66] Specifically, these histories are Nikolas Pevsner, *Pioneers of the Modern Movement, from William Morris to Walter Gropius* (1936); Emil Kaufmann, *Von Ledoux bis Le Corbusier: Ursprung und Entwicklung der autonomen Architektur* (1933); and Siegfried Giedion, *Space, Time, and Architecture: The Growth of a New Tradition* (1941)

attributes, with no discussion of the possible influence of social or technical considerations.[67] A preference is shown for the works of architects such as Walter Gropius, Le Corbusier, and Adolf Loos while architects who worked in a so-called irrational or Expressionistic vein, such as Bruno Taut or Erich Mendelsohn, are given little treatment or ignored altogether. According to Panayotis Tournikiotis in his book *The Historiography of Modern Architecture*, these histories define Modern architecture as,

> ...original, independent of tradition, liberated from imitation of the styles of the past, opposed to the convictions of the nineteenth century. Thus it is in complete rift with the past and past tradition. Everything is brand new: modern architecture is something that has never existed before. A new spirit composing forms without precedent.[68]

Largely as a result of these histories, architects in Western Europe and the United States, completing their education in the immediate postwar period understood the Modern movement as "incontrovertible fact," and this in part led to the style's widespread use in the 1950s and 60s.[69]

However, it is important to note that at this time, a shift was occurring between Modernism as Pevsner, Kaufmann, and Giedion had defined it, and what would come to be known as High Modernism. By 1940, many architects closely associated with the modern style, including Mies van der Rohe and Walter Gropius, had relocated to the United States in order to escape the war in Europe. In the early 1950s, Skidmore, Owings and Merrill (SOM), a company which would become synonymous with postwar, steel-and-glass corporate architecture, designed two buildings which established Modernism as the preeminent style for high-rise, commercial buildings: the Lever House in New York (1951-2), the Inland Steel

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[67] Panayotis Tournikiotis, *The Historiography of Modern Architecture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1999), 27, 32-4, 39, 48. It should be noted that not only critics and historians, but also architects themselves in their own biographies and monographs often contributed to this bias in the historiography of Modernism.
[68] Tournikiotis, *The Historiography of Modern Architecture*, 34.
[69] Tournikiotis, *The Historiography of Modern Architecture*, 49, 82.

Building in Chicago (1956-7). By the 1950s and 60s, the Modernist style which saw its initial development in Europe and which was originally associated with the political values of the left, began instead to be connected with more conservative cultural values and with the United States.

The style's connection with the U.S. had, however, been part of the earlier narratives of its history. In *Space, Time and Architecture*, for example, Giedion traced the pre-history of Modernism to the U.S., specifically to commercial architecture built in Chicago in the nineteenth century. In buildings like William Le Baron Jenney's Home Insurance Building (Chicago, 1884-5; now destroyed), Giedion saw evidence of an integration of architecture and engineering that, according to him, would not be achieved in Europe until the early part of the twentieth century. Within Modernism, as it was then defined, Giedion and others saw values that were then, as now, popularly regarded as quintessentially "American": a strong belief in the power of new technologies to order and advance society, and, attendant with this belief in progress, an overriding interest in the "future" made possible by such technologies, over the "outmoded" past. Moreover, because the modern style in architecture as well as painting was denounced by Europe's fascist regimes as "degenerate," it became associated with defiance against anti-democratic rulers. The U.S. in the postwar period became a bastion for this style, which became in-and-of-itself a symbol of progressivism and the "democratic spirit."[70]

In terms of the reconstruction of East and West Berlin, the issue of how to deal with the past versus the present and future was not only a question of architectural style, but also of the larger symbolic significance of the reconstruction effort. The reconstruction of not

[70] Robert H. Haddow, *Pavilions of Plenty: Exhibiting American Culture Abroad in the 1950s* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1997), 5, 78-80. The distinction between postwar "High Modernism" and pre-war "Modernism" was for the most part made only later.

only Berlin but also Germany as a whole was seen as tantamount to the repair of Germans' self-image and a key way of boosting morale in the economically depressed and war torn country, particularly given the country's recent past and the horrific deeds of the Nazis, which were brought to worldwide attention in part through the publicity surrounding the trials of Nazi war criminals at Nuremberg. This "working through" of the past, known in German as "*Vergangenheitsbewältigung*,"[71] was crucial not only in regard to Germans' self-understanding and sense of national identity, but was essential for the establishment of political legitimacy in East versus West Germany.

In the late 1940s, establishing political legitimacy was of prime importance to the GDR and Federal Republic, since the division of both Germany and especially of Berlin was still largely thought of as temporary. Thus as the effort to reconstruct Berlin began, at stake was not simply who would rebuild the city, but who would control it. In this regard, architecture and urban planning in this period, as so many scholars have noted, was extremely politicized in Berlin as in Germany as a whole, and city-building was viewed very explicitly as equivalent to state-building. However, the power of architecture to express and encourage particular political ideas was one that was not new to the postwar period but, as architectural historian Francesca Rogier has pointed out: "...was deeply rooted in the German consciousness and reinforced over time by the humanistic disciplines."[72] Specifically in terms of Berlin, the governments of East and West Berlin used not only architecture and planning initiatives, but the exhibition and display of their efforts in an attempt create a

[71] This term, as historian Jeffrey Herf has pointed out, applies not only the crimes of the Nazis but predates World War II, though today it is most commonly used in this regard. (Jeffrey Herf, *Divided Memory: The Nazi Past in the Two Germanys* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), 8.)
[72] Francesca Rogier, "The Monumentality of Rhetoric: The Will to Rebuild in Postwar Berlin," in *Anxious Modernisms: Experimentation in Postwar Architectural Culture*, ed. Sarah Williams and Rene Legault Goldhagen (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2000), 176.

visual identity for their half of Berlin that connected favorably to certain parts of the city's past, while condemning the Nazi era and the "other" Berlin.

Not only the more recent past, but Berlin's pre-war reputation influenced these efforts as well. Though framed as a decisive break and the beginning of an entirely new era, the construction of Berlin after the "Zero Hour" was of course influenced by the city's popular association with modernity as it was formed from the late-nineteenth century into the early-twentieth. For example, when West Germans were questioned by the U.S. Information Agency (USIA) as to their opinion on the "Berlin Crisis" of 1958, which preceded the construction of the Berlin Wall, they responded "with remarkable calm." Most responded that the way to solve the crisis was to either "let the U.N. take over" or "deal with the GDR," opinions which were particularly prevalent in Bavaria, Prussia's long-time rival.[73] West Germans' lukewarm responses to the questionnaire reveal the lack of connection they felt to Berlin, and suggest a continuation of the ambivalence that characterized pre-war attitudes towards it. Clearly Berlin continued to be a city towards which Germans' sentiments were deeply divided between appreciation and resentment. Its continued associations with unrest, social critique, radicalism and, in the wake of World War II, with tyranny of the Nazis and Prussia would remain a factor in the West and East Germans' image of the city and, particularly in relation to West Berlin, the issue of its continued financial support. In terms of the evolution and development of its built environment as well, these perceptions of the city were a constant presence with which architects and planners were forced to contend.

The first plan for rebuilding war-torn Berlin, called the Collective Plan

[73] "Public Opinion Report: 'West Germany Views the Berlin Crisis,' 10 February 1959," ii. File 250/67/04/3; Research Reports on German Public Opinion, 1957-59; Records of the U.S. Information Agency (USIA), Record Group 306; National Archives at College Park, College Park, MD. The Berlin Crisis is discussed in more detail in Chapter 2.

(*Kollektivplan*, 1946; Figure 7), was drawn up by a group of city planners and architects working under Hans Scharoun (1893-1972) in the postwar administration set up by Soviet forces in May 1945. This first effort at planning the reconstruction of the city adhered to the principles set out in CIAM's Athens Charter, providing for zoned areas based on residential, commercial or industrial use, and a system of highways to allow for an increase in automobile traffic, while at the same time retaining areas of circulation for pedestrians.[74] Though influenced by previous urban planning theories, Scharoun's was one of the only postwar reconstruction plans that attempted to create a wholly new urban plan for a German city, and avoided any reference to previous plans for Berlin.[75] In the *Kollketivplan*, historic continuity was instead created by connecting Berlin with its geological past. The plan was to follow the topography of the city, and, in taking the form of a long, narrow band, reference the glacial valley on which Berlin is built. The intent was to avoid directly referencing the city's recent history by going back further in time to Berlin's origin. Furthermore, by constructing Modernist buildings atop this ground plan, reference to particular historical styles, periods or political regimes would be avoided in favor of the spare, politically "neutral" and supposedly ahistorical style of Modernism. However, in 1948 when Berlin's municipal government was split, so too was Scharoun's planning commission. The *Kollektivplan* continued to enjoy support in the East and West, but was ultimately abandoned by both, as each created its own vision of the "new Berlin."[76]

East Germany, the Soviet Union and the Construction of East Berlin

The earliest efforts to construct East Berlin focused on casting the country's capital in the mold of the Soviet Union as part of an effort to establish a sense of East German identity

[74] Rogier, "The Monumentality of Rhetoric," 167.
[75] Diefendorf, "The New City: German Urban Planning and the Zero Hour," 103; Hain, "Berlin Ost," 33.
[76] Hain, "Berlin Ost," 33. The term "new Berlin" was commonly used in reference to postwar reconstruction plans for the city. (Hain, "Berlin Ost," 41.)

that was distinct and autonomous from that of West Germany. Not only architecture and planning, but the GDR's political, economic and social dimensions would, in these first years following East Germany's founding, be modeled after the Soviet Union. In the political and economic realm, this meant "Stalinization," or the consolidation of governmental power in the hands of a single political party.[77] In terms of architecture, this meant the use of historical styles gleaned from Germany and Berlin's architectural past, as evident in the centerpiece of the GDR's National Construction Program (*Das Nationales Aufbauprogramm* or NAP), the Stalinallee housing development in East Berlin.

Both the GDR and East Berlin were of course composed of the Soviet zones of occupation (*Sowjetischen Besatzungszone* or SBZ) and, as such, were subject to the political, economic and cultural policies of the Soviet Union. The Soviet Military Administration (*Die Sowjetische Militäradministration in Deutschland* or SMAD), created in June 1945, led the postwar occupation of these regions and in doing so was more intent on collecting reparations from Germany in comparison with the other Allied powers. To this end, the SMAD went about dismantling the industrial complex of the SBZ, shipping a large portion of the resources and infrastructure of what would be East Germany to the Soviet Union. By the end of 1946, over 1,000 factories in the SBZ had been dismantled and the production capacity of the zone, already damaged by the war, was reduced by 35% to 80%, depending on the industrial sector. In addition, a percentage of the production of those factories that did remain was siphoned off to benefit the Soviet economy. Because of both reparations burdens and the dismantling of the industrial infrastructure in the SBZ, the GDR was from the start put at a severe disadvantage as compared to the Federal Republic, and its economy would

[77] Peter Grieder, *The East German Leadership, 1945-1973: Conflict and Crisis* (New York: Manchester University Press, 1999), 1; Hermann Weber, *Geschichte der DDR* (Erftstadt, Germany: Area Verlag, 1999; reprint, 2006), 19-20.

ultimately never completely recover from this setback.[78]

The political reorganization of the SBZ was also headed up by the SMAD, which stocked government posts with German communists known to be loyal to the Soviet Union. In June 1946, the German Socialist Unity Party (*Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands* or SED) was founded through the forced union of the German Socialist Democratic and Communist parties, thus consolidating the power of Germany's left-leaning parties in the SBZ. Once the GDR was founded in 1949, it was nominally a multi-party socialist republic, however throughout the country's existence the SED would act as the equivalent of the Communist Party in the Soviet Union, wielding complete power over East Germany's political, economic and social development. The SED itself was headed by a General Secretary who was in turn the head of the party's Politburo. All major party decisions were made by the Politburo or, especially in the 1970s and 80s, by the Central Committee, a governing body made up of elite cadre of Politburo members. In June 1950, Walter Ulbricht (1893-1973), a German communist who had spent the war in exile in the Soviet Union, was elected General Secretary of the SED. Ulbricht remained supreme leader of the GDR until he was deposed in 1971.[79]

During his time in exile, Ulbricht authored *The Legend of German Socialism* (*Die Legende vom Deutschen Sozialismus*, 1945), a history and analysis of the Hitler dictatorship that outlined the German Communists' position on that era and their relationship to it. The book, of which tens of thousands of copies were published in the immediate postwar years, delineated the "antifascist" narratives that would become the foundation for the officially

[78] Weber, *Geschichte der DDR*, 42, 72-3.
[79] Weber, *Geschichte der DDR*, 76ff, 36-7. For more on the organization of the SED and East German government, see the appendix, "Government Administration: East and West Germany."

sanctioned national identity in the GDR.[80] Specifically, Ulbricht's history argued that the Nazi regime was the product of a particularly virulent strain of capitalism, which took hold of the country despite the best efforts of the German Communist Party, which was itself, of course, ultimately blameless. Indeed, the German people were likewise exonerated despite the massive popular support for Hitler and his party. Instead, Ulbricht laid the bulk of the blame for the Nazi era on the "arms industrialists and leaders of banks" who, he argued, had financed and thus enabled Hitler's war.[81] Since they had not united with the German Communists, Ulbricht insisted that the Social Democrats were also partially culpable for the rise of German fascism and for World War II, whereas the Soviet Union and Red Army were to be credited for freeing Germany from Hitler's rule and setting the country back on its "antifascist" path.

Ulbricht's book traced "antifascism" of the German Communist Party from the Weimar era, through World War II and ultimately to the foundation of the GDR. In the early 1950s as Ulbricht and his allies consolidated the SED's power during what historians call the country's period of "Stalinization," they argued not only that they were continuing this "antifascist" tradition, but that they had successfully eliminated any remaining fascist tendencies from GDR. To continue the fight against Hitler and Nazism, argued Ulbricht and the SED, they need only to continue the fight against capitalism, and to show their own repudiation of Nazism, East German citizens need only to be loyal to their government. Once the SED had cemented its mastery of all facets of East German life, the party maintained that its own history of antifascism and the personnel purges of the early 1950s had decisively resolved any lingering questions related to anti-semitism, the Holocaust or the crimes of the

[80] Weber, *Geschichte der DDR*, 64.
[81] Walter Ulbricht, *Der Faschistische Deutsche Imperialismus (1933-1945)* (*Die Legende vom "detuschen Sozialismus"*), 4th. ed. (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1956), 13-30. Quoted in Herf, *Divided Memory*, 35.

Nazis and thus could be laid to rest.[82]

This use of history as an instrument of political legitimization and exculpation in the immediate postwar years arguably explains the GDR's overall willingness to engage history in relation to national identity, though to be sure this was a history colored by the SED's own, usually mendacious interpretations. Regardless, this supposed legacy of antifascism represented the cornerstone of the SED's attempt to construct a cohesive sense of GDR national identity as distinct from that of West Germany. As the country's capital, East Berlin represented the primary site of this construction, at the center of the government's discourse on East German identity. In relation to East Berlin, the appeal to history was enabled in part by the fact that the city's oldest and most historically significant areas were in Berlin's Soviet-occupied zone, specifically in the district of *Mitte*. This district represented the literal, geographic center of Berlin but was also its figurative center, as it contained the city's cultural and historical institutions on Museum Island, as well as the city's and country's political and economic districts along Unter den Linden and Wilhelmstraße. It is then no surprise that, in the late 1940s and early 50s as the reconstruction process began, the SED focused its efforts and resources on East Berlin in order to emphasize the fact that the city's—and therefore the country's—historic centers were located there, and thus to make the claim that the GDR was the more legitimate Germany.

This further explains why initial designs for Berlin's reconstruction in the GDR rejected the Modernist style, opting instead for the use of historically-derived architectural styles and alternative urban planning models. In place of CIAM's Athens Charter, for example, the GDR adopted the "Sixteen Principles of City Planning" ("*Sechszehn Grundsätze*

[82] Herf, *Divided Memory*, 110-1, 163. "Denazification" was also used as an excuse to put party-loyalists in positions of authority and to eliminate voices of opposition. (Weber, *Geschichte der DDR*, 84.)

des Städtebaus") based on Soviet planning principles.[83] These "Sixteen Principles" rejected the concept of zoning, of allowing increased car traffic in inner-city areas, and the notion of turning the modern metropolis into a "garden city."[84] Rather, these principles outlined a kind of "critical reconstruction" of the city, arguing, for example that, "the basis of urban planning, must be…the regard for the historic origins of the city's structure while at the same time correcting the mistakes of these past plans."[85] These principles described an overall "urban design" that would be "created from the individual and unique face of the city" and which was based on the "organic" development of the city and its "historic" urban structure.[86] The "Sixteen Principles" also gave sole power over urban planning and construction to the government, stipulating that, "[t]he determination for and validation of urban-image (*städtebildende*) factors is the exclusive province of the government."[87]

These principles directly influenced city planning in the East until about 1960, though aspects of the "Sixteen Principles" remained important beyond this time. In particular, the designs for the GDR's first series of reconstruction plans in the early 1950s, collectively known as the National Construction Program, were heavily based on these principles.[88] First announced in 1951, the NAP was connected to the GDR's first Five Year Plan (1950-55). The NAP included the construction of housing throughout the GDR, as well as that of sports halls, cultural centers, and entirely new urban developments such as Stalinstadt, "the first

[83] These "Sixteen Principles" were drafted by East German architects after a 1950 trip to the Soviet Union. For more on this visit, see Simone Hain, "Reise nach Moskau: Wie Deutsche 'Sozialistisch' Bauen Lernten," *Bauwelt* 83, no. 45 (1992): 2546-61.
[84] While parks or similar green spaces in the city were not completely verboten, as Principle #12 stated, "[i]t is impossible to transform the city into a garden...in the city one lives an urban life, outside the city one lives a rural life." ("Die Sechzehn Grundsätze des Städtebaues," in *Vom Deutschem Bauen: Rede und Aufsätze*, ed. Lothar Bolz (Berlin: Verlag der Nation, 1951), 49.)
[85] Simone Hain makes this argument in Hain, "Berlin Ost," 38.
[86] "Die Sechzehn Grundsätze des Städtebaues," 41, 45.
[87] "Die Sechzehn Grundsätze des Städtebaues," 39.
[88] Hain, "Berlin Ost," 37-8, 55; Joachim Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR* (Berlin: Reimer Verlag, 2000), 44.

socialist city in the GDR."[89] In East Berlin, the city designated the focus of the program, the first and most widely-publicized phase of the NAP commenced with the construction of a housing development northeast of the Mitte district along Stalinallee, called "Germany's first socialist street."[90]

Not only did the NAP aim to literally rebuild the GDR, it was yoked to the larger, government-led effort to establish a unique and autonomous East German identity. In 1952, the SED declared the beginning of a national "Build Up of Socialism" ("*Aufbau des Sozialismus*"), by which was meant a new program of economic, political and social change.[91] The term "*Aufbau*," was intentionally used to conjure up notions of not just construction (*bauen*), but of "building up" or "assembly," and thus reflected the political function of the both "Build Up of Socialism" program and the NAP. As part of this "build up," the nation's architects and indeed all its workers were charged with not only the literal but the figurative construction of the new (East) German nation. In literature and art for example, metaphors borrowed from architecture and building terminology were used to describe the effort to "build up" the "House of Socialism" ("*Haus des Sozialismus*")[92] and, as an extension of this metaphor, Stalin himself was dubbed "master builder of a new world" ("*Der Baumeister einen neuen Welt*") (Figure 8).

Especially in the contested city of Berlin, the GDR's National Construction Program and the "Build Up of Socialism" was also framed as a rejection of the West and its policies, and as a way to repudiate the division of both Germany and Berlin. Specifically, as the first

[89] Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 44-5, 93. Stalinallee had been Große Frankfurt Straße. In 1961 the street name was changed again to Karl-Marx-Allee.
[90] Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 85.
[91] Weber, *Geschichte der DDR*, 196-7.
[92] See Maria Brosig, "Das 'Haus des Sozialismus'. Ästhetische Stellungnahmen im literarischen Feld der DDR anhand von Architektur und Städtebau," in *Literarisches Feld DDR. Bedingungen und Formen literarischer Produktion in der DDR*, ed. Ute Wölfel (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2005), 75-88.

of the two Germanies to undertake a large-scale plan of reconstruction, the GDR argued that it was more concerned than the West with the current and future prosperity of Germany, and thus presented its National Construction Program as the first real effort in establishing a "peaceful and democratic Germany."[93] While the West, according to Ulbricht and the SED, "invested in militarism in preparation for the destruction of Germany,"[94] the NAP was a "lever for the expansion of the struggle over peace, the struggle over the unity of Germany," but also "the struggle over the unity of Berlin."[95] Banners adorning the building site at Stalinallee, for example, declared its construction "an effective weapon in the struggle over the unity of Berlin and all of Germany" (Figure 9) and, as the first major project of the NAP, the "cornerstone," not only of this effort but of the larger effort to "build up socialism" (Figure 10).[96]

As part of the national project of literal and figurative "*Aufbau*," the construction program also represented the first effort to use Berlin to create a sense of national identity. The first of the "Sixteen Principles of Urban Planning" had helped to establish the importance of the city in relation to national identity, stating that not rural areas, but the city in its "structure and architectural design" was synonymous with "the expression of political life and the national consciousness."[97] As the capital of the GDR, East Berlin was thus therefore at the top of this hierarchy, the primary and supreme site of this national, political expression and the center of GDR "homeland" or "*Heimat*-GDR." Because of this, the effort

[93] "Plan des Friedlichen Aufbaus: Rede des Stellvertreters des Ministerpräsidenten Walter Ulbricht vor der Volkskammer," 31 October 1951
[94] "Plan des Friedlichen Aufbaus: Rede des Stellvertreters des Ministerpräsidenten Walter Ulbricht vor der Volkskammer," 31 October 1951
[95] "Vorschlag für das Politbüro: Nationales Aufbauprogramm Berlin 1952" 4 December 1951, 1, Stiftung Archiv der Parteien und Massenorganisationen der DDR, Bundesarchiv Berlin (SAPMO-BArch) DY 30 IV 2/2/180.
[96] At the topping-out ceremony (*Richtfest*) for Stalinallee, the development was hailed as the "cornerstone of the construction of socialism" ("*Die Stalinallee ist der Grundstein des Aufbaus zum Sozialismus*").
[97] "Die Sechzehn Grundsätze des Städtebaues," 33.

to reconstruct Berlin as "a beautiful and dignified" city was a "national task" of national importance, since its construction was to be a "symbol of the life of the German nation" (of course implying a single German nation) (Figure 11).[98]

Furthermore, focusing on Berlin allowed the East German government to showcase the fact that Germany's historic capital as a whole was within its borders and that Berlin's historic and governmental districts were in the Eastern zone as well. To make this connection between the GDR and Germany's and Berlin's past even more clear, as part of the National Construction Program, Stalinallee and the housing located there would be connected in East Berlin's urban plan with the well-known symbol of the city as a whole, the Brandenburg Gate (*Brandenburger Tor*) via Berlin's historic Unter den Linden boulevard.[99] In addition, the renovation of some of the historic buildings lining Unter den Linden, including the Berlin State Opera House (*Berlin Staatsoper*; Georg Wenzeslaus von Knobelsdorff, 1741-3) and the *Neue Wache* (Karl Friedrich Schinkel, 1816-8) was also included as part of the NAP.[100]

The historic focus of the reconstruction plan in East Germany was carried through in the plans for the Stalinallee development, for which GDR architects designed buildings that were explicit in their reference to Berlin's architectural past. These designs featured references to the works of architects like Knobelsdorff (1699-1753), and Schinkel as well as

[98] "Plan des Friedlichen Aufbaus: Rede des Stellvertreters des Ministerpräsidenten Walter Ulbricht vor der Volkskammer," 31 October 1951. The banner over one of the construction sites at Stalinallee, for example, read "The newly-established German capital Berlin will become the symbol of the life of the German nation." ("*Die neuerstehende Deutsche Hauptstadt Berlin wird zum Symbol des Lebens der deutschen Nation*") See Figure 11.
[99] "Hauptstraßenzug Stalin-Allee—Brandenburger Tor," 14 August 1950, SAPMO-BArch DY 30 IV 2/2/104.
[100] For a full discussion of these renovation projects, see Paul Stangl, "Restoring Berlin's Unter den Linden: Ideology, World View, Space and Place" *Journal of Historical Geography* 32 (2006): 352-76. Though the GDR viewed certain aspects of Germany's past unfavorably, including the Prussian monarchy, the buildings on Unter den Linden which were built primarily by the Prussian monarchy were contextualized within the GDR's own interpretation of history. The *Neue Wache*, for example, became the "Monument to Victims of Fascism and of Both World Wars." (Stangl, "Restoring Berlin's Unter den Linden," 361-2.)

Andreas Schlüter (1664-1714).[101] The use of historic styles was viewed as an essential way of reestablishing Berlin's glory and thus ensuring a promising future, but was also designed to create the sense of a shared, national past. According to the SED's Central Committee in its 1951 reconstruction proposal:

> The new Berlin will grow out of the old Berlin. In the new buildings, a modern equivalent must be found for that which is valuable in our tradition, that which shows the highest cultural development of our people. We want a national, German style of architecture, one that is derived from the great masters of German building history ... Therefore, German architects will have successfully completed their duty only when they build in a style that is national, beautiful, and grand.[102]

The model for the reconstruction would come from the "national tradition," specifically drawn from architectural styles of "around 1800."[103] In addition it was argued that unlike Modernist buildings in which the use of decorative elements was avoided in order to maximize profit, these buildings would feature elaborate decorative schemes and thus be luxurious "dwelling palaces" (*Wohnpaläste*) for the working class.[104]

In choosing designs that were historic as opposed to Modernist, the buildings on Stalinallee and indeed all the buildings of the NAP would also, according to the Ulbricht and the SED, avoid the influence of American social and economic values. Modernist buildings were dubbed, "American boxes" and "Hitler-esque barracks,"[105] and the "formalism" of the "Bauhaus style" and of Scharoun's *Kollektivplan* was criticized for being too theoretical and

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[101] Werner Durth, Jörn Düwel, and Niels Gutschow, *Architektur und Städtebau der DDR*, 2 vols., vol. 1 (Frankfurt; New York: Campus, 1998), 270.
[102] "Wäre es schön? Wäre es schön! Vorschlag des Zentralkomitees der Sozialistischen Einheitspartei Deutschland für den Aufbau Berlins," *Neues Deutschland*, 25. November 1951, 1. Quoted in Hain, "Berlin Ost," 44. The SED was the equivalent in the DDR of the Communist Party in the USSR. Though not always the head of state, the First Secretary of the SED was always the *de facto* leader of the DDR.
[103] Hain, "Berlin Ost," 44. The interest in architecture from "around 1800" was probably due in large part to Paul Mebes' influential book *Um 1800* (*Around 1800*, 1908). See for example Stanford Anderson, "The Legacy of German Neoclassicism and Biedermeier: Behrens, Tessenow, Loos, and Mies," *Assemblage* 15 (August 1991), 67-8.
[104] Hain, "Berlin Ost," 44.
[105] Walter Ulbricht, "'Die Großbauten im Fünfjahrplan' (Rede auf dem III. Parteitag der SED)," *Neues Deutschland*, July 23, 1950. Quoted in Hain, "Berlin Ost," 37.

unconnected with regional styles or traditions.[106] Echoing the Nazi's criticism of Modernism, Ulbricht also maintained that these buildings were ultimately too international and "cosmopolitan," given that they could be built just as easily in "America as in Africa."[107] By building in styles that were specific to Germany's architectural history, the GDR would avoid becoming, as the Federal Republic had, "colonized" by the "imperialist" forces of the U.S.

The designs for the Stalinallee development were chosen by a competition, which was held in the summer of 1951 and resulted in five prizes being awarded to five separate designs. The final buildings were based on these five winning entries, though ultimately the architects were required to adjust their plans and designs in order to bring them further in line with Soviet building policy (Figure 12). The proportions of the buildings were modeled on Schinkel's Feilner House (1828), which had been destroyed during the war but had been located in the neighborhood of Kreuzberg (and thus in West Berlin). The Stalinallee buildings were faced with ceramic plates featuring pictorial motifs based on those created by Schlüter for the Royal Magazine (*Zeughaus*, 1694-1729) on Unter den Linden (Figure 13).[108] The plan for the development was not wholly new nor did it break from previous street patterns, but was based on existing streets and squares and featured a wide central boulevard (Stalinallee) and several "gate-squares" (*Torplätze*) such as Strausberger Platz and

[106] "Plan des Friedlichen Aufbaus: Rede des Stellvertreters des Ministerpräsidenten Walter Ulbricht vor der Volkskammer," 31 October 1951. Later in this speech, Ulbricht critiques this style's "uniformity," (*Gleichförmigkeit*) as well, a charge that would soon seem ironic given that the *Plattenbau* which would soon come to dominate the GDR's built environment and become a symbol of the country even after 1990 were and are similarly critiqued as "monotonous."

[107] "Plan des Friedlichen Aufbaus: Rede des Stellvertreters des Ministerpräsidenten Walter Ulbricht vor der Volkskammer," 31 October 1951. In the early 1950s, Ulbricht used the charge of "cosmopolitanism" to purge the SED and GDR of his critics. The term was similarly used by the Nazis to attack Jews, leftists or any other people or groups designated as enemies of the state. See "Purging 'Cosmopolitanism'" in Herf, *Divided Memory*, 106-61.

[108] Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 88, 89. Of course the scale of the buildings on Stalinallee were far greater than either the Feilner House or the Royal Magazine.

Frankfurter Tor (Figure 14).[109] The buildings constructed on Stalinallee were for the most part residential, comprised of relatively luxurious dwellings that featured central heating, telephone lines and interior bathrooms. However in addition to these apartments, the buildings also included shops, cafes, and restaurants as well as movie theaters, sports halls and other leisure and entertainment venues.[110]

The construction of the Stalinallee development was begun in early 1952 and was accompanied by a large-scale publicity campaign. Newspapers and magazines featured photos of the new construction juxtaposed with those of the bombed out buildings they replaced, for example, and bus tours took visitors from the Western zones to visit the new apartments. Residents of West Berlin, who were expressly invited to take part in the NAP, were encouraged to compare the new district with the still-destroyed neighborhoods of the West. The SED's newspaper, *Neues Deutschland*, was filled with photos of the building site especially those that featured workers, emphasizing their diversity. Such images helped to communicate the message that the effort was a collective and national one, supported by a wide variety of (East) Germans (Figure 15). Other publicity materials included posters which detailed the progress on the construction site, enumerating the amount of rubble removed and building materials used month by month, and large billboards where workers' brigades noted the fulfillment of their quotas (Figure 16).[111] The state film concern, DEFA (*Deutsche Aktiengesellschaft*), made films about the construction as well, for example the 1952 film *The New Dwelling* (*Die Neue Wohnung*) (Figure 17). Such images not only emphasized the collectivity of the East German political and economic system, but helped to connect physical construction with the construction of national identity and the GDR state.

[109] Hain, "Berlin Ost," 45, 46-7.
[110] Durth, Düwel, and Gutschow, *Architektur und Städtebau der DDR*, 287-8.
[111] Rogier, "The Monumentality of Rhetoric," 175-6.

The Stalinallee development was very successful at publicizing the GDR's commitment to Berlin and Germany's reconstruction, as well as providing much-needed housing to East Germans, at least at first. Indeed the initial success of Stalinallee was a source of great consternation in the West and was one reason political and cultural leaders in West Berlin decided to hold a building exhibition of their own. Despite or perhaps because of its success as a public relations tool, the buildings in the Stalinallee were universally derided by architects and intellectuals in the West who saw in the buildings the built expressions of an oppressive, dictatorial government. Critics claimed the buildings' monumentality was reminiscent of Nazi architecture, and that its use of historicized designs and highly decorative façades was hopelessly retrograde, dismissed as "confectionary-style" (*Zuckerbäckerstil*) architecture.[112] Regardless, whatever success the Stalinallee project and the larger National Construction Program enjoyed was very quickly undermined by the country's growing economic and social problems. On June 16, 1953, 300 workers from the Stalinallee site marched to the House of Ministers on Leipzigstraße, protesting continuing shortages of food and basic commodities, and demanding a reduction of the recently-raised work norms. Eventually tens of thousands of East Germans, in cities as well as rural areas, joined the mass demonstration. However, the uprising was quickly quashed on June 17 when Soviet troops supported by tanks broke up demonstrations throughout East Germany, ultimately leading to the deaths of fifty protestors.[113] What followed was the period of "Stalinization" during which Ulbricht and his followers ousted their critics, consolidated their power and increased their tight control over East German politics, economics and society.

Though conditions in the GDR improved somewhat in the later 1950s, continuing

[112] Gabi Dolff-Bonekämpfer and Franziska Schmidt, *Das Hansaviertel: Internationale Nachkriegsmoderne in Berlin* (Berlin: Verlag Bauwesen, 1999), 15; Ribbe, *Berlin 1945-2000*, 97.
[113] Weber, *Geschichte der DDR*, 219-21.

economic troubles meant that the prestige-project approach represented by the Stalinallee development could not be sustained in the long term. East Germany simply did not have the labor power or access to the raw materials that made this first NAP project possible. In his 1951 speech on the NAP, Ulbricht announced that the government would attempt to drastically raise building productivity and lower the cost of construction by 1955 through the use of standardized building methods and materials. His announcement indicated the path that the GDR building economy would slavishly follow for the next thirty-eight years, wherein limited resources and a perennial housing shortage resulted in construction policies that focused far more on quantity than quality. The effort to build as quickly and as cheaply as possible ultimately led to the construction of the thousands of the poorly built, high-rise concrete apartment buildings that are today the most familiar symbol of the former East Germany.

West Germany, the United States and the Construction of West Berlin

Unlike in the GDR, the postwar period in the Federal Republic and West Berlin was characterized by an extremely rapid economic recovery. As the so-called "Economic Miracle" ("*Wirtschaftswunder*") began to take hold in the early- to mid-1950s, the development of a strong sense of national identity with which West Germans positively identified also began to coalesce. In West Berlin, continuing uncertainty about the city's fate resulted in the effort to connect it not only politically, but also economically and socially with the most powerful of the three Western Allied forces, the United States. In terms of reconstruction, the style and approach of Modernism was in particular used in the reconstruction plans for West Berlin to secure a role for West Berlin within divided Germany as well as within the Western world as a whole. In 1957, West Berlin's International Building Exhibition or Interbau established the city's political and cultural relationship to the West

generally and the U.S. in particular and set the precedent for building in the city as well as for the way architecture was used to construction political identity in West Berlin.

Initially the plan for the postwar occupation of Germany advocated by the U.S. and other Western powers was focused, like the Soviet Union's, on dismantling the German industrial infrastructure with the goal of forever preventing the country from waging another war.[114] However, with Britain and France burdened by their own postwar reconstruction, the Western powers quickly realized that if they did not create an autonomous Germany, they would have to support the country out of their own national coffers. Thus, the reconstruction effort in the Western zones, led by the U.S. as it was the least devastated by the war, focused on rebuilding the economy in these zones, as well as restoring political order.[115] In addition as part of "denazification," the occupying forces in the Western zones of occupation used tactics drawn from the social science to overcome what was thought of as a national psychological disorder: the need to submit to dominant authority figures.

The goal of what American occupation forces called "re-education" was not only to eliminate any remaining traces of Nazi tendencies in German society, but to fundamentally change the German national character by encouraging Germans to adopt not only capitalist and democratic institutions, but also "the mentality of political fair play and economic cooperation."[116] To do this, the U.S. government looked to the fields of psychology and sociology for theories that could explain and cure what was called "group paranoia." In a book entitled *Is Germany Incurable?* (1943), psychiatrist Richard Brickner argued that

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[114] This policy was outlined in the Morgenthau Plan (1944), proposed by U.S. Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau but abandoned in spring 1945. (Williamson, *Germany from Defeat to Partition*, 4.)
[115] Manfred Görtemaker, *Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland: Von der Gründung bis zur Gegenwart* (Frankfurt: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 2004), 21-4; Williamson, *Germany from Defeat to Partition*, 3.
[116] Uta Gerhardt, "American Sociology and German Re-Education after World War II," in *Stunde Null: The End and the Beginning Fifty Years Ago*, ed. Geoffrey J. Giles (Washington, D.C.: German Historical Institute, 1997), 40.

Germany had to undergo the equivalent of group therapy, which was to be initiated from an "outside," unaffected space which he called "the clear":

> If the Germany group contains a sizable number of individuals, however unorganized and unaware of one another, whose emotional values are prevailingly non-paranoid, the outside world has a clear area at hand to work with and out from in treating the Germany group case.[117]

The victors, specifically the U.S., would help to identify the "clear" aspects of German culture and "enhance and nurture" them.[118] The economy, for example, was so designated, and thus its regeneration was, along with building civilian morale, seen as a fundamental part of creating and fostering democracy in Germany.

Once it was established, the "denazification" efforts of the government of the Federal Republic itself, led by Chancellor Konrad Adenauer (1876-1967), chose similarly to avoid direct confrontation with issues that stemmed from the country's Nazi legacy. Instead of bringing those suspected of collusion with the Hitler's regime to justice, Adenauer's regime focused on restitution for victims. The government felt this approach was necessary in order to maintain the country's fragile political and social stability that was important particularly in the context of the growing Cold War with the East.[119] As a result, though the U.S. and the Federal Republic took measures to remove former Nazis from positions of power in the new country, many of the issues related to *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* in West Germany were not dealt with until the 1960s.

One result of this approach to history and memory in the Federal Republic was that, in the absence of a past which had been "worked through," the emerging sense of West German national identity was based on outside sources. While in the GDR, East Germans

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[117] Richard Brickner, *Is Germany Incurable?* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippencott, Co., 1943), 304-5. Quoted in Gerhardt, "American Sociology and German Re-Education," 46.
[118] Gerhardt, "American Sociology and German Re-Education," 44, 49.
[119] Herf, *Divided Memory*, 209.

were loathe to identify with the Soviet Union given their brutal treatment at the hands of the Red Army, in the Federal Republic, West Germans eagerly adopted Western, specifically U.S.-based models of consumption and behavior. From 1945, West Germany actively aligned itself politically, socially, and culturally with the United States in an attempt to forge a "new" national identity which would avoid the unpleasant and shameful past.[120] This emulation of American values, sometimes called "Coca-Colonization," was encouraged by the Adenauer government, which stressed continuing stability and economic success through "normalization," a synonym for "Westernization," and the Federal Republic's integration with the U.S. and Western Europe.[121] In West Berlin especially, government leaders were eager to align the city with the U.S. and the political, economic and military power it represented. Because it was not an official part of the Federal Republic, West Berlin depended on the Western Allied forces, particularly the U.S. for its continued existence as an island of the West inside the SBZ and later East Germany. As a result, the stakes for West Berlin and for the literal and figurative reconstruction of the city were arguably higher than for East Berlin. Cut off from the rest of West Germany, the city had to prove it could survive as a satellite, and was thus deserving of the political and economic support from West Germany and the U.S. In their first major efforts to rebuild the city, West Berlin's architects and planners embraced Modernism as the style that could best communicate the city's political, and thus cultural identity.

Though plans for a major reconstruction project in West Berlin's Hansa district had

[120] Konrad Jarausch, "1945 and the Continuities of German History: Reflections on Memory, Historiography and Politics," in *Stunde Null: The End and the Beginning Fifty Years Ago*, ed. Geoffrey J. Giles (Washington, D.C.: German Historical Institute, 1997), 19.
[121] Anthony Glees, *Reinventing Germany: German Political Development since 1945* (Oxford; Washington, D.C.: Berg, 1996), xxii. Glees moreover points out that for Adenauer, "German unification was desirable only in conjunction with its Western integration" (Glees, *Reinventing Germany*, xxiv-xxv.) See also Jeff R. Schutts "Born Again in the Gospel of Refreshment? Coca-Colonization and the Re-Making of German Identity," in *Consuming Germany in the Cold War*, David Crew ed. (New York: Berg, 2003), 121-150.

been underway since 1951, in 1953 these plans were expanded to included a large-scale and very public building exhibition. Called the International Building Exhibition (*Internationale Bauausstellung*) or Interbau, its goal was not only to create housing in one of the city's most devastated neighborhoods, but also to communicate West Berlin's new urban identity through a series of trade exhibitions, cultural events and international congresses. The Hansa district provided an ideal location for the focus of the exhibition since the neighborhood had sustained particularly heavy damage during the war and was also located very near the Eastern sector, visible from passing S-bahn trains.[122]

As in the GDR, the reconstruction of Germany's former capital was viewed in the West as the first step towards the country's eventual reunification and as an explicitly political act.[123] However rather than focusing on Germany's history and (West) Berlin's place within it, Interbau would highlight the preeminence of both the "technology and creative power of the free world," and thus the capability of the Western world generally to reconstruct and reunify Berlin and Germany.[124] To this end, Interbau featured finished buildings, but also buildings at various stages of construction so as to foreground "questions of building...from design to construction to financing." Interbau was also supposed to stand as "an example of international collegial collaboration," and thus to provide proof of the solidarity of the nations of the "free world" in their support for West Berlin.[125] As such, the

[122] Rogier, "The Monumentality of Rhetoric," 178.
[123] "Internationale Bauausstellung Berlin 1956, Darstellung der Ausstellungsabsicht," 1954, 4, BArch B 134/2252, "Mitteilung Nr. 49 des Präsidenten des Abgeordnetenhauses von Berlin," 1957, 1, BArch B 134/2252. Interbau was originally scheduled for 1956 but was pushed back due to difficulties in securing financing. A discussion of these problems is included in the 1961 federal audit of Interbau: "Prüfungsmitteilungen des Bundesrechnungshofes und des Landesrechnungshofes von Berlin über Einsatz und Verwendung der öffentlichen Mittel beim dem Wiederaufbau des Hansaviertels in Berlin," 10 August 1961, 3, BArch B 134/10417.
[124] "Internationale Bauausstellung Berlin 1956, Darstellung der Ausstellungsabsicht," 1954, 4, BArch B 134/2252.
[125] "Mitteilung Nr. 49 des Präsidenten des Abgeordnetenhauses von Berlin," 1957, 1, BArch B 134/2252.

buildings constructed in the Hansa district were designed by some of the so-called International Style's most prestigious members including Alvar Aalto, Oscar Niemeyer and Le Corbusier (Figure 18).[126] The ground plan for the Hansa quarter development, designed by Gerhard Jobst and Willy Kreuer, implemented Modernist principles by including large amounts of open green space, providing large, centrally-located roadways for auto traffic and avoiding any reference to the districts previous layout.

The choice of the Modernist approach was not surprising, first because of its associations with all that was radically "new" and second because its "international" connotations helped communicate the fact that West Berlin enjoyed the support of other countries.[127] Moreover, because "internationalism" and the related term "cosmopolitanism" had been decried by the Nazis as qualities associated with the decadence of modernity and urban life, the modern style, which had been likewise critiqued, was additionally attractive in the postwar period. Indeed the Modernist style was very useful in terms of the effort to create a simultaneously "new" and "historic" Berlin. Specifically, Modernism functioned to connect Interbau, and by extension West Berlin, with both the history of Modern architecture's development in Germany prior to World War II and its postwar development in the United States while at the same time eliding the Nazi period. Modernism was in this way a stylistic lynchpin between the innovators of the past and the present that furthermore suggested an innovative, promising future for West Berlin and West Germany, a future which was tied economically as well as culturally to the U.S.

In addition to the buildings in the Hansa district, a number of related events and

[126] The buildings of Interbau were designed primarily by architects who were not widely known, most of whom were from Germany. (Rogier, "The Monumentality of Rhetoric," 181.)
[127] This goal was, of course, achieved by the presence of national pavilions as well. Furthermore, this notion of "internationalism" was associated with the newly-formed U.N., the Modernist headquarters for which had recently been constructed such as(New York; Wallace Harrison and Max Abramovitz, 1947-50).

exhibitions both in this area and throughout West Berlin would further explore issues related to planning and building in the modern city.[128] Visitors to Interbau could visit each building site by taking a specially-built tram through the main exhibition area, or by riding a funicular railway over the Hansa district to get a bird's eye view of the new construction (Figure 19). National pavilions showcased the building economies and built environments of countries from all over the world, such as Cuba and Brazil. In the Tiergarten, the exhibition "The City of Tomorrow" ("*Die Stadt von Morgen*") presented contemporary theories of urban planning and architecture, suggesting the ways in which these theories along with modern technology could make the city of the future an attainable reality (Figure 20).[129] The U.S. was represented at Interbau more than any other single country, contributing the only nationally-sponsored building, the Berlin Congress Hall (Hugh Stubbins, 1956-7), as well as an apartment building designed by Walter Gropius and The Architect's Collective (TAC).[130] The U.S. sponsored a number of exhibitions as well, including "The New Face of the American City" and "American Buildings in Foreign Countries," both held in the *Amerika-Haus*, and a photo exhibit on "aspects of life in America" held in the Congress Hall. The U.S. was also represented at the German Industrial Exhibition (*Deutsche Indutrieausstellung*), which in its 1957 iteration was renamed the Interbau Industrial Exhibition (*Interbau Industrieausstellung*) so as to explicitly connect the annual event with that year's building exhibition. At the industrial exhibition, in addition to a trade show where various companies showcased building materials and consumer products, the U.S. mounted an exhibit showcasing

[128] "Internationale Bauausstellung Berlin 1956, Darstellung der Ausstellungsabsicht," 1954, 3; BArch B 134/2252. There was a central exhibition area for Interbau, but two buildings, Le Corbusier's Unité d'habitation, Berlin Type and Hugh Stubbins' Berlin Congress Hall, were outside the main exhibition area. Events were also held at the exhibition area near the Berlin Radio Tower.
[129] "Thematische Schau 'Die Stadt von Morgen'," 25 June 1956, Larch Berlin B Rep 009/38.
[130] Though Gropius was, of course, German by birth, he had emigrated to the U.S. and was a professor at Harvard University.

American building technologies entitled "America Builds" at the Marshall House.[131]

Like the buildings in the Hansa district, the exhibitions associated with Interbau represented the central tenets of Modernism as espoused by the CIAM. Many of the exhibition spaces built for Interbau, for example national pavilions like Venezuela's, were constructed in the Modernist style (Figure 21). In the "City of Tomorrow" exhibition, the planning principles, like those outlined Charter of Athens, were presented as the antidote to the problems of the "city of yesterday and today," for example in its "clustering of the unrelated spaces of dwelling and working" (i.e., lack of zoning) and its lack of "technological, economic and transportation infrastructure."[132] In U.S. exhibitions, examples of American Modernism, such as Skidmore, Owings and Merrill's Lake Meadows development in Chicago and Lever House (New York; Gordon Bunshaft, 1951-2) were featured as examples of cutting-edge architecture and urban planning.

The entertainment venues, cultural exhibitions and wide variety of other events and celebrations associated with the Interbau were not mere supplements to its permanent structures, but rather were an integral part of the exhibition as a whole, actively guiding the visitors' understanding and reception of the rebuilt Hansa district. Furthermore through Interbau, the Modern style was presented not only in the context of the newly-constructed buildings, but as part of larger environments that were often immersive and illusionistic. At the "America Builds" exhibition, for example, a 360° panorama recreated the experience of looking off the top of a Manhattan skyscraper, replete with recorded sounds of New York City traffic and flickering lights. The use of displays like these focused viewers' attention on the *experience* of the Modernist city of the future, rather than on the economic forces that

[131] Press Release: "Der Beitrag der Vereinigten Staaten vom Amerika zur Interbau," 17 May 1957; LArch B Rep 009/42.
[132] "Thematische Schau 'Die Stadt von Morgen'," 25 June 1956, LArch B Rep 009/38.

created it. In this way, the definition of "Modernism" was extended beyond a specific architectural style or set of styles, to an overall lifestyle that was made to seem aesthetically appealing, but also inevitable. As an extension of the system of display that made up Interbau, the buildings in the Hansa district became part of a socio-economic order that was specifically tied to the Western world and especially to the U.S.

The exhibitions and displays at Interbau also connected the Modernist vision of West Berlin's future with larger ideas such as freedom, democracy and humanist values. In this way, Interbau can be considered an extension of the postwar "reeducation" process initiated by the U.S. In this case, Modernism became the "clear" from which a new and untainted vision of West Berlin was created and which, through its psychological and emotive impact, could positively influence West Berliners' self-conception and worldview, shaping them into ideal participants in a free-market capitalist democracy. Of course the contributions the U.S. made to Interbau were part of larger battery of Cold War propaganda efforts, which in the 1950s focused on winning individuals' "hearts and minds" through displays at cultural fairs and trade exhibitions. Both the U.S., in its attempt to "embed" West Berlin with American political, economic and cultural values, and in West Berlin's concurrent attempt to cast itself as a Western, cosmopolitan metropolis, Modernism was transformed into a visual symbol that stood for grand and unassailable ideals like freedom and liberty.[133]

This use of symbols to engineer unanimity of public opinion was first described by the influential American writer and journalist Walter Lippmann in his 1922 book *Public Opinion*:

> When political parties or newspapers declare for Americanism, Progressivism, Law and Order, Justice, Humanity, they hope to amalgamate the emotion of

[133] Haddow, *Pavilions of Plenty*, 5, 65; Walter L. Hixson, *Parting the Curtain: Propaganda, Culture, and the Cold War, 1945-1961*, 1st ed. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), 22, 58.

> conflicting factions which would surely divide, if, instead of these symbols, they were invited to discuss a specific program. For when a coalition around the symbol has been effected, feeling flows toward conformity under that symbol rather than toward critical scrutiny of the measures... [H]e who captures the symbols by which public feeling is for the moment contained, controls by that much the approaches to public policy.[134]

This public relations technique and others, many of which had been developed to drum up Americans' support for World War I, were increasingly used in the post-World War II era to wage the Cold War but also in advertising to sell consumer products.[135] In the context of Interbau, the use of images and of symbols proved extremely successful in connecting the specific policies of the U.S., with national identity in West Germany and, of course, West Berlin. Indeed, throughout the Cold War such images and symbols would directly and indirectly influence the effort to construct a democratic, Western-oriented urban identity for West Berlin.

Interbau was extremely successful in terms of establishing the legitimacy and prestige of West Berlin as well as its public image as a Western-oriented city. Photos of the rebuilt Hansa quarter visually communicated a powerful message of renewal and the abandonment of the forms and ideals of the past in favor of a promising and progressive future. This message was an important and central one considering Germany's recent history and status as world pariah. German visitors to Interbau remarked that the international tenor of the exhibition made them feel as if West Berlin West Germany were once again an accepted and valued members of the world community. For example, in her 1999 book which traces the history of the exhibition, architectural historian Gabi Dolff-Bonekämpfer quotes Peter

[134] Walter Lippmann, *Public Opinon* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1922), 206-7.
[135] Lippmann worked with the Creel Committee on Public Information, which was founded in 1917 to generate public support for World War I and was dissolved in 1919 following the war. Later, it served as the precursor of the U.S. Information Agency, founded in 1953. Lippmann's influence on the field of public relations, along with that of the equally influential Edward Bernays, has been closely studied by Stuart Ewen in his books *The Captains of Consciousness: Advertising and the Social Roots of Consumer Culture* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1976; reprint Basic Books, 2001) and *PR!: A Social History of Spin* (New York: Basic Books, 1996).

Conradi, a German architect and public official who visited Interbau as a student: "We had the feeling of once again belonging, as if Germans were no longer outcasts, but participants in the creation of a new, improved world."[136] In the following years, Modernism was used in the construction of a number of commissions in West Berlin, including the IBM Building (Rolf Gutbrod and Bernhard Binder, 1960-1) on Ernst-Reuter-Platz, the Europa Center (Helmut Hentrich and Hubert Petschnigg, 1963-5) on Breitschiedplatz and housing developments outside the city such as *Gropiusstadt* (begun 1962).

However, as many critics noted, Interbau for the most part did not achieve its goals of creating a "model solution" to the problems of urban planning and design, nor were the experimental building techniques employed in the construction of the buildings in the Hansa district exportable as "models of modern urban construction."[137] The reason for this was primarily because the cost of construction had proved inordinately expensive. What drove the cost of Interbau up, as a federal audit showed, was first the fact that construction firms could not use standard materials or techniques since many of the buildings' designs and plans were unique and untried. Second, the buildings themselves featured expensive amenities such as trash chutes, automatic washing machines and refrigerators, and built-in kitchens. Finally, rents in the buildings had been subsidized to keep them low, making it difficult to recoup construction costs.[138] The press criticized the exhibition in part because it had resulted in no workable models for use in other parts of West Germany, but also because of the large

[136] Dolff-Bonekämpfer and Schmidt, *Das Hansaviertel*, 41.
[137] Letter to "participating architects" from the Berlin Senator for the Construction and Dwelling Industry (*Bau- und Wohnungswesen*), listing the "goals" of Interbau, 19 May 1955, BArch B 134/2252.
[138] "Prüfungsmitteilungen des Bundesrechnungshofes und des Landesrechnungshofes von Berlin über Einsatz und Verwendung der öffentlichen Mittel beim dem Wiederaufbau des Hansaviertels in Berlin," 10 August 1961, 3, BArch B 134/10417.

amount of public monies used to finance Interbau.[139]

In retrospect it is easy to believe that Interbau was more a public relations effort than it was an attempt to address issues of architecture and urban planning. And if this is true, then one can certainly conclude that Interbau achieved its goals. The exhibition successfully communicated messages of inclusion and acceptance in contrast to the Stalinallee development in East Berlin, which ultimately communicated a message of exclusion and government hegemony. In part because of Interbau's success, it set the standard for how West Berlin's political affiliations and urban identity were communicated through its built environment throughout the period of Berlin's division. The approach of yoking specific architectural styles and/or approaches to appealing though vaguely-defined ideals, and the focus on individual, government-subsidized "presige projects" would characterize many of the most widely publicized building projects executed in West Berlin, including the International Building Exhibition of 1987. In contrast in East Berlin, the ultimate failure of Stalinallee and the continuing economic problems in the GDR meant that in East Berlin and East Germany, new solutions and approaches would have to be devised.

Though the construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961 would deepen the divide between the two halves of the city, their fates would be no less entwined. As in the pre-Wall period, while each side attempted to create an urban image it claimed was independent of the other, both ultimately depended on the other in the constructing its own identity. Moroever, the way East and West framed their part of the city as diametrically opposed to the other would have

[139] The *Tagesspiegel* newspaper in Berlin gave an overview of newspaper articles published in West Germany that critiqued Interbau: "Modellfall oder Ausstellungsstück?: Das Hansaviertel im Urteil der deutschprachigen Presse," *Tagesspiegel* (3 November 1957), Press Clipping, BArch B 134/10417. The 1961 federal audit showed that 77% of Interbau's financing was comprised of public monies. ("Prüfungsmitteilungen des Bundesrechnungshofes und des Landesrechnungshofes von Berlin über Einsatz und Verwendung der öffentlichen Mittel beim dem Wiederaufbau des Hansaviertels in Berlin," 10 August 1961, 14, BArch B 134/10417.)

a profound impact on the development of Berlin's urban character and the way in which cultural meaning was constructed once the Berlin Wall was a reality.

CHAPTER 2: DIVISION TO DÉTENTE: 1961-1971

The Construction of the Berlin Wall

On August 13, 1961 at 1:11am, the East German government closed the border between East and West Berlin, halting cars and trams in their tracks, and sealing off the Western sectors of the city with barbed wire. Though the acrimony between East and West Germany and between the Western and Eastern occupation powers, had been growing since the end of World War II, the closing of the border was virtually unforeseen by the citizens of both East and West and certainly caught Western governments by surprise (Figure 22).[1]

The construction of the Berlin Wall brought to a head the series of events set in motion by Nikita Khrushchev's November 1958 ultimatum to the West, in which he demanded that West Berlin be made a demilitarized "free city," with access to it controlled by the GDR. In putting pressure on the situation in Berlin, Khrushchev knew that he was striking the West at its Achilles heel.[2] The Western powers had little political or military leverage to exert in a city that was surrounded on all sides by the Eastern zone of occupation, and the formal division of Germany would seem to nullify the Yalta Agreement, which had provided the West's legal rights to govern the city.[3] At the same time, the city's symbolic role as an outpost of western culture and its defiance throughout the 1947-48 blockade imposed

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[1] Thomas Flemming and Hagen Koch, *Die Berliner Mauer: Geschichte eines Politischen Bauwerks* (Berlin: Be.bra Verlag, 1999), 6-7. From 1961-64, West Berliners were not allowed to travel to East Berlin or any part of the GDR. After 1964, they were allowed to visit relatives in East Berlin up to five times per year. Only East Germans past the age of retirement were permitted to visit West Berlin and West Germany. (Ribbe, *Berlin 1945-2000*, 135-6.)

[2] He referred to the city rather memorably as "the testicles of the West": "When I yank," said Khrushchev, "they scream." (Quoted in William Taubman, *Khrushchev: The Man and his Era* (London: The Free Press, 2003), 407.)

[3] Mike Dennis, *The Rise and Fall of the German Democratic Republic, 1945-1990* (Harlow, England; New York: Longman, 2000), 93-4; Freedman, "Berlin and the Cold War," 6.

by Stalin had made it crucial for the West that West Berlin remain in its control.[4]

Khrushchev hoped that in order to protect access to West Berlin, the West would be forced to recognize and negotiate with the GDR and thus open East Germany up to the rest of the world, despite the West German Hallstein Doctrine. This doctrine, which had guided the Federal Republic's foreign policy since 1955, stipulated that the Federal Republic would cut off diplomatic relations with any country that recognized the German Democratic Republic. The implication was, of course, that there was only one "true" Germany and that consequently, other countries must choose between having diplomatic relations with one Germany or the other, but not both. Largely because of the Federal Republic's economic success, most countries that were not already members of NATO or the Warsaw Pact chose to recognize West rather than East Germany. As a result, the Hallstein Doctrine was very effective in isolating the GDR politically as well as economically throughout the 1950s and early 60s.[5]

Solving the "Berlin problem" would benefit East Germany in other ways as well, since the city's open borders were presenting the country with a variety of difficulties. First and foremost, Berlin remained the gateway to the West for the tens of thousands of East Germans. This mass exodus had been occurring since the end of the war, but by the late 1950s the emigration of GDR citizens was escalating quickly. In 1959, 143,917 left for the West while by 1960 this number had risen to 199,188; in July 1961 alone, 30,000 emigrated to West Germany via West Berlin. In total, East Germany had lost 2.6 million people since 1949. Compounding the problem was the fact that most of those leaving were young and of

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[4] Jill Kastner, "The Berlin Crisis and the FRG, 1958-62," in *The Berlin Wall Crisis: Perspectives on Cold War Alliances*, ed. John P. S. Gearson and Kori N. Schake (Basingstoke, Hampshire; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 126.

[5] William Glenn Gray, *Germany's Cold War: The Global Campaign to Isolate East Germany, 1949-1969* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 3, 5.

the educated and professional classes, leaving East Germany with an increasingly aged and unskilled population.[6] Finally, as the "display window of the West" (*Schaufenster des Westens*), West Berlin provided East Germans with a constant, very visible reminder of the success and prestige of the Federal Republic, a virtual advertisement for emigration.[7]

In July 1961 at a summit in Vienna, John F. Kennedy responded to Khrushchev's ultimatum by declaring that the West would continue to defend its rights in West Berlin, and would resort to force to do so, even use nuclear weapons, if necessary.[8] Though Khrushchev had hoped for a diplomatic resolution to the problem of Berlin, the intractable position of the West made this seem unlikely. In the meantime, Walter Ulbricht and the SED had for eight years been advocating border closure as a solution. The Soviets had initially resisted this measure as too drastic and sure to garner public protest, thereby undermining what little legitimacy the GDR regime had. However by the summer of 1961, the rate at which East German citizens were leaving their country had reached such a level that the Soviet Union became convinced that Ulbricht's plan was the only way to solve the problem without inciting a third world war.[9]

On the morning of August 13 when the news of the border closure in Berlin finally reached Bonn and Washington, D.C., the initial reaction was inaction. Because the GDR had not actually invaded West Berlin and because they had not strictly speaking violated any postwar agreements, the U.S. felt it could not respond with force. Moreover, the Bay of Pigs

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[6] Fifty percent of East German émigrés were under 25 years old. (Weber, *Geschichte der DDR*, 292, 295.)
[7] Hope Harrison, "The German Democratic Republic, the Soviet Union and the Berlin Wall Crisis," in *The Berlin Wall Crisis: Perspectives on Cold War Alliances*, ed. John P. S. Gearson and Kori N. Schake (Basingstoke, Hampshire; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 98-9. Another point of contention, in terms of Berlin's open borders, related to the East's claim that the West was using West Berlin as a launching point for espionage activities. To be sure, the East used divided Berlin in this way as well, but the West had an obvious tactical advantage in this regard.
[8] Mike Dennis, *The Rise and Fall of the German Democratic Republic, 1945-1990* (Harlow, England; New York: Longman, 2000), 93.
[9] Harrison, "The German Democratic Republic, the Soviet Union and the Berlin Wall Crisis," 96-7.

debacle was still a fresh memory and thus the U.S. along with other Western countries was unwilling to put itself in the position of either appearing weak by acquiescing to Soviet or East German demands, or embarking on a course that might lead to nuclear war.[10] For his part, West German Chancellor Adenauer felt that he could not act decisively without specific instructions from the Western Allies, since it was they and not he who had jurisdiction over West Berlin. Most of all, the Western governments did not feel that West Berlin was truly threatened; neither Adenauer, Kennedy nor French president Charles de Gaulle were at all convinced that Khrushchev would go to war over Berlin. On the morning of August 13 Adenauer issued a rebuke of the East's actions but outside of official words of protest, little else was done.[11]

While the U.S., West Germany and their allies were convinced that West Berlin was more or less safe, West Berliners were not as certain, and understandably so. Especially after Kennedy's strong show of support just a few weeks prior in Vienna, West Berliners, including Mayor Willy Brandt, were shocked and dismayed by the West's lack of response to the border closing. Finally on August 19, U.S. Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson visited the city along with Gen. Lucius D. Clay who because of his role in the 1948-9 airlift was a beloved figure in West Berlin. Greeted by ecstatic, thronging crowds this visit combined with an increased military presence did much to repair the damaged relations between West Berlin and the Western allies though in many ways West Berliner's confidence in their own security was not fully restored until the 1970s.[12]

Most historians agree that, although the closing of the border and the construction of

[10] Kastner, "The Berlin Crisis and the FRG, 1958-62," 138.
[11] Flemming and Koch, *Die Berliner Mauer: Geschichte eines Politischen Bauwerks*, 11.
[12] On August 16, the headline of West Berlin's *Bild* newspaper read "The West does NOTHING!" ("Das Westen tut NICHTS!"). (Flemming and Koch, *Die Berliner Mauer: Geschichte eines Politischen Bauwerks*, 11-2.)

the Berlin Wall seemed at the time like a heightening of tensions between the East and West, it was in fact the beginning of a period of détente.[13] Essentially both East and West provided their own answer to the so-called "Berlin Question": the East in its closing of the border and the West in its willingness to accept a divided Berlin (and Germany). And in providing an answer to the Berlin Question, however awkward or complicated, the question was at least temporarily laid to rest. In 1962, the Cuban Missile Crisis provided the U.S., the Soviet Union and their allies with a reason to look to diplomatic rather than military solutions for the Cold War conflict, leading to a period of decline in East-West tensions.[14]

The Berlin Wall and Urban Identity

The construction of the Berlin Wall marked a new phase in the division of Germany and Berlin. In fact, while the division of both is often thought of in terms of a single, decisive event, the construction of the Berlin Wall, it is more accurate to think in terms of a series of different kinds of divisions.[15] The first of these was geographic, as Germany and Berlin were partitioned into four zones of occupation in 1945 following the defeat of the Nazi regime. This geographic division was, however, primarily just that: though occupied by forces representing different national powers, these four zones were not initially considered by their occupiers or citizens as politically, economically or culturally distinct from one another.[16] Moreover, decisions that affected the country or city as a whole were subject to the

[13] Freedman, "Berlin and the Cold War," 1-2.
[14] Dennis, *The Rise and Fall of the German Democratic Republic*, 94; Glees, *Reinventing Germany*, 118.
[15] Indeed, the various divisions, (economic, political, geographic) overlap and are in some ways difficult to isolate. For example, in January 1947 the US, UK, and French zones of occupation joined together to create a "Bizone," which was considered an economic rather than political entity. Yet it was these very zones that would in 1949 become the Federal Republic of Germany. (Williamson, *Germany from Defeat to Partition*, 19-20.)
[16] The "demarcation line" between Germany's and Berlin's Soviet and Western zones of occupation did not become a "border" until 1952 when East Germany with the help of the Soviets erected barbed wire and began controlling and to some degree restricting movement between zones. Until 1961, the border between East and West Berlin was much more easily traversed than the border between East and West Germany proper. (Hope M. Harrison, *Driving the Soviets Up the Wall: Soviet-East German Relations, 1953-1961*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), 20.)

leadership of the Allied Control Council, thus creating some kind of unity among the various Allied forces.

Though the country's (and city's) political division would not occur until the 1949 establishment of West and East Germany, the Yalta Agreement had already sown the seeds of this division. The Agreement failed to outline any uniform reparations policy—a major point of contention between the Soviets and the other three powers—and gave principal authority in each zone of occupation to that zone's commander-in-chief. It was this autonomy that eventually led to Germany's and Berlin's economic and political split, as the eastern and western zones of occupation were essentially led down different postwar reconstruction paths.[17] Despite this widening gulf between the goals of the East and West and even after 1949 founding of East and West Germany, some hoped the country would be reunified in the "near" future. Others however, were not so optimistic. Adenauer, for example, expected to wait a long time before seeing unification come to pass while Walter Ulbricht actively worked against it.[18] Regardless, most assumed that even if the country remained divided the division of Berlin could not be maintained. The August 13, 1961 closing of the border and subsequent construction of the Berlin Wall proved otherwise.

It was at this point, in 1961, that the country's and city's political, economic and geographic divisions were complete. With these in place, the cultural division already underway gathered steam. This division, encouraged by the governments of the two competing "Germanies," was fostered by the Wall's construction and the sharply diminished contact between the two nations that resulted. This division is still felt today and indeed some

[17] Williamson, *Germany from Defeat to Partition*, 8.
[18] In fact, historians remain divided as to whether Ulbricht did or did not desire reunification of Germany. (See for example, Dennis, *The Rise and Fall of the German Democratic Republic*, 119.) There is similar controversy as to whether or not Stalin wanted a unified Germany. (Grieder, *The East German Leadership*, 12.)

would argue that the "alienation" between East and West Germans was already established by the early 1970s. By the time the border was re-opened in 1989, years of separate political, economic and cultural development had made each country essentially a foreign one to the other. Despite having a shared language, cultural heritage and history, East and West Germans thought of themselves as having fundamentally different nationalities.[19]

Indeed the ambiguity regarding Berlin's status, political and otherwise, would become an important factor in terms of identity construction in both East and West Berlin throughout the existence of both. First, in order to counteract the uncertainty created by the Wall's construction and to alleviate the international tensions it stoked, the ruling regimes of East and West Berlin attempted to construct more concrete notions of identity. Second, not only did the anxiety created by the border closure encourage the search for new means of identification, the very presence of the Wall made it easier to construct such images. This was in part because, in creating two distinct, physical entities, the Wall made it easier to create two, distinct *cultural* entities or places.[20] As cultural geographer Yi-Fu Tuan notes in his book on human geography, *Space and Place*, visibility is a key way of establishing a sense of place. Place, he argues, can be made visible when "rivalry or conflict" pits one place against another and also when boundaries delimit physical space, making it more knowable, but also more visible. In relation to nation-states, Tuan writes, "[v]isible limits to a nation's sovereignty, such as a row of hills or a stretch of river, support the sense of the nation as a place." Similarly, the Berlin Wall made West and East Berlin definitive places in a way they

[19] Glees, *Reinventing Germany*, xxiv-xxv; Gray, *Germany's Cold War*, 6.
[20] For a discussion of the definition of the term "place" see the Introduction.

had not been before, completing Berlin's transformation from a group of zones, to two, separate cities.[21]

The Wall affected identity construction in Berlin in other ways as well. Though it may have eased political tensions in the long term, the border closure also raised the stakes in terms of Berlin's role in the Cold War. While Berlin had since the end of World War II been the symbolic and literal frontier between East and West, the Wall heightened its symbolic importance by formalizing Berlin's division and thus its place at the center of the Cold War. Like the country as a whole, Berlin would be neither wholly "Western" nor "Eastern," politically or otherwise, nor would it be neutral; the conflict and therefore division would end only with the victory of either East or West. Thus, 1961 marks a change in the way East versus West Berlin identity was understood and to what ends it was constructed: it is at this point that the divided city truly became a microcosm of the Cold War as a whole.

Its symbolic importance was such that "the Wall" soon came to refer not just to a physical structure, but also a figurative concept. As a result of this, the Berlin Wall made the city even more important as a staging ground for competing identities, dividing as it did not only Berlin, but the world as well: into East and West, but also into socialist/communist and democratic/capitalist. So definitive was the Wall both physically and as a visual symbol, that it became difficult to see the Cold War conflict in any terms other than black and white. Of course this was by design, as Eastern and Western powers encouraged people to think in terms of a choice: one or the other, not both. This choice was crystallized in divided Berlin where there existed what amounted to two alternate versions of a single city.[22] Indeed, the

[21] Tuan, *Space and Place*, 178.
[22] Lawrence Freedman makes this point when he remarks in his essay "Berlin and the Cold War" that the GDR's tactics of intimidation were made more difficult in pre-Wall Berlin because of the "semblance of choice" offered by the accessability of East and West Berlin. (Freedman, "Berlin and the Cold War," 5.)

notion of either/or would influence identity construction in East and West Berlin, and by extension in East and West Germany, and would influence the way in which the built environment was used to construct such identities: East and West were framed as the opposite, politically and aesthetically, of one another.

In his book *The Ghosts of Berlin*, historian Brian Ladd makes a similar point, arguing that the Wall united Germans even as it divided them and moreover became a way of understanding the German national character, dividing the population into "good" versus "bad" Germans but also "us" versus "them":

> ...the very existence of the Wall served to displace any anxieties about German identity onto it. It was "a zipper," observed the East Berlin writer Lutz Rathenow, linking Germans even as it divided them. The separation enforced by the Wall made it easy to explain away any apparent disunity among Germans and to render harmless the whole idea of German identity. This is the point made recently by the West Berlin writer Peter Schneider: "it was the Wall alone that preserved the illusion that the Wall was the only thing separating the Germans."[23]

The Wall eventually became the confirmation of a fundamental difference between East and West Germans at the same time that it explained this difference.[24] Indeed even after it was demolished, the Wall remained an influence on East versus West identity construction, evidenced by, for example, the concept of "the Wall in the head" (*Die Mauer im Kopf*), which refers to the continued cultural, political, even linguistic differences between East and West Germans.[25] The continuing mental "presence" of the Wall is perhaps no surprise, given the psychological impact of the structure throughout its existence. Instances of so-called "Berlin Wall Disease" (*Die Berliner Mauerkrankheit*) began to be documented immediately after its construction, and throughout the 1960s-80s the Wall itself was used by psychologists

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[23] Brian Ladd, *The Ghosts of Berlin: Confronting German History in the Urban Landscape* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 30.
[24] Ladd, *The Ghosts of Berlin*, 31.
[25] Christine Leuenberger, "Constructions of the Berlin Wall: How Material Culture Is Used in Psychological Theory," *Social Problems* 53, no. 1 (2006): 28ff.

to theorize and explain Germans' psyche and emotional problems.[26] For all these reasons, the Berlin Wall's significance as a symbol and metaphor cannot be understated.

The Wall had an additional effect on culture and on the use of cultural propaganda, which as we have already seen was a crucial way in which the Cold War was waged. Before 1961, this aspect of the war took place primarily within the context of cultural expositions, for example the famous "Kitchen Debate" between U.S. Vice President Richard Nixon and Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev at the 1958 American National Exhibition in Moscow. However, after the closing of the border between East and West Germany and, indeed, between the Eastern and Western worlds as a whole, such direct confrontations were far less common. While such expositions continued, Eastern visitors could not easily if at all attend Western fairs nor did Westerners have ready access to fairs in the East, and as a result, Cold War propaganda became relegated more and more to the realm of mass media and visual culture. Film and TV screens along with the pages of mass media publications became the principal sites of Cold War cultural skirmishes. At the same time, the nature of the Cold War, based on surveillance and espionage rather than overt military action, resulted in a profusion of other kinds of image technologies, such as multi-screen "situation rooms."[27] Accordingly images became even more important in terms of guiding public perception either toward or

[26] The "Berlin Wall Disease" was first described in Dietfried Müller-Hegemann, *Die Berliner Mauerkrankheit* (Bielefeld, Germany: Nicolaische Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1973). The various influences of the Wall on individuals' psychology as well as the field as a whole are detailed in Leuenberger's "Constructions of the Berlin Wall." Mike Dennis argues that the Wall was a powerful force even *within* East Germany, "creat[ing] numerous political, psychological and social divisions in East German society." (Dennis, *The Rise and Fall of the German Democratic Republic*, 101.)

[27] Beatriz Colomina, "Enclosed by Images: Architecture in the Post-Sputnik Age," in *Ctrl Space: Rhetorics of Surveillance from Bentham to Big Brother*, ed. Thomas Y. Levin, Ursula Forhne, and Peter Weibel (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002), 323-4. In this article, Colomina discusses the changed mode of perception initiated in the postwar in relation to both military technologies and cultural propaganda displays.

away from the competing ideologies.[28]

As part of the centrality of images in general, the image of divided Berlin, both in the sense of its literal representation as well as its perception in the public imagination, became more important. As before, maintaining the appearance of prosperity and well-being despite any economic or social problems was considered vitally important by the governments of East and West Berlin. However, after 1961 there was a fundamental change in the way the image of Berlin, as crafted by the East, confronted the image of Berlin, as crafted by the West. Once the border was closed, East Berliners could no longer for example, come to the Western zones and visit trade or cultural fairs or see the changes wrought by the influence of American-style consumerism. East and West Berliners could only experience the other side visually, either by looking over the Wall or seeing depictions in magazines, films and on TV.[29]

The 1961 border closing defined the geographic limits of East and West Berlin and Germany. Their physical borders established, the two regimes focused more than ever on negotiating the non-material borders of culture and identity in an effort to establish legitimacy, inspire the good will and allegiance of their respective citizens, and to convince them and the world that theirs was the "real" Germany. In fact, the Wall itself fueled this effort, making the "othering" of Germans' erstwhile compatriots possible.[30] Post-1961 architecture and planning in East and West Berlin was necessarily implicated in this struggle for identity and legitimacy, but was also influenced by more concrete political, economic and

[28] In his article on the "Coca-colonization" of West Germany, for example, Jeff Schutts notes the transition from trade fairs as the primary site of display in the Federal Republic, to advertising images. (Jeff R. Schutts, "Born Again in the Gospel of Refreshment? Coca-Colonization and the Re-Making of German Identity," in *Consuming Germany in the Cold War*, ed. David F. Crew (New York: Berg, 2003), 162.)
[29] It is important to note that, though Western TV signals could be picked up throughout the GDR, in East Berlin restrictions governing movement near the Wall meant that direct visual access was limited.
[30] Ladd, *The Ghosts of Berlin*, 31.

social changes precipitated by the Wall's construction. As the Cold War progressed, the tension between the urban visions these governments attempted to impose and citizens' reception or rejection of these visions rose and fell with the changing reality of life in divided Berlin.

Establishing West Berlin's Mission: The *Kulturforum* and West German *Heimat*

The Wall left West Berlin more isolated, more vulnerable to the incursion of the East and thus more dependent on both the Western Allies and West Germany. And, while Interbau had firmly established West Berlin's relationship with the West generally and the U.S. in particular, its relationship to West Germany was more ambiguous. In the late 1940s and 1950s, West Berlin's precarious position had made its official annexation to the Federal Republic impossible, and after the construction of the Wall, the connection between the two seemed more tenuous than ever. The border closure had once again raised the question of whether or not to integrate West Berlin and West Germany, though it was ultimately decided that the city would remain subject to the postwar Four-Power Agreement so that the Western Allied forces could act as the city's guarantor against possible invasion by the East. Though not part of the Federal Republic, West Berlin was nonetheless more dependent on it than ever, since it was now physically cut off from West Germany.

West Berlin's continued existence was contingent on outside financial support, especially after the construction of the Berlin Wall made it clear that the city would remain isolated for the time being. Accordingly, West Germany increased the support provided by the "Berlin Help Laws" (*Berlin-Hilfe-Gesetz*), a series of subsidies, financial incentives and tax breaks inaugurated in 1950. The Help Laws were initially subsidized in part through Marshall Plan funds that the Federal Republic diverted to West Berlin. They included tax

cuts for businesses willing to locate their headquarters in West Berlin and subsidies designed to help make the city's goods competitive on the West German market, both measures intended to protect West Berlin's severely restricted economy. The Help Laws also provided incentives to keep West Berliners in the city and to encourage others to move there. After 1961 the West German government paid relocation expenses for those West Germans willing to move to West Berlin and, as compensation for living in the embattled city, West Berliners were paid a so-called "jitters premium" (*Zitterprämie*).[31] This financial support was made possible in large part by the strong West German economy, which despite a slight downturn in the late 60s, remained strong until the early 1970s.[32]

The now-famous West German "economic miracle" of the 1950s and 60s was and is largely attributed to the policies of the Federal Republic's economic minister and later chancellor, Ludwig Erhard. The so-called "miracle" of the West German economy was not immediate, but once it did take hold, was indeed astonishing in its rapid and sustained growth, particularly considering the extent of Germany's destruction during World War II. Throughout the 1950s, West German gross national product rose at a rate of 7-8% per year and from 1949-66, industrial production increased by a factor of six. By the end of the 1950s, the West German export economy rivaled that of the U.S. and the country enjoyed almost full employment.[33] These achievements were the result of the country's strong currency (the *Deutschmark*) combined with a technologically advanced infrastructure and a steady flow of cheap labor, initially from East Germany and later from countries like Turkey and Yugoslavia. Not only did the so-called economic miracle create material abundance in West Germany, it helped fuel the creation of a clearly identifiable sense of national identity that

[31] Ribbe, *Berlin 1945-2000*, 101, 132.
[32] Turner, *Germany from Partition to Reunification*, 111-2, 164.
[33] Turner, *Germany from Partition to Reunification*, 109-12.

was enthusiastically embraced by most if not all West Germans.[34]

This strong notion of national identity in West Germany had the effect of further confusing West Berlin's role within the Federal Republic. In response to the ambiguity surrounding its political status, the city's leaders attempted to strengthen the city's connection to West Germany and in so doing to create a definitive role or "mission" for itself within the Federal Republic. As before, architecture and planning were central tools in this effort. The creation of a "Culture Forum" (*Kulturforum*) in a bombed-out district near the city's Tiergarten park is one chief example of this effort to maintain West Berlin's relevance within the West German public imagination despite the city's increased physical isolation. As with Interbau, the *Kulturforum* represented the attempt to craft an urban identity for West Berlin that simultaneously gestured towards Berlin's pre-war urban identity as a center of "modernity," and was wholly "new." In buildings like Hans Scharoun's State Library, the largest building in the *Kulturforum*, the Modernist style of building was once again used to yoke the "new" of Berlin's past with its present and future, and thus to emphasize the city's historic associations with modernity. At the same time, however, other aspects of this pre-war identity were left out of this postwar vision. Practices such as questioning authority or social roles, experimentation and agitation for radical change—practices that were also associated with "modernity"—were discouraged and deemphasized in West Berlin. Indeed, as an analysis of the *Kulturforum* will show, it was for the most part the *appearance* of radical change and of the "new" that was sought, rather than actual change. Once again, the approach and style of Modernism was invaluable in this regard because, while it continued to bear the imprint of newness, it was also becoming the architecture of hegemony rather than

[34] The role of the "economic miracle" in the creation of West German national identity is discussed at length in S. Jonathan Wiesen, "Miracles for Sale: Consumer Displays and Advertising in Postwar West Germany," in *Consuming Germany in the Cold War*, ed. David F. Crew (New York: Berg, 2003), 151-78.

of the fringe or avant-garde.

West Berlin's Cultural Role and the Foundation for Prussian Cultural Heritage

Despite the increasingly close affiliation between West Germany and West Berlin, the city was still not officially part of the Federal Republic and the GDR and Soviet Union were particularly adamant that this distinction remain clear.[35] Their insistence on this point was related to the continued desire to create a "free state" out of West Berlin, one that was not affiliated with either East or West Germany. West Berlin's political leaders, however, uniformly rejected such an arrangement and after 1961 needed more than ever to display their connections to the West and their ability to provide a more or less normal life for their citizens. West Berlin, it was said, needed "a new mission."[36]

In the 1950s, West Berlin had developed the role of a cultural "meeting place" (*"Stätte der Begegnung"*) and in this way displayed its close relationship to the West while remaining formally separate from it. Interbau is, of course, one instance of how this was achieved: though the exhibition was of course heavily politicized, it did not, for example, violate any of the treaties governing the status of West Berlin vis-à-vis the Western Allies or West Germany, however ambiguous that status might be. After the 1961 border closing left West Berlin more isolated in every sense, its cultural function was expanded as a way of further emphasizing its connection with the West. However it was also as a way of alleviating its citizens' anxiety by providing cultural events for their entertainment and to

[35] In 1963, for example, the Soviet Union refused an invitation to participate in the Berlin Film Festival, though they had participated in previous festivals, because the invitation was tendered by the Bundestag in Bonn rather than the Berlin Senate. (Ribbe, *Berlin 1945-2000*, 128.)

[36] "After August 13th, Berlin needs a new mission" ("*Berlin braucht nach dem 13. August eine neue Aufgabe*") was the title of a series of lectures held in West Germany at this time. (Quoted in Ribbe, *Berlin 1945-2000*, 131.)

bolster their sense of purpose, belonging and, therefore morale.[37] Thus, after 1961, West Berlin's role as a center of culture as well as of scholarship and scientific research took on an increased significance.

The establishment of the Free University in Berlin, the Max Planck Institute for Human Development, and the German Development Institute were all related to this effort, as was the initiation of a yearly film festival.[38] The effort to mold the city as a whole into what was called "Culture Center Berlin" ("*Kulturzentrum Berlin*") eventually resulted in the construction of a specific center of culture within West Berlin. The goal was to erect a group of cultural buildings near the Tiergarten in an area where a concert hall and art museum were already under construction. Initially these buildings, the Berlin *Philharmonie* (Hans Scharoun and Edgar Wisniewski, 1960-3) and the *Neue Nationalgalerie* (Mies van der Rohe, 1965-8) (Figure 23), were not intended as part of a larger complex nor was there any long-term or large-scale plan for the development of the area. Indeed the *Philharmonie* was initially to be built further west from the city center in the Wilmersdorf neighborhood, but in 1959 with Scharoun's support, the decision was made to change the site to its current location adjacent to the Tiergarten.[39]

This area, which would come to be known as the *Kutlturforum*,[40] is located south of the Tiergarten, near what had been Kemperplatz. Known as the Tiergarten district

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[37] Ribbe, *Berlin 1945-2000*, 130-1. The well-being of West Berliners was no doubt a concern to the Federal Republic, but there were certainly additional motivations for this preferential treatment: a depressed and frightened West Berlin population or, even worse, a mass exodus would reflect negatively on Western values and ideology given the city's role as a symbol thereof.

[38] Ribbe, *Berlin 1945-2000*, 131.

[39] Norbert Huse, "In der Bundesrepublik," in *Hans Scharoun: Architekt in Deutschland 1893-1972*, ed. Christine Hoh-Slodczyk et al. (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1992), 130.

[40] Initially, this development was simply referred to as a "cultural center" (*Kulturzentrum*). Over time, the area was dubbed the "culture forum" (*Kulturforum*), a name that stuck. I refer to it throughout as the *Kulturforum*. (Almut Jirku, *Kulturforum Berlin: Hintergrund, Aufgabenstellung, Dokumentation der Wettbewerbergebnissse und der Ersten Realisierungsstufe*, Senatsverwaltung für Stadtentwicklung, Umweltschutz und Technologie: Stadt Entwicklung, vol. 26 (Berlin: wettbewerbe aktuell Verlagsgesellschaft mbH, 2000), 60.)

(*Tiergartenviertel*), the neighborhood was historically populated by the city's artistic and cultured set, wealthy Berliners who built urban villas in this neighborhood so they could live near the park. In the 1930s, foreign countries began to build embassies in this district, and eventually it came to be known as the "diplomatic quarter." Under Hitler, the Tiergarten district was to have formed part of the central axis in Speer's plan for Berlin and, because of this, many of the buildings in this neighborhood were demolished in the later 1930s and 40s. Also because of its significance in relation to Speer's plan, much of the land had been purchased or otherwise appropriated by the German government by the 1940s.[41] In 1939, construction began on the German House of Tourism, located on the so-called Runde Platz, but this work was halted in 1942.[42] At the end of the war, the half-built House of Tourism was one of the few remaining structures in the area, since bombing had severely damaged the Tiergarten district, destroying over half of its buildings.[43] However the Nazi's construction efforts left much of this land in the hands of the government, a factor that contributed to the decision to locate the *Kulturforum* there. After the 1961 construction of the Wall left the partially-constructed *Philharmonie* in a marginalized location and made Berlin's historical center of culture, the Museum Island, inaccessible to visitors from the West, plans for the area were changed to reflect its new context. Not only was the construction of a cultural center viewed a practical necessity, building it in this heavily ruined district fit neatly within the postwar mythology of reconstruction as the rebirth and repair of the German psyche and self image.

In 1963-4, the continued development of the *Kulturforum* was taken over by the

[41] Jirku, *Kulturforum Berlin*, 6-12.
[42] Helmer, *Hitler's Berlin*, 61-2; Paul B. Jaskot, *The Architecture of Oppression: The Ss, Forced Labor and the Nazi Monumental Building Economy*, The Architext Series (London: Routledge, 2000), 93; Jirku, *Kulturforum Berlin*, 12.
[43] Ribbe, *Berlin 1945-2000*, 91.

Foundation for Prussian Cultural Heritage (*Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz* or SPK), a cultural institution that had been formed in 1955 and officially recognized by the West German *Bundestag* in 1957.[44] The foundation was the result of a collaboration between the seven West German states or *Länder* that had been part of Prussia, including Berlin. The foundation's explicit goal was to "preserve, care for and build onto Prussian cultural treasures on behalf of the German people, as well as to bring these artifacts together" in a single collection. This collection, it was stipulated, should also be used to advance national "scholarship and cultural development" by remaining accessible to the public.[45]

In addition to this cultural mission, the SPK had a clear political function as well. The foundation represented an effort on the part of West Germany's cultural leaders and its government to deny the country's division by founding an institution that had ties to both the East and West, and which was furthermore rooted in a significant and collective past. In Berlin, the former capital of Prussia, a large portion of historically significant and valuable Prussian artifacts and buildings had ended up in the SBZ, including the royal residences in Potsdam and the collections housed in the various museums on Museum Island. A new cultural center in West Berlin under the direction of the SPK would not only provide West Berliners with access to fine art, it would represent a challenge, culturally and politically speaking, to the collections in for example the Altes and Bode Museums.[46] The SPK would furthermore collect all extant artifacts, many of which had been stored in smaller towns in

[44] The SPK was formed in 1955 and formally ratified by the Bundestag in 1957. Due to administrative delays, however, the foundation performed no official function until 1963. See "Gesetz zur Errichtung der Stiftung 'Preußischer Kulturbesitz,'" 7 July 1955, LArch B Rep 014/2608 and "Gesetz zur Errichtung einer Stiftung 'Preußischer kulturbesitz' und zur Übertragung von Vermögenswerten des ehemaligen Landes Preußen auf die Stiftung," 25 July 1957, LArch B Rep 014/2608.
[45] "Gesetz zur Errichtung einer Stiftung 'Preußischer kulturbesitz' und zur Übertragung von Vermögenswerten des ehemaligen Landes Preußen auf die Stiftung," 25 July 1957, LArch Berlin B Rep 014/2608.
[46] Indeed the term "*Kulturforum*" no doubt gained currency because of the *Forum Fredercianum*, the oldest group of buildings on the culturally and historically significant Unter den Linden boulevard of which the original royal library building is a part.

West Germany during the war, in the former Prussian capital of Berlin, in anticipation of what was characterized as the "coming reunification." For these reasons, the formation of the SPK allowed West Germany and West Berlin to assert their ownership over a joint cultural heritage and in doing so to make a claim for their legitimacy.

The foundation's first act was to construct buildings in which the vast amount of books, manuscripts, art works and other culturally significant items that made up the SPK's holdings would be housed. In 1963, the foundation outlined a large-scale building project that would create a group of museums in the Tiergarten district, as well as a State Library building (*Staatsbibliothek*), which would be the largest of these structures and the focal point of the collection.[47] A "Royal Library" (*Königliche Bibliothek*) was first established in Berlin under Frederick II (the Great, 1712-86) and was contained in a building on Unter den Linden, which was later nicknamed the "*Kommode*" or chest of drawers (Georg Friedrich Boumann, 1774-82; after plans by Georg Christian Unger). The collection was later moved to a building down the street at Unter den Linden 8 (Ernst von Ihne, 1903-14). After 1945, both of these buildings were, because of Berlin's division, located in East Berlin.[48]

The SPK announced a limited competition for the design of the new library in 1963, arguing that, "the new construction of the State Library is desperately necessary in order to return to Berlin those holdings that have been stored elsewhere during the war." The brief furthermore discusses the library's construction in relation to the city's possible reunification,

[47] Bericht über die Bauvorhaben der Stiftung 'Preußischer Kulturbesitz', 15 October 1963, BArch B 157/2643. Throughout the 1980s and into the 90s construction continued on the *Kulturforum*, resulting in the construction of a Museum of Musical Instruments and Chamber Music Hall (Scharoun and Wisniewski, 1979-84 and 1984-7), a Museum of Decorative Arts (*Kunstgewerbe Museum*; Rolf Gutbrod, 1978-85), a prints museum and art library (*Kupferstichkabinett* and *Kunstbibliothek*; Rolf Gutbrod, 1987-92), and the *Gemäldegalerie* (museum of 15th-18th-century painting; Heinz Hilmer and Christopher Sattler, 1988-98)

[48] The building at Unter den Linden 8 is currently still used along with Scharoun's building, and together they form the *Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin Preußischer Kulturbesitz*. In 1954, the GDR changed the name of the institution from the Prussian State Library (*Preußischer Staatsbibliothek*) to the German State Library (*Deutsche Staatsbibliothek*).

suggesting that a "center for scholarship and art on the south side of the Tiergarten" would be desirable to counteract the "decay of the inner-city areas" that would be the result of the division. Thus as part of a new cultural center, the SPK saw the State Library as helping the city to lay claim to its history as a Prussian and thus German capital and a way of achieving its own goal of "supporting and strengthening" West Berlin.[49] In terms of the library's design, the competition brief stipulated that the new State Library be, "the largest library in the German capital, indeed the largest German library overall" and that it be not just a regional but national institution. Once built, according to the SPK, the library would serve, not only Berliners but "a larger circle of users in the whole of Germany," and, to facilitate this elevated status, the library was to feature the most advanced technological infrastructure possible. Finally, the brief requested that competition entrants integrate their designs for the State Library into an overall plan for the *Kulturforum*, which was to include not only the *Philharmonie* and *Neue Nationalgalerie*, but other SPK museums, the designs for which would be chosen by competitions held at a later date.[50]

The cost for the new State Library building was estimated at DM 57 million, however by 1966 this figure had risen considerably. In that year, in response to members of the federal finance ministry who objected to the building's high cost, the chief curator of the SPK, Hans-Georg Wormit, argued that the political significance of the building warranted the expense of constructing a building in the isolated city as well as the cost of transporting tens

[49] Bericht über die Bauvorhaben der Stiftung 'Preußischer Kulturbesitz', 15 October 1963, 10, BArch B 157/2643. Certainly even if the State Library's role in connecting West Berlin to the Federal Republic was not widely discussed at the time, it is now widely acknowledged. In a pamphlet celebrating the 25-year anniversary of the building, for example, the State Library's general director comments, "[t]he impressive building—not only as a part of the *Kulturforum*—embodied the solidarity between the Federal Republic and the Western part of the city." ("25 Jahre Scharoun-Bau: 25 Jahre Staatsbiliothek an der Potsdamer Straße," Grußwort der Kommissarischen Generaldirektorin Barbara Schneider-Kempf. (Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preußischer Kulturbesitz, c. 2003), 1.)

[50] "Ausschreibung eines Bauwettbewerbs für den Neubau der Staatsbibliothek der Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz in Berlin," 1963, 13-20, LArch Berlin B Rep 014/1869.

of thousands of books and other materials from towns in West Germany, through East Germany and into West Berlin. Though it was difficult for West Germans to get to West Berlin, thus limiting the number of the library's potential patrons, Wormit argued that the library's emphasis on distance lending would compensate for this and that in any case, after the "coming reunification," the collection's location in Berlin would make it of particular national significance as it could then balance out the collection in the "SBZ."[51] Locating the State Library in West Berlin, concluded Wormit, was therefore important, "not only for political reasons," but would "once again make Berlin the true center of intellectual life and, above all, scholarship" in Germany.[52]

Scharoun's Kulturforum *and State Library*

In 1964, the SPK announced the results of the State Library Competition, awarding the commission to Hans Scharoun. Calling the "urban conception" of Scharoun's plan for the *Kulturforum* "masterful," the competition jury praised the way his design for the State Library integrated not only his own *Philharmonie* building, but also the hard-edged geometry of Mies van der Rohe's *Neue Nationalgalerie*, which they acknowledged was the "particularly difficult task" required by the competition (Figure 24).[53] The choice of Scharoun for the design of the State Library as well as the *Kulturforum* as a whole constituted not just an aesthetic, but also a political choice on the part of the SPK. It communicated a particular position with regards to West Berlin's past and future urban plans,

[51] After 1949, referring to East Germany as the Soviet zone of occupation or SBZ was meant as derogatory.
[52] Letter to Federal Finance minister Dr. Werner Dollinger from Hans-Georg Wormit, 30 June 1966, BArch B 157/2643.
[53] "Urteil des Preisgerichtes des Wettbewerbs 'Staatsbibliothek' vom 9.7.1964." Reprinted in Peter Pfankuch, ed., *Hans Scharoun: Bauten, Entwürfe, Texte* 2nd ed. (Berlin: Akademie der Künste, 1993), 342-3. Throughout the 1980s and into the 90s construction continued on the *Kulturforum* and the overall plan was re-designed more than once. The Senate Guesthouse, which according to Scharoun's plan was to have been constructed across from the State Library and next to the *Neue Nationalgalerie*, has to date not been built. In the early 1980s a new plan for the area was created by Hans Hollein, and subsequent development has followed this plan. (Gerhard Ullmann, "City-Kloster und Bibelmuseum: Hans Holleins Entwurf für das Kulturforum Berlin" *Aktuelles Bauen* 6 (August/September 1984): 47-52.)

but also was a clear attempt to make a place for the city in the national identity of the Federal Republic and consciousness of its citizens. Specifically, Scharoun created a space within West Berlin's new urban plan that both denied the Nazi past and transformed reading and learning into quasi-sacred rites of democracy, and in doing so helped to establish further the Modernist idiom as a symbol of the Western political order.

In creating his plan for the *Kulturforum* as a whole, Scharoun drew on both the *Kollektivplan*, the first postwar urban plan for Berlin created in 1946 by a collective he led, as well as his entry for the 1958 "Capital City Berlin" ("*Hauptstadt Berlin"*) competition, created in collaboration with planning collective member Wils Ebert. As in the *Kollektivplan*, the plan for the *Kulturforum* was unrelated to any previous plans for this area of the city but created a wholly new conception out of the ruins left by the war. The intent was to avoid directly referencing the city's recent history by going back further in time to Berlin's origin and also to create an "urban landscape" (*Stadtlandschaft*), such as that created in the *Kollektivplan*. By "urban landscape," Scharoun and the collective's planners meant that the form a city takes should originate from the topography of the land on which it is built, but also that the features of the plan, such as buildings and parks, should be organized in a "lively arrangement," as in a "beautiful landscape."[54] The goal of this planning principle was to bring about an unmediated integration of "Nature" with "Modernity," thus suggesting a harmonious balance between the forces of "civilization" and those of the natural world.

This idea was developed further in Scharoun and Ebert's design for the "*Hauptstadt Berlin*" competition. This competition, held in 1957-8, asked entrants to create designs for Berlin's center districts, from Alexanderplatz in East Berlin to the Tiergarten in West

[54] Hans Scharoun, lecture of 5 September 1946, reprinted in Pfankuch, ed., *Hans Scharoun: Bauten, Entwürfe, Texte* 158.

Berlin.[55] As in the *Kollektivplan*, the urban plan created by Ebert and Scharoun, which won second place and was displayed at Interbau along with the other competition entries, followed the topography of Berlin rather than previous urban plans. Ebert and Scharoun envisioned the city as a series of "bands" arranged along an east-west axis, with the outermost bands containing residential districts while the inner bands contained commercial and entertainment areas. In an effort to facilitate the increased presence of automobiles in Berlin, this *Bandstadt* (band-city) proposal also included a system of highways that converged into a ring outside the city.[56] In 1961-2, the concept was refined into a single band of cultural buildings called the "*Kulturband*" by a group of architects and planners that included Scharoun, the Senate Building Director Werner Düttmann, the Senator for Building and Dwelling Rolf Schwedler and others.[57] Though it still acknowledged the cultural buildings to the east, the *Kulturband* shifted the plan's focus to the west in order to compensate for the fact that the Berlin Wall had closed off Unter den Linden and the Museum Island.

As with his earlier plans for Berlin as a whole, Scharoun's conception for the *Kulturform* represented a repudiation of earlier plans for the city, including and especially Speer's plans for "Germania." However, this aspect of the plan was implicit, as neither the text of Scharoun's competition entry nor the SPK jury's report on the competition results made any mention of the site's previous history. Instead the plan's rejection of the Nazis' vision for Berlin was communicated indirectly when the ruins of the German House of

[55] "Internationaler städtebaulicher Ideenwettbewerb 'Hauptstadt Berlin'," draft March 1957, BArch B 134 2278. The north-south borders of the competition area were Oranienburger Tor and Mehringplatz.
[56] Peter Blundell Jones, *Hans Scharoun* (London: Phaidon Press, 1995), 109. The approach to zoning and inclusion of a expanded system of roadways, of course, reflected the principles of the Athens Charter and thus the continuing influence of the Modernist style.
[57] Scharoun served on an advisory council (*Beirat*) to Rolf Schwedler, where he also worked with Werner Düttmann. (Hermann Wegner, "Werner Düttmann als Senatsbaudirektor Berlin," in *Werner Düttmann: Verliebt Ins Bauen*, ed. Haila Ochs (Berlin: Birkhäuser Verlag), 91-2.)

Tourism were quietly demolished, as well as through the formal qualities of Scharoun's *Kulturforum* plan and State Library design. For example, the east-west axis of Scharoun's earlier plans and the "cultural band" plan represented a radical departure from all other plans for Berlin, which like Speer's, had been based on the arrangement along a north-west axis (Figure 25). Different from Speer's plan for the Runde Platz specifically, was Scharoun's considerably less structured arrangement of buildings on the *Kulturforum*, where buildings do not adhere to the same street line, share the same orientation, or circle around a central square or *platz*. This is a result of Scharoun's design but is also endemic to the specific site, which is bisected not by a tree-lined boulevard but by a busy roadway.[58] This lack of any strict axiality or symmetry in the plan of the *Kulturforum* was carried through in the designs of Scharoun's State Library as well.

Certainly in choosing Hans Scharoun, the SPK knew that their choice, both in terms of the resulting design and the architect's biography, would communicate their disavowal of the Nazi era in yet another implicit way. A general connection between Modernism and democracy had of course already been established in the postwar era, in part by Scharoun himself in the *Kollektivplan*. More specifically, he had since the beginning of his career been a practitioner and advocate of the kind of "new building" (*Neues Bauen*) that was vilified by the Nazis.[59] In 1926, for example, Scharoun joined the Ring (*Der Ring*), an expressly leftist, anti-conservative group formed with the purpose of defending and promoting *Neues Bauen*

[58] Indeed integrating Potsdamer Straße and the Western Tangent highway into the *Kulturforum* design was stipulated as part of the 1963 competition brief.

[59] In interpreting the SPK's choice, one must keep in mind the postwar tendency to assume that the Nazis objected to all forms of Modern architecture. However as Barbara Miller Lane points out in *Architecture and Politics*, though they targeted certain modern architects such as those affiliated with the Bauhaus, the Nazis also sponsored buildings that "closely resembled" the modern style. She and others furthermore point out that there was no official Nazi style of architecture, though the stripped, Neo-classical forms of Speer's "Germania" plan seem to be what most think of as the "Nazi style." (Lane, *Architecture and Politics in Germany*, 9; Taylor, *The Word in Stone*, 10.)

against the shift towards historicist, conservative building styles.[60] Scharoun had also worked on the *Siemensstadt* (1929-31) development, one of the modernist housing programs initiated by Berlin's then-chief architect Martin Wagner who had, along with the developments themselves, been targeted by the Nazis because of ties to the SPD. In the polarizing and politicized climate that characterized cultural production in the 1920s and 30s, Scharoun was in both the "radical" Modern and politically left camps. During this period, he became acquainted with many of Modernism's most well known figures, such as Bruno Taut and Mies van der Rohe, though he himself did not enjoy wide-spread notoriety at the time.

In the postwar period, Scharoun had of course been instrumental in the first efforts to rebuild the city, and after he left his post at the planning collective in 1946, he built a number of buildings throughout West Germany and in West Berlin. In 1963, Scharoun's building for the West Berlin *Philharmonie* brought international recognition and acclaim for the first time in his career. The project was featured in a host of international publications and Scharoun received numerous awards in the years following its completion.[61] By the time of his State Library design, both Scharoun's pedigree as a modern architect of world renown and his commitment to the reconstruction of West Berlin and West Germany were beyond reproach. In terms of the *Kulturforum* project, the architect was therefore an ideal choice in that he represented at once the best parts of Berlin's and Germany's past, the repudiation of the Nazi era, and the promise of current and future prestige as well. Indeed, Werner Düttmann, West Berlin's director of building, was one of the competition jurors, and the "*Kulturband*" concept he created in collaboration with Scharoun was specifically mentioned in the competition

[60] One of the Ring's most significant achievements was effecting the replacement of Ludwig Hoffmann, an architect who worked in the Neo-Classical style and opposed *Neues Bauen*, with Martin Wagner as Berlin's chief architect. (Blundell Jones, *Hans Scharoun*, 45.)
[61] Blundell Jones, *Hans Scharoun*, 190, 196.

brief, suggesting that in inviting Scharoun to participate, the jury anticipated his selection as its winner.[62]

Regardless, choosing Scharoun's design for the State Library immediately put the project significantly over budget. Even after he had made requested changes, the large scale and complexity of the design raised the estimated cost of construction from DM 57 million to DM 90 million.[63] As a government institution, the SPK and its activities were financed by the Federal Republic, which was soon balking at the cost of the project. In 1966, the SPK asked for but was denied funds from the European Recovery Program (ERP), and was encouraged to seek other, non-federal funding sources. Financial problems continued to plague the State Library project throughout its construction. The building was finally completed in December 1978, eleven years after ground was broken, but was not open to the public until the following year (Figure 26).

In the end, it is difficult to judge the extent to which the finished State Library is representative of Scharoun's original conception. In addition to financial woes, the building's construction was hampered by engineering and administrative difficulties as well as the downturn of the West German economy in the early 1970s. In 1972, the *Bundesbaudirektion* (Federal Building Authority) took over complete control of the project and in November of the same year, Scharoun died.[64] Ultimately, a number of changes were made to the building's design in order to cut costs, including the removal of a central staircase on the library's

[62] "Ausschreibung eines Bauwettbewerbs für den Neubau der Staatsbibliothek der Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz in Berlin," 1963, 17, LArch Berlin B Rep 014/1869.
[63] Letter from Bundesbaudirektion to Bundesschatzministerium, Bauabteilung, 28 November 1966, B Arch 157/2643. The Federal Building Authority asked Scharoun to, among other things, reduce the scale of the building, to move 300 underground parking spaces above ground. (Letter from Bundesbaudirektion to Scharoun, 11 November 1964, BArch 157/2643.)
[64] Edgar Wisniewski, Scharoun's chief assistant and a partner in his firm, carried through the plans for the State Library during the last few years of its construction and from 1979 to 1987 would do the same during the construction of the Museum of Musical Instruments and Chamber Music Hall, also in the *Kulturforum*.

second floor and a significant scaling back of the plans for the lighting system in the reading room (Figure 27).[65]

Despite any changes, Scharoun's design was (and is) largely interpreted in terms of a modern-day temple for scholarship and learning, read as a building that transforms reading into an almost sacred act. The State Library seemed to make the activities that took place there seem inherently democratic, so that by visiting the building, West Berliners could participate in the democratic society of not just their city, but of West Germany. Crucially, the political aspects of the State Library were not and are not often discussed explicitly in any texts relating to the building, its description or its critique. Rather, as was the case with Interbau, broadly-conceived, universally-held ideals were implicitly connected with strong visual symbols to create an overall impression that is imbued with political significance. In critiques of the building, Scharoun's explicit attention to the experience of the individual library user and the use of light and interior space to enhance this experience are understood not just in terms of the architect's aesthetic goals, but also implicitly, in terms of the political goals of those who sponsored the construction of the State Library in West Berlin.

Already in his 1964 competition entry, Scharoun evinced a clear interest in guiding and mediating experience of the individual visitor to the State Library. He outlines the concept of a "visitor-path" ("*der Besucherweg*") in the library, which would serve as a "link" ("*das Bindeglied*") between the entry level of the library and the reading room. The library user would enter the building and continue up one of two staircases located to the right and left of the main entrance. She would then find herself on a mezzanine level before continuing up further and into the reading room. Throughout, the user would be led along this prescribed

[65] The difficulties related to the building's construction were detailed in a number of newspaper and magazine articles from 1967-78, many of which are discussed in more detail in the following chapter.

route by a series of visual cues. Lit handrails, for example, would lead her from the relatively dark space of the library's lobby towards the staircases, while the light emanating from the reading room above, lit by prodigious fenestration along its front side, would indicate the user's ultimate destination.

Once there, the expansive, almost palpable sense of space created by the interior volume of the reading room is designed to contrast with the relatively closed feeling of the entrance level. The feelings of openness and freedom the space of the reading room inspires was noted repeatedly in reviews of the building.[66] Architectural critic Julius Posener, for example, in his critique of the building for the journal *Arch +*, described the experience of entering the building as calming, writing that, "when you walk in you feel relaxed, unburdened, you breath more quietly and walk more slowly."[67] "Openness" and "freedom" were, of course, concepts that were particularly valued in a walled-in city. Though West Berliners' physical movement was limited, the State Library created a space in which one could feel, in Posener's words "liberated, not intimidated."[68] Not only in a physical sense but in a metaphysical sense as well, as the reading room would free not just the individual user but also her spirit. "This is no everyday world," wrote Ulrich Conrads in the Berlin architecture journal *Bauwelt*, "but rather a bright inner-world-space (*Innenwelt-Raum*). Though a stranger, one feels as if one is already home."[69]

According to Edgar Wisniewski, who worked closely with Scharoun on the project, the architect's goal was to "develop a space in which information and scholarly research,

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[66] See for example, Julius Posener, "Fragen Zur Staatsbibliothek," *Arch* + 43-44 (1979): 5-8; Manfred Sack, "Der Goldene Bücherbuckel Von Berlin," *Die Zeit*, 15 December 1978, 41-2; Manfred Speidel, "Gedanken Zur Staatsbibliothek," *Arch* + 43-44 (1979): 9-11.
[67] Julius Posener, "Fragen zur Staatsbibliothek," *Arch* + 43-44 (1979): 5.
[68] Posener, "Fragen zur Staatsbibliothek," 6.
[69] Ulrich Conrads, "Offenbar: ein Innenwelt-Raum," *Bauwelt*, no. 1 (1979): 13. The term "*Innenwelt*" has the connotations of an interior world or space and the "inner-" or mental life of an individual.

anonymous individuality and community, spatial transcendence and a feeling of security come together in a creative relationship,"[70] and indeed many critics agreed that the space of the reading room helped to foster a sense of community and belonging. In the British journal *Building*, for example, Dennis Sharp remarked that the advantage of the interior space was in its "open effect and in the public, visual contact it fosters," adding that "[t]his visual contact is by no means obtrusive."[71] Peter Blundell Jones goes a step further, connecting the sense of community inspired by the reading room to its political function: "one of the main virtues of the Library is the openness of the great reading room which allows one to feel the presence of so many others: it is this that makes it clearly a national institution rather than a provincial one."[72]

Light and space are used to inspire particular reactions in the library's users but also as symbols for the scholarly activities that take place there. Light has of course long been used as a visual metaphor for the acquisition of knowledge and the personal and societal transformation that can result. In medieval cathedrals, for example, light is used as the material expression of a state of "enlightenment," while in more recent times Nietzsche similarly used the metaphor of light versus dark in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (1883-5).[73] Both the Gothic cathedral and the writings of Nietzsche were furthermore an influence on the work of architects who worked in the style known as Expressionism, including Scharoun.[74] In his State Library, the natural light that floods the open space of the reading room is again a

[70] Edgar Wisniewski, "Raumvision und Struktur: Gedanken Über Hans Scharouns Konzeption zum Bau der Staatsbibliothek," in *Festgabe zur Eröffnung des Neubaus in Berlin*, ed. Ekkehart Vesper (Weisbaden: Reichert, 1978), 153.
[71] Dennis Sharp, "Required Reading: Berlin State Library," *Building* 238 (4 January 1980): 34. Press clipping, AdK Berlin, HSA, WV 236.
[72] Blundell Jones, *Hans Scharoun*, 203.
[73] Rosemarie Haag Bletter, "Mies and Dark Transparency," in *Mies in Berlin*, ed. Terence Riley (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2001), 351-2.
[74] Bletter, "The Interpretation of the Glass Dream," 20.

metaphor for knowledge but is also understood to consecrate the space. Posener, for example, describes the room as a "cultural sanctuary" (*Kulturheiligtum*).[75] In the same way that worship is both an intensely personal and collective experience, studying in this library was framed as similarly sacred ritual, both a group activity and an individual pursuit.

In addition, light and interior space are used together to create a landscape in the reading room (*Lesesaal-Landschaft*) that is analogous to the "city-landscape" (*Stadtlandschaft*) formed by the *Kulturforum* as a whole, and which connects the specific site of the reading room and State Library with the world outside of it. Specifically, the reading room becomes a microcosm of the world as a whole, bringing "vastness, infinitude" together in a single place, in "human-oriented proportions."[76] As Wisniewski describes it,

> The notion of an interior roof symbolizes the overall view, the distant glance, the freedom of scholarship, ... [a] convention is destroyed—law-bound structure works against the creation of space, whereas nature seems epic. Reading room-landscape (*Lesesaal-Landschaft*) as image, as metaphor for the freedom of spirit, but also as the medium for the reestablishment of the *universitas litterarum,* of the classical library.[77]

Wisniewski's remarks, made at the time of the State Library's opening, not only connect Scharoun's building with humanist ideals like those espoused by Wilhelm von Humboldt, they also point to the historical origins of Scharoun's design. In the wake of World War I, Scharoun began corresponding with Bruno Taut, later contributing to a series of letters initiated by Taut, "The Glass Chain" ("*Die Gläserne Kette*," 1919-20), and to Taut's journal *Frühlicht* (1920-22). In his own work, Taut explored the notion of an ideal community of the future, in which a new social order would form after humankind had evolved beyond the horror the modern age had wrought. Partly as a reaction to the destruction of the recent

[75] Posener, "Fragen zur Staatsbibliothek," 5.
[76] Wisniewski, "Raumvision und Struktur," 154, 157.
[77] Wisniewski, "Raumvision und Struktur," 154.

World War, Taut advocated the dissolution of the cities in order to bring humans into greater harmony with nature.[78] Taut published his utopian ideas and sketches in a series of books in the late 1910s and early 20s, including *Alpine Architecture* (*Alpine Architektur*, 1919), *The City Crown* (*Die Stadtkrone*, 1919), and *The Dissolution of Cities* (*Die Auflösung der Städte*, 1920).

Two of the most important concepts to emerge from these writings and drawings were the *Volkshaus* and the *Stadtkrone* or City Crown. By "city crown," Taut meant a focal point for the plan of his ideal community, a literal and figurative center around which it would be oriented. At this focal point would be the *Volkshaus* or People's House, a center of cultural and social development which would not only symbolize but also help to create this new kind of community and which was based on the model of the Gothic cathedral.[79] Through this building, architecture would become a means of mediating the relationship between individuals and their community, but also between individuals and the natural and spiritual worlds. Taut's drawings, along with those of Scharoun and others, depicted *Volkshäuser* as fantastic, crystalline structures made almost entirely out of glass. Inspired by the writings of Paul Scheerbart, the use of glass was symbolic of the social transformation the *Volkshäuser* would inspire and facilitate. In its transparency, glass was also the symbol of the new social order itself, which was characterized by its openness and accessibility to all.[80]

Scharoun returned to creating sketches of large public buildings during World War II when he could not practice architecture (Figure 28). In these sketches of *Volkshäuser*, the structures appear to be far larger than in their earlier iterations, largely because of the

[78] Bletter, "The Interpretation of the Glass Dream," 20. Taut's "anti-urbanism" was also influenced by socialist anarchist principals. (Bletter, "The Interpretation of the Glass Dream," 36.)
[79] Blundell Jones, *Hans Scharoun*, 26, 28-9.
[80] Bletter, "The Interpretation of the Glass Dream," 32-3.

inclusion of small human figures in and around them. The *Volkshäuser*, which seem to tower above these figures, are as before comprised of asymmetric, organic forms. However, these forms are arranged in much looser, much more biomorphic configurations in comparison with the compact and rigid crystalline structures of the 1920s *Volkshäuser*.[81] The State Library is heavily influenced by these designs and represents the realization of Scharoun's wartime sketches. The State Library is thus a kind of *Volkshaus* and, as in his drawings of both the 1920s and 1940s, glass and natural light are used in its design to both generate and transform a community that is defined in both secular and spiritual terms. Though not made entirely of glass, the faceted cladding on the exterior of both the *Philharmonie* and the State Library maintains much of the formal expressiveness that characterized the crystalline asymmetry of the earlier *Volkhäuser*, while incorporating the monumentality and looser arrangement of forms in the later examples.

The political message communicated through the notion of the *Volkshaus* and specifically through the State Library is, however, changed slightly given the State Library's context of divided Berlin. Whereas in the post-World War I era the *Volkshaus* represented the vision of an as-yet-unrealized future, in postwar West Berlin the State Library presented a vision of community that was posited as both existing and in process. As before, the *Volkshaus*, in this case the State Library, would be central to the formation of this new, harmonious community, both symbolizing and effecting the reunification of Berlin and Germany. Contemporary critics seemed to agree that cultural buildings in general and the State Library in particular could function this way. For example Manfred Speidel of *Arch+* argued that, "the lost sense of urban community (or the abuse of community in the mass-

[81] Blundell Jones, *Hans Scharoun*, 104ff.

demonstration squares) will be reconstructed in the civic-minded buildings of culture."[82] In this way, Scharoun's intentions in his design for the State Library evoke those of Schinkel in his design for the Altes Museum 140 years before: the creation of a structure that was to educate and cultivate a democratic and engaged citizenry. Like Schinkel, Scharoun focused on the experience of the viewer and on eliciting an emotional and psychological response, in order to "refine or cultivate society as a whole."[83]

At the 1967 groundbreaking ceremony for the State Library, Scharoun's short speech reflected his interest in the ability of architecture to express that which is elemental and unchanging, and as an instrument of individual and collective liberation:

> In the beginning was the Word, within which the meaning and relevance of today's celebration is rooted.
>
> Then came writing and printing, and the spaces and structures for them: the libraries.
>
> With these came the librarian with his sense of order, methods and systems.
> And then the architect came and with him will-to-form and his imagination.
>
> For the effect of both, those inspiring words from the nineteenth century are still true today, on this site: "Learning sets one free" ("*Bildung macht frei*").[84]

Appealing to these universal values ironically reinforced the building's political role in the specific time and place in which it was built. As the product of the West German government and an institution in the service of Prussian culture and history in West Berlin, the State Library helped to lend these qualities of timelessness and universality to the city in which it was located. West Berlin was framed not as the accidental result of an incomplete plan of postwar occupation, but as the natural and inevitable result of a long history of human development. This was not necessarily the result of a conscious attempt to disguise

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[82] Manfred Speidel, "Gedanken zur Staatsbibliothek," *Arch* + 43-44 (1979): 11.
[83] Moyano, "Quality vs. History," 592-3.
[84] "Grundsteinlegung Staatsbibliothek am 10.10.1967," Akademie der Künste—Berlin (AdK Berlin), Hans-Scharoun-Archiv (HSA), Werkverzeichnis (WV) 236.

ideological discourse, but rather resulted from the intersection of Scharoun's specific background and approach, the political goals of the SPK, and the socio-historical context of Cold War West Berlin. This approach in framing the political function of architecture is clearly evident in SPD-leader Adolf Arndt's 1960 speech, "Democracy as Client" ("*Demokratie als Bauherr*"), delivered at the Academy of the Arts (*Akademie der Künste*) in West Berlin. Arndt argues that question of a "democratic architecture" is an issue "not of the number of administrative buildings, but rather of their politically-conceived design and their spirit. It has to do with whether these buildings' interiors reference humankind as the public…"[85]

Finally, in transforming learning and the pursuit of knowledge into rituals that were both quasi-sacred and quasi-political, the State Library became a place where West Berliners could escape their physical isolation and become part of an extended community. This is, of course, the chief function of rituals: they help to forge the "imagined community" of national identity, encouraging a sense of belonging and of differentiation. As historian Margarete Meyers Feinstein argues, rituals help to separate "us" from "them," and they also "take the individual participant beyond him- or herself into the community of the nation."[86] In this way, both the State Library and *Kulturforum* in their aesthetic forms as well as in their literal and symbolic functions expressed the solidarity and unity of West Berlin and West Germany. The State Library and *Kulturforum* also gave West Berlin a space in its urban plan dedicated to culture and the preservation of a shared history. This was necessary, of course, because those areas which had formerly performed this function had been made inaccessible both

[85] Adolf Arndt, *Demokratie als Bauherr*, Anmerkungen der Zeit, vol. 6 ((West) Berlin: Akademie der Künste, 1961), 12.
[86] Margarete Myers Feinstein, *State Symbols: The Quest for Legitimacy in the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic, 1949-59* (Boston: Brill Academic Publishers, Inc., 2001), 141-2.

physically and in terms of urban identity: as a definitive part of East Berlin, the Museum Island could no longer be claimed as part of the West Berlin's culture or identity. The *Kulturforum* was thus a response to the Wall, which had reordered and reoriented the city both literally and symbolically and which would ultimately result in the creation of a new and cohesive urban plan that reflected West Berlin's cultural, political and social values.

Because the area near the Tiergarten which had formerly been near the city's center became its edge, the center of West Berlin shifted west towards Kufürstendamm Straße. This area, known colloquially as the "Ku'damm," had grown significantly in the 1910s and 20s, and was considered the most "modern" quarter of the quintessentially modern Berlin. The Ku'damm was the center of the city's nightlife, its cabarets and movie theaters, and its prime shopping district. It and the western suburbs, such as Wilmersdorff and Charlottenburg, were also home to cultured, white-collar professionals, many of whom were Jewish.[87] This district's reputation was capitalized upon in the 1960s with the construction of the Europa-Center, an office building and shopping center built in the Modernist style (Figure 29). Further north, Ernst-Reuter-Platz[88] was constructed during the same period as West Berlin's center of research, development and capital. The Technical University located its architectural faculty in a building designed by Scharoun and Bernhard Hermkes (1963-8) and IBM built its West Berlin branch on the Platz (Rolf Gutbrod and Bernhard Binder, 1960-1) (Figure 30). Thus by the end of the 1960s, these three areas—the *Kulturforum*, the Ku'damm, Ernst-Reuter-Platz—had compensated in some way for the loss of the city's eastern portions. In addition, this reconfiguration of Berlin's urban plan served to inscribe onto the city a new

[87] Smail and Ross, "New Berlins and New Germanies," 66.
[88] This area was to be the western terminus of the East-West axis in Speer's plan. An architectural competition was held in 1955 and the area was made into a new Platz named after West Berlin's first mayor, who had died in 1953.

set of Western-oriented values. West Berlin had been reconstituted as a whole, autonomous politically, economically *and* culturally from the "other" Berlin.

Yi-Fu Tuan has argued that, "the built environment clarifies social roles and relations" and can guide individuals' behavior.[89] The set of social relations and values articulated in West Berlin's built environment and the shift in orientation of its urban plan reflected the city's political goals. For example, West Berlin was oriented physically but also ideologically around Kurfürstendamm Straße: affluence, consumption and display were placed both literally and figuratively at the center of the city. Moreover, this display of economic success helped to tie West Berlin, economically but also visibly, to the West German "economic miracle." The *Kulturforum* helped to articulate another set of ideals related to, yet distinct from, those represented by the Ku'damm. The pursuit of knowledge and the open exchange of ideas were (and indeed are) considered emblematic of democratic society and therefore the *Kulturforum*, and in particular the State Library, was a spatial expression of these values. The forum was thus an attempt to construct West Berlin's urban identity as primarily democratic so that, as long as it could not formally be part of the Federal Republic, it could remain a symbolic part of it.[90]

After 1961, once the physical border between East and West had been established, the government and cultural leaders in West Berlin focused on establishing borders in the more intangible realms of society and culture: creating a fully-fledged "regime of borders." The State Library in the *Kulturforum*, along with the projects that rose on the Ku'damm and on Ernst-Reuter- Platz were clearly a result of this effort as well as its major instruments. The

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[89] Tuan, *Space and Place*, 102.

[90] This is emphasized by the use of the word "forum" which is connects the space to a specific political ideology and social order, that of the Roman republic, while also referring to the more abstract space where such exchanges occur (for example, mass media as a public "space" or forum). As aforementioned, the use of this word no doubt relates to the *Fredercianum Forum* on Unter den Linden as well.

Wall itself, however, was at this point willfully ignored in terms of the city's identity. This was first because the structure was still viewed by many as temporary, as evidenced by the SPK's references to the "coming reunification." However, the denial of the Wall and its influence was also a reflection of the West's foreign policy, which was predicated on denying the legitimacy of East Germany. Finally, ignoring the Wall was for West Berlin's government a way to exhibit its resiliency and fortitude in the face of adversity and uncertainty. By downplaying the Wall's significance, the city's government could insist that the structure had no real effect on daily life in the West, nor would it have lasting consequences for West or even East Berliners. As we will see, however, the longer the Wall stood, the more closely it came to be associated with West Berlin, until the GDR's "anti-fascist protection wall" ironically became a symbol of the outpost of the West, rather than the regime that built it.

West German Heimat*: National Identity and West Berlin*

Even as the effort to construct the city's identity was unfolding in West Berlin, the formation of West German national identity was proceeding apace. However, while in West Berlin the focus was on connecting the former capital with the Federal Republic, in the Federal Republic the newly-forged sense of national identity did not, for the most part, include West Berlin. As has been discussed, West German identity was after 1945 based on the strong identification with American values and culture, which West Germans quickly appropriated.[91] American values remained an important influence after the foundation of the Federal Republic, however in the 1950s and 60s the notion of an "economic miracle" helped to cohere a collective sense of national identity in West Germany further. In addition, though West Berlin was initially part of the western zones of occupation, as the 1950s progressed the

[91] For a discussion of the influence of the U.S. on the formation of East and West German national identities, see Uta Poiger, *Jazz, Rock, and Rebels: Cold War Politics and American Culture in a Divided Germany*. Studies on the History of Society and Culture, 35 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

city began a slow drift outside of the West German public's consciousness and national identity. Once the construction of the Berlin Wall had physically isolated the city and put an end to the idea that West Berlin would be integrated into the Federal Republic in the immediate future, this shift occurred even more rapidly. By the end of the 1960s, West Berlin no longer held a formative role within the West German definition or representations of *Heimat*.

Political sociologist John Agnew has argued that shared place-based meanings and associations "can be *projected* onto [a] region or a 'nation' and give rise to regionalism or nationalism."[92] In German culture, this relationship is articulated in the concept of *Heimat* which is defined as "homeland," but which carries connotations that are much deeper and more complex. The notion of *Heimat* refers to the attachment one feels towards one's birthplace and to the feeling of kinship one feels with those who are from the same country, meaning that *Heimat* relates to both personal and collective identities. The term encompasses both physically locate-able spaces such as a nation like Germany or a region like Bavaria, as well as more abstract notions of place, such as "the homeland" or "the place of origin." Temporally speaking, *Heimat* is historical but is at the same time immune to specific political and social developments, since it represents values that are fundamental and constant; it refers to a generalized "past" yet is also timeless.[93]

Just after World War II, however, references to the past in the West, however generalized, were strictly avoided. Instead, the western zones of occupation focused

[92] Agnew, *Place and Politics*.
[93] Heide Fehrenbach, *Cinema in Democratizing Germany: Reconstructing National Identity after Hitler* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 150-1.

steadfastly on the future, with Modernist architecture the emblem of that approach.[94] As the West German economy continued to grow throughout the 1950s and 60s, *it* became increasingly central to the definition of identity and of *Heimat*. Indeed, historian S. Jonathan Wiesen argues that the narrative of the economic miracle amounted to the kind of foundation myth around which national identity is often constructed, in this case based on a notion of (West) Germans' superior ingenuity and ability to produce high-quality consumer goods.[95] According to Wiesen, this narrative was communicated through the trade shows and cultural fairs that were sponsored by the Federal Republic and held in East and West Germany throughout the 1950s, including and especially the yearly German Industrial Exhibition in Berlin.[96] Thus, as is so evident in the case of Interbau and the attendant Interbau Industrial Exhibition, the reconstruction of West Berlin, both physically and literally, was directly tied to the establishment of the "economic miracle" myth, creating images of endless amounts of consumer goods and raw materials (Figure 31). Based on this vision, West German *Heimat* was a pristine space characterized by its abundance and affluence. Constructed whole cloth from "modern" materials such as steel and glass with the most technologically advanced materials, it was sleek, glamorous and aesthetically appealing.

Though West Berlin was part of this vision initially, the relationship between it and other regions of Germany, especially Bavaria, had of course always been ambivalent. Walther Rathenau had argued in 1899 that the city had no authentic identity of its own and in 1985, cultural critic and journalist Jürgen Engert echoed Rathenau's assessment, arguing,

[94] Modernism might be called the "official style" of postwar West Germany, with all the contradictions such a term suggests. That is, the effort was made to publicly associate West Germany with Modernism, though not all buildings constructed in the postwar were built in this style. Indeed, economic pressures and the practical necessity for buildings meant that many, if not most West Germans' experience of postwar reconstruction was informed not by Modernism, but by traditional or simply more prosaic, utilitarian building styles.
[95] In addition, the West German economy looked particularly successful when compared to that of the GDR, which partly explains the mythical status of the former.
[96] Wiesen, "Miracles for Sale," 151-2, 155.

"Berlin, although representative of this country, was never a source of identity for the German peoples." In the 1950s and 60s, as the social and cultural politics of West Germany stressed conformity and "normalization," which for Chancellor Adenauer was synonymous with Westernization, West Berlin seemed to fit less and less within definitions of "West German." The city had long been associated, not with conformity, but with social protest, critique, with continuous flux and often violent disorder.[97] In 1958, when the U.S. Information Agency asked West Germans what actions they thought the Federal Republic should take after Khrushchev issued his ultimatum, a majority of the respondents felt it was not West Germany's responsibility but "up to the West."[98] Once the 1961 construction of the Berlin Wall prevented West Berlin's political integration into the Federal Republic, at least for the immediate future, and physically isolated the city, it seemed more than ever a separate and distinct entity, with a separate and distinct identity.

The group of *Heimatfilme* or "*Heimat* films" produced in the Federal Republic in the 1950s, provides evidence of the erosion of Berlin's importance in terms of West German culture and identity. In the 1950s and 60s, the primary medium for the dissemination of images of West Germany affluence and abundance shifted from trade shows to mass media culture, such as advertising and film.[99] Also during this period, the "timelessness" and constancy of *Heimat*, helped make the concept politically "safe" in the postwar era. In particular, the term assumed a special relevance vis-à-vis West German identity in the form of the *Heimatfilm*, a genre of film that had its roots in the pre-war era. As cinema became a crucial means of differentiating between the two "Germanies" in the wake of World War II,

[97] Davis, "'Everyday' Protest," 267-8; Engert, "Berlin between East and West."
[98] "Public Opinion Report: 'West Germany Views the Berlin Crisis,' 10 February 1959," ii. File 250/67/04/3, Research Reports on German Public Opinion, 1957-59, Records of the U.S. Information Agency (USIA), Record Group 306, National Archives at College Park, College Park, MD.
[99] Wiesen, "Miracles for Sale," 161.

Heimatfilm became very important in this regard, in both the GDR and the Federal Republic.[100]

Already in the early 1920s, many of the *Heimat* films' most recognizable conventions had been established, including the use of rural landscapes (usually the Bavarian Alps), traditional dress (*Trachten*), folk songs and a cast of stock characters including the virtuous-yet-plucky maiden and unscrupulous poacher.[101] The genre's most well-known films are those made in the 1950s, such as *Black Forest Maiden* (*Schwarzwaldmädel,* 1950), *Green is the Heath* (*Grün ist die Heide*, 1951), *Heimat Bells* (*Heimatglocken*, 1952), and *When the Heath Blooms* (*Wenn die Heide blüht*, 1960). Such films were huge popular successes, but maligned by the critical establishment as kitschy, low-brow fare with no artistic merit, produced for the sole purpose of making money. Indeed, such films have usually been interpreted as escapist fantasies, popular because of their ability to distract viewers from the difficult realities of postwar West German society.[102] While this may be partially true, film historian Johannes von Moltke offers a more nuanced interpretation of these films in his article "Evergreens: the *Heimat* Genre." This "spatial genre," argues von Moltke provides a way, not simply to avoid dealing with the profound social and cultural changes of the postwar period, but to naturalize them by integrating ideas of tradition and history with then-present social changes.

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[100] These films' influence was not limited to the cinema. The genre had an important, arguably more significant presence on television in the form of *Heimat* TV series and annual rebroadcasts of particular *Heimatfilme*. In addition, American films were, of course, also important in terms of establishing East versus West identity. (Johannes von Moltke, "Evergreens: The *Heimat* Genre," in *The German Cinema Book*, ed. Tim Bergfelder, Erica Carter, and Denis Göktürk (London: British Film Institute, 2002), 18, 22.)

[101] von Moltke, "Evergreens: The *Heimat* Genre," 18, 20.

[102] Examples of critiques that interpret Heimatfilme in this way include Walter Schmieding, *Kunst oder Kasse: Der Ärger mit dem deutschen Film* (Hamburg: Rütten und Loening, 1961) and Bärbel Westermann, *Nationale Identität im Spielfilm der 50er Jahre* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1990). (von Moltke, "Evergreens: The *Heimat* Genre," 26, notes 4-5.)

Heimatfilme of the 1950s usually center on a conflict between tradition and modernity, represented by the rural vs. urban, or by old vs. new technology.[103] Resolution of the conflict happens when these two apparent opposites are integrated, so that tradition is not undermined by modernity, nor does modernity efface tradition. Moreover, like the Modernist style in architecture, the *Heimatfilm* functioned to provide positive portrayals of what was essentially German and traditional, while eliding those aspects of German identity or the German past which could be associated with the Nazis.[104] Ultimately, these films presented uncritical views of a West Germany that was aesthetically appealing, apparently genuine but ultimately fictional. Here, the vision of contemporary West Germany remains a future- and technologically-oriented one, but is no longer so stridently Modernist. Instead, the vision of *Heimat* softened, to include representations of history, the past and the natural world.[105] In addition, like their subject matter, these films are visually very conventional, respecting the rules governing filmic continuity by, for example, avoiding any reference to the camera or any overtly stylized or experimental techniques. Such conventional editing and camera techniques result in a space that is clearly oriented and navigable. Moreover, West German *Heimat* in these films is still influenced by the "modern," but instead of urban environments, focuses on verdant and lush rural landscapes often drawn from Bavaria (Figure 32). The vision of West German *Heimat* represented by the *Heimatfilme* does not, however, include West Berlin.

Unlike the vision of *Heimat* presented in these films, West Berlin was neither "knowable" nor "safe" given its strategic vulnerability and the ambiguity surrounding its

[103] Indeed, one could argue that these films evince a concern for many of the same issues of culture versus commodity that preoccupied the Werkbund in the pre-World War I period.
[104] Fehrenbach, *Cinema in Democratizing Germany*, 151.
[105] This was no doubt partially the result of the East-West Arms race and threat of nuclear war which together revealed the dark and threatening side of technological innovation.

political affiliation. Berlin had long been the "symbol of modern urbanity" within Germany and, as part of this, was generally associated with what was radically new rather than historical or traditional. The only culture or historical tradition that Berlin conjured in the public's imagination was of course Prussia, since it had been its capital, and this aspect of the German past was in the postwar unappealing to many West Germans, including their chancellor. In addition, whereas the *Heimatfilme* reflected a national preoccupation with mobility and travel, these activities were of course incredibly difficult if not disallowed in the walled-in city of West Berlin. Not only was physical movement in the city limited, the mastery of and control over space articulated by the *Heimatfilme* was impossible in a still-"occupied" city. Finally, with its ambiguous political and economic status, West Berlin was still a question mark that could not be definitively situated within notions of national identity in the West German popular imagination. By the 1970s, while West Germans certainly continued to feel a sense of solidarity with West Berliners and sympathy for their plight, they arguably did not consider West Berliners to be West Germans.

In June 1967, just four months before the official start of construction on the State Library, student Benno Ohnesorg was shot and killed by police while participating in a protest of the Shah of Iran's official visit to West Berlin. The event marked the beginning of what would become a nationwide student protest movement, which raised questions about the degree to which the Federal Republic was truly democratic and critiqued the way the Nazi past had been dealt with throughout the Adenauer era (1949-63). At more or less the same time, the election of former West Berlin mayor Willy Brandt to a SPD-CDU coalition government in 1966 and to the position of FRG Chancellor in 1969 heralded the arrival of West Germany's first SPD-led government and a new foreign policy position with regard to

the GDR. Brandt's *Ostpolitik* rejected the Hallstein doctrine, advocating instead "change through rapprochement" ("*Wandel durch Annährung*") and direct dealings with the East German government.[106] These and other social and political developments, along with the decline of the West German economy meant that when it was finished in 1978, the State Library SPK opened its doors to a West Berlin and West Germany that were both vastly different than those of 1964, when the project was begun. Though intended to give West Berlin a place in West Germany, the State Library and the *Kulturforum* were not strong enough as statements to forge a sense of fellowship between West Berlin and West Germany, especially since the building did not open until 1979. Already in 1973 in reference to the *Kulturforum* and SPK, Düsseldorf's *Handelsblatt* newspaper commented that while the term "national foundation" (*Nationalstiftung*) sounded nice, in reality it meant "nothing concrete."[107]

East Berlin: The Search for a National Building Style and *Heimat*-GDR

The late 1950s to 1960s in the GDR were characterized by continuing economic problems and, in architecture and planning, the shift to modes of production that were highly mechanized and standardized. Khrushchev's exposure and repudiation of Stalin's crimes in 1956 combined with the success of Sputnik, launched in October 1957, led to a new interest in technology and modernization within the Eastern Bloc, both of which had previously been denigrated because of their associations with the West. In the GDR, the turn towards new technologies and rationalization of production processes was tied to the larger effort of besting the by then famously successful West German economy. This was particularly important in terms of establishing East German political legitimacy since, with its "economic

[106] Ribbe, *Berlin 1945-2000*, 140-2, 127.
[107] "War alle Planung umsonst? Die Finanzierung für den Berliner Museumskomplex ist gefährdet," *Handelsblatt* (Düsseldorf) 10. March 1973, press clipping, AdK Berlin, HSA, WV 236.

miracle" the Federal Republic had set the standard for measuring the success of one Germany versus the other. In addition, because the economic miracle had functioned so effectively as a starting point for the creation of a collective national identity, the two notions had become closely associated, meaning that for the GDR, outperforming the West meant both proving its superiority and establishing an opposing national identity.

Architecture continued to be an important part of achieving the political, economic and social goals of the GDR's government. However, reflecting the resurgent interest in industrialized production, the country's building economy was increasingly focused on developing "rationalized" processes that lowered labor and material costs while increasing the rate of production. By the early 1960s, the GDR's construction industry was producing the pre-fabricated *Plattenbau* (literally "slab construction") for which the country would become notorious. However, though the *Plattenbau* was intended in part to reflect the country's overall values and ideals, East Berlin remained the central site for the literal and figurative construction of GDR national identity. The country's resources were poured into construction initiatives designed to make the capital an impressive showcase of socialist ideals and GDR identity, as defined by the SED. However, East Germans' lingering unease and ambivalence combined with their government's inflexible and intolerant attitudes complicated this effort. While the GDR's architectural establishment critiqued the "monotony" and shoddy construction of the *Plattenbauten,* the population as a whole grappled with the grand and heroic vision of *Heimat*-GDR presented in East Berlin. In, for example, a number of cutting-edge and controversial films of the late 1950s to early 1960s, filmmakers critiqued the SED's efforts to create a socialist society and also addressed East Germans' struggle to forge a collective, national identity. In fact, these films provide

evidence of a rising conflict within East German culture and society, between the government's attempt to provide for (or at least appear to provide for) its citizens' happiness and security, and its desire to maintain absolute control of political, economic and social power. Beginning in the later 1960s, the inherent contradiction between the government's stated goals and its policies and actions were increasingly hard to ignore. Eventually, there emerged two separate definitions of *Heimat*-GDR: one defined officially by the government and one defined more informally by the East German people themselves.

The construction of the Berlin Wall was the starting point for the creation of a distinct GDR identity, however ambivalent and tentative. Indeed, historian Mike Dennis has argued that August 13, 1961 should be considered "the real date on which the GDR was founded." Not only did the Wall stop the mass emigration of East Germany's population that was crippling its economy and undermining its legitimacy, it consolidated the power of the SED-led government. For GDR's citizens, the lack of Western response to the border closing and post-1961 isolation of the country seemed to end any hopes of either German unification or an immediate end to Walter Ulbricht's regime. After the construction of what the government called the "anti-fascist protection wall" ("*Antifaschistische Schutzwall*"),[108] East Germans were forced to resign themselves to their fate; however bleakly ironic or counter-intuitive, the SED's claim that the Wall had "secured peace" seemed to be at least partially true.[109]

In general, public reaction to the closing of the border in East Germany was limited. Officially, newspapers and government proclamations hailed the events of August 13 as a victory for East Germany. The GDR, it was claimed, had neutralized the threat of the West,

[108] The use of the term "anti-fascist" reflects the role of the Berlin Wall in the SED's mythology of the GDR as a country founded by "anti-fascists." See Chapter 1, "East Germany, the Soviet Union and the Construction of East Berlin."
[109] Dennis, *The Rise and Fall of the German Democratic Republic*, 101-2; Ribbe, *Berlin 1945-2000*, 136.

shutting out the "imperialist aggressors," who had waged economic war against the East and might even be planning a military invasion. Though there was some protest by East Berliners, the effort to quash it was great, and ultimately overwhelmed any resistance. During the latter half of 1961, for example, 20,000 people were arrested and condemned as "political offenders" (*Staatsverbrecher*), while only 4,500 had been similarly condemned in the first half of that year. In fact, since the Western threat was the excuse made for censorship and the silencing of voices of opposition, many East Germans hoped that the border closure would mean a relaxing of restrictions on individual expression and public debate. This was indeed the case for a time, and the years after the Wall's construction saw a number of liberal reforms made to GDR economic and cultural policies and an increased tolerance towards criticism of the SED.[110] Such reforms were, however, short-lived.

The GDR Economy in the 1960s: A Second Economic Miracle?

The period after the construction of the Wall was one of increased political and economic stability, though East Germany continued to face many of difficulties that plagued its development throughout the 1950s. Compounding these difficulties was the Federal Republic's Hallstein Doctrine, which kept East Germany isolated from the world market and limited its access to raw materials, hampering economic growth.[111] In addition, the continued success of the West German economy provided a sharp contrast to East Germany's troubles and a constant source of frustration and embarrassment. The success not only of the West

[110] Flemming and Koch, *Die Berliner Mauer: Geschichte eines Politischen Bauwerks*, 15-8; Klaus Schroeder and Steffen Alisch, *Der SED-Staat: Partei, Staat und Gesellschaft 1949-1990* (Munich: Hanser, 1998), 171-2. The liberal, post-Wall atmosphere was partly a result of a general cultural thaw in the Eastern Bloc following Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin in 1956 as well. (Dennis, *The Rise and Fall of the German Democratic Republic*, 78ff.)

[111] In addition, in 1960 the Federal Republic revoked the 1951 Interzonal trade agreement in protest against GDR-imposed travel restrictions in and out of East Berlin. The agreement had helped provide East Germany with much-needed raw materials, and its revocation deepened the country's economic crisis. (Dennis, *The Rise and Fall of the German Democratic Republic*, 89.)

German economy but, crucially, of the construction of the myth of the "economic miracle" had made economic success the central factor in the struggle to prove the superiority of East versus West Germany. Because of this, throughout the later 1950s and 60s the GDR would focus the country's resources almost exclusively on besting the economy of the Federal Republic, despite the fact that it was handicapped by an antiquated infrastructure, a comparatively small labor force and the strictures of a planned economy. In fact the GDR economy was and would remain the strongest economy in the Eastern European economic community or COMECON (Council for Mutual Economic Assistance). However, it failed to surpass that of the Federal Republic, meaning that whatever economic gains were achieved in East Germany mattered little in terms of shaping its public image either at home or abroad.

At the SED's Third Party Congress in 1955, the government set a series of ambitious, ultimately unrealistic economic goals for the country's next Five Year Plan (1956-60). Though the promised 55% increase in net production was not met, modest gains were achieved as industrial production rose 12% in the first half of 1958 and another 12% by the end of 1959.[112] Despite these increases, the lack of available consumer goods had a negative impact on the public's perception of the country's economic well-being and therefore, its government's legitimacy. The 1960s were dominated by the attempt to develop an economic system that would continue to foster growth in the industrial sector, but that would raise living standards and put products on the shelves of East German stores as well.[113] In 1959 in order to align the East Germany economy with that of the Soviet Union, the second Five Year Plan was interrupted in order to inaugurate a Seven Year Plan (1959-65). This plan explicitly sought to match West German productivity and per capita consumption levels,

[112] Weber, *Geschichte der DDR*, 255, 268-9.
[113] Williamson, *Germany from Defeat to Partition*, 97.

attempting to exceed these levels by 85% before the end of 1961. Such goals were unrealistic to say the least. Not only was the Seven Year Plan unable to meet them, the GDR suffered a recession from 1959-60.[114]

By 1962 the Seven Year Plan was acknowledged to be a failure and abandoned, and in 1963 at the Sixth SED Party Congress the more liberal New Economic System of Planning and Administration (*Neue Ökonomische System der Planung und Leitung* or NÖSPL) was introduced. The NÖSPL was an attempt to reform the plan-based approach of economic planning by focusing more on incentives for individual workers and greater autonomy for individual economic agencies, taking power away from the government's administrative planning body, the State Planning Commission. The new system was largely successful, raising productivity 13% by the end of 1965. However the SED was not pleased with the fact that the new system was predicated in part on weakening their administrative power. This, plus the pressure to integrate the East German economy with that of the Soviet Union, led to a reform of the NÖSPL in 1965. The system's name was shortened to the New Economic System (*Neue Ökonomische System* or NÖS) and reorganized so as to restore power to the State Planning Commission.[115] Despite these changes, the NÖS, which remained in place until 1971, strengthening the GDR economy and leading to unprecedented growth in the second half of the 60s, a period sometimes called the "second German economic miracle." Heavy industry, for example, grew rapidly throughout the late 60s and household consumption rose by 24% from 1965 to 1970. The percentage of East Germans who owned a television rose by a factor of four during the 1960s, from 16.7% in 1960 to 69.1% in 1970;

[114] Weber, *Geschichte der DDR*, 270-1, 291. 320
[115] Weber, *Geschichte der DDR*, 321-3. The pressure to conform the GDR economy to that of the Soviet Union was a result of East Germany's membership in the COMECON, the Eastern Bloc's economic organization.

car ownership rose from 3.2% to 15.6% during the same period.[116] By the end of the 60s, the East German economy was, along with the Soviet Union's, the strongest in the Eastern Bloc.

The push to make changes to the NÖSPL despite its success provides evidence of the inherent contradictions in the SED's approach to governance. The June 1953 uprising had shown definitively that Ulbricht needed to foster economic growth in order to maintain his power monopoly. However, the liberalizing reforms and greater flexibility that such growth required was viewed as an erosion of that power. Thus, there arose a conflict between Ulbricht and the SED's effort to promote security and prosperity, and the concurrent effort to maintain total and absolute political, economic and social control over the GDR. This was evident when, for example, the government's continual consolidation of its own power served to limit the efficacy of first the NÖSPL, then the NÖS, a move which, along with the pressures to conform to Soviet models, ultimately thwarted true economic growth. In the end, the SED was concerned more with its own well being than with that of its citizens, and thus any attempts to improve the economy were undermined by attempts to secure its own dominance. However, even despite such limitations, the GDR economy was a relatively successful one, not only in terms of the COMECON countries but also on a global scale. Indeed the GDR's economic growth in the 1960s led to increased international recognition when, in a blow to the Hallstein Doctrine, the country received an official visit from Egyptian diplomats in 1965.[117] Regardless, the country's economy remained unimpressive when measured against West Germany's, and unfortunately for the GDR government, this was the only comparison that mattered.

[116] Dennis, *The Rise and Fall of the German Democratic Republic*, 120.
[117] Weber, *Geschichte der DDR*, 322-3, 344, 331-2.

The Development of the GDR Building Economy: The Plattenbau

The GDR's two primary goals during the Ulbricht era were to outpace the Federal Republic—first of all economically, but also socially and culturally—and also to forge a unique and autonomous East German identity. These goals were, however, in conflict. West Germany's domination of the global market, from which East Germany was largely excluded, meant there was virtually no way the GDR could compete economically with the Federal Republic.[118] Moreover, in attempting to beat West Germany at its own game, the GDR was essentially defining itself in relation to West Germany and was thus working against the formation of distinct or autonomous national identity. This contradictory approach characterized architecture and planning in East Germany in the 1960s as well. While economic concerns were allowed to dictate architectural style (or lack thereof), the search for an aesthetic that would symbolize and express the values of socialism was, especially in the late 60s, deemed a central concern. In short, the importance of keeping building costs low ultimately interfered with efforts to develop or implement any kind of national style, and indeed this push-pull relationship between economic and aesthetic concerns would characterize the East German building economy throughout its existence. In the end, it was economic pressures that would win out, and the prefabricated *Plattenbauten* that came to dominate the GDR's architectural landscape provided undeniable proof of the SED's obsessive attention to the bottom line.

As part of the series of reforms related to the NÖSPL (and later the NÖS), a new emphasis was placed on the development of rationalized production methods and new technologies designed to increase production. Moreover, in order to help the GDR in achieving its economic goals, Ulbricht brought economic and scientific experts into the

[118] Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 183; Williamson, *Germany from Defeat to Partition*, 98.

SED's inner circles, even promoting some of them to the Central Committee and Politburo. These specialists worked to expand the country's technological infrastructure so that, despite the lack of raw materials and labor power, productivity could be increased. In 1955, Khrushchev delivered a speech on building policy that was published in East Germany under the title "Building Better, Cheaper and Faster" ("*besser, billiger und schneller bauen*"), which helped to encourage the shift towards industrialized building methods and the move away from the neoclassical aesthetics that had characterized architecture in the Soviet Union and GDR in the late 1940s and early 50s.[119]

The prefabricated construction methods that produced the *Plattenbau*[120] were a result of this push toward rationalization and standardization of the building industry. Industrialized building was attractive because, as in other sectors of the economy, prefabrication and similarly mechanized modes of production reduced overall building costs and compensated for the GDR's high labor costs and lack of advanced infrastructure.[121] By 1965, well over half of the buildings in East Germany were made from prefabricated materials and by 1985, 83% of the building economy was industrialized.[122] Indeed, the GDR would continue to produce these *Plattenbauten* throughout the 1970s and 80s in ever increasing numbers, despite the intense and almost universal criticism of the buildings which began virtually from the

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[119] Christine Hannemann, *Die Platte: Industrialisierter Wohnungsbau in der DDR* (Berlin: Vieweg & Sohn Verlag, 1996), 56, 58. At the 21st USSR Communist Party Congress in 1961, Khrushchev again stressed the importance of science and technology to the social and economic development of Eastern Bloc countries. (Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 195.)

[120] The word "*Platten*" (plates) refers to the pre-cast concrete slabs with which these apartment buildings were constructed.

[121] Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 195; Williamson, *Germany from Defeat to Partition*, 98. This shortage of labor in the construction industry was partly a result of the way GDR economy was structured: while some economic sectors, such as the chemical and later microelectronic industries, were given special consideration and favored status, others, including the construction industry, were left wanting. (Hannemann, *Die Platte*, 59.)

[122] Hannemann, *Die Platte*, 22. In her book on the *Plattenbau*, urban sociologist Christine Hannemann defines an industrialized building economy as one in which the majority of building materials are fabricated in factories rather than on the building site and where plans are selected from a few predetermined configurations. (Hannemann, *Die Platte*, 24-5.)

moment the first unit was constructed. Ultimately, despite the SED's efforts to make use of the built environment of East Berlin as the chief visual expression of GDR national identity, the *Plattenbau* would instead fulfill this role, especially after 1989.

As in the 1950s, building activity in the 60s concentrated on residential construction, partly because of a housing shortage, which persisted despite the country's loss of population to western emigration.[123] This was in part because the East German building industry was handicapped by the expense and dearth of raw materials and skilled labor, and thus could not meet construction quotas. At the same time, an aging and still-war torn housing stock made the need for meeting such quotas of the utmost importance. In 1961, one third of East Germany's housing stock still did not have running water, only every fortieth dwelling had central heating, and 64.7% of the total housing stock dated to before 1918. Of course, the race to build housing and fulfill construction quotas was was also tied to the effort to out perform West Germany.[124] Moreover, housing construction was in the GDR closely tied to social politics, giving it an added symbolic and ideological significance.[125]

Certainly the ability to provide housing is one of the most basic requirements for any government, particularly one that wants to instill confidence in its citizens and establish its legitimacy. In the GDR, the construction of housing was specifically tied to what had been called the "social question" ("*Die Soziale Frage*"), that is, the issue of how best to order the modern industrial society for the health and well-being of its inhabitants, including and especially in terms of housing. The "social question" is what of course had preoccupied

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[123] Harald Michel and Volker Schulz, "Von der 'Stalinallee' zur DDR-Plattenbausiedlung. Anmerkungen zur Wohnungs- und Städtebaupolitik in Berlin-Brandenburg seit 1949," in *Schaufenster der Systemkonkurrenz: die Region Berlin-Brandenburg im Kalten Krieg*, ed. Michael Lemke (Cologne: Bohlau, 2006), 222.
[124] Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 194, 187-8; David M. Smith, "The Socialist City," in *Cities after Socialism: Urban and Regional Change and Conflict in Post-Socialist Societies*, ed. Gregory Andrusz, Michael Harloe, and Ivan Szelenyi, Studies in Urban and Social Change (Oxford; Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), 71-2.
[125] Hannemann, *Die Platte*, 19.

political leaders and scholars in Western Europe and particularly in Germany since the advent of industrialization in the nineteenth century. It was a primary focus of the late-nineteenth-, early-twentieth-century "Big City Debates" and the subject of Friedrich Engels' *The Conditions of the English Working Class in 1844* (1844), a book which had been influential in the development of socialist theory. Because the "social question" was closely bound with the "housing question" ("*Die Wohnungsfrage*"), housing policy was in postwar East Germany framed as the government's response to the challenges of the modern, specifically urban, community. Whereas in the late nineteenth century, it was argued, unchecked capitalist speculation had resulted in the construction of the infamous *Mietskasernen*, in the GDR socialist planning and construction methods would provide the working class with quality housing. In addition, the construction of high-rise developments (rather than for example detached, single-family homes) would foster "socialist communal-living" ("*sozialistisches Gemeinschaftleben*"), in contrast to the abject conditions and alienating existence that characterized life in the *Mietskasernen*.[126]

The construction of housing was therefore framed as the construction of community, both in a literal and figurative sense. As part of this effort to construct socialist community, many of the earliest housing developments in the GDR were built in the new towns and cities that had been established around state factory concerns. In 1955, for example, the "second socialist city" of Hoyerswerda was founded around the country's lignite processing facility (*Braunkohlenkombinat* or "*Schwarze Pumpe*"), and resulted in the construction of enough *Plattenbau* housing, leisure and cultural facilities to support a population of over 40,000.[127]

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[126] *Deutsche Architektur* 10 (1960): 2. Quoted in Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 188.
[127] Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 148. The GDR's "first socialist city" was Stalinstadt, founded around the state iron works (*Eisenhüttenkombinat*) in the early 1950s and, after "de-Stalinization," renamed Eisenhüttenstadt. (Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 93ff.)

In Hoyerswerda, as in the new developments in other factory towns, housing was tied to employment in the factory. In other words, in order to be granted housing in one of the factory-adjacent developments, one had to be a factory employee. Unlike in, for example, the Federal Republic where the bulk of high-rise housing constructed in the 1960s was built around major cities, in the GDR the majority of *Plattenbauten* were constructed in these remote factory towns or on the outskirts of middle- and small-sized cities.[128]

Though architects experimented with a number of different approaches to prefabricated building in the 1950s, the Experimental Building Type P2, developed in 1960-1, became the preferred *Plattenbau* type in the GDR until the 1970s. Created by architects from the (East) German Building Academy's (*Deutsche Bauakademie*) Institute for Structural Engineering, Experimental Building Type P2 (Wilfried Stallknecht and Achim Felz, 1960-1; Figure 36) was innovative in that its constituent pre-cast concrete slabs or *Platten* could be rearranged to produce apartment buildings of various configurations.[129] The individual apartments in the Type P2 buildings were relatively small, the smallest measuring only 20 by 40 feet, but to maximize the usable space, moveable walls and partitions were included, as was furniture specially designed for these units (Figure 37).[130] As a building type, the P2 was appealing of course because it could be cheaply and efficiently mass-produced but, in addition to this, these dwellings represented an improvement over existing housing conditions. Each unit was, for example, equipped with central heating, running water and indoor toilets, amenities that were conspicuously absent from the pre-war *Mietskasernen*

[128] Hannemann, *Die Platte*, 23-4. The one exception was, of course, East Berlin, where some *Plattenbau* developments were constructed in the inner-city areas, for example on Karl-Marx-Allee (formerly Stalinallee).
[129] Reestablished in 1951, the German Building Academy was East Germany's central institution for architectural research, scholarship, and education. The Academy was of course based on the early version that was founded in the nineteenth century. (Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 65-6.)
[130] Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 196-8; Frieder Sieber and Hans Fritsche, *Bauen in der DDR* (Berlin: Huss Medien, 2006), 29.

(also known as "old construction" or "*Altbau*") in which most East Germans lived. Reflecting their importance in regards to GDR social politics, the Type P2 and other *Plattenbauten* were also heralded in official discourse as the housing that would usher in a new way of life for East Germans. The apartments' small size, for example, was tied in official discourse to this new, socialist lifestyle: since husbands and wives would both be working, children would be in all-day schools and life in general would be lived as part of a community rather than in the private sphere, large dwellings, it was argued, would not be necessary.[131] The small size of the units was also, however, a cost-cutting measure, and indeed the average size of apartments in the new *Plattenbau Siedlungen* (*Plattenbau* developments) was continually reduced throughout the 1970s and 80s.[132]

Throughout the early to mid-1960s, the Type P2 and buildings like it were used in a number of large-scale housing developments, such as those in the "*Neustadt*" ("new-city") district of Halle, in the "socialist city" of Schwedt, as well as in continuing construction in Hoyerswerda and on Karl-Marx-Allee (formerly Stalinallee)[133] in East Berlin (Figure 38). Even as the buildings' numbers grew, however, the GDR's architectural community protested against *Plattenbau* construction and the proliferation of the "radical standardization" ("*radikale Standardisierung*") processes that produced them.[134] Architects argued that too much attention had been paid to economic factors alone with little regard for aesthetic concerns or contemporary discussions of architectural style. Though then, as now, the *Plattenbauten* were often viewed in the West as variations on postwar Modernism, in the

[131] Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 197.
[132] The average dwelling size in new construction in the GDR was 721 square feet in 1967 and 581 square feet in 1989. (Hannemann, *Die Platte*, 68.)
[133] Stalinallee was renamed Karl-Marx-Allee in 1961.
[134] Hannemann, *Die Platte*, 63. Not only the GDR's architects, but some members of the government also criticized the *Plattenbau* constructions. (Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 184.)

GDR they were viewed, not as a fulfillment of Germany's modernist heritage, but as a betrayal of it. For example, in the journal of the German Architect's League (*Bund deutscher Architekten*), *German Architecture* (*Deutsche Architektur*), engineers Bernhard Geyer and Hubertus Hoffmann wrote:

> We young architects are particularly disappointed by the architectural developments of our republic, which lags behind those of other socialist countries as well as Western countries. When one considers that in the 20s and early 30s Germany was the country of modern architecture, this is particularly regrettable.[135]

Indeed, Modernism was seen as a way to *avoid* the "monotony" of prefab construction. In 1960 Bruno Flierl, young editor-in-chief of *German Architecture*, held up Lucio Costà and Oscar Niemeyer's designs for Brasilia (1957-60) as models for the planned redesign of East Berlin's central district, advocating a move away from stark, rectilinearity in architectural design. Indeed, partly encouraged by the cultural thaw following Khrushchev's anti-Stalin declaration, discourse around architectural style and planning approaches was relatively open and critical in the early 1960s. Many architects argued that the GDR be allowed to learn from developments in the West, claiming that such influence would allow them to bring out the "artistic character" of architecture. At its "First Theoretical Conference" in 1960, the Building Academy passed a resolution permitting the Western influence in the realm of urban planning and architecture, so long as buildings retained a "socialist countenance" ("*sozialistische Antlitz*").[136]

While their criticisms of the *Plattenbau* were certainly merited, architects were no doubt also reacting to the marginalization of their profession in the GDR, which had also

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[135] *Deutsche Architektur* 10 (1962): 602. Quoted in Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 200. In fact there was some connection between *Plattenbau* and Modernism or *Neues Bauen*. In both the 1920s and 1950s-60s, industrialized building methods were seen as a way of alleviating social problems brought on by modernism, as in the social housing constructed in Berlin under Martin Wagner. (Hannemann, *Die Platte*, 21.)
[136] Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 189-91, 184-5.

been a factor in the industrialization of the building economy. Beginning immediately after the war, the government had placed architecture and planning activities under the aegis of a few government institutions like the Ministry of Building and the Institute for City- and High-Rise Building (*Institut für Städtebau und Hochbau*). The influence and importance of individual architects and architectural firms gradually eroded in the face of the increasing centralization of political power and de-privatization of national industry, and architects became little more than project managers or "coordinators of the design process."[137] One result of this was the continuing separation in the East German building economy between the economic planning and construction (*Planen und Bauen*) sectors and those sectors concerned with architecture and urban planning (*Architektur und Städtebau*), a split which was exacerbated by the need to build cheaply and quickly.[138] Moreover, because building functioned almost exclusively in service of economic and social policy, there was little regard for how new developments fit within larger urban plans or the built environment as a whole.[139] The installation of a former member of the State Planning Commission as president of the Building Academy and other similar administrative changes helped ensure that fewer aesthetic and theoretical discussions took place in the GDR, and that what discussions did take place had little effect on what was built.

Not surprisingly, as the East German building economy took shape in the 1960s, it reflected the contradictions and problems of the economy as a whole. The focus on the quantity rather than quality of new construction undermined questions of style, and the need

[137] Hannemann, *Die Platte*, 52-3. This was in keeping with the third of the Sixteen Principles, which stipulated: "The determination for and validation of urban-image (*städtebildenden*) factors is the exclusive province of the government." ("Die Sechzehn Grundsätze des Städtebaues," 39-40.)
[138] Bruno Flierl, "Das Kulturhaus in der DDR," in *Gebaute DDR: Über Stadtplaner, Architekten und die Macht: Kritische Reflexionen 1990-1997* (Berlin: Verlag für Bauwesen, 1998), 54, 59; Hannemann, *Die Platte*, 52-3.
[139] Hannemann, *Die Platte*, 23-4.

for flexibility and reform in the building industry was overcome by the SED's efforts to retain absolute power. What centralized power and planning meant for East German architecture was an ever more monolithic building economy, configured more and more towards the production of a single building type. After a certain point, the GDR building economy did nothing but churn out *Plattenbauten*, even as criticism of these buildings mounted and calls for the preservation of *Altbau* grew louder. Consider, for example, the fate of the Type P2 *Plattenbau*: despite significant technical and aesthetic problems, Type P2 buildings, initially planned for a five-year production run, were constructed in various forms from 1966 to 1990 in virtually every city in East Germany, eventually representing 17% of the country's total housing stock.[140]

In one sense, the *Plattenbau* was indeed meant to express GDR national identity, though not in terms of style. Rather, the "rationalized" building processes that produced it were meant to reflect the modernized and advanced state of GDR society, while the "socialist communal living" it supposedly encouraged and symbolized was to reflect the SED's concern for its citizens. However in the 1980s and especially after the end of the GDR, the *Plattenbau* would arguably come to be considered the primary expression of the East German architectural *aesthetic*. Particularly after the huge Housing Construction Program of the 1970s and 80s resulted in thousands more of these buildings, the monochrome, unadorned and poorly-built structures would come to be viewed as stark emblems of the failures and inadequacy of the East German system in particular, and of communism in general.

Constructing National Identity in East Berlin, Capital of the GDR

In terms of a visual aesthetic it was not the *Plattenbau*, but the design and style of the buildings in East Berlin, that were meant to express the values and ideals of East Germany.

[140] Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 196-7; Sieber and Fritsche, *Bauen in der DDR*, 29.

As in the immediate postwar period, during the late 1950s and 1960s the government continued to rely on the construction of its capital to forge a sense of national identity. Until its collapse in 1990, the GDR government focused its full attention and most of its resources on East Berlin, exempting it from many of the administrative, fiscal and aesthetic inadequacies that plagued the rest of the country's building economy and built environment. Eventually in the 1970s, the city became the measure of what the GDR—its government and, to some degree, its citizens—wished or imagined the country to be, rather than what it was.

In the 1960s, however, the grand designs created for East Berlin were only partially realized, since the country's assets could not afford to be siphoned off in the service of individual prestige projects. From the National Construction Program in the 1950s to the preparations for the 1969 celebration of the GDR's twentieth anniversary, a number of different plans were created, specifically for the redesign of East Berlin's historic and geographic center: the *Mitte* district. Though these plans were realized only in fits and starts, by the end of the 1960s, East Berlin's central district bore the unmistakable imprint of this effort to construct an autonomous, national identity for the GDR. Indeed through these plans, East Berlin's urban identity was redefined but also made synonymous with East German national identity. By the time Ulbricht was deposed in 1971, he had partially-realized his vision of a pristine, heroic and technologically modern city, and thus country. However this future-oriented vision of East Berlin contrasted sharply with East Germans' present and the realities of their daily life in the GDR.

The question of East Berlin's status vis-à-vis the rest of East Germany after 1961 was a somewhat ambiguous one, though less so than in West Berlin/West Germany given the geographic proximity between East Berlin and its affiliated country. During the period of

occupation, the Soviet Union had integrated East Berlin into East Germany despite the protestations of the West, though the city was not officially made part of the GDR. East Berlin's representatives in the *Volkskammer* (People's Chamber) were not allowed direct votes, but like their counterparts in the Federal Republic's *Bundestag*, served only in an advisory capacity. In addition, East Germany's national laws did not automatically apply to East Berlin, but had to be formally accepted by the city's governing body, the Magistrate (*Magistrat*). Foot and vehicle traffic going between East Berlin and East Germany were even monitored until the late 1960s.[141]

Despite this formal division, East Berlin's role in the GDR and its government's position in regards to the "other" Berlin were reinforced by its official status as the capital. In the West, officials made the claim that West Berlin existed only as a result of GDR aggression and that Berlin's division was moreover temporary. Though West Berlin was of course closely connected to the Federal Republic and both West Berlin and West Germany were framed as continuations of the positive aspects of pre-war German history, the GDR's closure of the border and division of the city was presented in the West as a *break* in the historical continuity of Berlin, a break that could only be repaired with the restoration of the city as the capital of a united Germany and the destruction of the powerful and unforgettable symbol of that aggression: the Berlin Wall.[142] West Germany furthermore avoided dealing with Berlin's divided status by separating it politically from the Federal Republic and making Bonn a "provisional" capital.

In contrast in East Germany, the government used the opposite approach to

[141] From 1981, East Berlin's representatives were voting members in the *Volkskammer,* and from 1976 GDR laws applied automatically to East Berlin. (Ribbe, *Berlin 1945-2000*, 89-90.)
[142] This argument is implicit in, for example, the SPK's references to the "coming reunification" in their discussions of the State Library in West Berlin.

communicate the same message. To assert its legitimacy, the GDR government made East Berlin the capital of East Germany, officially referring to it simply as "Berlin, Capital of the GDR" ("*Berlin, Hauptstadt der DDR*") or, even "Capital City Berlin" ("*Hauptstadt Berlin*").[143] This of course implied that there was no other Berlin and no other German capital, but it was also a way to argue that East Germany was the result of the uninterrupted progression of German history. By continually reinforcing the capital status of East Berlin through the use of the phrase "Berlin, Capital of the GDR," the government was providing a constant reminder that *its* capital was also the *historic* capital of the German nation and since the late nineteenth century, its most important city. In so doing, the GDR was again asserting its own importance, in this case in relation to Germany's pre-war history, but also attempting to discredit West Germany and its capital of Bonn, a small town which before 1949 had had limited historical, cultural or political significance. Because of its political function, East Berlin continued to be at the center of East Germany's political, social and economic life in the 1960s, as it had been in the 50s. Like West Berlin, East Berlin was considered a showcase city, a site for the display of East Germany's various achievements, and for this reason the city received more financial support from the government than other cities in the GDR. For example, consumer and luxury products, scarce elsewhere, could be found in East Berlin's shops, and the bulk of the country's industrial production was located in and around the city.[144]

The importance of East Berlin reflected the general importance of cities within East

[143] Ribbe, *Berlin 1945-2000*, 90. Whenever the city is mentioned in official documents, for example, it is always referred to as "*Berlin, Hauptstadt der DDR*." For a discussion of the various names for Berlin, East and West, and their political connotations, see the Appendix, "Nomenclature: East and West Berlin."

[144] Häußermann and Strom, "Berlin: The Once and Future Capital," 339; Ribbe, *Berlin 1945-2000*, 136-8. In fact, so much attention and resources were given to East Berlin that the GDR's other major cities languished as a result. This trend intensified in the 1980s, when the activities related to the 750th anniversary of Berlin meant that even more of what little capital the country had was diverted away from other East German cities and poured into the capital. (Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 235, 291.)

German political and architectural discourse. The GDR's centralized planning apparatus, along with the fact that the state owned and controlled the land, meant that what city planning was undertaken was more holistic than in capitalist countries, conceived of in terms of large-scale developments rather than composed of individual projects that were built and financed one at a time. Cities were conceived of in their entirety and, on a national scale, they were planned in relation to one another around the idea of "communities of cities."[145] In 1952, cities additionally became the nodes around which the country was *administratively* organized, when the map of East Germany was redrawn to create fourteen districts or *Bezirke*, each named after its largest city, such as *Bezirk Leipzig* and *Bezirk Dresden*. The largest and most important city within this community of cities was of course East Berlin and, in terms of design and planning, the capital was designated the model on which the other major cities were to base their own physical, social and economic development.[146] The idea that architecture and planning initiatives realized in or planned for East Berlin were to be emulated was, however, more a conceit than an achievable reality. The special considerations that stocked store shelves and lowered unemployment rates in East Berlin benefited its building economy as well. The high visibility and political importance of construction projects in the GDR capital meant that there was often little or no shortage of skilled labor or building materials in East Berlin as there was in the rest of East Germany, nor were financial considerations as divorced from aesthetic ones.[147]

In architecture and planning discourse, the political, economic and cultural importance of East Berlin was furthermore expressed through the importance placed on the

[145] Smith, "The Socialist City," 72. It is important to note that high-rise housing developments similar to those in East Germany were also constructed in West Germany and West Berlin throughout the 1960s. See Chapter 3, "Architecture, Building and Social Critique."
[146] Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 187.
[147] Hannemann, *Die Platte*, 59.

urban "center" and on "centrality." Berlin as a whole was inside the Eastern zone and, in addition to this, the geographic, historic and cultural center of Berlin, the *Mitte* district, was in East Berlin. Moreover, the administrative buildings for all of the GDR's main political institutions—the *Volkskammer*, SED headquarters, and government ministries—were located in the traditional government district within *Mitte*. This meant that, in claiming that the center was the most important part of any city or nation, the GDR was simultaneously making claim for its own importance, as within it was located the center of Berlin, and Berlin itself, a historical center. Indeed, such was the importance of East Berlin that its urban identity became conflated with the national identity of the country as a whole. The capital, particularly its historic center, was the place in which the GDR government, in the words of architect Bruno Flierl, "spatially stage[d] socialist centrality." In short, East Berlin was where the country's values and ideals were expressed.[148]

Within East German architectural policy, the "center" (*Das Zentrum*) was first given importance in the "Sixteen Principles of Urban Planning" (1950) wherein it is designated "the political focal point" of life in the GDR and the site of the city's "most important and most monumental buildings."[149] However, even after the influence of the "Sixteen Principles" waned, the urban center (and the city itself) remained a spatial and thematic focal point around which the literal and figurative construction of the GDR was organized. In part because of the importance of the "center," East Berlin's *Mitte* district was the focus of

[148] Bruno Flierl, "Der Zentrale Ort in Berlin--Zur Räumlichen Inszenierung Sozialistischer Zentralität," in *Gebaute DDR: Über Stadtplaner, Architekten und die Macht: Kritische Reflexionen 1990-1997* (Berlin: Verlag für Bauwesen, 1998), 121.
[149] "Die Sechzehn Grundsätze des Städtebaues," 42-3.

reconstruction plans in the 1950s, 60s and beyond.[150] Furthermore, the most important structure within this important district would be the so-called "Central Building" ("Zentrale Gebaude"), a government administrative building that was to be built near the Museum Island.[151] A series of designs, executed from the early 1950s to the late 1960s proposed a variety of plans for the Central Building as well as the district around it, from Alexanderplatz to the Brandenburger Tor. Moreover, in the early to mid-1950s, the National Construction Program had provided for the restoration of many of the historic buildings along Unter den Linden, and connected the entire district to the "socialist street" of Stalinallee.

In the late 1950s, partly in response to the "*Hauptstadt* Berlin" competition sponsored by the Federal Republic, the GDR's leading architects presented new designs for this central area. In these designs, "centrality" is interpreted in terms of "monumentality" and the Central Building is imagined as an impossibly huge, high-rise structure, as in Gerhard Kosel's 1958 design for the central building (Figure 33). However in his own 1958-9 plan, Berlin City Architect Hermann Henselmann offered an alternative vision of this central district and the Central Building (Figure 34). Created as a critique of Building Academy president Gerhard Kosel's 1958 design, Henselmann's plan includes not just government administration buildings, museums and monuments, but shopping, entertainment and leisure venues. Henselmann's designs and the overall aesthetic presented in his 1958-9 plan would ultimately prove most influential on the finished redesign of this area. His own *Haus des Lehrers* (Teachers' House), a community and education center, was built near Alexanderplatz in

[150] In terms of architectural discourse in the GDR, the importance of inner-city areas waxed and waned in importance throughout the 1950s-80s. In regards to what was actually built however, most development took place on the outskirts of cites and so, as in every other regard, the reconstruction of the *Mitte* district in East Berlin was an exception to the rule.

[151] For a complete discussion of the designs for the Central Building and the eventual construction of the Palace of the Republic, see Chapter 3, "The Palace of the Republic: The Central Building."

1961-4 and was clearly influenced by the United Nations Headquarters Building (New York; Wallace Harrison and Max Abramovitz, 1947-50).

As the twentieth anniversary of the GDR's founding approached, plans for the *Mitte* district took on increased significance. The redesign of the district around the Alexanderplatz train station, including the construction of a high-rise hotel and shopping center (1967-70), and the construction of the TV Tower (*Fernsehturm*; Fritz Dieter, Günter Franke, Werner Ahrendt, after an idea by Herman Henselmann, 1965-69) were both related to the 1969 celebration (Figure 35). These projects cast East Berlin as the capital of a modern, technologically advanced society, proof of the GDR's superiority to the West but also of the SED's political legitimacy and efficacy as a ruling power.[152]

Indeed particularly in the late 1960s, the GDR government made great strides in forging a wholly new urban identity for East Berlin and, as an extension of this, a wholly new national identity for the citizens of the GDR. Though throughout the 1960s, economic difficulties continued to interfere with the realization of many of the government's grandest schemes, by the 1969 celebration of the country's twentieth anniversary, the SED had clearly left its imprint on Berlin's *Mitte* district. In sharp contrast to the architectural approach of the 1950s, exemplified by Stalinallee, architecture and building in the GDR in the 1960s avoided any historical allusions as well as excessive decorative motifs. Indeed, the effort to create an urban identity for East Berlin that was radically new and different echoed the Western approach to architecture and planning evident in, for example, Interbau. However unlike in the West where the supposedly "new" urban identity constructed for West Berlin was based

[152] Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 260. The TV Tower was also hailed because on a practical level, it provided a much-needed boost in TV signal strength, granting greater access to both East German and West German television programming. (Peter Müller, *Symbol mit Aussicht: Der Berliner Fernsehturm* (Berlin: Verlag Bauwesen, 2000), 19.)

on historical precedents, specifically the architects and styles of *Neues Bauen*, in the East any connections to the past styles or to the West were disavowed.

By doggedly focusing on technology, modernization and the creation of a idealized future that was only just out of reach, the government was insisting that the problems of the past had been overcome, and that all was well in the GDR. However it was clear to East Germans that this was not the case, and they struggled with what Stefan Wolle describes as, "the irreconcilable contradiction between economic rationality and political claims to power."[153] Though the unified aesthetic of central East Berlin seemed to suggest a cohesive sense of national identity, from the perspective of the country's citizens, such a collectively shared and understood notion of *Heimat*-GDR was in the 1960s only beginning to coalesce.

Defining Heimat-*GDR*

Whereas in the Federal Republic a strong affinity for American culture and values had helped in the formation of a sense of West German identity, in the GDR the lack of any similarly polarizing force had resulted in the slower development of East German identity. Economic troubles and the tumult of the 1953 uprising had also worked against the formation of a national identity that was embraced by the population as a whole. The Wall, however, had meant the resolution of the "Berlin Question" as well as, for the time being, the "German question," and had also neutralized the Western threat that was the nominal excuse for the SED's tight control of individual expression. The economic reforms of the NÖSPL and relatively liberal policies that followed "de-Stalinization" further served to encourage a burgeoning sense of hope for the future on the part of the GDR population.[154] However, as

[153] Stefan Wolle, *Die Heile Welt der Diktatur: Alltag und Herrschaft in der DDR, 1971-1989* (Bonn: Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung, 1999), 32.
[154] The effects of "de-Stalinization" were slow to take hold in the GDR, in comparison with other Eastern Bloc countries because the SED wanted to retain as much political power as possible and so resisted the liberal reforms de-Stalinzation heralded. (Weber, *Geschichte der DDR*, 251.)

the 1960s progressed, this tentative optimism began to erode when it became clear that Walter Ulbricht and the SED were far more interested in retaining their own power than in effecting any real social change or economic improvement.

The government's increasingly hard-line policies and dogmatic rhetoric alienated even those East Germans who had been supporters of the regime and, as distrust of the SED deepened, East Germans began to forge their own sense of national identity that was related to, but distinct from official, party-sanctioned notions of *Heimat*-GDR.[155] In terms of East Berlin's urban identity, so important for defining national identity, the sleek and shiny vision of the city as reflected in the circa-1969 redesign of the *Mitte* district contrasted sharply with the image of East Berlin that, for example, was featured in the so-called "Berlin Films" of the 1950s-60s. In these films, created by director Gerhard Klein and writer Wolfgang Kohlhaase, East Berlin is defined not by new construction in the *Mitte* district or by the new housing on Stalinallee, but by the sense of community and belonging that is fostered in the small, pre-war dwellings of the *Mietskasernen*. An examination of the image of East Berlin as presented in these films, in particular *Berlin—Schönhauser Corner* (*Berlin—Ecke Schönhauser*, 1956) and *Berlin Around the Corner* (*Berlin um die Ecke*, 1965/1990),[156] will help to elucidate the role East Berlin played in the formation of an unofficial notion of *Heimat*-GDR. Specifically, the ambivalence on the part of East German citizens and their struggle to integrate party-sanctioned notions of *Heimat*-GDR with the more traditional notions as well as with their own, lived experience are reflected in these films.

In the period after the 1961 border closure, there was a sense of hope among East

[155] The scientist Robert Havemann, for example, was a member of the German Communist Party before World War II and was a member of the GDR *Volkskammer* from 1950-63. From 1956, however, he was also an outspoken critic of the SED and leader of the democratic-communist opposition within the GDR. (Weber, *Geschichte der DDR*, 336.)

[156] The two dates listed indicate when the film was made (e.g., 1965) and when it was first released (e.g., 1990).

Germans that a GDR-specific notion of *Heimat* could now be forged.[157] This hope was furthermore encouraged by the government, who insisted that, now that the Wall had secured peace, the real work of creating a socialist society could begin. As reflected in the theme for the SED's Sixth Party Congress in 1963, the construction of the Wall had, it was argued somewhat counterintuitively, had allowed for the "unbridled build-up of socialism" ("*umfassenden Aufbaues des Sozialismus*") and the party congress would accordingly be an opportunity for the public to demonstrate its clear sense of "national consciousness" ("*Nationalbewußtsein*"). However, in the wake of the 1953 uprising, most East Germans did not support or accept the SED regime, nor did they feel it reflected their needs or desires.[158] Despite this lack of support, particularly after the waning of political tensions and increased economic security of the early 1960s, East Germans began to reconcile themselves to their fate. It helped that most no longer thought of the dictatorship as synonymous with the country as a whole, but according to GDR historian Hermann Weber, began to carve out some degree of "personal freedom" ("*persönlicher Freiraum*") within the party-imposed social structure.[159]

In terms of cultural production, the mid-1950s to early 1960s were a time when artists tentatively experimented with ways to represent the GDR's new social order. Cinema in particular was deemed of central importance for public information and political education,

[157] A number of West German scholars wrote books during this time, which commented on the development of an East German identity that was distinct from that of West Germany. (Dennis, *The Rise and Fall of the German Democratic Republic*, 119.)

[158] Resistance to the regime did not end in 1953, though after this point any opposition was on a very small scale and was consisted primarily of passive resistance. The "Prague Spring" in Czechoslovakia and student protest movements in West Germany and France also encouraged an "ersatz-protest culture" in the GDR, wherein protest songs and books like Robert Merle's *Behind the Glass* (*Derrière la vitre*, 1970) garnered cult followings. (Hans-Hermann Hertle and Stefan Wolle, *Damals in der DDR: Der Alltag im Arbeiter- und Bauernstaat* (Munich: Wilhelm Goldmann Verlag, 2006), 194, 196; Weber, *Geschichte der DDR*, 229.)

[159] Weber, *Geschichte der DDR*, 243, 268. The 1960s in the GDR were also marked by the growth of those groups, such as the youth organization Free German Youth, through which the SED indoctrinated East German citizens and maintained its hegemony. (Mary Fulbrook, *Anatomy of a Dictatorship: Inside the GDR, 1949-1989* (Oxford, UK and New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 58ff.)

and thus the effort to create films that would reflect a shared notion of East German identity and society was important to the GDR government, as well as to the population as a whole. As in architectural circles where the issue of a national building style was in debate, filmmakers working for the state film concern, DEFA (*Deutsche Film Aktiengesellschaft*), negotiated the SED's strictures in an attempt to create depictions of modern East Germany that were realistic, relevant but also entertaining. For some, this meant making films that were critical of the government and its policies, though for the most part these critiques were not intended as a refutation of the socialist system. Rather, films like the later Berlin Films of Kohlhaase and Klein reflected the widespread hope for more openness and flexibility within GDR society and the socialist system. As film historian Joshua Feinstein has argued, "filmmakers had embarked on a process of developing images that would confirm East Germany as an independent society while challenging the regimes' vision of a land moving harmoniously toward the future."[160]

As we have seen, architecture and urban planning were central means of disseminating the officially-defined "*Heimat*-GDR," particularly in the context of the reconstruction of East Berlin. Films also became part of the effort to define *Heimat*, and, as in West Germany, a number of films produced by DEFA in the 1950s carried on the *Heimatfilm* tradition, updating the genre to reflect then-current notions of the term. Films, like *The Condemned Village* (*Das verurteilte Dorf*; Martin Hellberg, 1952) and *The Ox from Kulm* (*Der Ochse von Kulm*; Martin Hellberg 1955), dealt primarily with the threat of American influence and the need to protect the homeland against the physical, political and cultural incursion of the West. In such films, *Heimat* was not a temporally and spatially

[160] Joshua Feinstein, *The Triumph of the Ordinary: Depictions of Daily Life in the East German Cinema, 1949-1989* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 42-3, 21.

remote place as in West German *Heimatfilme*, but a specific location within East Germany, subject to then-contemporary political, social and economic developments. East German television also helped to define *Heimat*-GDR, and series such as "Songs of a Small Town" ("*Schlager einer kleinen Stadt*") showcased local customs in various parts of East Germany, situating regional identities within a shared national identity by redefining them in socialist terms.[161] Such films and television programs, though in line with party doctrine, were not necessarily viewed with contempt by the East German public. Many of the East German *Heimatfilme*, along with films that centered on socialist heroes such as Kurt Maetzig's films about the life of Ernst Thälmann (*Ernst Thälmann—Son of his Class*, 1954 and *Ernst Thälmann—Leader of his Class*, 1955) were approved by the SED but also enjoyed popular success.[162]

Given the importance of East Berlin and its urban identity in constructing East German identity, representations of the GDR capital are particularly revealing in terms of the struggle to define *Heimat*-GDR. In particular, the series of "Berlin Films" ("*Berlin-Filme*") created by director Gerhard Klein and writer Wolfgang Kohlhaase in the early 1950s to mid-1960s suggest both the importance of East Berlin in defining notions of *Heimat* and a growing ambivalence towards the government's attempt to control this definition. The first of the Berlin Films, *Alarm at the Circus* (*Alarm im Zirkus*, 1953) and *A Berlin Romance* (*Eine Berliner Romanze*, 1956) endorse or at least do not directly contradict the political and cultural values espoused by the East German government. The final two, however, are marked by an increasingly ambiguous relationship to official ideology. *Berlin—Schönhauser*

[161] The East German *Heimatfilme* of the 50s are examined in Thomas Lindenberger, "Home Sweet Home: Desperately Seeking Heimat in Early DEFA Films," *Film History* 18, no. 1 (2006). The program 'Songs of a Small Town' is discussed in Jan Palmowski, "Regional Identities and the Limits of Democratic Centralism in the GDR," *Journal of Contemporary History* 41, no. 3 (2006): 511ff.
[162] Feinstein, *The Triumph of the Ordinary*, 39.

Corner (*Berlin—Ecke Schönhauser*, 1957), focuses on a group of rebellious teenagers from the Prenzlauer Berg neighborhood, examining the difficulties each has in finding his or her place in East German society. The film was a huge popular success and was to be followed in 1965 by *Berlin Around the Corner* (*Berlin um die Ecke* 1965/1990), which tells a similar story, this time focusing on two young factory workers' similar attempts to fit themselves into East Germany's socialist vision. *Berlin Around the Corner* was banned along with eleven other DEFA films in 1965, but, as with *Berlin—Schönhauser Corner*, the film's portrait of the city is revealing in that it presents a sharp contrast to the gleaming vision of central East Berlin that was then under construction.

While historically the definition of *Heimat* relates to rural customs and traditions, the films of Klein and Kohlhaase offer an alternate though related definition, which is primarily urban. Klein, who died in 1970, and Kohlhaase were both born in Berlin, and their collaboration began early in their careers. With the Berlin Films, the two wanted to make films that took place in the streets where they had grown up, and in doing so were influenced by a "sense of responsbility for the future" that they felt prevailed in the postwar as well as, in terms of filmmaking, the Italian Neorealist style. As Kohlhaase later said, he and Klein attempted to "portray the reality of people's everyday lives," but also their dreams and aspirations.[163] Indeed, particularly in *Berlin—Schönhauser Corner* and *Berlin Around the Corner*, Klein and Kohlhaase use the narrative and formal conventions of urban-based film genres like Neorealism to examine the themes central to the *Heimatfilm*: belonging, identity and community, and the relationship of these to specifically German places. The notion of *Heimat* that emerges in these two films is much less self-assured or concrete than either

[163] Wolfgang Kohlhaase, "DEFA: A Personal View," in *DEFA: East German Cinema*, ed. Seán Allan and John Sandford (New York; Oxford, UK: Berghahn Books, 1999; reprint, 2003), 119, 124, 129.

official definitions of *Heimat*-GDR or those apparent in West German *Heimatfilme.*

Heimat in these films is both more discursive and less distinct, characterized by the search for a "homeland" rather than by its definition or delineation. The space of Berlin, and specific places within it, become instrumental in this search for identity. At the center of both *Berlin—Schönhauser Corner* and *Berlin Around the Corner* are young people who feel out of place in East German society. Angela (Ilse Pagé) and Dieter (Ekkehard Schall) in *Berlin—Schönhauser Corner* are each in conflict with figures of authority, her parents and his older brother, who scold the teenagers' for their rebellious behavior, but are themselves either unkind, hypocritical or both. Similarly, Olaf (Dieter Mann) and Horst (Kaspar Eichel) in *Berlin Around the Corner* are in constant conflict with both the older men at the factory where they work and party functionaries. Their inability and/or unwillingness to please figures of authority leads to the young peoples' disillusionment and to their sense of alienation from society, which is the central conflict of both films. Ultimately, the characters' struggle to define their role in relation to their friends and family as well as society as a whole, represents their attempt to establish for themselves their own sense of belonging and *Heimat*.

The way in which East Berlin is represented in these films reflects this conflict of belonging and identity. Following the neorealist aesthetic, these films use naturalistic lighting and camera angles, employ non-actors and on-location filming to create a "documentary feel."[164] Space in these films is on the one hand locatable and grounded in reality, but at the same time, individual shots suggest a certain lack of orientation or rootedness, particularly in

[164] Claus, "Rebels with a Cause," 104. As Joshua Feinstein points out, the use of Neo-Realist conventions represented a rejection of the government-endorsed style of Social Realism. Whereas Social Realism was supposed to depict of reality with uncritical optimism, Neo-Realism was associated with more "truthful" and gritty representations of everyday life. (Feinstein, *The Triumph of the Ordinary*, 56-8.)

Berlin Around the Corner. This later film begins with a distant, aerial shot of the inner city, then gradually zooms in to take us to a rooftop somewhere in Berlin. The action, as in *Berlin—Schönhauser Corner*, unfolds in and around *Mietskaserne* buildings in the former working-class districts where the characters live; however, in *Berlin Around the Corner* the specific center of the action is no longer designated by the eponymous mention of a particular locale. Instead, this Berlin is still becoming, "around the corner." Newer, postwar housing is shown only once in *Berlin Around the Corner*, when near the end of the film, shots of the apartment buildings on Stalinallee bookend the shots of the *Mietskasernen* that opened the film. Unlike the vision of East Berlin offered by the government in, for example, the redesigns for the *Mitte* district, the city in the Berlin Films is not wholly new or defined solely in terms of its future. Indeed, aspects of Berlin's reputation as established in the pre-war, in particular its notoriously rough-and-tumble street life to which some of the films's characters belong, are used to raise questions about life of East Germans in the 1960s.

Ultimately, any hopes inspired by the economic reforms announced in 1963 or by the limited liberalization that had followed de-Stalinization were dashed in 1965. In that year, the SED rolled back the economic reforms of the NÖSPL and cracked down on artistic expression at the Central Committee's Eleventh Plenum. In his speech on cultural reform, Party functionary Erich Honecker cited the influence of "Western immorality" on GDR culture, arguing that artists had "fail[ed] to realize that the effect of these works of art is...to hinder the development of socialist consciousness on the part of the working classes."[165] While Honecker included in his condemnation a wide variety of art forms including

[165] Erich Honecker, *Bericht des Politbüros an die 11. Tagung des Zentralkomitees der Sozialistischen Einheitspartei Deutschlands*, *15-18 December 1965 (*Berlin 1965), 56. Quoted in Seán Allen, "DEFA: An Historical Overview," in *DEFA: East German Cinema*, ed. Seán Allen and John Sandford (New York; Oxford, UK: Berghahn Books, 1999; reprint, 2003), 12-3.

literature, theater, and television, he targeted the film industry in particular, even mentioning two films by name.[166] In the so-called *Kahlschlag* or "clearing of the ground" that followed the speech, twelve DEFA films, almost an entire year's production, were banned.[167] The SED's unexpected about-face severely undermined public perception of the regime's legitimacy, and more or less put an end to any lingering doubts about its intentions. Though they continued to participate in the government's "political fiction," East Germans no longer believed in its willingness to realize its supposed goals.

Like their counterparts in East German architectural institutions, Klein and Kohlhaase, along with other filmmakers whose work was banned after the Eleventh Plenum, have argued that their intention was not to reject socialism, but instead to offer commentary and critique on the system as then practiced in the GDR. Though neither *Berlin—Schönhauser Corner* nor *Berlin Around the Corner* closes with a definitive resolution or "happy ending," both offer a more or less optimistic view of the future of East Germany and the characters' ability to find their place within it.[168] After a brief trip to a West Berlin refugee camp, Dieter decides to return to East Berlin at the end of *Berlin—Schönhauser Corner.* By the end of *Berlin Around the Corner,* Olaf has renounced his leather jacket, a well-known symbol of Western decadence, and in a voiceover, suggests that the GDR will soon resolve its economic problems. The shot of Stalinallee near the end *Berlin Around the Corner* represents the East Berlin that has not yet been realized but which nonetheless is just

[166] The two films Honecker mentioned were *I Am the Rabbit* (*Das Kaninchen bin Ich*, 1965) and *Just Don't Think I'm Crying* (*Denk bloß nicht, ich heule*, 1965). Because of the former, these banned films are now known as the "Rabbit Films."
[167] Film was likely targeted because of the importance relegated to it by GDR officials, who considered it the "most important of the arts," in line with Lenin's declaration of the same in 1922. In addition, the film industry was until this time less subject to government control than, for example, the television industry, which partly explains how these "subversive" films were allowed to be made at all. (Daniela Berghahn, "Film Censorship in a 'Clean State': The Case of Klein and Kohlhaase's *Berlin um die Ecke*," in *Censorship and Cultural Regulation in the Modern Age*, ed. Beate Müller, Critical Studies 22 (Amsterdam; New York: Rodopi, 2004), 113.)
[168] Berghahn, "Film Censorship in a 'Clean State'," 112, 125-6.

"around the corner."

Unlike *Heimatfilme* in West Germany, the Berlin Films and others like them do not establish definitive borders or social relations, nor do they attempt to naturalize the profound social changes of the postwar period. This is partly because of a distinctly different narrative and formal approach to both to *Heimatfilme* in the GDR as opposed to the Federal Republic. Klein's and Kohlhaase's Berlin Films as well as the earlier more conventional *Heimatfilme* in the GDR deal directly with contemporary issues like the postwar occupation and division of Germany. For example, as Thomas Lindberger has pointed out, the West German film *Green is the Heath* (1951) never references the presence of NATO troops in the Lüneburg Heath where it is set, and indeed explicitly avoids depicting those areas which were then in use by the forces of occupation.[169] In constrast, by self-consciously broaching the issue of Germany's and Berlin's divisions, East German films dealt directly with the negotiation of various borders, physical and otherwise, that these divisions necessitated. Indeed the daily negotiation of borders—between East and West Germany, between the individual and the collective, between region and nation—would become a defining factor in the GDR's "regime of borders."

By all accounts Klein's and Kohlhaase's notion of *Heimat*-GDR resonated with East German audiences, especially in *Berlin—Schönhauser Corner.* This film was a huge popular success and was in 1992 named by the director of the Potsdam film museum as one of the two films that best represented the idea of *Heimat* in East Germany.[170] The success of *Berlin—Schönhauser Corner* and of films like it suggests that East German audiences appreciated directors' and other artists' attempts to raise rather than answer important social

[169] Lindenberger, "Home Sweet Home," 50.
[170] Claus, "Rebels with a Cause," 102, 103-4; Feinstein, *The Triumph of the Ordinary*, 52. The film was sharply criticized by government officials after its theatrical run. (Feinstein, *The Triumph of the Ordinary*, 53.)

questions. Ironically, if allowed to continue, the debates generated by such films, as well as the discussions about architecture and urban planning, may very well have engendered the kind of socialist community that the GDR government attempted to impose using the *Plattenbau*. Instead, the feelings of betrayal and disillusionment after the Eleventh Plenum turned many against the very idea of socialism. In the case of architecture, *Plattenbauten* became a symbol of the East German government's attempt to impose, rather than foster community.

With their return to policies of repression, the SED relegated voices of debate and reform to the fringes of society. According to historian Hans-Hermann Hertle, it was after this that "the socialist ideal slowly began to die."[171] It was also at this point that the so-called "double consciousness" or "double life" of East Germans began to emerge. While East Germans continued to participate in the rituals of nationalism and patriotism, such as the annual celebration of the GDR's founding, they no longer believed that the government was either willing or able to realize its stated goals, or even that the government itself believed in these goals. In her study of history curriculum in East German, historian Sirkka Ahonen describes the phenomenon this way:

> ...in public, that is, in the media, at work, at trade union meetings, at school and so forth, one kept to the compulsory political rhetoric, while in private it was feasible to refer to one's genuine memory and information.[172]

While in public, for example, all agreed that the "state border" (*Staatsgrenze*) was a barrier against the incursion of the West and had secured peace for the GDR, lived experience told East Berliners that the Berlin Wall was a barrier built to keep them in. The double life of East Germans allowed them to profess values and goals that were inherently contradictory and

[171] Hertle and Wolle, *Damals in der DDR*, 197.
[172] Sirkka Ahonen, "A Transformation of History: The Official Representations of History in East Germany and Estonia, 1986-1991," *Culture & Psychology* 3, no. 1 (1997): 51.

sometimes even absurd and, in doing so, arguably helped in the formation of a national identity. East Germans' double consciousness provided a way to reject the oppressive SED-led government while still establishing a positive identity for themselves as well as a beloved *Heimat*-GDR.

In the 1960s, as in the 50s, West Germany and Berlin were initially more successful than the GDR at creating a built environment in Berlin that seemed to reflect, not only the shared values of its citizens, but the willingness and ability of the government to realize such goals. However, profound and far-reaching social and political changes, which were already beginning in the late 1960s, would change the relationship between the built environment and the articulation of national identities in both East and West. In West Berlin, the voices of those who felt left out of the vision represented by the State Library and *Kulturforum* began to use urban space to critique this vision, and the city came increasingly to be associated, not with mainstream but with radicalized values and ideals. In constrast, the GDR's Palace of the Republic represented a relatively successful attempt to create a positive symbol of national identity in East Berlin. In both cases, the changing political relationship between East and West was represented in these projects and in their reception, as both countries attempted simultaneously to reconcile and reassert their differences.

CHAPTER 3: PROSPERITY AND PROTEST: 1971-1980

New Leadership in the GDR and East-West Rapprochement

In May 1971 at the SED Central Committee's Sixteenth Plenum, Walter Ulbricht asked to be relieved of his duties as First Secretary of the Central Committee, an announcement which came as a surprise to the East German public. For his replacement, he endorsed Erich Honecker (1912-94), who had since 1958 been a member of the Politburo, a high-ranking member of the Central Committee, and generally acknowledged to be the Party's second in command. Just a month later Ulbricht did in fact resign, citing as his reason a wish to retire from public life. At the SED's Eighth Party Congress in June 1971, Honecker assumed Ulbricht's role at the head of the party, naming as his central goals the people's well-being ("*Wohls der Menschen*") and a focus on the "common man" ("*der klein Mann*").[1]

Though to many East Germans Ulbricht's announcement may have come as a surprise, those in the inner circles of government knew by early 1971 that change was imminent. Since the summer of 1970, Honecker had been maneuvering to depose Ulbricht and was supported in his efforts by the Soviet Union's General Secretary Leonid Brezhnev, who was displeased with Ulbricht for having moved the GDR too far outside the sphere of Soviet influence.[2] As the powers of East and West moved towards détente in the late 60s, Ulbricht had refused to take part in diplomatic talks with the West until the GDR had been granted international recognition on equal terms with West Germany, a stance which undermined that of the Soviet Union.[3] Ulbricht angered other Communist leaders in the region as well, by loudly and publicly claiming that the GDR was *the* most advanced country in the Eastern Bloc and that other socialist economies should be modeled after the East

[1] Weber, *Geschichte der DDR*, 267, 372-3.
[2] Dennis, *The Rise and Fall of the German Democratic Republic*, 125-6.
[3] Weber, *Geschichte der DDR*, 367.

Germany's. However these countries' leaders were well aware that, because of the Hallstein Doctrine, the GDR was dependent on them for its import and export market. With his posturing and boasting, Ulbricht had by 1970 succeeded in alienating both himself and East Germany from the other communist countries of Eastern Europe, including and especially the USSR.[4]

Upon assuming power Honecker worked to realign the GDR with the Soviet Union. Official Marxist-Leninist doctrine was, for example, re-written to follow more closely that of the Soviet Union and the import-export rate between the GDR and other Eastern Bloc countries was increased by 50% during the first five years of his rule.[5] Honecker made changes to the political administration of the GDR as well, purging the academics, economists and other specialists who had been installed in the party leadership by Ulbricht, and replacing them with party-loyal, career politicians. Furthermore, Honecker consolidated the SED's power by curtailing the independence of regional and low-level echelons of government, giving more control to the Central Committee. In addition, he reaffirmed the party's role in East German society ("*gesellschaftliches Leben*" or social life), arguing in 1974 that "[i]n terms of the increased role of the party in society, there is no alternative."[6] As part of his efforts to increase the SED's power, Honecker gave the Ministry for State Security (*Ministerium für Staatsicherheit*, or the Stasi) a more central role in his government.[7]

Though Honecker's regime was characterized by the increased control and power of the central government, his takeover also marked a period of cultural openness, at least initially. As part of realizing his goal of improving the daily lives of East Germans, for

[4] Dennis, *The Rise and Fall of the German Democratic Republic*, 130; Weber, *Geschichte der DDR*, 361, 363.
[5] Weber, *Geschichte der DDR*, 380, 393.
[6] *Neuer Weg* 29:5 (1974): 199. Quoted in Weber, *Geschichte der DDR*, 374.
[7] Weber, *Geschichte der DDR*, 374-7, 373, 400.

example, Honecker posited the idea of socialist affluence or "*sozialistische Wohlstandsgesellschaft*," and created economic policies to encourage consumerism, in party by increasing the amount and variety of available goods.[8] This new focus on consumption was coupled by a general cultural liberalization. For example the ban on blue jeans, previously considered a symbol of Western decadence, was lifted, and listening to or broadcasting rock music, once outlawed, was once again permitted.[9] In the end, however, any appearance of reform or liberalization during the Honecker era was ultimately just that. Changes like allowing East Germans to wear jeans and listen to pop music were greeted enthusiastically, but ultimately served to mask the fact that Honecker's regime was anything but liberal or open, and indeed was arguably more oppressive than that of his predecessor.

The Four-Power Agreement and the Basic Treaty

When Honecker took power in 1971, the Berlin Wall had been standing for ten years and both East and West Berliners were beginning to get used to "living with the Wall."[10] However, because both East and West Germany refused to recognize this arrangement or even each other officially, agreements on issues like city administration and travel permits had to be painstakingly hashed out year by year. This provisional approach to governance in the divided city made many aspects of life very difficult, especially in West Berlin. Traveling between West Berlin and the Federal Republic, for example, was a trying ordeal. Customs checks took hours as cars and baggage were thoroughly searched. Fees for visas and street-usage, though subsidized by West Germany, had to be paid by individual travelers. Shipping

[8] Wolle, *Die Heile Welt der Diktatur*, 41.
[9] Wolle, *Die Heile Welt der Diktatur*, 43-4.
[10] Flemming and Koch, *Die Berliner Mauer: Geschichte eines Politischen Bauwerks*, 100. The phrase "living with the Wall" became associated in the Federal Republic with liberal foreign policy with regard to the GDR, as exemplified by *Ostpolitik*, and suggested the acceptance of the situation in divided Berlin, as in Richard L. Merritt, "Living with the Wall," in *Living with the Wall: West Berlin, 1961-1985*, ed. Richard L. Merritt and Anna J. Merritt (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1985).

goods in and out of West Berlin was also a headache, since East German officials opened sealed boxes while searching cargo and because usage of Berlin's waterways was restricted.[11] These practical difficulties were compounded by the general sense of uncertainty and anxiety that East and West Berliners lived with day to day.

By the late 60s, it was clear that this ad hoc approach to administration in East and West Berlin and between West Berlin and West Germany was untenable and that the governments of the GDR and Federal Republic, along with the four occupying powers would have to establish official regulations regarding border movement and general oversight of the divided city. This realization was preceded by the overall warming in diplomatic relations between East and West Germany, effected in large part by the 1969 election of Willy Brandt (1913-92) to West Germany's chancellorship and the subsequent initiation of his *Ostpolitik*, along with the deposing of Walter Ulbricht. Beginning in March 1970, representatives of East and West Germany, as well as of the United States, Soviet Union, France and Britain met in Berlin to broker an agreement that would settle the question of Berlin's political status as well as regulations regarding the city's infrastructure and governance.[12]

Each of the representatives, those of the occupying powers as well as of the two Germanies, had a different opinion on what the political designation of Berlin should be. Ultimately, it was decided that the two parts of the city would remain as they had been, though from then on each of the countries involved would officially recognize this status. West Berlin would continue as a special zone affiliated with but not officially a part of the Federal Republic. The western city would maintain its non-voting representative in the *Bundestag* and would continue to be represented by the Federal Republic in foreign treaty

[11] Ribbe, *Berlin 1945-2000*, 146. The Spree River and Landwehr Canal marked zonal borders in some parts of the city.
[12] Ribbe, *Berlin 1945-2000*, 144-5.

negotiations. West German federal laws would automatically apply in West Berlin and, from 1971, West Berliners could apply for and receive visas from West German embassies. The *Bundestag* was, however, explicitly forbidden from convening in West Berlin. East Berlin, though not officially recognized as the East German capital (*Hauptstadt*) by the agreement, was named the "seat of the East German government" ("*Sitz der Regierung der DDR*"), and in practice was allowed to act as the country's capital. Moreover, the city was acknowledged to be part of the GDR, rather than a special zone within it. East and West Germany did not go so far as to set up embassies in Bonn or East Berlin, but established instead what were called "permanent representative agencies" (*Ständige Vertretungen*) in each capital. Doing so allowed both countries to avoid official, diplomatic recognition of the "other" Germany.[13]

After the Four-Power Agreement on Berlin was signed in 1971, representatives of the East and West German governments met to establish the political status of and relations between the GDR and the Federal Republic.[14] In the Basic Treaty (*Der Grundlagenvertrag*), signed in 1972, each of the two countries recognized the independence and sovereignty of the other, while of course continuing to avoid official diplomatic recognition. Regardless, this treaty brought a definitive end to the Federal Republic's Hallstein Doctrine and opened the GDR and its economy to the world.[15] By the time the treaty was signed, East Germany was recognized by twenty countries, including, for example, Sweden and Austria, and was by 1978 recognized by an additional 103 countries.[16] In 1973, both the Federal Republic and the

[13] Ribbe, *Berlin 1945-2000*, 145-6, 148.
[14] Though signed in 1971, the Four-Power Agreement did not go into effect until 1972, when the central governments of the involved countries had all ratified the treaty. (Ribbe, *Berlin 1945-2000*, 145.)
[15] Since the Hallstein Doctrine was never a formal policy, it did not need to be officially repealed. Already by the late 1960s, it was used less and less as an instrument of foreign policy. (Gray, *Germany's Cold War*, 7.)
[16] By comparison, the GDR was recognized by only eleven countries upon its founding in 1949, and until the late 60s, was unsuccessful in securing recognition of any non-Eastern Bloc country. (Gray, *Germany's Cold War*, 3.)

GDR were admitted into the United Nations.[17]

The Central Building in East Berlin: The Palace of the Republic

The establishment of formal, though not official, diplomatic relations between East and West Germany and the end of the Hallstein Doctrine had profound effects on East German national identity, which had just begun to take shape in the late 1960s. Because of the change in inter-German relations which led to these treaties as well as the measures enacted by the treaties themselves, there followed a shift in the way each country thought of itself as well as the "other" Germany: no longer did either the GDR or the Federal Republic outwardly maintain that theirs was the only Germany. In East Germany as a result of this shift, for example, the word "German" was replaced with "GDR" in the names of government agencies and in official documents and publications. The German Building Academy (*Deutsche Bauakademie*) became the Building Academy of the GDR (*Bauakademie der DDR*), and the journal *German Architecture* (*Deutsche Architektur*) was renamed *Architecture of the GDR* (*Architektur der DDR*).[18] Such changes encouraged the perception both within the country and without that East Germany was no longer an illegitimate regime but a internationally-recognized, sovereign power.

In opening East Germany to the global market, the treaties of the early 1970s also contributed to economic stability in the country, which in turn helped to foster positive identification on the part of its citizens. This was furthermore encouraged throughout the first decade of Honecker's regime in particular, when the government engaged in a conscious and explicit effort to raise the country's global profile and bolster its citizens' good will towards

[17] Weber, *Geschichte der DDR*. The Four-Power Agreement and Basic Treaty were preceded by the 1970 Moscow Treaty between the Federal Republic and the Soviet Union, in which West Germany formally accepted the post-World War II, eastern border of Germany, the so-called Oder-Neisse Line. (Ribbe, *Berlin 1945-2000*, 145.)
[18] Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 294-5.

it.[19] As a result of this, and given Honecker's cultural concessions and his promise of more reform and an increase in the standard of living, East Germans in the early 1970s were optimistic about the future of the GDR. A steady increase in industrial production throughout this period and the greater availability of consumer goods combined with more open cultural policies all served to nurture this burgeoning sense of national pride.[20] The economic success of the early 1970s along with the new-found sense of pride were no doubt contributing factors in the decision to build the long-planned "Central Building" (*Zentrale Gebäude*) at the historic center of Berlin.[21] The ultimate result of this effort was the Palace of the Republic (*Der Palast der Republik*, Heinz Graffunder et al., 1973-76, Figure 39), which opened its doors in April 1976 after only a thirty-two month construction time.

Compared to other East German architectural projects, the Palace of the Republic represented an approach to uniting national identity and architecture that was closer to that of the West. Rather than using a complex of buildings or a large-scale construction project to express national identity, the Palace was a single building designed to achieve the same goals.[22] Like, for example, the State Library in West Berlin, the Palace was a public display of economic prosperity and cutting-edge design, a "prestige project" designed to be a symbol of East German identity that would showcase the country's technological but also cultural

[19] Fulbrook, *Anatomy of a Dictatorship*, 142, 145. The attention paid in the GDR to winning Olympic gold medals in the 1970s is perhaps the most famous example of the regime's deliberate attempt to raise the country's international profile.
[20] Weber, *Geschichte der DDR*, 390.
[21] Though Museum Island was historically the center of Berlin, it was of course located on the Western edge of East Berlin.
[22] Large-scale building programs were still undertaken and still presented as integral to the formation of national identity, especially Honecker's housing construction program of the 1970s and 80s (*Wohnungsbauprogramm*). This program will be discussed in chapter four. (Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 295ff.)

and artistic advancement.[23] Particularly since 1990, however, the Palace has been viewed as a quintessential example of GDR architectural policies which, it is presumed, were out of touch with global trends. This view, however, does not consider the economic and political realities of the GDR in the early 1970s. Indeed it was precisely because of the East-West political struggle that it was deemed crucial that the building be comparable to contemporary Western architectural developments. Considered purely in terms of style, the Palace bears an unmistakable resemblance to a the municipal theater building in Gelsenkirchen in West Germany (Werner Ruhnau, et al., 1954-9; Figure 40), to cite one example. Moreover the integration of entertainment and leisure venues in a government building was virtually unprecedented at the time. A detailed examination of the Palace's design and construction results in an interpretation of the building that goes beyond the biases that have clearly influenced its more recent reception, revealing the building's contributions to the field of architectural design, but also its importance in relation the formation of East German national identity.

Since 1990, the most common critiques of the Palast have focused on its "monstrous"[24] size, its lack of aesthetic appeal, and the fact that it does not seem integrated into its surroundings, but is an "eyesore in the heart of the restored and redecorated German capital."[25] Australian journalist Anna Funder's description of the Palace in her best-selling non-fiction book, *Stasiland*, is emblematic of such critiques:

> I can't see it but I know that just near there, on the site of the old Palace of the Prussian Kings pulled down by the Communists, is the parliament building of the

[23] For example, cultural historians Thomas Beutelschmidt and Julia M. Novak call the building a "prestige object" in their history of the building, and in his history of GDR architecture Joachim Palutzki calls the Palace "the most spectacular project" of the Honecker era. (Thomas Beutelschmidt and Julia M. Novak, *Ein Palast und seine Republik* (Berlin: Verlag Bauwesen, 2001), 11; Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 365.)
[24] Former Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder, quoted in "The New Battle of Berlin" *Irish Times*, 1 June 2002, 56.
[25] "In Berlin a Last Look at the Palace of the Past," *International Herald Tribune*, 9 July 2003, section 1, page 4.

> GDR, the Palast der Republik. It is brown and plastic-looking, full of asbestos, and all shut up...The structure is one long rectangular metal frame, made up of smaller rectangles of brown-tinted glass. When you look at it you can't see in. Instead the outside world and everything in it is reflected in a bent and brown way. In there, dreams were turned into words, decisions made, announcements applauded, backs slapped. In there could be a whole other world, time could warp and you could disappear.[26]

Later in the book, she refers to the Palace as she describes architecture in the former Communist countries as a whole, lumping the building together with virtually every structure created during the Cold War. "From [East Berlin] to Vladivostok," writes Funder, "this was Communism's gift to the built environment—linoleum and grey cement, asbestos and prefabricated concrete," an aesthetic she describes as a "one-size-fits-all architectural principle."[27] Indeed like Funder, many journalists and critics saw the Palace as synonymous with architecture of the Eastern Bloc as a whole.[28]

In describing the Palace as a ramshackle sore thumb in relation to its surroundings, critics are no doubt judging the building based on how it appeared from 1990 to 2006, left decrepit and gutted by an asbestos removal project, and often fronted by cheap and shabby-looking carnivals. These carnivals, combined with the building's earlier role as venue for pop-culture events and activities, provide another possible explanation for the negative critiques of the Palace: it is dismissed as kitsch. There is certainly reason to think of the Palace in this way, particularly when one considers of Clement Greenberg's "Avant-Garde

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[26] Anna Funder, *Stasiland: Stories from Behind the Berlin Wall* (London: Granata Books, 2003), 51.
[27] Funder, *Stasiland*, 123-4.
[28] Examples of similar critiques of Eastern European architecture in general, or the Palace of the Republic in particular, include Jane Kramer's assessment of post-Wall East Berlin in "Letter from Europe: Living with Berlin," *The New Yorker,* 5 July 1999, 50-64, and columnist Simon Jenkins' review of the Modernism show at the Victoria and Albert Museum, in which he claims, "the modernist utopia fueled fascism and communism and bred a tradition of stylistic authority still alive today." A recent article in the New Zealand herald called the Palace of the Republic "the best, or worst, example of socialist architecture," while in 1997 a reporter for *The Economist* described the building as a "grungy...asbestos-plagued hideosity" (Simon Jenkins, "For a Real Exhibition of Modernism, Skip the V&A and Go to Manchester," *The Guardian*, 7 April 2006; "Germany: Cold War Wheels Go to the Wall," *The New Zealand Herald*, 14 March 2007; "Rekaisering Berlin" *The Economist*, 18 January 1997, 50.)

and Kitsch" (1939), originally published in *The Partisan Review*. Greenberg describes kitsch as "merely another of the inexpensive ways in which totalitarian regimes seek to ingratiate themselves with their subjects," and certainly the Palace was built in part to appeal to a public dissatisfied with its government. The widespread view that the Palace of the Republic was a cheap and showy attempt to pander to East Germans is reflected in, for example, its derisive nicknames, especially the term "Palazzo Prozzo" or "pompous palace." The building is not only viewed as an undignified imitation of Western examples, what Greenberg might have called a "simulacr[um] of genuine culture," but is also seen as an affront to the tradition of architectural innovation exemplified by, for example, Karl Friedrich Schinkel's Altes Museum (1825-8) just across the street. The push to demolish the Palace in order to rebuild the Berlin city palace (*Berliner Stadtschloß*) which formerly occupied the site, seems to confirm that the Palace was considered an example of "ersatz culture," in contrast to the presumably more authentic culture represented by the *Stadtschloß*.[29] Regardless, in East Germany the building was very explicitly constructed as the built expression of GDR national identity and *Heimat*, and its role in forming this identity and reception by the East German public was and is far too complicated to be captured in such binary terms as "avant-garde" or "kitsch."

The Social and Political Function of the Palace

The Berlin city palace (*Berliner Schloß* or *Stadtschloß*; Figure 41). was one of the city's oldest structures, having been built as a fortress in 1440 and expanded into a royal residence in the 18th century. The building was damaged by wartime bombing and was

[29] Clement Greenberg, "Avant-Garde and Kitsch," in *Greenberg, Clement the Collected Essays and Criticism, Volume 1: Perceptions and Judgments, 1939-1944*, ed. John O'Brien (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 20, 12. Greenberg's essay has, of course, been since critiqued as being elitist and anti-democratic. It is, however, still useful here given its continued influence on aesthetic judgment and critique. (Susan Noyes Platt, *Art and Politics in the 1930s: Modernism, Marxism, Americanism* (New York: Midmarch Arts Press, 1999), 239-50.)

ultimately torn down in 1950-1 as a symbol of the Prussian monarchy as well as to create an open space for mass demonstrations.[30] Throughout the 1950s and 60s, a number of architects drew up plans for a Central Building to be constructed in this area of the city, which, due to economic concerns, were repeatedly shelved.[31] Ultimately, the former *Schloßplatz*, would remain empty until 1973 when construction began on the Palace of the Republic.

Though called "immense" or even "gigantic" in more recent critiques, the Palace was far more modest in scale compared to earlier plans for the Central Building.[32] In such plans, the Central Building was conceived of as a "central point" ("*zentraler Punkt*") around which national identity would figuratively and literally be constructed. Richard Paulick's 1951 proposal for a massive, 394-foot structure (Figure 42), which would have as its forecourt Marx-Engels-Platz (formerly Schloßplatz) exemplifies this approach. Paulick's design had a clear precedent in contemporary Soviet designs and as such was an unambiguous expression of power and domination, designed to communicate the strength and legitimacy of the East German government to both its own citizens and the world.[33] The weak economy of the GDR could never hope to realize the kind of monumental structure envisioned by Paulick and others, however, and the design was never built.[34]

Later designs for the Central Building and the area around it introduced the Modern style in place of the historicized, Soviet-influenced style of plans like Paulick's. In the late 1950s when the Central Building project was once again revived, Hermann Henselmann,

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[30] Though the *Stadtschloß* did sustain bomb damage, other historic buildings that had been as damaged or even more so had been reconstructed in the 1950s. For example, St. Hedwig's Church (Georg Wenzeslaus von Knobelsdorff, 1747-73), just south of the *Stadtschloß* on Unter den Linden, was more or less completely rebuilt after being almost totally destroyed during the war. It should also be noted that many East German architects objected to the destruction of the *Stadtschloß*. (Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 54-5.)
[31] Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 81.
[32] "In Berlin a Last Look at the Palace of the Past," *International Herald Tribune* (9 July 2003), section 1, page 4; Jane Kramer, "Letter from Europe: Living with Berlin," *The New Yorker*, 5 July 1999, 50.
[33] Flierl, "Der Zentrale Ort in Berlin," 129-30.
[34] Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 81.

East Berlin's city architect, created his own design as a critique of other, party-approved proposals (Figure 34).[35] Henselmann's 1958-9 plan was clearly influenced by Modernism but also greatly reduces the scale of the Central Building. The tallest component of the plan is no longer the main government building, now long and low in form, but a "signal tower" (*"Turm der Signale"*) located to the west of the Central Building. Also unlike earlier plans, Henselmann's conception is not focused on a single, "center point" but rather is composed of a group of buildings stretching from Alexanderplatz to the Spree. Furthermore, the complex is no longer dedicated only to the government administration, but includes shops, cafes, and other venues intended for leisure and entertainment.

Though at the time Henselmman's plan was critiqued as being too heavily influenced by Western designs, the complex of buildings that eventually took shape in the center of East Berlin essentially realized Henselmann's vision. Ulbricht's call in the 1960s for a "scientific-technological revolution," spurred in part by the success of Sputnik, became a driving force behind the eventual realization of Henselmann's "signal tower," in the form of the TV Tower or *Fernsehturm*, completed in 1969. Located further east than is indicated by Henselmann's 1959 plan and closer to the Alexanderplatz train station, the TV Tower replaced the need for a high-rise central building, since, as a 1964 Politburo resolution explained, the tower provided the sufficient expression of "urban dominance." The resolution further stipulated that, since this was the case, the Central Building need not be a high-rise, but should instead be "similar to that of the Foreign Ministry Building" (Josef Kaiser, et al, 1963-66, demolished 1995; Figure 43); that is, it could be a long, low-rise modern building on a scale

[35] Flierl, "Der Zentrale Ort in Berlin," 135.

comparatively much smaller than that of earlier plans.[36]

The Palace of the Republic's location at the center of the capital city of East Berlin was part of establishing the building's importance as a national symbol, since the GDR's capital city had continued to be the main focus of the literal and figurative construction of national identity. In a 1975 planning document, for example, prepared by the State Planning Commission and passed as a resolution by the Politburo, the capital's main function is described as a "socialist metropolis and center of political power, [and] the city with the largest industrial production." In addition to this political and economic role, the capital was designated the center of the country's "most meaningful scholarly, educational, cultural and artistic developments," as well as its "center of communication." The resolution continues:

> The general goal for the development of the capital therefore demands that the … architectural image of the city be designed so as to express the growing political and economic strength of the German socialist state, the GDR …
>
> In order to facilitate the development of the central political function of the capital, the development of the city-center as the focal point of society and as the central location of international and capital-related congresses must be furthered. This is what the architectural design [of East Berlin] should reflect.[37]

Architecture would help to express the importance of the center (and therefore of the GDR) in its design, but also in its spatial arrangement. Specifically, the Palace would be built in Berlin's most historically and culturally significant district, which had also long been a center of government activity for the German nation. It was constructed on the site of the *Schloß*, on Museum Island, across from Schinkel's *Altes Museum* and the Berlin Cathedral, and in close proximity to Berlin's city hall (*Rotes Rathaus*). Thus symbolically, through architecture, the Palace allowed the GDR to place itself within German history. Moreover, as

[36] Anlage Nr. 4 zum Protokoll Nr. 23 vom 14 July 1964, BArch SAPMO DY 30/J IV 2/2/938; Flierl, "Der Zentrale Ort in Berlin," 152.
[37] Zentrale Orientierungen für die Ausarbeitung des Generalplanes zur Entwicklung der Hauptstadt der DDR, Berlin, BArch SAPMO DY 30/J IV 2/2/1548, 2-3.

is clear in the text of the 1975 resolution, the GDR could and did tie East Berlin explicitly to its government. This was something neither rhetoric nor architecture in West Berlin could do, first because its geographic isolation made such arguments less convincing and second because the city was not officially part of the Federal Republic.

By the early 1960s, the Central Building was no longer conceived of as a "center point" ("*zentraler Punkt*"), but as part of a group of buildings that would form a "central district" ("*zentraler Bereich*"). This central district would furthermore express a multi-layered "social centrality," rather than a more singular expression of centralized political power. When, in 1972, a collective was formed to create yet another scheme for the Central Building, the group was given the task of coming up with a design and plan for the construction of what was now explicitly called a "mixed-use building" (*Mehrzweckgebäude* or MZG). The so-called MZG collective, led by architect Heinz Graffunder, began meeting in September 1972, often after hours in the office of the President of the Building Academy, in what former collective member Bruno Flierl describes as "quasi-secrecy." The reason for the secrecy, as explained by Flierl, was that the SED did not want to announce their intention to build the new building without first being sure they had the economic means to see it through.[38] However, the group's after-hours meetings also suggest the degree to which to this project was conceived of, designed, and constructed outside the bounds of the GDR's building economy as a whole.

In the post-reunification era, pre-fabricated buildings like the *Plattenbauten* came to symbolize not only East German architecture, but the architecture of the Eastern Bloc as a whole, and are no-doubt what Anna Funder is thinking of when she refers to a "one-size-fits-all architectural principle." However, because of its political importance the Palace of the

[38] Flierl, "Der Zentrale Ort in Berlin," 142, 153.

Republic cannot be viewed as a direct result of the building economy that created the *Plattenbau*, since it was to a great extent immune from those concerns that plagued other construction projects in the GDR. For example, though the much-improved East German economy was still hampered by limited supplies of funds and labor in the 1970s, those resources that were available were funneled into the construction of the Palace and toward installing its high-tech facilities and relatively luxurious amenities.[39] Moreover, because it was created as a separate entity, the MZG collective was not as affected by the GDR Building Academy's institutional split between construction and design. Though of course not outside of government control or completely autonomous, the conditions of the Palace's design and construction were markedly different from those that produced the *Plattenbau*.[40]

The Palace of the Republic was to be *the* architectural expression of not only the government of the GDR, as in earlier Central Building designs, but also its people and thus its identity as a nation. To achieve this—its "cultural-political task" (*kulturpolitische Aufgabe*)—the building was to unite the social, political and cultural aspects of East German life under one roof and in so doing symbolize the larger goals of socialism:

> The multi-use building will be a house of the people, ... a building at the center of social life that—commensurate with its socio-spatial position in the center of the city—will be at the highpoint of social life in the socialist capital of the GDR—Berlin—, [and] a building that will be a built expression of socialism...[41]

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[39] The cost of the Palace rose steadily throughout its construction. By September 1973 it had risen to 468 million Marks and four months later it was estimated at 516 million Marks. No final cost for the building is mentioned in any of the East German press reports covering the April 1976 opening of the Palace of the Republic, though West German newspapers gave estimates ranging from over 500 million to 1 billion Marks. (Erhard Gißke to Staatssekretär Martini, 6 September 1973, BArch SAPMO DH 1/32906; Attachment to letter from Erhard Gißke to Staatssekretär Martini, 2 January 1974, BArch SAPMO DH 1/32906; Peter Pragal, "Wo der Staat in einem angenehmen Licht erstrahlt," *Süddeutsche Zeitung* 96 (26 April 1976), 3; Manfred Sack, "Marmorglanz und Monotonie," *Zeit* 22 (21 May 1976), 16.)

[40] Pre-fabricated materials were used in the construction of the Palace of the Republic, but in order to realize the building's advanced infrastructure, in for example the areas of climate control and audio-visual facilities, the government approved "above-average expenditure." (Konzeption für die Errichtung des Palastes der Republik in der Hauptstadt der DDR, Berlin, 4, BArch SAPMO DY 30/J IV 2/2/1440.)

[41] "Thesen zur Aufgabenstellung des Mehrzweckgebäudes am Marx-Engels-Platz" (December 1972), AdK Berlin, HGA, NL II, 24/1.

In its role as a center of cultural life, of government activities, as well as a meeting place for "national and international congresses," the Palace of the Republic would also be a way to display the GDR's newly-established international ties and communicate to the world its growing sense of pride. At the same time, the building would unify the nation by providing a shared and (it was hoped) beloved symbol, that all East Germans could take part in. In fact to emphasize this point, the Ministry of Building brought construction workers, craftspeople, chefs, artists and even waiters from all over East Germany to East Berlin, in order to ensure that workers from each of the country's fourteen administrative districts were a part of the Palace's construction and administration.[42]

The MZG collective strove to design a building that would articulate these themes of unity, openness and accessibility, and visibility. In terms of architecture and planning, unity was associated with centrality, since establishing a focal point for the expression of identity was a way of bringing the nation together, of creating "communality" (*Gemeinsamkeit*) around a shared locale, symbol, and/or building.[43] Openness and accessibility were obviously fraught terms given the repressive policies of the SED, and yet in the early 1970s there was hope that the liberal policies inaugurated by Honecker would lead to greater freedoms overall. Finally, since the GDR had at long last established its legitimacy, the Palace's visibility was an important way of asserting East Germany's new-found place in the global economic market and as an accepted part of the international community of nations.

"Centrality" and "visibility" were concepts that had clearly informed earlier designs

[42] Konzeption für die Errichtung des Palastes der Republik in der Hauptstadt der DDR, Berlin, 7, BArch SAPMO DY 30/J IV 2/2/1440; Richtlinie für den Einsatz sozialistischer Brigaden aus den Bezirken der DDR beim Aufbau des Palastes der Republik in der Hauptstadt der DDR, BArch DH 1/32906.
[43] For example, March 1976 document drafted by the Event Planning Department refers to the building's role in constructing "a community of all the workers of our republic—a political-moral unity..." (Abteilung Planung und Organisation der Veranstaltungen: Palast der Republik, 15 March 1976, AdK Berlin, HGA, NL II, 24/1.)

for the Central Building. Later plans reinterpreted these notions, expanding them beyond expressions of centralized political power and into social and cultural centrality. At the same time, the reduced scale and mixed-use conception of plans like Henselmann's of 1959 (Figure 34) make the building more approachable and accessible, both literally and figuratively, than the high-rise structures of earlier designs. Indeed, in choosing Heinz Graffunder to lead the collective, the SED was effectively choosing to take the latter approach, since Graffunder had worked for Henselmann on a later design for the Central Building.[44] At the same time, the new focus on accessibility and social centrality reflected both the reform-minded policies of the new regime, and its overall approach to rhetoric, which, compared to Ulbricht's, was less given to grandiose or utopian declarations, and "more pragmatic and realistic."[45] Though in more recent critiques the Palace of the Republic has been characterized as bombastic in its size as well as in its style, the Graffunder-led collective's intention was to create an unimposing, "inviting" structure. Certainly, the five-storey Palace was far more modest in scale compared to designs like Richard Paulick's of 1951. As part of this, the MZG collective moved the site of the now-smaller Central Building across the Spree to Marx-Engels-Platz on Museum Island itself. This left a space on the eastern bank of the Spree which would now be called Marx-Engels-Forum, and which would become a public park.[46] Not only was the Palace's size supposed to be less intimidating, its mixed use was to make it, quite literally, a more accessible building.

Though the building's modern style was in contrast to some of the older structures

[44] [Lebenslauf] Projektverzeichnis, AdK, Berlin, HGA, NL I, 11. At the time of the MZG collective's final report in January 1973, the building is also referred to as the "Kongreß-Palast" or Congress Palace. The name Palace of the Republic is first used in the 1973 Poliburo resolution and formally adopted in June 1973.
[45] Wolle, *Die Heile Welt der Diktatur*, 41.
[46] In addition, unlike the *Stadtschloß* which took up the entirety of the renamed Marx-Engels-Platz, space was left in front of the Palace of the Republic and used for mass demonstrations on state holidays.

around it, the MZG collective clearly thought of the Palace in terms of its specific spatial context, considering how the finished building would relate to both older and newly-built structures nearby. In its design and location, the Palast would unify the entire area from Alexanderplatz to Museum Island, an area which would itself link the historic Unter den Linden boulevard with the buildings along East Germany's "socialist street," Karl-Marx-Allee.[47] This would be achieved through a series of spatial but also visual connections ("*Verbindungen*") that would create an overall "harmonious accord" ("*harmonische Übereinstimmung*") among the buildings of this district.[48] The collective's design, for example, unifies the Palace of the Republic with the Berlin Cathedral and the Royal Stables (*Marstall*, Ernst von Ihnen, 1898-1900) to the south of the Palace by situating all three along the same side of the Spree, an effect that was particularly evident when the three buildings were viewed from the Spree side (Figure 44). East-west continuity, from Alexanderplatz to the Foreign Ministry building, is ensured by the landscaping design of Marx-Engels-Forum, which carried the geometric elements of the TV Tower through to the similarly geometric Palace, and the also-similar State Council and Foreign ministry buildings (Figure 45). Indeed press photos of the finished building often emphasized these connections, using foreshortened perspective or reflections in the building's façade to unite the Palace of the Republic with its historic surroundings (Figure 46).[49]

"Visual connections" like these were integral to the MZG collective's design. When viewed from the Marx-Engels-Platz, for example, the Palace would frame the TV Tower

[47] Flierl, "Der Zentrale Ort in Berlin," 155.
[48] "Thesen zur Aufgabenstellung des Mehrzweckgebäudes (MZG) am Marx-Engels-Platz in Berlin" (no date), 1, AdK Berlin, HGA, NL II, 24/5; " Palast der Republik: Dokumentation zur Investitionsvorentscheidung" (November 1973), 23, BArch DH 1/32906.
[49] In planning documents and in Graffunder's 1977 book, it is noted that the Palace's height is similar to that of the Royal Stables and the State Council Building (*Staatsratsgebäude*; Roland Korn, et al., 1962-4). ("Palast der Republik: Dokumentation zur Investitionsvorentscheidung," November 1973, BArch DH 1/32906, 22; Heinz Graffunder and Martin Beerbaum, *Der Palast der Republik* (Leipzig: VEB E.A. Seemann Verlag, 1977), 17.)

behind it, and at the same time provide a foil for what Graffunder later called the "vertical accents" of the cathedral, the TV Tower, the spire of the *Marienkirche*, the *Rathaus* tower and the *Altes Stadthaus* (Ludwig Hoffman, 1902-11) (Figure 47).[50] Views to and from the TV tower would provide additional "visual connections" with the Palace of the Republic. (Figure 48). In the interior of the building as well, the "visual-relationships" ("*Sichtbeziehungen*") made possible by the building's glass facade were part of the effort to connect the building with the structures around it, by for example offering panoramic views of the entire area around the Palace (Figure 49).[51] Within the Palace, a relatively open plan provided views of various floors and their attractions, and the interior was visible from the exterior as well, particularly at night (Figure 50).

The building's literal transparency was also meant as a metaphor for "openness and contact among people" ("*Offenheit und Kontakt der Menschen*").[52] In his 1977 book on the Palace, Graffunder wrote:

> Optical transparency of the building itself as well as the sculptural interpenetration of the building's structural elements were sought because of the central, urban location of the structure, between Marx-Engels-Platz and the TV Tower-Spree area, and to communicate the fact that the building is open to all citizens.[53]

The use of glass in the Palace was therefore intended as a symbol for political transparency and openness. Furthermore, the exterior expression of structural elements was meant to

[50] Graffunder and Beerbaum, *Der Palast der Republik*, 17. Graffunder refers to the *Altes Stadthaus* by its previous name, the *Neues Stadthaus*.
[51] Graffunder and Beerbaum, *Der Palast der Republik*, 17-8.
[52] "Palast der Republik: Dokumentation zur Investitionsvorentscheidung," (October 1973, draft), 47, AdK Berlin, HGA, NL II, 24/6.
[53] Graffunder and Beerbaum, *Der Palast der Republik*, 23.

symbolize another kind of openness: "honesty of materials."[54] The building's visual accessibility was reinforced by its literal accessibility as well, which was to suggest what Graffunder called "the principles of city-openness" ("*Die Prinzipien der Stadtoffenheit*"). Specifically, the Palace of the Republic could be entered from all four sides, and the main entrance in particular was designed to create an impression that was "inviting and generous."[55]

While it is perhaps easy to regard such statements as empty rhetoric, given the optimism heralded by Honecker's assumption of power, it would seem rather that the collective honestly believed that the building could and did embody these qualities. In the wake of East-West détente and of the GDR's greater economic and political openness, the idea that the new Palace would reflect these progressive trends must have been generally accepted in the early 1970s, though undoubtedly with reservations. While this openness would come to an end just a short time later, it is wrong to think of the building and its design as mere products of the SED regime or to think of its planners as wholly disingenuous in their attempts at creating a palace for the people.

The Palace of the Republic in a Global Context

Because the Palace of the Republic was highly visible as an architectural prestige project as well as the result and symbol of the GDR's arrival on the global stage, it was naturally considered important that the building be comparable to contemporary

[54] Flierl, "Der Zentrale Ort in Berlin," 142-3; Graffunder and Beerbaum, *Der Palast der Republik*, 23.; "Palast der Republik: Dokumentation zur Investitionsvorentscheidung," (October 1973, draft), 47, AdK Berlin, HGA, NL II, 24/6. For more on the concept of "honesty of materials" as it relates to the Modernist aesthetic, see James Schmiechen, "The Victorians, the Historians, and the Idea of Modernism" *The American Historical Review* (April 1988): 287-316.

[55] "Palast der Republik: Dokumentation zur Investitionsvorentscheidung," (October 1973, draft), 20, AdK, Berlin, HGA, NL II, 24/6; Graffunder and Beerbaum, *Der Palast der Republik*, 25. As in English, the word "*Offenheit*" carries connotations of honesty and candidness. In West Germany, the *Bundeshaus* in Bonn (Günter Behnisch, 1989-92) also used glass as a symbol for political transparency, as did, of course, Sir Norman Foster's design for the rebuilt dome of the Reichstag (1992-9). For more on this, see Deborah A. Barnstone, *The Transparent State: Architecture and Politics in Postwar Germany* (London and New York: Routledge, 2005).

developments in architecture around the world. Of course, Graffunder's collective was influenced by examples from the East, in particular the State Kremlin Palace in Moscow (M. Posokhin, et al., 1959-61; Figure 51).[56] However the collective examined and in some cases visited buildings in the West as well, such as the Congress Hall in West Berlin (*Kongreßhalle*; Hugh Stubbins, 1956-7) and the Vienna City Center (*Stadthalle Wien*; Roland Rainer, 1954-8), as well as sports halls in Japan, Belgium, and the U.S.[57] Indeed, buildings like sports halls, cultural venues and convention centers were looked at as models for the Palace of the Republic much more so than any government administration buildings.

Even after the construction of the Palace was underway, representatives from the GDR's Ministry of Building along with Palace administrators visited congress centers in other cities, for example in Munich, Paris and Zurich, to learn about the latest advancements in audio-visual facilities and other areas.[58] In 1975 the Palace's director, Gunter Bischoff, wrote the Council of Ministers (*Ministerrat*) requesting that he be allowed to subscribe to a number of Western publications so as to ensure that the Palace of the Republic maintain the "highest international level" of technological, cultural and food service facilities.[59] After the Palace was constructed, it too became a stop on tours made by architects and planners from the East and West alike as they designed convention and cultural centers for their own cities.[60]

The design and conception of the Palace was comparable to contemporary architectural developments, but also fit within a specific tradition of avant-garde architecture

[56] Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 366.
[57] Betr: MZG Berlin, Problemliste, September 17, 1972, AdK Berlin, HGA, NL II, AK 25/1.
[58] Information über Erfahrungen des Generalprojektanten bei der Vorbereitung und Durchführung des Bauvorhabens Palast der Republik, June 30, 1976, 17, AdK Berlin, HGA, NL II, 24/12.
[59] Dr. Günter Bischoff to Dr. Rost, Leiter des Sekretariats des Ministerrats, 13 May 1975, BArch DC 207/1.
[60] See, for example, the February 14, 1977 letter from Culture Minister Dr. Kleinart to Culture Minister Dr. Weißig regarding a visit from the directors of the Munich Convention and Exhibition center. (BArch DC 207/1.)

in Germany. Specifically, the Palace represented a variation on *Kultur*- or *Volkshäuser* (House of Culture or House of the People) building type.[61] Such buildings were originally created in the nineteenth century by social reformers in places like Britain and Belgium, where buildings like Victor Horta's *Maison du Peuple* (House of the People, 1895-9; demolished 1965) were intended as cultural centers or "workers' clubs" to provide education, cultural enrichment and entertainment to the working class. In the twentieth century the rapid growth of the socialist and communist parties fueled the establishment of these clubs all over Europe. In 1917, the German Volkshaus Society (*Deutscher Volkshausbund*) was founded, and among its members were Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and Bruno Taut, central figures in architecture's Modern movement. As we have seen, Taut in particular would in the 1910s and 20s become closely associated with the further evolution of the *Volkshaus* concept, creating a number of visionary schemes in which *Volkhäuser* formed the center or "city crown" (*Die Stadtkrone*) of a new kind of community. Taut's designs emphasized the fantasy and utopian aspects of the *Volkshäuser*, which he envisioned as organic, crystalline structures built of colored glass that were supposed to transform society by creating a "unity" between "art and people" (*Kunst und Volk*).[62]

The association between the *Kulturhäuser* and the political left made these buildings a target of the extreme right, and in the 1930s the Nazis began closing down and/or repurposing *Kulturhäuser*, all but eradicating them. The Soviets mounted an effort to rebuild *Kulturhäuser* in Germany relatively quickly after the end of World War II hoping to provide

[61] The terms "*Kulturhaus*" and "*Volkshaus*" are sometimes used interchangeably, yet it could also be argued that "*Kulturhaus*" is a more general term while "*Volkshaus*" is associated specifically with the visionary schemes of architects like Bruno Taut.
[62] Simone Hain, "Die Salons der Sozialisten: Geschichte und Gestalt der Kulturhäuser in der DDR," in *Die Salons der Sozialisten: Kulturhäuser in der DDR*, ed. Simone Hain and Stephan Stroux (Berlin: Links, 1996), 89-90, 96-9. See also Chapter 2, "Scharoun's *Kulturforum* and the State Library."

much-needed diversion in the physically and psychologically devastated country.[63] These postwar *Kulturhäuser* were heavily influenced by the Soviet model of workers' clubs or "Culture Palaces" (*Kulturpaläste*), and they flourished throughout the 1950s in the GDR as "gifts of socialism," built in close proximity to state-owned factories and executed in traditional, often classical styles.[64] The social and cultural changes brought on by the rejection of Stalin in the late 1950s and early 60s, along with Ulbricht's focus on scientific and technological development, resulted in a change in both the design and conception of *Kulturhäuser* in the GDR, which were now called *Volkshäuser*. *Volkshäuser* of the 1960s were more modern in style, as compared with *Kulturhäuser* of the 50s, informed by a so-called "industrial aesthetic" that favored steel-and-glass materials. The newer buildings also included facilities designed for more intimate events and added venues for leisure activities. These *Volkshäuser*, for example, featured cafes and galleries in addition to ballrooms and 1,000-seat theaters, as well as public foyers that did not require fees for entry but could be visited even when no organized events were taking place. At the same time, *Volkshäuser* of the 1960s were conceived of as centers of not only culture, but also communication. Influenced by the developments of system theory and cybernetics, buildings like the *Kulturpalast* in Dresden (Wolfgang Hänsch, et al., 1962-9) were outfitted with advanced audio and televisual facilities, as well as rooms that could be reconfigured to serve a variety of different types of activities.[65]

Like the newer *Volkshäuser*, the Palace of the Republic boasted a wide variety of facilities and venue types, from more intimate cafes and restaurants to its large-scale *Großer Saal* (main hall). As in the Dresden *Kulturpalast*, the Palace featured advanced broadcasting

[63] Hain, "Die Salons der Sozialisten," 92, 104, 106.
[64] Flierl, "Gebaute DDR," 108-9.
[65] Flierl, "Gebaute DDR," 114-5; Hain, "Die Salons der Sozialisten," 98, 142-3.

capabilities and concert halls that could be rearranged depending on the type of event. The *Großer Saal* was the site of countless performances and conventions of all kinds, from SED congresses to ballet performances to rock concerts, many of which were televised (Figure 52). Indeed, though not often or extensively discussed, the Palace's connection to the *Volkshäuser* tradition as well as to pre-war avant-garde architecture was nonetheless intentional. As Graffunder stated unequivocally in his 1977 book on the building, "[t]he progressive German architects' vision from the beginning of the century, of the self-expression of the working class in light-flooded *Volkshäuser* has now been realized in the Palace of the Republic."[66]

The tradition of *Volkshäuser* continued into the postwar period in the Federal Republic of Germany and in West Berlin as well, for example in Hans Scharoun's *Kulturforum* and State Library building. Though visually dissimilar from the State Library, the Palace of the Republic does bear a striking resemblance to a number of other cultural buildings in West Germany and West Berlin, in particular theaters and concert halls. The concert hall for the music academy in Berlin (Paul Reinhold Baumgarten, 1952-54; Figure 53), for example, and the municipal theater in Gelsenkirchen (Max von Hausen, Ortwin Rave, Werner Ruhnau, 1954-9; Figure 40) both feature glass, curtain-wall facades and are built as low structures, longer than they are wide.[67] In its function as a reconfigurable, mixed-use facility, the Palace is reminiscent of the experimental projects associated with the avant-garde architectural group Archigram as well, such as Cedric Price's Fun Palace (1962-5, unbuilt) and the Centre Pompidou in Paris (Renzo Piano and Richard Rogers, 1971-77). Similar to the Palace of the Republic, for example, Price's Fun Palace was intended for use

[66] Graffunder and Beerbaum, *Der Palast der Republik*, 15.
[67] Anke Kuhrmann, *Der Palast der Republik: Geschichte und Bedeutung des Ost-Berliner Parlaments- und Kulturhauses* (Petersberg: Michael Imhof Verlag, 2006), 129-32.

by the working class, a place where they could "escape the mind-numbing routine" of their daily lives and find opportunities for diversion. Though Price's vision was far more radical than the Palace of the Republic and more focused on the personal development of the Fun Palace's users, like the East German building it sought to create social unity with a structure that would house a "network of multiple events."[68]

A parallel comparison was made more explicitly, this time in the context of the debate over whether to demolish or restore the Palace of the Republic, when those in favor of saving the building suggested that it could become Berlin's version of the Centre Pompidou.[69] The two were seen as similar in design, but also in function. For example, just as the Palace of the Republic had filled the hole left by the *Stadtschloß*, the Parisian museum and cultural center was built in the space left by the demolition of the public market *Les Halles*. The Centre Pompidou was also a built expression of national identity, designed to be the "triumphant crystallization of the national cultural spirit," words that could also describe the GDR's Palace. Moreover, part of its role in expressing national identity, the Centre Pompidou was to provide a center for cultural edification, a site that would, like the Palace of the Republic, not only visually express nationhood, but play an active role in shaping its country's citizenry.[70]

Though many think of the inclusion of a bowling alley and disco in the Palace of the Republic's in terms of kitsch, considered in the context of the Fun Palace or Centre Pompidou, its attempt at bringing together "high" and "low" culture could just as easily be

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[68] Stanley Mathews, "The Fun Palace as Virtual Architecture," *Journal of Architectural Education* (February 2006): 39, 43; Nicolai Ouroussoff, "Trying to Save a Berlin Relic from the Dustbin," *New York Times*, 9 January 2006, Section E, Column 2.

[69] See for example Wolfgang Rex, "Palast könnte zu Art Centre Pompidou werden" *Neues Deutschland* (22 June 1995), 5; "Palast Streit ohne Ende: SED-Prestige Projekt so vielseitig wie das 'Centre Pompidou'" *Berliner Morgenpost,* 1 February 1993, press clipping, AdK Berlin; HGA, II, 37.

[70] Nathan Silver, *The Making of Beaubourg: A Building Biography of the Centre Pompidou, Paris* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1994), 1-3, 25.

regarded as avant-garde. To be sure, regardless of its similarities to contemporary projects, many would consider the Palace of the Republic a far more modest, less advanced accomplishment than either Price's Fun Palace plans or the Centre Pompidou. However, any critique of the Palace of the Republic must take into consideration its place within the GDR building economy, both subject to and to some degree removed from that building economy's many limitations, and within global architectural trends. Regardless of one's opinion of it, the Palace of the Republic cannot be, as it has so often has been, dismissed out of hand as simply "ugly" or as the "mere" product of an aesthetically blind and technologically backward country.

The Palace of the Republic and East German National Identity

In April 1976, just days before the SED's Ninth Party Congress, the Palace of the Republic officially opened its doors to the public. The new building featured a meeting hall for the GDR's *Volkskammer*, as well as a 5,000-seat hall (*Großer Saal*) to be used for SED Party Congresses and other "political, scholarly and cultural" events, all of which could be televised.[71] In addition, as promised in the 1973 resolution, the Palace provided entertainment and leisure venues available for the daily use of East Germans, including a wide variety of cafes and restaurants, an espresso bar, a club for young people (*Jugendtreff*), art exhibition spaces, a small theater (*Theater im Palast* or "TiP"), sport facilities, a disco and a bowling alley (Figure 54-Figure 57). By paying such attention to the lives of "everyday people," Honecker in a very real seemed to way be delivering on the promises he made upon coming to power in 1971. As former GDR citizen Stefan Wolle has written, in the Palace of

[71] Heinz Graffunder, "Palast der Republik" *Architektur der DDR* (September 1976), 529, press clipping, AdK Berlin, HGA, NL II, 28.

the Republic, "the oft-promised 'unity of economic and social politics' actually existed."[72]

The Palace of the Republic was a popular success from the moment it opened its doors. In addition, the sheer number and variety of events that the Palace of the Republic hosted gave it an enduring media presence in both the Federal Republic and GDR.[73] Indeed, by the mid-1970s, West German newspapers could not dispute *Neues Deutschland*'s claim that the building was a "visitor magnet." The *Frankfurter Rundschau*, for example, reported in 1977 that the building had attracted a remarkable 11.8 million people since it had opened in 1976.[74] East Germans themselves seemed to greet the Palace with cautious enthusiasm. While GDR citizens visited the building in droves, they at the same time dubbed it with wry nicknames such as "Ballast of the Republic"[75] and "Erich's Lamp Shop," the latter referring to both Erich Honecker and the Palace's profuse and elaborate light fixtures.[76] Stefan Wolle explains this ambivalence towards the Palace of the Republic in his book on politics and everyday life in the GDR, *The Ideal World of Dictatorship* (1999), where he describes the building as an "island of bliss":

> Here were clean toilets, friendly waiters, working telephones, special stamps and a post office open until ten o'clock at night. Among the paintings by famous artists, which were by no means solely comprised of realist works depicting socialist heroes, families and couples promenaded. The sound system played, not worker's songs, but "internationally famous music." When the people called it "Erich's Lamp Shop," they said it ironically but not with hostility.

While East Germans enjoyed the amenities offered in the Palace, they nonetheless recognized the contradiction between the vision of the GDR it presented and the reality of their everyday lives. In this way, the Palace of the Republic was regarded as "the symbolic

[72] Wolle, *Die Heile Welt der Diktatur*, 46.
[73] See for example, "Press Clippings: Berlin/West," BArch DC 207/1304.
[74] "Palast der Republik ein Besuchermagnet" *Neues Deutschland* (29 December 1978), press clipping, BArch DC 207 1261; "Republik-Palast viel besucht" *Frankfurter Rundschau* (21 April 1977), press clipping, BArch DC 207 1304.
[75] This was also a joking reference to the Saxon accent, in which Ps are pronounced like Bs.
[76] These nicknames and others endured in the period after reunification as well.

incarnation of the Honecker era" in both positive and negative ways. In other words, not only the promises but also the contradictions of the regime were brought under one roof. For example, the Palace was kept "clean, orderly and well-lit," to please its visitors, but had another, darker purpose as well: it allowed "security personnel [to] see into every corner with their surveillance cameras."[77] The Palace of the Republic thus became the built expression of the "double consciousness" that characterized East German life, wherein each citizen constructed a public self that was kept separate and distinct from his or her private self.

When Honecker took over at the Eighth Party Congress in 1971, East Germany seemed poised to enter a new and better era, one that would bring positive change and improvement to peoples' daily lives. East Germans did feel a renewed sense of pride and well-being, but as Mary Fulbrook has argued, it was not so much that they were wholly contented with their lives, but rather that they were "[more] prepared to adopt modes of behavior of outward conformity in the 1970s than in the 1950s."[78] Essentially, GDR citizens implicitly agreed to participate in mass demonstrations, such as those celebrating the country's founding, in exchange for the economic and cultural concessions promised and to some extent delivered by Honecker's government.[79] This was one way in which the country's citizens lived their lives in a country where there was such a discrepancy between its stated values and priorities and its actual policies. Through a strategy of "accommodation and complaint" (*Anpassung und Meckern*), East Germans found ways to live their lives despite the endless compromises and hardships required by life in a dictatorship.[80]

One result of such strategies was that personal and national identities were split into

[77] Wolle, *Die Heile Welt der Diktatur*, 46.
[78] Fulbrook, *Anatomy of a Dictatorship*, 142.
[79] Dennis, *The Rise and Fall of the German Democratic Republic*, 146.
[80] Fulbrook, *Anatomy of a Dictatorship*, 143.

two categories, official and unofficial, each of which was understood in spatial terms. As Fulbrook argues, East Germans fashioned "spaces" in which they could create for themselves "a degree of personal happiness, privacy, [and] fulfillment," that were in contrast to those public spaces in which they were required to exhibit loyalty to the regime. Public and private space had in general in the GDR, become sharply differentiated as were the activities and behaviors associated with them. The reason for this was partly related to political ideology as it was reflected in architecture. For example appealing to Marxist doctrine, the SED continually stressed the needs of the collective over individual, and so in constructing the *Plattenbauten* there was little effort to differentiate architecturally between public and private space. The design of public spaces, such as the areas immediately adjoining the buildings was ignored, often left as vast wastelands of undeveloped land. Partly as a result, what urban sociologist Christine Hannemann calls "half-public space" ("*halböffentlicher Raum*") was created, which was not private, but also had no specific public function.[81] In the Palace of the Republic as well, a similar kind of "half-public" space was created. While the Palace was a public building and a site of national celebrations, it was also a common venue for personal celebrations such as weddings and birthdays.

In East Germany, one was forced to live one's life in the open and, though the reason for this lack of private space was attributed to ideology, it was also the result of the SED's paranoia. Because its legitimacy was hard won and built on such shaky ground, the government created an elaborate administrative bureaucracy through which it could dominate and indoctrinate East German society. Of course the State Security Ministry or Stasi was also heavily relied upon to ensure the Party's domination, particularly in the Honecker era, and its far-reaching surveillance activities further helped to erode East Germans' sense of security

[81] Hannemann, *Die Platte*, 104.

and privacy. Furthermore, as the Stasi encroached more and more into individuals' personal lives, East Germans began to spend more time in the private sphere, in the home but also in places like individuals' rented garden plots (*Schrebergärten*). This reorientation and redefinition of space led to the formation of what Fulbrook calls a "niche society"; that is, life in East Germany was organized in terms of various spaces that dictated which behaviors were allowed and/or expected. One understood, for example, which thoughts could be expressed in the home versus in the school or workplace.[82]

The concept of "homeland" or *Heimat* in the GDR eventually began to reflect this split. Particularly in the 1970s and 80s, "*Heimat*-GDR" could be thought of in terms of an official, party-sanctioned "homeland" that was publicly displayed but which distinct from a separate, more personal understanding of *Heimat*. The Palace of the Republic was part of both notions of *Heimat*-GDR. It was, of course, central to official definitions of *Heimat*, as it was, for example, featured on stamps and on the 100-Mark bill, and its main lobby's ornate "glass bloom" (*Gläserne Blume*) sculpture was flashed on East Germans' TV screens between the segments of the evening news. Images of the Palace were featured in pop-culture representations of "the homeland" as well. Films of the 1970s such as *Du und icke und Berlin* (*You, Me and Berlin*; Eberhard Schäfer, 1977) featured upbeat views of the GDR capital and especially of the Palace, often threaded into the films' narratives as part of sightseeing tours.[83] So common was this motif that Thomas Werner's 1987 experimental film *Guten Tag Berlin* (*Good Day Berlin*) used the sightseeing tour as a way to critique the split between these public and personal notions of East German identity, juxtaposing sunny views of

[82] Fulbrook, *Anatomy of a Dictatorship*, 54, 141-2. This split is one reason why scholars like Thomas Lindenberger argue that, in addition to political history, the history of "ordinary people," that is "everyday history" (*Alltagsgeschichte*) is so important when studying the GDR. (Lindenberger, "Everyday History," 50ff.)
[83] Harry Blunk, "The Concept of 'Heimat-GDR' in DEFA Feature Films," in *DEFA: East German Cinema*, ed. Seán Allan and John Sandford (New York; Oxford, UK: Berghahn Books, 1999; reprint, 2003), 209.

landmarks such as the Palace with, for example, footage of a couple fighting in their apartment.

Though the Palace of the Republic was central to the construction of an "official" *Heimat*-GDR, the fact that it was open to all East Germans—and was often visited by them—meant that it played an equally important role in the formation of an unofficial notion of *Heimat*-GDR. Unlike the official version, this more personal *Heimat* was not based on images of national landmarks, but rather on the individual, yet common experiences of daily life.[84] A visit to the Palace, for example, ranked as one of the key experiences of life in the GDR and something that most East Germans could and many did experience. The high quality of the performances and events held in the Palace meant that the building's role as a cultural venue was widely respected. The *Theater im Palast* became so renowned and so popular that plans were made to expand the small venue not long after the Palace opened.[85] In addition, the Palace provided in many cases the only opportunity for East Germans to see performances or artworks by foreign artists. Concerts given by, for example, the Maria Rosa Ballet Company of Spain but also by pop-culture figures like Harry Belafonte and West German rock star Udo Lindenberg gave East Germans a rare glimpse beyond the GDR. The building was also a favorite site for holding personal celebrations, as many people had their birthday or anniversary parties, or even got married in the Palace.[86] Stefan Wolle calls the Palace of the Republic "the dreamed-of GDR" ("*enträumte DDR*") and indeed it was very

[84] This second notion of Heimat was particularly evident after 1989 when a wave of nostalgia for the former East Germany, so-called *Ostalgie*, swept Germany. Works like Jana Hensel's *Zonenkinder* (*Children of the Zone*) (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 2002) and the film *Good Bye Lenin!* (Wolfgang Becker, 2003) were immensely popular and revealed a sense of East German identity and belonging that was defined by specific products, such as the coffee substitute Mocha-Fix, and by typical GDR experiences like visits to the Palace of the Republic.
[85] Information über Nachforderungen an den elektrischen Anlagen und Einrichtungen im Palast der Republik, 9 February 1977, BArch DC 207/2.
[86] Volker Büttner, "Die Veranstaltungen: Zwischen Professionalismus und Provinzialismus," in *Ein Palast und Seine Republik*, ed. Thomas Beutelschmidt and Julia M. Novak (Berlin: Verlag Bauwesen, 2001), 157ff; Kuhrmann, *Der Palast der Republik*, 66; Wolle, *Die Heile Welt der Diktatur*, 46.

consciously made into what East Germany was *supposed* to have been, both according to the party leadership and the country's citizens, rather than what it actually was. This illusion was engineered down to the tiniest detail: in 1977 when the price of coffee rose sharply worldwide, the Palace's director, along with a top official from the Council of Ministers arranged to ensure that bean coffee, a scarce and highly-valued commodity in the GDR, would be served at a reasonable price in the Palace of the Republic's cafes and restaurants.[87]

This careful construction of the world within the Palace partly explains why many East Germans took a positive view of the building despite its association with Honecker's regime. The Palace was arguably the only place in the GDR where both the unofficial and official notions of *Heimat* coexisted in relative harmony. Indeed, if the 1970s were a time when the borders between personal and public space were well defined, and when East Germans and their government might be said to have entered into an implicit contract wherein each agreed to respect the others' boundaries, the Palace of the Republic was a place where these boundaries blurred somewhat. The Palace can moreover be thought of as a microcosm of East Berlin as a whole. Like the building, East Berlin became the place where what was hoped for the GDR became reality, or at least more of a reality than in other East German cities. East Berlin was the exception that tested the rule, for better although, ultimately, for worse.

After a few years of liberal reforms and economic growth, Honecker's disinclination to make any real, lasting change became obvious, particularly once the global oil crisis of the 70s took its toll on the GDR economy. Already in the mid- to late 1970s, it was clear to most East Germans that the promises of 1971 would never truly be realized. As the 1970s became the 80s and economic growth and standards of living continued to stagnate, it became more

[87] Dr. Bischoff to Dr. Kleinart, Leiter des Sekretariats des Ministerrats, 25 August 1977, BArch DC 207/2.

and more difficult to countenance the blatant contradictions between the regime's version of reality and East Germans' own experience of it.[88] The increasing contradiction between the government's stated goals and its policies eventually overcame individuals' willingness to adopt strategies of accommodation. When the borders between personal and public spaces collapsed, so too did the SED regime and soon thereafter, the nation itself.[89]

West Berlin: Capital of the Counter-Culture

The Four-Power Agreement had a significant impact on the way West Berlin was perceived by the West German and international public. As political tensions in the city eased, rising tensions in other parts of the world, especially Vietnam, dominated headlines, and as a result West Berlin's socio-economic problems were brought to the forefront. What had previously been seen as secondary in importance to the safety and stability of West Berlin were now of central concern, and the postwar urban identity of economic success and progress, established and propagated by events like Interbau, was increasingly difficult to maintain. West Berlin's growing problems were connected to economic and social shifts developing in West Germany as well. In both, the rise of social protest movements accompanied by the end of the "economic miracle" undermined the image of freedom, equality and abundance that had dominated visual culture in the 1950s and early 60s.[90]

Just as architecture and building had been a crucial part of constructing this postwar image, both literally and figuratively, so too did it become a crucial part of the critique of this image. In the 1970s, a squatter movement emerged in cities throughout the Federal Republic and in West Berlin as a response to a severe housing crisis. In cities like Hamburg and

[88] Weber, *Geschichte der DDR*, 396, 427.
[89] Fulbrook, *Anatomy of a Dictatorship*, 145-6.
[90] The rise of social protest movements in the late 1960s and the economic downturn in the early 1970s were, of course, phenomena not limited to West Germany or West Berlin, but were part of a cultural and economic shift that occurred throughout the Western world, specifically in Western Europe and the United States.

Frankfurt and in West Berlin in particular, activists occupied ruined or abandoned buildings as part of a critique of that postwar building policy which had resulted in the construction of modernist, high-rise housing on the outskirts of such cities and the decline of urban centers. This movement helped to make building policy the subject of national debate, and also connected architecture and housing with the counter-cultural critique of the consumer-oriented lifestyle. Moreover, the squatters' rejection of the Modernist approach to building and planning unfolded at the same time that Western architects and planners were as a whole beginning to question the validity and efficacy of documents like the Charter of Athens.

In late 1978 when Hans Scharoun's State Library *Preußischer Kulturbesitz* finally opened, it was in this environment of social unrest and change. Conceived of as a continuation of the postwar reconstruction effort, the finished building was ironically completed at a time when this postwar approach, and all that it represented, was being questioned by not only the architectural community but by the public as a whole. However, though the State Library was in part implicated in the critiques that had fueled the squatter movement, a look at the reception of the building in the international press, both popular and architectural, reveals that the building was ultimately viewed in positive terms. In fact, an examination of the reception of the State Library provides insight into the way the postwar approach to architecture as political argument, initiated with Interbau, was maintained even while it was so heavily critiqued.

Political, Economic and Social Changes of the 1960s and 70s

Despite one or two periods of slight slowdown and/or recession, the West German economy had continued to boom throughout the 1960s, growing by 7.5% in 1969 alone.[91] Troubles

[91] A.J. Nicholls, *The Bonn Republic: West German Democracy, 1945-90* (London and New York: Longman, 1997), 242.

were already on the horizon, however, when the 1973 global oil crisis brought the "economic miracle" to a crashing halt, devastating the export-dependent West German economy.[92] The outside pressure of the oil embargo was compounded by internal pressures in the form of an ambitious program of social welfare introduced by Willy Brandt's Social Democratic government. Brandt introduced many policy reforms but also greatly expanded West Germany's program of social welfare, increasing expenditure on such programs from DM 174.7 billion in 1970 and to DM 334.1 billion in 1975. By the mid-1970s, West Germany was embroiled in the most serious recession of its short history. Serious unemployment set in and already by 1975 more than a million West Germans were out of work.[93] In 1974, inflation reached 7%, the highest level since the *Deutschmark* was introduced in 1948.[94]

When the West German economy suffered, so too did West Berlin's since the Berlin Help Laws, introduced in 1950, had grown to make up half of the city's annual budget. Despite the financial incentives provided by these measures, companies had since the 1960s been moving their headquarters out of West Berlin. Not only did this take much-needed capital out of West Berlin, it severely limited career opportunities for remaining residents. The stability that followed the 1971 Four-Power Agreement laid bare weaknesses inherent in the economic structure of West Berlin, previously obscured by the city's headline-grabbing political tensions. After 1973, however, the economic crisis made it more difficult to correct such weaknesses and deepened West Berlin's economic dependence on West Germany. Throughout its existence, West Berlin was never able to establish an independent economy.[95]

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[92] Görtemaker, *Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, 573.
[93] By comparision, in 1970 there were only 150,000 unemployed in West Germany. This number rose to over 500,000 by 1974 and exceeded 2 million for the first time in 1983. (Nicholls, *The Bonn Republic*, 242, 282; Turner, *Germany from Partition to Reunification*, 164.)
[94] Görtemaker, *Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, 581.
[95] Häußermann and Strom, "Berlin: The Once and Future Capital," 338-9; Ribbe, *Berlin 1945-2000*, 150.

West Berlin's subsidized economy in fact helped to influence the city's demographic make-up, especially once the Four-Power Agreement had made the city safer and more accessible. Since the mid-50s overall population rates in West Berlin had been declining. This was first because of the death rate in the city's large population of elderly but also because those who immigrated to the city from the GDR in this period ultimately chose to move to West Germany.[96] Despite declining population numbers, throughout the 1960s-80s more people in fact moved into West Berlin than out of it. Those who did come to the city were primarily foreign laborers or university students, attracted to West Berlin in part because of the city's low cost of living, made possible by West German subsidies.[97] By the end of 1970s, the population of West Berlin looked very different than it had at the end of World War II.

Foreign laborers were encouraged to move to West Berlin when the city's economy was still relatively strong. These so-called guest workers (*Gastarbeiter*) had been moving to West Germany in large numbers throughout the 1960s, invited by the federal government to supplement its workforce, which no longer benefited from cheap labor streaming in from the GDR. Because fewer people overall were moving to West Berlin, these workers made up a greater percentage of West Berlin's newcomers as compared to West Germany. Already by 1971 every fifth child born in West Berlin had foreign parents and by 1983, one fourth of the city's population was foreign-born.[98] About half of this immigrant population was made up of Turkish workers and their families, most of whom lived in the city's central districts, above all in the neighborhood of Kreuzberg. As West Berlin's foreign population increased, many saw it is a sign of the city's overall decline, leading some journalists to wonder whether West

[96] Ribbe, *Berlin 1945-2000*, 149.
[97] Häußermann and Strom, "Berlin: The Once and Future Capital," 338.
[98] Ribbe, *Berlin 1945-2000*, 150.

Berlin could still be considered German at all, but had become a "Turkish city."[99]

Like foreign-born workers, young people from West Germany were attracted to the city because of its low cost of living, but also by its university system, which had been cultivated in the 1950s and 60s as part of developing West Berlin's role as a center of culture and scholarship. The Free University was a particularly desirable destination, since it was founded as an experimental, reform university and included student representation on many of its governing boards. In addition, many students moved to West Berlin as a way to escape what they saw as the provincialism of life in the Federal Republic, and certainly the city's precarious political status in the 1960s made life there seem especially daring and rebellious. For young men, moving to West Berlin also meant avoiding the compulsory military service required of high-school graduates in West Germany.[100] Given such reasons for moving, it is easy to see how, compared to the Federal Republic, a larger percentage of university students in West Berlin were politically engaged and held critical, anti-establishment views. Though in the late 1960s students all over West Germany joined in protests and political demonstrations in increasing numbers, West Berlin, and specifically the Free University became the flashpoint and center of the national student movement.

In fact it is somewhat ironic that West Berlin would become, as political scientist Richard L. Merritt called it in a 1969 essay, "the battleground for the most significant aspect of the student protest movement in West Germany."[101] Since its partition in 1945 and its physical division in 1961, the city's inhabitants had overwhelmingly supported the U.S. and

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[99] Nawrocki asks "Will the divided city become a Turkish city?" in "Wird West-Berlin zum Hinterhof der Nation?," *Die Zeit*, 3 July 1976, 3. See also Jürgen Engert, "Ist Berlin noch eine detusche Stadt? Jeder achte Berliner ist ein Ausländer," *Rheinischer Merkur*, 4 December 1981, 3. By comparison, 4.5 million immigrants lived in West Germany by 1981, of which 1.5 million were of Turkish descent. (Nicholls, *The Bonn Republic*, 249.)

[100] Ribbe, *Berlin 1945-2000*, 139-40.

[101] Richard L. Merritt, "The Student Protest Movement in West Berlin," *Comparative Politics* 1, no. 4 (1969): 517.

its policies, and had been well known for their vehement anti-Communist stance. Though politically left of center (the city was governed by mayors from the leftist Social Democratic Party until 1981), West Berlin's position at the center of the Cold War meant that protest and dissension were viewed suspiciously. This insistence on stability and consensus characterized not only West Berlin but West Germany throughout the late 1940s and 50s, as divisive issues were largely avoided and individuals eschwed political engagement or critique.[102]

Indeed, the approach to Germany's Nazi past was *the* controversial issue which, while not entirely repressed, until the late 60s was not dealt with in any thoroughgoing way.[103] Once a new generation of West Germans came of age and collectively began to question the previous generations' role in the atrocities of World War II, the government was forced to confront its past directly. However, as was the case with the student movements in the U.S. and France, the West German/West Berlin student movement was not solely political. These students saw their political activities in the context of a larger effort to create a new way of living that was "outside" mainstream culture. Rock 'n' roll, drug usage, and alternative living arrangements were all ways in which they attempted to do so.[104] Influenced by sociologist and Frankfurt School member Herbert Marcuse and his 1964 book *The One-Dimensional Man*, the student movement critiqued the consumer-oriented culture that had proliferated in the Cold War and which they accused of alienating individuals and of destroying community.

In part because of this socially integrated approach to activism, a national community

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[102] Glees, *Reinventing Germany*, xxv. Glees suggests this political climate could also be explained by the association between oppositional politics and the desire for power and/or domination, from which West Germany was anxious to dissociate itself in the postwar era.

[103] In an essay on Gerhard Richter, for example, art historian Paul Jaskot comments that "...it is abundantly clear that the National Socialist past was anything but a silence in West German society or art, even if it was not yet systematically discussed." (Paul Jaskot, "Gerhard Richter and Adolf Eichman" *Oxford Art Journal* 28 (October 2005): 462.)

[104] The connection between drug consumption and social critique is discussed in Robert P. Stephens, "Drugs, Consumption, and Internationalization in Hamburg, 1960-1968," in *Consuming Germany and the Cold War*, ed. David F. Crew (New York, NY: Berg, 2003), 179-206.

of activists would evolve out of the student movements forming West Germany's New Social Movement (*Neue soziale Bewegung*) in the 1970s.[105] Groups of activists espousing a variety of related concerns were linked by communal and/or cooperative "projects" such as repair shops, movie theaters, bookstores, cafes, and organic food markets, often operated out of single buildings. The largest of these alternative communities was in West Berlin where by 1981 a large network of around 1,500 cooperative projects had been established.[106] Eventually, members of West Berlin's "Alternative Scene" (*Alternative Szene*) brought their desire for social change together with their political goals, forming a political party, the Alternative List, which in the 1981 municipal elections won nine seats in the West Berlin Senate.[107]

Architecture, Building, and Social Critique

The difficulties brought on by the post-1973 economic downturn seemed only to confirm the critical views of West Germany and West Berlin's alternative groups. In particular, the severe problems with housing in West Germany were blamed on a building economy that was far more concerned with profit than with providing affordable housing to those who needed it. Beginning in the mid- to late 1970s, the shortage of available living space was so extreme that many began to illegally occupy or "squat" in abandoned buildings. The squatter movement (*Hausbesetzerbewegung*), as it was known, was a direct response to building policy in West Germany as a whole, but was also related to the social changes of the 1960s and early 1970s, since it was largely university students and guest workers who were affected by the housing crunch and who occupied these buildings. Though housing shortages

[105] Görtemaker, *Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, 620ff.
[106] Görtemaker, *Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, 644-5; Margit Mayer, "Social Movements in European Cities: Transitions from the 1970s to the 1990s," in *Cities in Contemporary Europe*, ed. Arnaldo Bangnasco and Patrick Le Gales (Cambridge, UK and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 132.
[107] Ribbe, *Berlin 1945-2000*, 143, 144.

plagued many West German cities, the situation in West Berlin was more dire, in part because of the city's limited amount of space, but it was also more visible, given the city's symbolic significance.[108] In West Berlin, the squatters' actions had a significant influence on municipal building policy and, particularly in the 1980s, played a role in shaping the city's built environment and the public's perception thereof. The movement reasserted the important role architecture played in the formation of the city's public image and thus West Berlin's urban identity and status as a symbol of the Western world.

In 1961 after the Berlin Wall made the city more isolated and more economically dependent on the Federal Republic, construction in West Berlin was encouraged by a generous system of credit granting, tax breaks, and guarantees made possible in large part through the Berlin Help Laws. By the later 1960s, developers could receive up to 70% of their financing costs from the government, in addition to the significant tax write-offs they benefited from by building in West Berlin.[109] Since public monies financed such a high percentage of construction costs, firms developed close relationships with government officials and eventually West Berlin's entire building market was dominated by the handful of companies that had cultivated such relationships. As a result of this, plus the fact that building materials had to be "imported" from West Germany, the cost of building in West Berlin was on average 15% higher than in the Federal Republic.[110]

Given the potential profit margins, developers not surprisingly found new, large-scale construction more appealing than the reconstruction or renovation of existing housing stock.

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[108] Steven Katz and Margit Mayer, "Gimme Shelter: Self-Help Housing Struggles within and against the State in New York City and West Berlin," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 9, no. 1 (1985): 36; Merritt, "Living with the Wall," 199, 203.
[109] Harald Bodenschatz, Volker Heise, and Jochen Korfmacher, *Schluss mit Zerstörung?: Stadterneuerung und Städtische Opposition in West-Berlin, Amsterdam und London* (Giessen: Anabas Verlag, 1983), 34-5.
[110] Häußermann and Strom, "Berlin: The Once and Future Capital," 339.

In the 1960s especially, the approach to city renewal (*Stadterneuerung*) was focused on "redevelopment" (*Sanierung*) and "city expansion" (*Stadterweiterung*) rather than on renovation and/or preservation. Municipal redevelopment agencies (*Sanierungsträger*),[111] razed pre-war buildings particularly on the outskirts of the city and built in their place large-scale developments of modern-style, high-rise housing blocks. As a result of this policy, derisively referred to as "clearance redevelopment" (*Kahlschlagsanierung*), so-called "satellite cities" (*Trabantenstädte*) began to pop up outside of West Berlin's central districts, including Gropiusstadt in Neukölln (18,000 units, begun 1962) and "Falkenhagener Feld" in Spandau (10,000 units, begun 1963) (Figure 58).[112] Rather than ease the housing shortage, however, such developments only made the situation worse. The numbers of units in the new constructions were often fewer than in the older buildings they replaced, meaning that the overall amount of available living spaces in West Berlin went down rather than up. In addition, old housing was demolished faster than new housing could be built; in 1974, out of the 56,000 units called for by the 1963 City Renewal Program (*Stadterneuerungsprogramm*) only 14,500 had actually been built.[113] Finally, the rent for the new units was higher than it had been in the older buildings, so that building policies in the 1960s actually worsened West Berlin's housing crisis, significantly reducing the amount and availability of particularly low-cost housing.[114]

When both West Berlin's architectural community and its residents began to object to the postwar approach to urban renewal, the government changed course. In the second City

[111] An example of one such agency is the *Deutsche Gesellschaft zur Förderung des Wohnungsbau* or DeGeWo, a public agency which also played a role in the development of Interbau buildings and which still exists today. See "Die DeGeWo" in Dieter Hanauske, *Bauen, Bauen, Bauen: Die Wohnungspolitik in Berlin (West), 1945-61* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1995), 1097-1114.
[112] Bodenschatz, Heise, and Korfmacher, *Schluss mit Zerstörung?* , 28, 30.
[113] Renate Mulhak, "Der Instandbesetzungskonflikt in Berlin," in *Großstadt und Neue Soziale Bewegungen*, ed. Peter Grottian and Wilfried Nelles (Basel: Birkhäuser Verlag, 1983), 208.
[114] Bodenschatz, Heise, and Korfmacher, *Schluss mit Zerstörung?* , 32.

Renewal Program of 1972, financial incentives were designed to encourage "modernization" (*Modernisierung*) of existing housing stock especially in the central districts, rather than new construction in West Berlin's peripheral areas. The economic downturn of the early 70s made this approach even more appealing, not only because of a sharp increase in the cost of building, but because public money for financing new construction could not be spared as readily. However, though the funds were less available, government financing continued to play a huge role in West Berlin's housing market, and developers, which from 1977 included private firms, could receive from 43% to 95% of their financing from the government, depending on the condition of the housing stock to be renovated. In short, firms got more money for buildings that needed more work.[115]

From the point of view of the tenants and individual building owners, the new focus on modernization did little to improve the housing market or their living conditions. As before, the overall amount of housing was reduced since firms demolished the structures towards the interior of the old housing blocks, retaining only the front-most, street-adjacent buildings. Rents in the newly-renovated *Mietskasernen* were higher than they had been before, meaning a further decrease in the amount of housing for lower-income residents. Finally the pace of building remained slow and buildings were left empty until renovation could begin; in fact many buildings in the designated "renovation areas" (*Sanierungsgebiete*) were purposefully left deteriorating and vacant so as to maximize the amount of financing the developers could receive. While the number of unoccupied buildings in West Berlin went up, the post-1973 economic crisis meant higher unemployment rates and a reduction in the already-low incomes of the city's citizens. By 1982, almost 10,000 housing units in West Berlin were in empty or partially empty buildings despite the fact that 70,000 applications for

[115] Bodenschatz, Heise, and Korfmacher, *Schluss mit Zerstörung?* , 45.

housing were languishing in the offices of the city's Housing Authority (*Landesamt für Wohnungswesen*).[116]

The postwar embrace of Modernism meant that the building policies of the 1963 and 1972 Renewal Programs both directly and indirectly encouraged the construction of high-rise housing developments like Gropiusstadt. These buildings were of course originally intended as a way to open up urban space by providing an alternative to the dark, cramped *Mietskasernen* and by separating commercial from residential districts and car traffic from foot traffic. However, in West Berlin as in the rest of the world, high-rise developments like Gropiusstadt soon became associated with urban problems like drug abuse and poverty. In the U.S., for example, high-rise developments like these were supposed to provide better housing for the lower classes as part of a national effort to eradicate slums initiated with the 1949 Housing Act. However these housing projects, often poorly managed by corrupt city governments or agencies, merely replaced slums by creating what effectively became high-rise ghettos.[117]

The push to create highways and roads so as to facilitate the use of cars in and around urban areas netted similarly negative effects. Planners soon realized that more roads meant more, not less traffic, and that highways often destroyed communities when built in inner-city districts. In West Berlin plans for a series of highways, called "tangents," had a direct impact on the rise of the squatter movement. Though the highway plans were ultimately abandoned, a number of buildings, particularly in Kreuzberg, had been earmarked for demolition and were therefore left abandoned and deteriorating; such buildings eventually

[116] Bodenschatz, Heise, and Korfmacher, *Schluss mit Zerstörung?* , 47; Mulhak, "Der Instandbesetzungskonflikt in Berlin," 205.
[117] For example, see the postwar section of Wim de Wit's examination of the history of public housing in Chicago, "The Rise of Public Housing in Chicago, 1930-1960," in *Chicago Architecture and Design, 1923-1993*, ed. John Zukowsky (New York: Prestel, 1992), 233-45.

became homes to squatters.[118] In West Berlin and elsewhere, the tenets of Modernist planning as outlined in CIAM's 1933 Athens Charter, far from solving the problems of modern urban dwelling, seemed to have created new, more intractable ones.

As the city's housing crisis worsened, a number of scandals exposed rampant corruption in West Berlin's building industry and its city government, the most notorious of which were the *Steglitzer Kreisel* and Garski Affair. The *Steglitzer Kreisel* involved the construction of a modern, high-rise building in Berlin-Steglitz that was to feature shops, restaurants and office space. Officials in West Berlin's department of building extended DM 42 million in credit to architect Sigrid Kressmann-Zschach for the construction of the building. However, in 1974 Kressmann-Zschach defaulted on the loan, leaving the city in possession of a half-finished high-rise which had cost DM 330 million to build.[119] A similar scenario unfolded when Dietrich Garski, a West Berlin architect and developer, proved unable to repay the city yet another loan, this time totaling DM 140 million.[120] Before becoming ensnared by scandal, both Kressmann-Zschach and Garski were regularly featured in West Berlin society pages and apparently enjoyed cozy relationships with highly placed members of the city government; Kressmann-Zschach reputedly made a private trip to Vienna with West Berlin Finance Bureau chief Dr. Klaus Arlt.[121] To the West Berliners who were in desperate need of affordable housing, such scandals were particularly galling and helped to fuel the growing protest movement.

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[118] Ribbe, *Berlin 1945-2000*, 158.
[119] "Architektin will den Kreisel nicht aufgeben," *Berliner Morgenpost*, 17 January 1974, 1, 3. The original estimate for the building costs, DM 181 million, rose due to the overall rise in building costs precipitated by the 1973 oil embargo. (Wolfgang Helmer, "Wer rettet den torkelnden Kreisel?," *Die Welt*, 2 January 1974, 10.)
[120] "Der Fall Garski: Muß das Land Berlin mit 139 Millionen Mark einspringen?," *Berliner Morgenpost,* 12 December 1980, 1, 3.
[121] "Private Wienreise mit der Architektin," *Berliner Morgenpost,* 13 January 1974, 1. Wolfgang Lüder, member of the West Berlin Senate and responsible for economic matters, was eventually forced to resign because of his role in the Garski Affair. ("Stobbe über die erste Hürde: SPD billigt seine Kandidaten," *Berliner Morgenpost,* 10 January 1981, 1, 2.)

The lack of low-cost housing in West Berlin was particularly problematic given the fact that the city's population was made up in large part by lower- or limited-income populations, in particular foreign workers, university students and retirees.[122] Beginning in around 1973, neighborhood organizations along with individual activists, many of whom had played central roles in the student movement of the previous decade, began to organize. Specifically, these activists wanted to force the city to change its policies so as to halt the destruction of older housing stock and thereby create more affordable housing. It was as this movement began to take shape that many lower-income and/or unemployed West Berliners moved into the growing number of empty buildings.[123] By the early 1980s, over 300 buildings in all but two of West Berlin's neighborhoods were illegally occupied, and most of these were located in Kreuzberg, where by 1982 eighty-two houses had been squatted.[124] Ironically, the large amount of square footage in the *Mietskaserne* of such neighborhoods, along with mix of commercial and residential use—which planners dubbed the "Kreuzberger Mix" ("*Kreuzberger Mischung*")[125]—helped to foster community in these inner-city districts, creating the ideal environment for the establishment of a vibrant and viable counter-culture.

While the immediate goal was a resolution of the housing crisis, the squatter movement in West Berlin grew out of and was connected to a variety of other social movements, such as the environmental protection and women's rights movements and the

[122] Bodenschatz, Heise, and Korfmacher, *Schluss mit Zerstörung?* , 39.
[123] As foreign workers came in, ostensibly as "guests" of the city and West Germany, they were initially placed in dormitory-style housing most of which was located in Kreuzberg, effectively creating "foreigner ghettos." As workers began bringing their families to West Berlin, these dormitories became inadequate and so many families naturally moved into cheap or unoccupied buildings in the area. (Ribbe, *Berlin 1945-2000*, 150.)
[124] Görtemaker, *Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, 643; Mulhak, "Der Instandbesetzungskonflikt in Berlin," 207, 211.
[125] See Felix Escher, "Die 'Kreuzberger Mischung'. Zur Genesis eines Begriff" in *Wirtschaft im Umbruch*, ed. Wolfram Fischer, et al., 119-130 (St. Katharinen: Scripta Mercaturae, 1997).

movements protesting the U.S. presence in Vietnam and nuclear arms proliferation.[126] For its members, the issue of housing functioned as a point of cohesion for the social, political and economic aspects of the New Social Movement and was intended as a critique of the uncritical social conformity encouraged by a consumer-oriented society as a whole. In terms of the built environment, this conformity was associated with the urban vision that the federal and city governments as well as commercial interests had attempted to impose in the postwar period, a vision in which residents felt they had had no say.[127]

In response, these groups attempted to create "an altogether different way of living and working," that was both populist and in some way "outside" the capitalist market. Squatters formed semi-autonomous communities and alternative projects that worked to provide various kinds of support for the group as a whole, outside of state-supported welfare programs and therefore state control.[128] Of course, West Berlin represented an important venue for such protest since it was widely viewed as a symbol of the Western world. In particular, the act of squatting or occupying space was a particularly trenchant one in West Berlin, which was still technically an "occupied" city governed by the Allied Control Council. By taking control over space, the squatters were implicitly (and often explicitly) criticizing the presence of the Western Allies, chiefly the United States, in West Berlin and to some degree in West Germany as a whole. Through their actions, the squatters very effectively raised the question of who has the power to occupy, use or alter urban space.

In addition to establishing "self-help activities" like cooperative projects in the *Mietskasernen*, beginning in the 1980s "Rehab-squatters" (*Instandbesetzer*) refurbished the

[126] Mayer, "Social Movements in European Cities," 135.
[127] Mayer, "Social Movements in European Cities," 135; Mulhak, "Der Instandbesetzungskonflikt in Berlin," 205.
[128] Katz and Mayer, "Gimme Shelter," 131.

buildings they occupied, attempting to make the deteriorating nineteenth-century housing stock once again livable.[129] In occupying the ruined hulks of tenement buildings that postwar reconstruction efforts had worked to destroy, the squatter movement was also raising the specter of the past. Just as the student movements of the 1960s had critiqued West Germany's approach to dealing with the Nazi past, so too did protests of the 70s and 80s question the attempt to create an entirely "new" Berlin without consideration of or regard for the past. In reclaiming the nineteenth-century housing stock that had survived the mass demolition projects of 1950s-70s, the so-called "Second Destruction" (*Zweite Zerstörung*), squatters were in effect arguing that city define itself at least partly in terms of its past, and to consider how this past might influence its present and future development. By doing this, the squatter movement framed the city in a context not only of the struggle between East and West, but also between the marginalized "Other" and hegemonic power. This reorientation of the struggle to which West Berlin was so central, would influence how the city was used as a symbol in the Cold War and would also influence efforts to rebuild the city in the 1980s, by which time development was seen as part of an effort to restore the city's so-called "lost face."[130]

The State Library Opens its Doors

In December 1978 when the Berlin State Library *Preußischer Kulturbesitz* was finally finished, the squatter movement was just gaining steam and the reception of Modernism was at a critical turning point. These changes in many ways influenced the urban identity of West Berlin, a city that had worked hard in the postwar period to define itself in

[129] Katz and Mayer, "Gimme Shelter," 37, 33.
[130] In the 1960s, social critics and journalists began to lament what they saw as a loss of the city's "face" or character, due to the destruction of the West Berlin's nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century buildings. See for example Günter Kühne's series on "Verliert Berlin sein Gesicht?" (Has Berlin lost its Face?) in the Sunday issues of *Der Tagesspiegel*, from 29 April to 6 June 1974.

terms of Modern architecture and planning. The success of Interbau had linked the institutional and popular reception of Modernism to that of West Berlin in particular and the Western world in general and indeed it is no accident that, as in the squatter movement, the critique of postwar building efforts was bound together with the critique of the Western lifestyle as a whole.

Scharoun's State Library was seen partly related to problems plaguing West Berlin's building economy and the backlash against Modernism, due mostly to its extremely long construction time and its huge price tag. A look at contemporary critiques of the building, however, reveals that the State Library was ultimately well received, interpreted in fact as an antidote to the "monolithic and dull"[131] buildings produced by the rest of modern movement. In such reviews, which filled the popular as well as professioal press, one can see the emergence of a new framework within which Modernism was interpreted. While most critics and journalists acknowledged the "failure" of the Modernist approach as it was employed in postwar reconstruction projects throughout Western Europe, the style was at the same time not completely repudiated. Instead, the notion of two different kinds of Modernism is implicitly proposed in these critiques of the 1960s and 70s: a "good" Modernism that is humane and which truly represents democratic ideals versus a "bad" Modernism that is characterized as rigid and alienating. As an example of the former, the State Library helped to maintain West Berlin's reputation as a center of cutting-edge architecture, despite Modernism's fall from grace.

Despite its ultimately positive reception, the State Library's construction was dogged from the start by lack of funds and problems stemming from the technical complexities of both Scharoun's design and the library's infrastructure. By 1973, the project was hugely

[131] "Humane Modernist," *Architectural Review* 157 (March 1975): 129.

behind schedule and over budget. Called a "*Jahrhundertbau*" or a "building for the centuries" at the ground-breaking ceremony when the construction time was still estimated at five years, the term became ironic when in reports on the November 1973 topping-out ceremony, journalists used it to suggest that the library's *construction* would last centuries.[132] Not only had Scharoun's complex design and the desire of the *Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz* (SPK) to make the library as technologically advanced as possible made the State Library an expensive undertaking, poor management of the project pushed the building's cost up even more. In the rush to begin construction, for example, mistakes were made in the planning phase and engineering calculations had to be redone. By the time the library was completed, more than three separate engineering and architectural firms, in addition to Scharoun's, had worked on the project, and each time a new firm took over the project, construction was further delayed. Finally, the sharp increase in the overall cost of building resulting from the 1973 economic crisis inflated the State Library's price even further, until the projected cost of DM 90 million was exceeded two and a half times: the State Library ultimately cost approximately DM 230 million to build.[133]

Upon its December 1978 opening, the West German news magazine *Der Spiegel* described the building's construction as chaotic, contentious, and "scandalous," concluding that "[s]eldom has such an extensive public construction project been built on such shaky

[132] See for example, Hellmut Kotschenreuther, "Ein Bau der Poesie: Richtfest für Hans Scharouns neue Staatsbibliothek in Westberlin," *Stuttgarter Zeitung*, 28 November 1973; Susanne Hoffmann, "Ein Jahrhundertbau für 156 Millionen: Staatsbibliothek vor dem Richtfest," *Bonner Rundschau,* 9 October 1973; "Scharouns 'Jahrhundertbau': Die neue Staatsbibliothek in Berlin steht vor ihrem Richtfest," *Gießener Allegemeine,* 9 October 1973, all press clippings, AdK Berlin, HSA, WV 236.
[133] Ekkehart Vesper, "Das Bibliotheksgebäude," in *Festgabe zur Eröffnung des Neubaus in Berlin*, ed. Ekkehart Vesper (Weisbaden: Reichert, 1978), 135.

ground."[134] The government of the Federal Republic was the primary target of such criticism, since it had been the main financial sponsor of the project and, as of 1972, assumed complete oversight of its construction. In an interview with the West German journal *Der Architekt*, architect Edgar Wisniewski, Scharoun's partner on the project, claimed that it was the pressure put on by the government to begin construction and the resulting curtailment of the planning phase, which led to higher costs and delays.[135] The *Deutsche Bauzeitung* also blamed the Federal Building Administration for the chaos associated with the project, exclaiming, "The absurdity of basing planning solely on business cycles is clearly evident here!" and calling the entire affair, in no uncertain terms, "a tragedy."[136]

Considering the scale of both the building itself and the gaffes associated with its construction, the State Library would seem to be the kind of large-scale, publicly-financed project that the squatter movement targeted as poorly managed, inexcusably expensive and, ultimately, proof of the inefficacy of West Germany's and West Berlin's approach to building in the postwar era. In the architectural journal *Arch +*, for example, Julius Posener argued that building a national library on such a grand scale in West Berlin seemed impractical, even wasteful: how much use would the library really enjoy, given the fact that the city was not only isolated from potential patrons in the Federal Republic but itself had a dwindling

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[134] "Goldener Schrein. 15 Jahre nach dem ersten Entwurf ist Scharouns Spätwerk fertig: Ende dieser Woche wird die Stabi in West-Berlin eröffnet – nach einer Bau Chronik scandaleuse," *Der Spiegel*, 11 December 1978, 249.

[135] "Architektur kritisch: Staatsbibliothek Berlin," *Der Architekt* 9 (1977): 319-20, 321, press clipping, AdK Berlin, HSA, WV 236.

[136] "Staatsbibliothek Preußischer Kulturbesitz," *Deutsche Bauzeitung* 3 (1979): 12. Added to the embarrassment of the State Library's construction was the Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation's own financial and administrative difficulties, also widely publicized in the West German media throughout the 1960s and early 70s. See for example Hannelore Schubert, "Ein Wettbewerb ohne Ergebnis," *Die Welt*, 8 July 1966; "Die SPK ist wieder ohne Geldsorgen: die von der Bundesregierung Anfang 1971 verhängte Finanzsperre ist aufgehoben worden," *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 9 July 1971; "War alle planung umsonst? Die Finanzierung für den Berliner Museumskomplex ist gefährdet," *Handelsblatt* (10 March 1973), all press clippings, AdK Berlin, HSA, WV 236.

population?[137] Others argued that, like housing projects of the 1960s in West Berlin, the planning and design of the State Library and *Kulturforum* represented the so-called "clearance redevelopment" approach. Architectural critic Colin Rowe, for example, later called the *Kulturforum*, "[a]n indeterminate wasteland absurdly dignified with a Roman name."[138] This "wasteland" was furthermore created by the demolition of those buildings that had remained in the Tiergarten, regardless of the extent of their damage, and had been based on a plan that was wholly new and unrelated to previous organizations or uses of the site. In addition, as with Modernist plans for the city as a whole, the plan for the *Kulturforum* had accommodated the major traffic arteries of Potsdamer Straße and a highway, the Western Tangent. Though the Western Tangent was never built, critics noted that the heavy traffic on Potsdamer Strasse which cut through the center of the forum, made the space anything but tranquil or encouraging of introspection.[139] For these reasons, the *Kulturforum* became, in the words of one journalist, an unintentional symbol of what was wrong with planning in West Berlin: "tearing apart what had belonged together."[140]

Large public projects like the *Kulturforum* were beginning to draw criticism not just in West Germany and West Berlin, but all over the world as well. The construction of Lincoln Center in New York, for example, necessitated the destruction of a large number of apartment buildings in a central Manhattan neighborhood as well as the forced eviction of the buildings' tenants.[141] Activists, urban planners and architects alike began to recognize the negative effects of such projects by the mid- to late 1960s, and many blamed Modernism,

[137] Posener, "Fragen zur Staatsbibliothek," 6.
[138] Colin Rowe, "IBA: Rowe Reflects," *Architectural Review* 1076 (September 1984): 92.
[139] Conrads, "Offenbar: ein Innenwelt-Raum," 13.
[140] Manfred Sack, "Der Goldene Bücherbuckel von Berlin," *Die Zeit*, 15 December 1978, 41.
[141] Robert A. Caro, *The Power Broker: Robert Moses and the Fall of New York* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1975), 986, 1013-4

particularly the kind endorsed by CIAM, for the destruction of public space and of community which resulted from such policies. To be sure, critics were responding not just to the style of, for example, public housing but also to the way in which public money was allocated and spent by housing administrations. Nonetheless, the corruption of specific administrative bodies was often conflated with the Modernist approach as a whole and, as with the squatter movement in West Berlin, the reaction against Modernist planning and building in Western Europe and the U.S. was related to a larger critique of the postwar cultural and economic values.

Part of what resulted from this backlash was the style of architecture that would come to be known as Postmodernism.[142] This approach emerged in the late 1960s as individual architects and planners began to question the validity of the kind of architecture endorsed by the CIAM, and critique the approach to urban planning described in that organization's Charter of Athens. Published in 1966, Robert Venturi's *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* was the movement's so-called "gentle manifesto," and exemplifies the goals of these architects and planners. Employing pithy aphorisms like "less is a bore" Venturi railed against the stripped-down, rectilinear "International Style," advocating a return to the use of decorative elements and motifs derived from historic styles.[143] In 1978, the same year the State Library opened, Colin Rowe and Fred Koetter published *Collage City*, a critique of modernist urban visions, such as Le Corbusier's *Plan Voisin* (1925), which, as Rowe and

[142] Other critiques of Modernism preceded that of the Postmodernists, including those of the group of architects known as Team X beginning in the early 1950s and Le Corbusier's later work. In addition, critiques of the Charter of Athens had in the 1960s already been raised by CIAM members, including at the 1949 meeting Bergamo, where the Polish architect Helen Helena Syrkus declared, "We in the CIAM must change our stance. The Bauhaus is as outmoded as Scamozzi. It is time to adapt the Charter of Athens to reality." (*7. CIAM Bergamo 1949, documents*, Kraus, Reprint 1979, Seance Pleniere 29.7., p. 8. Quoted in Hain, "Berlin Ost," 38.)
[143] Robert Venturi, *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1977), 16-7. The term "International Style" refers to the 1932 exhibition of the same name, held at the Museum of Modern Art.

Koetter argued, were predicated on the destruction of the existing city.[144] Though supposedly concerned with the city's inhabitants, the Modernist approach seemed on the contrary to ignore individuals' needs by providing a one-size-fits-all model that often did not allow for input or adjustment by buildings' residents.

The State Library was finished and opened as Postmodernism was coalescing into a movement. In addition, because Scharoun had died only five years before, critiques of the building doubled as eulogies for the architect and assessments of his entire career. For these reasons, Scharoun's oeuvre in general and the State Library in particular were discussed in the context of the then-recent shift in architectural discourse, viewed in relation to both Modernism and Postmodernism. The resulting critiques rarely implicated Scharoun in what were viewed as the crimes of Modernism, despite the fact that both the man and his work had strong and explicit connections to the Modern movement and its leading members. These reviews, particularly those that were published in the U.S. publication *Architectural Review*, portray Scharoun as an architect who, while influenced by the Modernism, ultimately took the approach in a different direction and thus avoided "conform[ing] to the tactics...of those who formed the hard core of CIAM."[145]

Scharoun, such critiques argued, was able to adapt his style to varying demands and was not hemmed in either by the constraints of a single style or by what was characterized as an obsession with the details of a building. As a "humane modernist," Scharoun considered the use of the buildings he designed and, as an extension of this, the buildings' users. In doing so, claimed critics, he created individual, "varied and interesting" buildings as opposed to the

[144] Colin Rowe and Fred Koetter, *Collage City* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1978), 65-6.
[145] Colin St. John Wilson, "Light on Scharoun," *Architectural Review* 165 (April 1979): 194.

"megaliths" which "[rob] our cities of coherence and identity."[146] Furthermore, such critics noted that though Scharoun was connected personally and professionally with the architects most closely associated with the so-called International Style, he was enlightened enough to reject or at least be skeptical of this approach from the start.[147] Ultimately what was praised in Scharoun's work in critiques of the late 1970s were those aspects which seemed the most related to Postmodernism and the least related to Modernism, as the two movements were then defined. The sense of playfulness in his designs was praised, as was his attention to the users of his buildings. According to critic Colin St. John Wilson, for example, Scharoun's architecture, like that of Alvar Aalto and Johannes Duiker, was "untouched by the birth and death" of the "fictions" of modernism, "and require[d] no expiation in the ashes of Pruitt-Igoe."[148]

Though by the time of his death Scharoun was regarded favorably by architectural critics, he had come to prominence relatively late in his career in comparison to other "Masters of the Modern Movement."[149] It was his postwar successes, particularly the Berlin *Philharmonie*, that had brought him to wider renown and the first monograph on Scharoun was published in the year the State Library opened, authored by British architect and critic Peter Blundell Jones. Scharoun's association with the Expressionist style is one reason why his work, along with that of architects like Bruno Taut and Erich Mendelsohn, was neither highly regarded nor included in pre-war histories of Modernism like Nikolas Pevsner's *Pioneers of the Modern Movement* (1936) or Siegfried Giedion's *Space, Time and*

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[146] "Humane Modernist," 129.
[147] Walter Segal, "Scharoun," *Architectural Review* 153 (February 1973): 101; Wilson, "Light on Scharoun," 195.
[148] Wilson, "Light on Scharoun," 197. Architectural historian Charles Jencks famously equated the demolition of the Pruitt-Igoe housing development in St. Louis, Missouri with the death of Modernism. (Charles Jencks, *The Language of Post-Modern Architecture*, 5th ed. (New York: Rizzoli, 1987), 9-10.)
[149] "Humane Modernist," 129.

Architecture (1941). In these histories, Expressionism is relegated to a secondary role or ignored altogether in favor of the approach endorsed by CIAM and the Bauhaus after 1924. In contrast to this sparer, more rectilinear style and the interest in mechanized processes reflected therein, Expressionism was characterized by its preference for curves and organic forms, as well as, in terms of architects' conceptual approach, a profound skepticism of technology. Expressionism was also associated with what was regarded as utopian and "irrational" tendencies, most evident in the fantastic designs and visionary drawings featured in Taut's publications, and were thus dismissed for their lack of rationality and/or practicality.[150] However, though initially considered a less worthy iteration of Modernism, the reaction against CIAM-influenced Modernism in the 1960s and 70s prompted a reevaluation of Expressionism, which eventually brought the style more respect and recognition.

In fact the distinction made between Expressionism and what was called the International Style was perhaps more imagined than real. As architectural historian Wolfgang Pehnt remarks, "I remember my astonishment at the arbitrary way in which historians of modern architecture ignored completely an epoch to which their own heroes—Peter Behrens, Walter Gropius, and to a certain extent Mies van der Rohe—had belonged."[151] In fact, many architects associated with the "International Style" also designed buildings and objects that could be considered Expressionist or at least not in keeping with the style as defined by the MoMA exhibition. Examples of such work include Mies van der Rohe's design for the Friedrichstraße Competition (1921), with its crystalline form and prodigious use of glass, or

[150] Both Dennis Sharp and Wolfgang Pehnt discuss this in their histories of Expressionist architecture: Wolfgang Pehnt, *Expressionist Architecture* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1973), 7-8; Dennis Sharp, *Modern Architecture and Expressionism* (New York: George Braziller, Inc., 1966), ix-x.
[151] Pehnt, *Expressionist Architecture*, 7.

the work of Bauhaus students before 1924, comprised to large degree by textiles and ceramics executed with a decidedly handcrafted aesthetic. More recent historical analyses have provided a more expansive definition of what might be referred to as Modernisms; that is the *variety* of architectural responses to the social, economic and political changes of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[152]

However in the 1970s, both definitions of Modernism and Expressionism tended to see the two approaches as markedly different, and the institutional reaction against the former helped to revive interest in and appreciation of the latter. Expressionist examples came to be viewed as what might be called humane or "progressive" Modernism, in contrast to the kind of architecture that was associated with the postwar reconstruction. Indeed after the 1960s, modern architecture as a whole was discussed in both the institutional and popular press in relation to a continuum, ranging from progressive on one end to alienating or oppressive on the other. As with the postwar reception of the Palace of the Republic, this new interpretation of Modernism was based in part on a distinction between what was considered genuinely avant-garde, versus what was considered a cheap copy or "kitsch." These value judgments were not, however, solely based on the aesthetic merits or failures of individual examples, but were instead informed by the political milieu of the late Cold War. Moreover, the labels of "avant-garde" versus "kitsch" were not consciously ascribed by individual critics, but emerged as a reaction to the waning popularity of the style of architecture that had dominated building since the end of World War II.

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[152] For discussions on the relationship between the so-called International Style and Expressionism in terms of historiography, see Tournikiotis, *The Historiography of Modern Architecture*. For a discussion of stylistic commonalities across different Modernisms, see for example Bletter, "Mies and Dark Transparency," 350-7. *Anxious Modernisms: Experimentation in Postwar Architectural Culture* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2001), edited by Sarah Goldhagen and Réjean Legault, provides insight into the various "modernisms" that prevailed in Europe and the U.S. after World War II.

The need for a way to distinguish worthy from unworthy Modernist examples was prompted first by the reaction against the style in the West, and second by the increasing use of Modernist architectural idioms in the East. Whereas in the immediate postwar period, the "unsuccessful" architecture of communist countries could be immediately recognized by the use of historically-derived, decorative motifs, the profusion in the Eastern Bloc of, for example, large-scale, seemingly Modernist high-rise housing complexes made the visual differences between Eastern and Western architecture less readily apparent.[153] In addition, the shift towards Postmodernism in the West meant a return to historically-derived, decorative motifs, especially in the U.S. Thus, the formulation of a humane or progressive Modernism, characterized by its supposedly free and open forms, helped to distinguish it not only from the now-maligned Western projects of the postwar but also from architecture of the communist and socialist East.

To be sure, the definitions of progressive versus oppressive Modernism were by no means discrete nor were they explicit, and considerable gray areas existed between the two. For example, the work of Mies van der Rohe was often contrasted with that of Hans Scharoun and judged as being too rational, too spare and thus too alienating. Though no critics argue that Mies is anything less than a master, his work is implicitly ranked below Scharoun's more "humane" and "open" buildings. In the British journal *Building*, for example, Dennis Sharp, critic and author of one of the first surveys dedicated to Expressionist architecture, writes of the seemingly aggressive character of Mies's buildings, saying "Mies's design for the Bacardi Rum Factory, now transposed into the largely unusable New National Gallery by energetic acts of German nationalism packs a geometrical punch

[153] This is particularly true after 1990 when Westerners could see the cities of in former Communist countries first-hand.

that paralyses Scharoun's organic composition."[154] The way in which this avant-garde versus kitsch conception of Modernism functioned in terms of political identities is particularly evident in discussions of the State Library because of its location in the highly symbolic city of West Berlin and because of its public function. Reviews of the State Library employed the same language that was used to praise Scharoun's career as a whole; the building is called "humane," and is repeatedly described as open, free and as an "anti-monument."[155] Like the architect himself, it is seen as an exception to the rule in terms of Modernism:

> [The State Library], despite the premature and widespread reports of the death of "modern architecture" (whatever that is), is a signal of the continued ability of buildings to use humans not as mere decoration in achieving their public function, but to beckon them to opportunities for personal development...[156]

The language used to praise the State Library in contemporary critiques clearly places the building in the category of humane or progressive Modernism, and the work of Peter Blundell Jones exemplifies the way in which this was achieved. For example, in his 1979 critique of the building for *Architectural Review*, which is more or less reproduced in his monograph on Scharoun, Blundell Jones discusses the architect's style in political as well as nationalist terms. He claims that styles like Scharoun's never "took root" in Blundell Jones's native Britain, because "we have neither the Germans' Expressionist heritage nor their strong reaction against Fascist architecture with its cold formalism, monstrous simplicity, and utter lack of respect for the human scale."[157] Of course by the 1970s, kitsch or "oppressive" Modernism might have been described using adjectives similar to those he reserves for "Faschist architecture," since, though formerly equated with architecture's release from the

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[154] Sharp, "Required Reading: Berlin State Library," 34. Press clipping, AdK Berlin, HSA, WV 236.
[155] Peter Blundell Jones, "Scharoun and Berlin," *Architectural Review* 165 (June 1979): 334; Speidel, "Gedanken zur Staatsbibliothek," 9.
[156] "Staatsbibliothek Preußischer Kulturbesitz," *Bauwelt*, no. 1 (1979): 12.
[157] Blundell Jones, *Hans Scharoun*, 330.

tyranny of historical styles and political ideology, it was by this time viewed as alienating, "constraining," and, as Dennis Sharp's comments on Mies's New National Gallery suggest, in nationalist and political terms.

Blundell Jones goes on to praise Scharoun's avoidance of monumentality, a formal quality which he equates with fascism: "Scharoun's aggressively informal architecture, with its complex articulation of elements breaks down the massive whole into manageable and recognizable parts [and] ... never departs from the human scale."[158] Certainly the reading room of the State Library, as many critics agree, is not contained in one monumentally large, unbroken area, but is broken into smaller parcels of space. However, given the building's exterior and its massive scale, it is difficult to agree with Blundell Jones's statement, regardless of the State Library's lack of formal centrality or symmetry. The State Library was, according to the foundation that sponsored it, supposed to be "the largest library in the German capital, indeed the largest German library overall." It was, as we have seen, *intended* as a monument to the ideals and values of the West. This is evidenced in part by the insistence that the building be built in West Berlin and not, for example, in the small West German town of Marburg where a large portion of the SPK's collection had been located during the war. As the president of the SPK, Hans-Georg Wormit, argues in a letter to a Federal treasury minister, "...it cannot be doubted that the location of Berlin is fully defensible, not only for political reasons..."[159]

Though the State Library was built as a political structure, sponsored by an organization formed in part for political reasons, its political function was rarely alluded to explicitly in contemporary critiques. Indeed, barely any explicit discussion of the building's

[158] Blundell Jones, *Hans Scharoun*, 330.
[159] Hans-Georg Wormit to Dr. Dollinger, Bundesschatzminister, 30 June 1966, 7, BArch B 157/2643.

role in the development of West Berlin's urban image or in the Cold War is included, meaning that the building's significance as a piece of propaganda has heretofore not been addressed. For example, Blundell Jones's description of the State Library, like others', does not directly discuss the library's political function but prefers to allude to political ideology in other ways. In his monograph on Scharoun, for example, Blundell Jones remarks that the architect avoided a "hierarchical system in his democratic library" in his description of the State Library's layout.[160] Moreover, the continual use of the terms "open" and "free," in both English- and German-language reviews, allude to Western democratic values, as do the descriptions of Scharoun himself. The architect is repeatedly described as "outspoken," daring and inventive, suggesting that he embodies the ideals of democracy: the exercise of individual liberty and personal expression. Indeed, this facet of the architect's reputation persists, as in the 2004 monograph by Eberhard Syring and Jörg C. Krischenmann entitled *Hans Scharoun: Outsider of Modernism*.[161]

It is clear that the State Library, like the Palace of the Republic in East Berlin, which opened just two years before it, was intended to be an architectural expression of a political identity. Indeed, the State Library and Palace of the Republic share many goals, in terms of both the buildings' designs and how those designs relate to their respective political roles. Both Graffunder and Scharoun expressed a deep interest in making their buildings accessible, not only because of their functions as public buildings but as a way to express more general notions of accessibility and of national unity. As we have seen, each architect strove to design a building that was literally and figuratively open, and to create an environment that

[160] Blundell Jones, *Hans Scharoun*, 204. Much of Blundell Jones's 1979 critique of the State Library is reproduced in the section on the library in his mongraph.
[161] Eberhard Syring and Jörg C. Krischenmann, *Hans Scharoun: Outsider of Modernism* (Cologne: Taschen, 2004).

would encourage adherence to specific political values and ideals. Moreover, the State Library and Palace share an architectural lineage in the *Kultur-* and *Volkshäuser*. Both were furthermore built as symbols of national unity as well as buildings that, it was hoped, would actually engender this unity, by symbolically but also literally bringing together all Germans. Both were framed as continuations of what, it was argued, were the best and most honorable aspects of Germany's history that could also be tied directly to the regime that sponsored the building, a regime which itself was, it was implicitly argued, a result of these honorable historical developments. Of course each building was also said to represent the triumph over those villainous developments of German history that the sponsoring regime had put an end to, but which unfortunately persisted on the other side of the Wall.

However, though the buildings were built with similar goals, politically and architecturally speaking, they were discussed and presented in very different ways. While in the East, the Palace of the Republic was discussed, particularly by government officials, in explicitly socialist terms, the State Library's political associations were, as we have seen, rarely referenced directly. I would argue that this approach is part of what made the State Library a more effective political symbol than the Palace of the Republic. Specifically, the avoidance of stridently political language in relationt to Scharoun's building helped to make the connection between the library and democratic values seem natural, self-evident, even endemic to the building. In contrast, the stilted rhetoric used to describe and praise the Palace, as was so often the case in East Germany, tended to undermine the very claims being made, as did, of course, the reality of life in East Germany under the SED. Thus, whereas values like openness and accessibility were seemingly imposed on the Palace, in the case of the State Library critics seemed merely to be describing values that were already present.

Of course, the emergence of a notion of a progressive or avant-garde versus oppressive or kitsch Modernism helps to explain the reception of the State Library, but also that of the Palace of the Republic, particularly after 1990. Like Scharoun, Graffunder attempted to tie his building to universally held values that might generally be described as humanist. His efforts were, however, undermined by the party-sponsored publicity, which succeeded in connecting the Palace with the regime in East Germany in particular. The Palace of the Republic was therefore tainted by its connection with SED since it was the regime that sponsored it, but also because it was so aggressively marketed as representative of not only socialism, but the SED and Erich Honecker specifically. Thus, when the SED regime was finally toppled, the proverbial baby was tossed out with the bath water: the Palace, as a symbol of that regime, was viewed as a failure not only in political but also in aesthetic terms.

Critiques of the Palace of the Republic that define the building in such terms, while in some ways understandable, nonetheless fail to take into account the specific design and construction history of the building. Moreover, they do not consider the building's role in the construction of East German national identity, or how it fits within a particular cultural and economic moment in the country's history. Particularly in the popular press, the GDR is thought of either as a strange "other world," or, in regard to cultural, economic and political developments, considered more or less synonymous with the Soviet Union. Moreover, Western definitions and interpretations of Modernism seemed validated in the wake of the SED's downfall and the end of the GDR. Though in many ways similar, the current fate of the State Library versus that of the Palace reveals how different the popular and institutional

reception of these buildings still are: the State Library is undergoing extensive renovations while the Palace of the Republic has been completely dismantled.

The New "Face" of West Berlin

Despite the State Library's positive reception, West Berlin's Alternative Scene had by the late 1970s come to dominate the city's representation in the media, undermining the image of abundance and technological superiority created in the postwar. By the end of the decade, the image of West Berlin in the public's imagination did not look like the gleaming, modernist metropolis that was presented in the 1957 Interbau exhibit. Instead, the stories and images of West Berlin that filled West Germany's and the world's newspapers, magazines and films beginning in the late 1960s dealt more often with the city's social problems and the activities of its counter-culture (Figure 59). Though clearly tied in many ways to Berlin's pre-war reputation as a place of social and cultural decadence and experimentation, the city's press image in the 1970s and 80s was characterized as unprecedented and was furthermore explicitly connected to its built environment and urban space, especially its streets and squatted *Mietskasernen*.

In the 1970s, the West German and international press reports on West Berlin focused in particular on the city's sharp increase in drug abuse and prostitution rates, its rising population of immigrants, and the riots and demonstrations by leftist political groups that took place in its streets. Called the "junkie capital" (*Hauptstadt der Fixer*), by the late 1970s West Berlin had the highest and most consistent drug fatality rate of any West German or even European city and the economic downturn of the early 1970s, felt more acutely in West Berlin given its lower-income population, pushed up unemployment rates.[162] The West

[162] "Rauschgift: Hauptstadt der Fixer," *Der Spiegel,* 2 January 1978, 51. According to *Der Spiegel*, even New York's heroin fatality rate was lower than West Berlin's in 1978.

German news magazine *Der Spiegel* regularly chronicled such dire statistics and the West German tabloids were filled with, for example, images of women and girls in West Berlin, some as young as thirteen, forced into prostitution by poverty or drug addition. These problems were moreover viewed as interrelated. In an article on teenage prostitution in the tabloid *Der Stern*, for example, one of the young prostitutes, "Gabi," is said to have first used heroin at the invitation of an "Arab": "since then, she has had to earn her twice daily heroin fix on the streets. Now she has syphilis."[163]

This image of West Berlin was tied to its built environment first of all through the squatter movement, which was viewed by many as both a result and cause of the city's social problems. However these problems were also tied to the high-rise housing complexes built outside of the city, which had bred widespread drug use and crime. Perhaps the most well-known example of popular dissemination of this image is the story of Christiane F., a young girl from West Berlin who became addicted to heroin at fourteen and who was featured in a September 1978 article in *Der Stern*. Christiane's story, which later became a best-selling book as well as a successful film, helped to establish the notion that West Berlin was a cold and gritty city that alienated its inhabitants from one another while simultaneously encouraging and facilitating their base desires.[164] In the book, for example, she describes the "satellite city" of Gropiusstadt as an alienating place that did not offer much in the way of diversion or distraction, or encourage community among residents (Figure 60). "The so-called park areas between the high-rises," she writes, "they were really sign-parks. And most

[163] Rieck, Horst. "Christine (14), 30 Mark," *Die Stern,* 30 March 1978, 31. This article clearly laid the groundwork for Rieck's later article on Christiane F., published in *Der Stern* six months later.
[164] The book version of Christiane F.'s story is *Christiane F.: Wir Kinder vom Bahnhof Zoo*, with Kai Hermann und Horst Rieck (Hamburg: Gruner und Jahr, 1978). The film is entitled *Wir Kinder vom Bahnhof Zoo* (Uli Edel, 1981).

of the signs of course forbade children from doing things."[165] It is the boredom of life in Gropiusstadt that Christiane in part credits for her drug addiction. Along with such dismal depictions of West Berlin's high-rises, the image of the Zoo train station (*Bahnhof Zoo*), where Christiane F. and her friends picked up johns to support their drug habit, became a particularly defining one in terms of West Berlin's urban identity.

West Berlin's drug scene, along with the squatter and other protest movements, garnered negative attention in the press but also made the city attractive to counter-culture figures. The 1981 film based on Christiane's story, for example, featured a soundtrack by David Bowie who, along with Iggy Pop, lived in Berlin for a short time in the late 70s while reportedly recovering from their own heroin addictions. Pop culture figures like Bowie and Pop, Lou Reed and later Nick Cave helped contribute to the city's reputation as a haven for misfits but also made it seem glamorous. Articles in publications like *Rolling Stone* helped popularize this image by chronicling the rock stars' time in West Berlin, making squatter neighborhoods like Kreuzberg internationally known.[166] Thus, the very factors that many maligned as evidence of West Berlin's so-called "downfall" made it appealing to young people and fueled the growth of its alternative scene. Echoing the comments of cultural critics forty to fifty years before, West Berlin was described in the 1970s as a modern-day "Sodom and Gomorrah" where protesters were concerned with, "self, not society."[167]

In the late 1970s, and into the 1980s, these are the images of West Berlin that came to dominate the public sphere: complexes of stark and alienating high-rise housing, dark and

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[165] *Christiane F.: Wir Kinder vom Bahnhof Zoo*, with Kai Hermann and Horst Rieck (Hamburg: Grüner und Jahr, 1978), 23.
[166] Chris Hodenfield, "Bad Boys in Berlin: David Bowie, Iggy Pop and the Terrible Things an Audience Can Make You Do," *Rolling Stone*, 4 October 1979, 41-5; Steve Turner, "Rock Holidays: The Great Escape of the Thin White Duke," *The Independent*, 4 May 1991, 43.
[167] "Europe's Dead-End Kids," *Time*, 27 April 1981, 52; Karl-Heinz Krüger, "'Ich Lerne Langsam, dich zu Hassen': Über den Niedergang von West-Berlin," *Der Spiegel*, 15 August 1983, 40.

dirty train stations where young drug addicts trawled for tricks to support their habit, and crumbling facades of *Mietskasernen* where squatters rubbed shoulders with rock stars. Such images helped to shift West Berlin's symbolic meaning: the city was depicted as the destination of choice for the social outcast who either would not or did not want to be integrated into the mainstream. Not only depictions in the media, but popular and independent films helped to reinforce this image of West Berlin. For example, films that focused on the city's gay scene, such as Rosa von Praunheim's *Berliner Bettwurst* (*Berlin Bed-Sausage*, 1975) or Frank Ripploh's *Taxi zum Klo* (*Taxi to the Toilet*, 1981), or films depicting Berlin's drug scene such as Uli Edel's film adaptation of Christiane F.'s story or *Das Ende des Regenbogens* (Uwe Frießner, *The End of the Rainbow*, 1979) all encouraged the public to associate West Berlin with aberration and difference.[168] West Berlin, claimed Rosa von Praunheim, was by the 1980s the "Mecca for all that is extreme and flipped-out."[169]

Such depictions seemed to suggest that West Berlin was an anomaly, less and less reflective of West German or even Western values and that, though still important because of its role in the Cold War, the city had little relevance for West Germany. Out of the global spotlight and governed by a series of scandal-ridden administrations, West Berlin seemed secondary in political, economic and social importance in relation to the Federal Republic, at the "backyard of the nation" in the words of one journalist.[170] The city that had once been the most important in Germany and that had a central role in the definition of German national

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[168] Helmut Schödel, "Die Szene im Kino, das Kino der Szene: Berlin ist seine Pleite Wert," *Die Zeit*, 7 February 1986, 56.
[169] Krüger, "'Ich Lerne Langsam dich zu Hassen'," 40.
[170] This term was used in the title of an article, which appeared in *Die Zeit* in 1976: Joachim Nawrocki, "Wird West-Berlin zum Hinterhof der Nation?," *Die Zeit*, 23 July 1976, 3. In 1985, West German politician Dieter Mahncke noted that after the Four-Power Agreement, West Germans were more inclined to think of the Federal Republic and West Berlin as two separate entities, so that news anchors might refer to the traffic moving "between West Berlin and the Federal Republic." (Dieter Mahncke, "From the Wall to the Quadripartite Agreement: Some Underlying Trends," in *Living with the Wall: West Berlin, 1961-1985*, ed. Richard L. Merritt and Anna J. Merritt (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1985), 102-3.)

identity was diagnosed by the world and especially by the West German press as diseased and dying, kept alive only by a continuous transfusion of Federal Republic funds.[171] In fact, West Berlin was representative of trends unfolding in West Germany as a whole, though these trends were perhaps more pronounced in West Berlin. For example, West German cities like Frankfurt and Hamburg were also home to squatters and other social protest movements, though they were not as large as in West Berlin. What made these trends seem specific to West Berlin, however, was no doubt its long reputation as a center of social protest and street demonstrations as well as its status as a symbol of the Western world.[172] Regardless, this image of West Berlin as a "sick" and "dying" city persisted throughout the 1980s. However accurate, so powerful was this image that many began to predict the city's ultimate demise and, as part of this, lament the loss of the city's "face," or character. In the news magazine *Der Spiegel*, for example, Karl-Heinz Krüger did not mince words: "the city is—sad but true—kaput."[173] Ultimately, this perception would influence the next major phase in the city's postwar urban development, providing the impetus for yet another international building exhibition. The resulting exhibition, called IBA, was eventually staged in 1987 and linked with the festivities associated with the celebration of Berlin's 750th anniversary.

For the GDR the 1970s was a period of relative—if fleeting—social, economic and political stability. It was also a period of accommodation and appeasement, as East Germans resigned themselves to life under the SED regime, and the regime itself made the attempt to

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[171] In addition to Nawrocki's, a host of other West German newspapers articles throughout the period predicted a dire future—no to mention present—for West Berlin, for example Otto Jörg Weis "Wohin man schaut: Nichts geht mehr," *Frankfurther Rundschau*, 3 September 1981, 3 and Karl-Heinz Krüger, "'Ich lerne langsam, dich zu hassen': Über den Niedergang von West-Berlin," *Der Spiegel* (15 August 1983), 36-53. Others decried West Berlin's "subsidies mentality" (*Subventions-Mentalität*), as in Jürgen Engert, "Einst Hauptstadt—bald Alt-Stadt? Berlin: Spangenbergs Standpauke gegen perfide 'Subventions-Mentalität," *Deutsche Zeitung*, 15 October 1974, 5.

[172] Davis, "'Everyday' Protest," 283.

[173] Krüger, "'Ich lerne langsam, dich zu hassen'," 40.

at least appear to be concerned with the needs of its citizens. With this stability came a stronger sense of national identity in the GDR and, though this identity took two largely incongruous forms, in East Berlin and specifically in the Palace of the Republic, these two divergent notions of what it meant to be an East German seemed to be reconciled. Whereas in the GDR, the borders that defined identity—national, urban, personal—were slow to develop, in West Berlin such borders were, or at least appeared to be clearly demarcated already in the 1950s. However in the 1970s, changing social, economic and political conditions caused such borders to blur and thus the urban identity of West Berlin vis-à-vis West German to change. Eventually, West Berlin moved decisively outside the sphere of West German life and politics and came to be regarded as an entity all its own. Though clearly a reflection of trends in the Federal Republic, West Berlin's urban identity seemed to be unrelated in the public's imagination to West German national identity.

Throughout the last decade of Berlin's division, government and cultural leaders in West Berlin would attempt to repair the division between it and West Germany and to recenter the city's urban image. Specifically, the effort was made to recapture Berlin's place of prominence within art and architectural circles and to "restore" its supposedly lost "face." In East Germany the carefully constructed borders between the government and its people, between official and unofficial notions of GDR identity were increasingly transgressed. Especially as the Stasi grew more present in the daily lives of East Germans, invading what little private space and sanctuary there existed, the population began to resist the imposition of the SED's "regime of borders." Ultimately, the balance between what the government demanded from East Germans and what they were willing to give could not be maintained. All of these trends were brought into sharp relief with the 1987 celebration of Berlin's 750th

jubilee, which became a way for both East and West to display to the world their own definition of Berlin's urban identity as well as how this identity related to larger national identities.

CHAPTER 4: REVITALIZATION AND REUNIFICATION, 1980-89

Divided Berlin in the 1980s

At the beginning of the 1980s, both East and West Berlin were suffering from social and economic crises. In West Berlin, 1981 marked the peak of the squatter movement, as 100 buildings were occupied in the first two months of the year alone. As police attempted to block squatters from taking buildings over and/or to physically remove them from existing squats, the movement evolved from a relatively peaceful attempt at social critique to a direct and often violent confrontation with the state.[1] After Dietrich Stobbe was forced to resign in January of 1981 in the wake of the Garski Affair, Stobbe's replacement, Hans-Jochen Vogel announced a new approach to dealing with the housing crisis. Known as "The Berlin Line of Reason" (*Die Berliner Linie der Vernunft*) or simply the Berlin Line, this policy stipulated that houses could be forcibly cleared if it were done within twenty-four hours of their occupation by squatters. The Berlin Line policy resulted in a sharp increase in clashes between police and squatters and was expanded by Richard von Wiezsäcker, who became the city's mayor after official elections were held in May 1981.[2]

The election of Wiezsäcker, West Berlin's first mayor from the right-wing CDU party, reflected an overall shift towards conservative social and economic policies in the 1980s in West Germany.[3] In 1982 the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) party reclaimed the chancellorship when a vote of no confidence was called against Helmut Schmidt (b. 1918), the SPD member who had replaced Willy Brandt as West German Chancellor in

[1] Görtemaker, *Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, 643; Mayer, "Social Movements in European Cities," 136-7.
[2] Mulhak, "Der Instandbesetzungskonflikt in Berlin," 233.
[3] Görtemaker, *Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, 688.

1974.[4] Schmidt lost the vote to Helmut Kohl (b. 1930), a CDU leader who would remain chancellor of the Federal Republic until 1998. Kohl's first goal was to mend the Federal Republic's ailing economy, which he attempted to do by scaling back government spending on social welfare programs, cutting taxes, and adhering to strict monetary policies designed to curb inflation.[5] While West Germany's economy was improving by the mid-1980s, unemployment proved a tougher nut to crack, and the number of jobless, which hit its peak in 1983, would not begin to decline until after German reunification. Foreign policy remained basically the same in the Kohl era, and cordial relations between East and West Germany were largely maintained despite rising tensions between the Soviet Union and the U.S.[6]

In East Germany, the 1980s looked much like the 1970s. The SED continued to dominate all facets of life in the GDR, as Honecker continued to centralize the government's control. The Stasi played a key role in Honecker's consolidation of power, growing from 59,458 paid employees in 1975, to between 85,000 and 105,000 in 1989.[7] Similarly, the Politburo became more powerful than the Central Committee of which it was a part; eventually, the Central Committee did little more than rubber-stamp Politburo resolutions.[8] The country suffered from not only political, but economic and social stagnation as well. Though the GDR continued to enjoy the highest standard of living in the Eastern Bloc, citizens' dissatisfaction grew in the 1980s as supplies of consumer goods continued to be of limited and sporadic availability. Despite the SED's assurances that everyone in this socialist society was looked after, 30% of the population, or about 3 million people were living at the

[4] Brandt was ousted in part because of West Germany's economic difficulties, which were exacerbated by his social welfare programs, but also because one of his closest advisors, Günter Guillaume, was revealed to be an East German spy. (Görtemaker, *Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, 576, 578.)
[5] Nicholls, *The Bonn Republic*, 282, 285.
[6] Görtemaker, *Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, 705-8.
[7] Fulbrook, *Anatomy of a Dictatorship*, 48.
[8] Weber, *Geschichte der DDR*, 425-6.

subsistence level by the mid-1980s. Economic growth continued to be hampered by a scarcity of labor, as low population growth and an ever-rising number of pensioners kept the GDR's percentage of working population at about 37% throughout the late 1970s and 1980s. By the mid-1980s, the only thing keeping the GDR economy from a complete collapse was West Germany, which had extended billions of *Deutschmarks* in loans and credit to the GDR.[9]

The SED's obdurate adherence to the political, economic and social formulas it had always employed, despite the rising tide of unrest and the looming economic crises of the 1980s, hastened its downfall. Mere months before the government's collapse, the SED leadership continued to ignore its own inevitable end, concerning itself with issues like "friendship visits" from foreign dignitaries, even as citizens marched in the streets in mass protests. Though opposition groups were initially agitating only for government reform and free elections, after the border was opened in November 1989 most GDR citizens decided they wanted to become part of the Federal Republic. The shock of seeing the far-better living conditions in the West first-hand changed their rallying cry from "We are the People" ("*Wir sind das Volk*") to a cry for unification: "We are one People" ("*Wir sind ein Volk*").[10] In October 1990, the members of the *Volkskammer*, who had been chosen by free elections in the spring of that year, voted to dissolve the GDR and join the Federal Republic. After forty years of SED dictatorship, it took East Germans about one year to bring an end to the party's hegemony and indeed the nation itself.

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[9] Dennis, *The Rise and Fall of the German Democratic Republic*, 148-9, 162; Weber, *Geschichte der DDR*, 442, 432, 453. The Federal Republic's extension of credit and loans to the GDR was part of their foreign policy of détente, but West Germany also received some concessions in exchange for their financial assistance, for example relaxed restrictions on travel across the inter-German border. (Görtemaker, *Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, 708.)

[10] Weber, *Geschichte der DDR*, 470, 480-3.

The Return of the Past

The 1980s were a significant time for Berlin in particular because 1987 marked the city's 750th anniversary. Given the political, social and economic tumult of the period, the anniversary became an opportunity for the municipal and national governments of East and West Berlin and Germany to remind the world and themselves of the city's role in the Cold War and in the formation of East versus West German identity. In particular, political and cultural leaders looked to Berlin's past to establish political legitimacy in the present and to strengthen the connection between East/West Berlin's urban identity and East/West German national identity. This became particularly important in the 1980s since by this time the division of Berlin and Germany, once considered a temporary peculiarity, had proven to be a thirty-year reality. The urgency and anxiety of the 1940s and 50s had long since waned, leaving in their place feelings of complacency and ambivalence in the West and of begrudging resignation in the East. Most accepted Germany's and Berlin's divisions as the reality for the near and even distant future and thus, from the standpoint of government leaders, the rhetorical positions with regard to Berlin, hastily fashioned in the postwar period, had to be dusted off, reevaluated, and then reaffirmed or adjusted as necessary.

Berlin's jubilee year provided a unique opportunity for this undertaking, which the West Berlin Senate termed "position-fixing." In the context of this celebration, history became an important and central way for the East and West to reinforce particular notions of identity and to differentiate between "us" and "them." Evocation of the past has since the nineteenth century been used to create community, particular in relation to the rise of nation-states. In Germany for example, historic architectural styles had long been used to reinforce and define notions of national identity. In the reconstruction of Cologne Cathedral in the wake of Napoleon's defeat, for example, the Gothic style was used to reinforce culturally the

newly-reestablished political border between France and what would become Germany. In the post-World War II period, the embrace of Modernism and destruction of the *Mietskasernen* in West Berlin, and the move to rationalized building methods and rapid construction of *Plattenbauten* in the GDR, led in the 1980s to a feeling of nostalgia for what had been lost. Indeed the 1980s marked a global resurgence in architectural preservation and the use of historical styles in new construction. As historian David Lowenthal remarked in his 1985 book *The Past is a Foreign Country*, "…destructive and disruptive change has accelerated. Technological innovation, rapid obsolescence, the radical modernization of the built environment, massive migration and increased longevity combine to leave us in ever less familiar surroundings, remote even from our own recent pasts."[11] Reflecting this trend, urban planning and construction projects associated with Berlin's 750th jubilee looked to past styles and approaches to define community by establishing continuity with positive aspects of the past and in so doing to create a sense of familiarity that had been lost in the destruction of the war as well as in the postwar.

The past and history were also used in relation to Berlin's 750th jubilee to highlight those aspects of the city's pre-war identity with which East/West Berlin wanted most to be associated. In the East, for example, the city's reputation as a primary locus of Germany's labor movement and the rise of the German Socialist Party was foregrounded and, in terms of architecture, the importance placed on this aspect of Berlin's history was expressed in the preservation projects that centered on former working-class neighborhoods in East Berlin. In West Berlin, exhibitions and publications related to the jubilee stressed the city's history as a center of social protest and cultural experimentation in an attempt to redefine the Alternative

[11] David Lowenthal, *The Past Is a Foreign Country* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 393, 396.

Scene and New Social Movement as, not oppositional and aggressive, but as part of a long and non-threatening tradition. Berlin's reputation as a haven for "freaks" and outcasts was, it was repeatedly argued, related to its history as a center of "openness and tolerance" ("*Offenheit und Toleranz*"). Indeed in the West, the past and history were used to answer many of the critiques leveled by the social protest movements of the 1960s and 70s. In particular, revisiting the past became a way to "fortif[y]" the present against the "subsequent mishap [and] corruption" of, for example, the Nazi era and thus to respond to the charge that these unsavory eras had been ignored. By telling the history of the Nazi period in, for example, the historical exhibitions associated with the 750th jubilee, the West Berlin government could not only assert its willingness to deal with the past but also situate itself in relation to it.[12]

With the 1987 celebration, the attempt was made to abrade the border between the past and present in order to draw, redraw and/or erase cultural borders between East and West Germany and East and West Berlin. Historical precedents were used in service of this process of "remapping," helping the governments in East and West Berlin to reattach their particular definitions of Berlin's urban identity to larger notions of East/West German national identity and to distinguish their political and social order from that which existed on the other side of the Wall. Coming as it did just before the collapse of the physical border, the "position-fixing" resulting from the celebration of the city's jubilee year would have profound effects on the very similar process of border-making that took place in the post-reunification period. After 1990 and the dissolution of the political borders between East and West Germany and Berlin, the decision as to which cultural borders would remain and which would be erased—either by the government or informally by Germans themselves—related

[12] Lowenthal, *The Past Is a Foreign Country*, 41.

directly to the rhetorical stances presented in Berlin in 1987. In terms of architecture, the definition of urban and national identity formed in West Berlin in 1987 had a direct influence on building policies after 1990, since the West emerged as the victor in the Cold War.

The Evolution of the Berlin Wall

Though its significance as a physical barrier did not officially end until 1989, by the early 80s the permeability of the Berlin Wall had increased markedly since its construction. Specifically, in the early 1970s after the Four-Power Agreement was brokered, the Wall lost some of its power as a physical barrier though it gained resonance as a symbol of the East-West German and global divide. The relaxed political tension and the greater accessibility to the divided city was the main reason for this shift. Travelers from all over the Western world were free to come and visit West Berlin and see the Wall for themselves. Though Western travelers could also visit East Berlin, naturally they could not freely photograph or even approach the Wall from its eastern side, and so it was the western side of the Wall that increasingly filled media depictions of the city. Ironically, though the Wall was the GDR's creation and intended to keep its people in, the structure became arguably more associated with West Berlin, rather than with either East Berlin or East Germany.

Though envisioned by many, then as now, as a flat surface and/or single Wall, the Berlin Wall was in fact an elaborate system of containment and "security." By the time the inter-German border was opened on the night of November 9, 1989, the Berlin Wall had evolved considerably since 1961. The barbed-wire fence hastily erected on the night of August 13, 1961 was replaced shortly thereafter by two concrete walls: one of which ran along the East-West Berlin border and one which was several feet inside East German territory, known as the hinter wall. The area between the walls was known as the "Death Strip" (*Todesstreifen*), consisting of sand that was carefully raked so as to make footprints

easily visible, and a paved pathway down the center patrolled by border guards and their dogs. Guard towers were also located in this intra-Wall area, outfitted with searchlights, which were illuminated night and day. Though, as some have argued, the Wall may have by the mid-1960s began to fade into the background of everyday life for Berliners on both sides, it is hard to imagine its presence was entirely forgotten, particularly for those who lived in the districts that bordered it.[13]

The Wall underwent some renovation and expansion throughout the 1960s, but it was in the 1970s that it took its most elaborate and most familiar form. Just as relations between East and West Germany were thawing, the GDR began a process of literal and figurative "demarcation" or "border-making" (*Abgrenzung*), which resulted in, among other things, the construction of a new, larger and more extensive border system. The "Border-Wall 75" (*Grenzmauer 75*), actually the "fourth generation" of the Wall, featured concrete segments four-feet wide and half a foot thick, ranging from eight to twelve-feet high. These segments extended seven feet into the ground so that tunneling under the Wall was made difficult if not impossible.[14] Attempts to climb over the barrier were hindered by the large, round concrete pieces that topped the Wall along its length. From 1976 to 1989, 45,000 of these concrete slabs were installed along the border at a cost of 15.7 million Marks, and these, along with high-tech instruments such as motion sensors, helped to ensure that the border was virtually impossible to breach.[15]

In constructing the fourth-generation Wall, the GDR government was also mindful of the Wall's outward appearance, wanting to create a particular impression on, not only West

[13] Flemming and Koch, *Die Berliner Mauer: Geschichte eines Politischen Bauwerks*, 100.
[14] The Wall was first a simple wire fence (1961), then a more substantial wire fence plus secondary interior fence (1962-5), two concrete walls (1965-75) and, finally in its fourth iteration, "*Grenzmauer 75*," the elaborate system of surveillance and containment described above.
[15] Flemming and Koch, *Die Berliner Mauer: Geschichte eines Politischen Bauwerks*, 82-3.

Berliners but of course the world. Specifically, the government wanted to convey an image of "order and cleanliness" and reinforce the sovereignty and power of the GDR. Painting the outsides of both the outer and hinter walls white, for example, was intended to make the Wall look intimidating but also "pleasing in form" ("*formschön*").[16] On the East German side, the effort at managing what might be called the Wall's image was relatively successful. This was in part because in 1963, the area near the hinter wall was officially declared a restricted zone, meaning that anyone who wanted to approach this area, which ranged from about 131 feet to one mile, needed to obtain government permission to do so.[17] Thus, at the deserted areas near the eastern side of the Wall, the structure retained its spare, controlled appearance. On the other side, however, the Wall did not remain pristine but instead became, famously, a blank canvas for the graffiti that by the 1980s covered this side. Ultimately, the East German government would not be able to implement fully the planned upgrades to the Wall before November 1989 when the East-West German border was opened and the Berlin Wall became a relic of the past.

West Berlin: Back to the Center

Though since its construction the Berlin Wall had served as a, if not *the* central symbol of the Cold War, in the 1980s the image of its graffiti-decked western side also became a symbol for the city of West Berlin itself. This was undoubtedly because once the city became synonymous with anti-authoritarian protest and social unrest, the images scrawled on the Wall's surface aptly seemed to convey an attitude of defiance and resistance, both political and social. The Wall became an emblem of the city's status as an "island" in the

[16] Konzeption für den weiteren pionier- und signaltechnischen Ausbau der Staatsgrenze der DDR, 5. August 1982, Bl 10 (Mauer-Archiv). Quoted in Flemming and Koch, *Die Berliner Mauer: Geschichte eines Politischen Bauwerks*, 83.
[17] Flemming and Koch, *Die Berliner Mauer: Geschichte eines Politischen Bauwerks*, 43-4.

GDR sea, but also of its apparent outsider status, associated with all of its most infamous social "problems" from its vibrant counter-culture to its population of immigrants to the squatter movement (Figure 61).

Indeed if the squatters' occupation of the *Mietskasernen* represented the attempt to create revised architectural and social order for the city, the monument to this new order was the Berlin Wall itself. Through the image of the Berlin Wall, the city was literally and figuratively inscribed with the cipher of protest and critique, oriented towards its margins rather than towards the center. In place of the image of a centralized power structure imposed from the top down—an order represented by the postwar, Modernist high-rise—came the image of dispersed, decentralized power, emanating from the bottom up. Some viewed this newer image in positive terms as the expression of a true and vigorous democracy, in keeping with Berlin's history of protest against past dominant regimes, including the Nazis. Others, however, saw a city that was in decline and out of control.[18] Regardless, given West Berlin's continued significance as a symbol of the superiority of the Western way of life, this reputation for unrest and social critique was viewed as a liability.

West Berlin's "Identity Crisis"

Though East and West Germany maintained good relations in the 1980s, the arms race between the Soviet Union and the U.S. had escalated East-West aggression on a global scale, leaving still-occupied West Berlin in a vulnerable position. At the same time, conflicts elsewhere in the world, particularly the Vietnam War, and the stability brought by the 1971 Four-Power Agreement had taken West Berlin out of the global spotlight.[19] These factors, along with the media's insistence that the city was dead or at least dying, led many to

[18] Merritt, "Living with the Wall," 198.
[19] In 1976, for example, *U.S. News & World Report* featured the Berlin Wall in its "Whatever Happened to..." column. ("Whatever Happened to...Berlin Wall--Even More Formidable," *U.S. News & World Report*, 12 January 1976, 61.)

conclude that West Berlin was in the midst of what was characterized as an identity crisis.[20] Specifically, West Berlin's "downfall" was related to the loss of a clear identity or function in relation to West Germany. In both explicit and implicit terms, critics, journalists and politicians diagnosed an extreme ambivalence in both the city and its citizens' political, psychological, cultural and even economic identity. As prominent journalist Jürgen Engert commented in 1985, "[West Berlin] knows what it was, but it still does not know what it is, let alone what it will be."[21]

The perception that West Berlin was suffering from a crisis of identity was partly just that, but it was also related to very real economic and political developments. After forty years as a divided city and twenty years surrounded by a wall, West Berlin's role within West German national identity had necessarily changed, partly as a result of the rhetorical stance that had helped to establish the political, cultural and literal borders between East and West Germany. The Federal Republic had long argued that West Berlin existed only as a result of East German aggression, "a symbol and victim of the division,"[22] and that this supposedly temporary break in the city's historic continuity would "soon" be resolved. However there was no immediate end to Germany's division in sight, and while concessions to permanence were granted in the Four-Power Agreement, West Berlin remained in a kind of holding pattern. It could not take a definitive role in West German identity, but, as a capital-city-in-

[20] See for example Andreas Cleis, "Westberlin auf der Suche nach neuer Identität," *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 6 October 1981, 5; Hans-Jürgen Krupp, "Berlin--Eine Stadt auf der Suche nach ihrer Wirtschaftlichen Identität," *Außenpolitik* 37 (1986): 327-41.; Otto Jörg Weis, "Identitätskrise einer Stadt" *Stuttgarter Zeitung*, 10 November 1976, 1.
[21] Engert, "Berlin between East and West," 153.
[22] Joachim Braun, "Berlin ist keine Hauptstadt," *Der Spiegel*, 21 December 1987, 33.

waiting, neither could it form an identity of its own.[23] It had truly become, as it was called in the early 1960s, "a capital without a country."[24]

While some critics dated the beginning of the city's loss of identity to the construction of the Berlin Wall, others saw it as a consequence of the period of stability initiated with the Four-Power Agreement.[25] After 1971, many argued, West Berlin was robbed of its "front-city identity," an identity which had only lasted "as long as [the city] was in danger." Once West Berlin was no longer a powder keg, not only was its central *raison d'être* lost, its relationship to the Federal Republic was less clear. Media reports in the 1980s describe the city as adrift, bereft of purpose and of the economic means to function as a vital part of West German politics, economy or even culture. Many critics commented on the fact that Berliners and West Germans had "never really got on," and that, faced with the prospect of a permanent division and thus a permanent need for the financial support of West Berlin, many West Germans' "Berlin-aversion" was growing.[26] "In the national consciousness," argued Otto Jörg Weis in 1982, "the relationship between the western part of Germany and the former capital of the empire is fundamentally defective."[27]

Without a concrete identity vis-à-vis West Germany and without a clear future path given the supposedly imminent reunification, West Berlin appeared to be stuck in the past, an

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[23] Indeed some have pointed out that it is not certain whether West Germans wanted reunification at all. In his history of the Federal Republic Anthony Glees writes that, "By 1989 very few West Germans shared their Chancellor's stated desire for national unity. The noted interpreter of German politics, the celebrated French political scientist Alfred Grosser, once distinguished between the French attitude to the loss of Alsace-Lorraine in 1871 (about which the French always thought but never talked) and the West German attitude towards the Communist East German state (about which the Germans always talked but never really thought)." (Glees, *Reinventing Germany*, xxiv.)

[24] A term used by some West German politicians after 1961. Quoted in Ribbe, *Berlin 1945-2000*, 127.

[25] Martin J. Hillenbrand, "Twenty Years of Berlin History," in *Living with the Wall: West Berlin, 1961-1985*, ed. Richard L. Merritt and Anna J. Merritt (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1985), 120-1; Krüger, "'Ich Lerne Langsam dich zu Hassen'," 42.

[26] Braun, "Berlin ist keine Hauptstadt," 32; Annamarie Doherr, "Berlin ist Mehr als ein Las Vegas zwischen Ost und West," *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 1 January 1974, 3; Krüger, "'Ich Lerne Langsam dich zu Hassen'," 48.

[27] Otto Jörg Weis, "Berliner Existenzangst," *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 9 July 1982, 3.

"anachronistic"[28] island existing in the shadow of its former, storied glory. As Karl Heinz Krüger and others pointed out, it had lost its historic center as well as its "capital-city- and metropolitan-character" ("*Hauptstadt- und Metropolcharackter*"),[29] trading these for provincialism and a general lack of relevance.[30] Once the center of political life in Germany and its economic powerhouse, with the loss of its capital status, Berlin lost its means for survival and its claim to fame. However, as many pointed out, "despite its troubles and its cost" the city remained an important one in terms of the Cold War.[31] Indeed, West Berlin's continued importance as a symbol of Western values and ideals was part of why its troubles were a source of concern—even though its importance as a symbol had in many ways fostered these selfsame troubles. The very factors which were a result of its status as the capital of the West—its financial subsidies, various exemptions, protection by the former Western Allies—had all been factors in attracting members of the counter culture to West Berlin and had created an ideal environment for the critique of the West. Thus the conflict between what the city was supposed to represent (order, stability, affluence) and what it became connected with (chaos, unrest, the lower classes) created confusion as to what the city truly signified. Was West Berlin representative of the Western social and political order? Or an exception to the rule? A "prototype or pariah"?[32]

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[28] "West Berlin: The Story of a City in Decline," *U.S. News & World Report*, 4 December 1967, 82. In another article, the Berlin writer Wolfgang Schnurre laments "the island-character of this anachronistic cairn." Quoted in Krüger, "'Ich Lerne Langsam dich zu Hassen'," 46.
[29] Krüger, "'Ich Lerne Langsam dich zu Hassen'," 53, 46.
[30] West Berlin's increasing provinciality is referred to in, for example, Hillenbrand, "Twenty Years of Berlin History," 121; Joseph Wechsberg, "Letter from Berlin," *The New Yorker*, 15 October 1966, 150. West Berlin's lack of relevance is commented upon in many sources, including Krüger, "'Ich Lerne Langsam dich zu Hassen'," 40-1; Otto Jörg Weis, "Wohin man Schaut: Nichts geht Mehr," *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 3 September 1981, 3; "West Berlin: The Story of a City in Decline," 81.
[31] "West Berlin: The Story of a City in Decline," 82.
[32] Engert, "Berlin between East and West," 147.

West Berlin's identity crisis was characterized as political, economic and cultural but also psychological. The city's troubles, it was argued, had lowered its citizens' morale and self-esteem.[33] Moreover, West Berliners were suffering from their own identity crises, brought on by that of the city in which they lived: "West Berliners are neither citizens of the FRG nor the GDR, and their 'provisional' passports attest to a merely provisional existence."[34] News reports propagated the notion that the city was filled with people who were either despondent, alienated from one another or both, and who lacked a sense of "individual responsibility."[35] Most of all, West Berliners were apparently ashamed of their city and were "looking for that time when they could once again say with pride 'this is my city'."[36]

The discussion of West Berlin's lack of political-economic function, its imminent downfall and the low morale of its citizens was quite prevalent in the West German and international press beginning already in the late 1960s and grew in intensity in the later 1970s and 80s. However, to what extent was this concern over West Berlin and its citizens warranted? In 1983, the Allensbach Institute of Public Opinion (*Allensbach Institüt für Demoskopie*), the equivalent of the Gallup Organization in the U.S., conducted a poll on what West Berliners and West Germans thought of Berlin. The poll focused on the image of (West) Berlin in the popular imagination, and its conclusions for the most part contradicted the view of the city created in the press. For example, despite the claims that citizens in the

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[33] See for example, Doherr, "Berlin Ist Mehr Als Ein Las Vegas Zwischen Ost Und West," 3; Joachim Nawrocki, "Wird West-Berlin Zum Hinterhof Der Nation?: Psychogramm Einer Siechenden Stadt," *Die Zeit*, 23 July 1976, 3; Otto Jörg Weis, "Eine Stadt Repariert Ihr Selbstbewußtsein," *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 21 August 1976, 1.
[34] Krüger, "'Ich Lerne Langsam dich zu Hassen'," 46.
[35] Bernt Conrad, "Das Berlin-Barometer fällt," *Die Welt*, 7 February 1974, 4; Friedhelm Kemna, "Das Neue Berlin-Gefühl: Chancen für den Aufstieg mit Weizsäcker," *Die Welt*, 27 May 1982, 9.
[36] Otto Jörg Weis, "Eine Stadt Repariert ihr Selbstbewußtsein," *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 21 August 1976, 1. In many cases, this lack of self-confidence was ascribed to the city itself, which was often anthropomorphized. For example, many press articles referred to the city's "psychological profile" (*Psychogramm*).

Federal Republic resented the yearly outlay of financial support necessary to keep West Berlin afloat, only 12% of those West Germans questioned felt that this support should be reduced; 74% either felt it should remain the same or be raised. Sixty-six percent of West Berliners and 62% of West Germans disagreed with the statement "West Berlin is a dying city."[37]

While it is difficult to draw definitive conclusions as to what West Berliners or West Germans thought of Berlin, it is not difficult to believe that the media-created image of the city was overwrought. Was the city really so imperiled? Had it truly lost its identity? Or was it simply that many did not approve of the turn its identity had taken in the postwar, away from the mainstream and toward the fringes? Moreover, viewed in the context of the city's history as a place that was almost always loved by some and reviled by others, weren't the critiques of the 1960s-80s merely the latest in a long line of lamentations predicting the city's demise? Regardless, the perception that the city was out of control and sliding towards oblivion was a powerful and pervasive one. Whether or not West Berliners or West Germans believed in the media's dire predictions, it seems certain that West Berlin's political leaders were convinced these groups did believe West Berlin was dead or dying, and thus felt they should respond.

Restoring West Berlin's Image and Identity

In the early 1980s as the city's 1987 jubilee year approached, the West Berlin Senate saw the celebration as a chance to rebuild the city's public image and to reassert its importance in relation to West Germany and the world. Specifically, West Berlin's political and cultural leaders wanted to blur the distinction between the city and the Federal Republic,

[37] "Berlin Fernbild, Tabellenbad" (Allensbach: Institüt für Demoskopie, 1983), 27, 93; "Berlin Nahbild, Tabellenbad" (Allensbach: Institüt für Demoskopie, 1983), 39. The poll's findings were apparently not widely reported, though some newspapers did publish articles on the report, for example "Die meisten Berliner leben besonders gern in ihrer Stadt," *Handelsblatt*, 12 October 1984, 3.

a distinction that had become steadily more pronounced in the 1960s and 70s. They wanted West Berliners to feel like they were part of West German society and likewise to remind West Germans of West Berlin's cultural and political value. To do this, West Berlin's leadership intended to use all of the activities, events and publications of the 750th celebration to communicate a strong and positive urban identity and one that connected to the city's pre-war identity but also responded to recent critiques of, for example, the squatter movement.

Architecture and planning once again played a central role in this effort. As part of the 750th celebration, a series of architectural initiatives were implemented, including the repair and restoration of historically significant buildings and monuments, the construction or reconstruction of several buildings, and an international building exhibition (*Internationale Bauausstellung*). Called IBA, this exhibition was the largest and most significant of the architectural projects related to the city's 750th anniversary celebration and represented a kind of sequel to the earlier 1957 exhibition, Interbau. Though the developments of the intervening years were reflected in IBA, specifically the rise of the squatter movement and the institutional reaction against Modernism, the 1987 exhibition essentially made the same kinds of political arguments in much the same way as Interbau had in 1957. In addition, though it met with a decidedly mixed critical and popular reception, IBA played an undeniable role in shaping the built environment and urban image of West Berlin on the eve of reunification, and was thus an influence on the reconstruction of Berlin after 1989. Though heretofore discussed primarily as an autonomous exhibition, considered in the context of the jubilee celebration of which it was a part, the role of IBA in achieving political goals, specifically those related to West Berlin's global status and urban image, are clear.

In West Berlin, the 750th jubilee celebration took place throughout the first six months of 1987 and in addition to architectural projects, included a wide variety of cultural and historical exhibitions, international conventions, and both district- and city-wide festivals, all of which culminated in a formal celebration held on April 30, 1987. Though the decision to celebrate the jubilee has been characterized as "arbitrary,"[38] the events were clearly designed as a response to the media's harrowing pronouncements regarding West Berlin and engineered to quell any fears of an identity crisis by "mak[ing] the city's identity clear." The celebration sought to raise the city's international profile (and, by extension, West Berliners' morale), reestablish West Berlin's political, economic and cultural function, and, in doing these things, restate its claim as the capital of a reunified Germany.[39] Specifically, it was hoped that the 750th-year celebration would effect a "political position-fixing" ("*politische Standortbestimmung*") of Berlin in relation to Germany as well as to the city's "world partners," and bring the city back into the global limelight:

> The jubilee should cast the eyes of Germans and other peoples on Berlin and in so doing clearly show our role vis-à-vis our location in the middle of Europe...Berlin signifies a centrality not only in a geographic sense, but also in a political and spiritual-cultural sense. The division has left Berlin in the middle and at the border. Berlin is the binding clamp of the German nation.[40]

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[38] In an essay on East Berlin's role as capital of the GDR, historian Brian Ladd comments on the "...extraordinary attention devoted to the commemoration of Berlin's 750th anniversary in 1987. Years before that crucial (if arbitrary) date, both East and West Berlin had committed themselves to impressive anniversary celebrations and to major projects of inner-city renovation." (Brian Ladd, "Socialist Planning and the Rediscovery of the Old City in the German Democratic Republic," *Journal of Urban History* 27, no. 5 (July 2001): 229.)

[39] Protokoll der 5. Sitzung der Senatskommission zur Vorbereitung der 750-Jahr-Feier, 29 June 1984, 2, LArch Berlin B Rep 150/152. Planning documents also refer to the effort to abolish "identity-weaknesses" (*Identitätsschwäche*) and of stressing the "identity-endowing" (*Identitätsstifenden*) effect of, for example, the central exhibit on the history of Berlin. (Protokoll der 5. Sitzung der Senatskommission zur Vorbereitung der 750-Jahr-Feier, 29 June 1984, 4, LArch Berlin B Rep 150/152.)

[40] "Mitteilung des Präsidenten Nr 105: Programm der 750-Jahr-Feier Berlins 1987, Grundlinie," 2, LArch Berlin B Rep 150/416.

The jubilee would also prove the continued worth of West Berlin and thus justify the continued support of the city by the global community:

> A central focus of the city jubilee is celebrating together with foreign guests. We want to deepen our ties with our foreign relations and in doing so show that, despite our geo-political location, with the help of our friends we can not only preserve our political, economic and cultural livelihood, but make it stronger.[41]

As part of this effort to raise the city's international profile, building initiatives were to focus on "restoration of building memorials, closing holes in the built environment, preserving historic building infrastructure, [and] generally refreshing the urban-image (*Stadtbild*)"[42] The reconstruction of the collapsed Congress Hall (Hugh Stubbins, 1956-7), the construction of the Chamber Music Hall (Hans Scharoun and Edgar Wisniewski, 1984-7) in the *Kulturforum*, the restoration of the nineteenth-century Anhalter train station, and the refurbishment of the Tiergarten were all projects connected to the city's jubilee year and designed to achieve these goals. As the largest of these initiatives, IBA would address these issues as well, and "in its planned and built examples work against the widely-criticized, inhospitable modern city." In doing so, IBA would reestablish "Berlin's preeminence as a culture-metropolis (*Kulturmetropole*)."[43]

IBA was not, however, originally planned as part of the 1987 celebration. The idea for a new international building exhibition dated from the mid-1970s when several architects suggested such an exhibition as an antidote to the problems created by postwar reconstruction projects and as a way to address West Berlin's continuing housing crisis. The

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[41] "Mitteilung Nr 105, Programm der 750-Jahr-Feier, Grundlinie," 3, LArch Berlin B Rep 150/416. It is interesting to note that, much in the way the GDR had always asserted the importance of the "center," the rhetoric around West Berlin's 750th anniversary celebration continually refers to the city's figurative and literal location at the "middle" (*Mitte*) of Europe and to its "centrality" (*Zentralität*). The reason for this rhetorical shift may be the then-current push towards European integration and a union of European nations, developments which were supported by the Kohl administration.

[42] The term "urban-image" will be used throughout as the translation for the German term "*Stadtbild.*"

[43] "Mitteilung Nr 105, Programm der 750-Jahr-Feier, Internationale Bauausstellung," 10-1, LArch Berlin B Rep 150/416.

idea was from the start controversial and, despite the support of some members of the Berlin Senate, was criticized as being too expensive and impractical.[44] Regardless, in June 1978 the still-controversial resolution to stage an exhibition was passed by the Berlin Senate largely through the support of Harry Ristock, then director of the Senate Building Authority.[45] Like the larger jubilee celebration, IBA was partly a response to the perception that West Berlin was in crisis.

Indeed, discussions of West Berlin's identity crisis often cited the city's shabby "urban-image" as both a symptom and result of this crisis. In 1974, for example, architecture critic and journalist Günter Kühne penned a series of articles for the *Tagesspiegel* newspaper entitled "Is Berlin Losing its Face? Urban-Image in Danger."[46] Echoing the critiques East German architects had leveled at the *Plattenbauten* in the 1960s, Kühne lamented the poor quality of the "urban-image" that resulted from the construction of the 1950s and 60s, specifically accusing projects like Gropiusstadt of robbing the city of its unique "face."[47] These "anonymous" blocks of high-rises not only lacked character but also fragmented the urban fabric of West Berlin, isolating city dwellers from one another and disrupting any

[44] The plan for IBA was critiqued heavily by the CDU party in the Berlin Senate and was led by Eberhard Diepgen, who ironically would be mayor of West Berlin when IBA was finally staged. For a description of the CDU's objections to IBA, see Große Anfrage der Fraktion der CDU über Finanzierung der Interanationale Bauausstellung, 4 March 1980, LArch Berlin B Rep 002/16997.
[45] Senatsbeschluß Nr 2504/78 vom 27. Juni 1987, LArch Berlin B Rep 009/4450. Kleihues summarizes the history behind IBA in Josef Paul Kleihues, "Architecture as Desire: Boundless Architecture, This Was What I Wanted to Say, Needs the Care and Support of Us All," in *Internationale Bauausstellung Berlin 1984. Die Neubaugebiete: Dokumente-Projekte*, ed. Josef Paul Kleihues (Berlin: Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1981), 71.
[46] Günter Kühne, "Is Berlin Losing its Face? Urban-Image in Danger, Part 1" ("Verliert Berlin sein Gesicht? Stadtbild in Gefahr, 1."), *Tagesspiegel*, 28 April 1974, 49. The series continued for seven consecutive Sundays with the last appearing on page 41 of the June 6, 1974 issue. The "face" metaphor appeared in articles besides Kühne's as well. For example Uwe Lehmann-Brauns, "Das verlorne Gesicht: Stadtgestaltung in Berlin," *Der Tagesspiegel*, 12 September 1982; 3, Tilman Buddensieg, "Eine neues Gesicht für Berlin. Erstmals liegt ein Plan für die Umgestaltung der alten Hauptstadt vor," *Die Zeit,* 24 July 1981, 33-4.
[47] East German architects had of course criticized the "monotony" of the *Plattenbauten*, claiming that they had robbed cities in the GDR of their unique character. See "Architectural Preservation and the 750th Jubilee in the GDR" below.

cohesive sense of "urbanness" (*Urbanität*).[48] At the same time, those neighborhoods that *had* fostered community and where Berlin's unique architectural heritage could be found, neighborhoods like Kreuzberg, had in the 1950s and 60s been ignored and were rapidly deteriorating. Kühne's series raised the question of "who plans what for whom in Berlin," and cited the lack of citizen involvement, the absence of historical continuity and the corruption in West Berlin's building economy as the chief reasons for the city's loss of character.

In 1977, Josef Paul Kleihues and Wolf Jobst Siedler, chief proponents of the new international building exhibition, edited their own series on the problems of architecture and planning in West Berlin in the *Berliner Morgenpost* newspaper, entitled "Berlin—Models for a City."[49] Coming to many of the same conclusions as had Kühne, Kleihues, a practicing architect and professor of architecture, and Siedler, director of the publishing firm that owned the *Berliner Morgenpost*, also blamed West Berlin's problems on a lack of input from architects. Citing the 1974 *Steglitzer Kreisel* scandal, Siedler argued that, "it was not architects who destroyed Berlin, but the developers and financiers, who were often one and the same and half of whom, out of simplicity, did not hire architects at all."[50] They agreed with Kühne that West Berlin had lost its unique urban image, and asked that architects show their support for "Berlin-typical forms" and for an expressive urban-image for the city. Kleihues and Siedler also used the forum to make a case for why they thought a building exhibition would best address these problems, arguing that such an exhibition would bring attention to West Berlin's housing problems, would encourage debate around key urban

[48] Bodenschatz, Heise, and Korfmacher, *Schluss mit Zerstörung?* , 28; Ribbe, *Berlin 1945-2000*, 158.
[49] Wolf Jobst Siedler, Josef Paul Kleihues, and others, "Berlin--Modelle für eine Stadt," *Berliner Morgenpost*, 18 January 1977. Articles on this subject appeared in the *Berliner Morgenpost* throughout the year.
[50] Wolf Jobst Siedler, "Berlin--Modelle für eine Stadt: Nicht die Konkurse, die Fehlplanungen sind der Skandal der Baupolitik Berlins," *Berliner Morgenpost*, 18 January 1977, I.

planning issues and would form the first part of a "long-term urban repair and development program."[51]

Originally planned for 1984, debates about the feasibility and expense of the exhibition and a change in government administration in 1981 delayed the plans until 1987, at which time it was integrated into the events celebrating West Berlin's 750th jubilee. IBA formally opened in May 1987, and was divided into two sections: IBA-*Neubau* (new construction), headed by Kleihues and IBA-*Altbau* (old construction), headed by architect Hardt-Waltherr Hämer. While IBA-*Neubau* focused on new buildings, constructed as "infill" at various points throughout the city, IBA-*Altbau* focused on the refurbishment of existing buildings, drawing on Hämer's experience designing projects that incorporated input from local communities.[52] This two-pronged approach, along with the exhibition's two themes, "Saving the Ruined City" ("*Rettung der kapputen Stadt*") and "The Inner-City as a Place to Live" (*Die Innenstadt als Wohnort*), reflected the planners' goals of revitalizing the "dying" city with new construction but also by paying attention to previously neglected areas. In addition, by engaging in "critical reconstruction" and "careful urban renewal" (*behutsame Stadterneuerung*), IBA would not only avoid repeating the mistakes of the 1950s and 60s but

[51] Josef Paul Kleihues, "Programmvorschläge für eine Internationale Bauausstellung zur Wiederbelebung des alten Berlin," *Berliner Morgenpost*, 18 January 1977, III.

[52] Part of the goal of IBA was, of course, to address West Berlin's housing crisis by providing affordable housing. However, IBA GmbH, the corporation formed to raise the finances for and run the exhibition, could not by itself create subsidized housing, According to architectural historian Wallis Miller, "IBA GmbH's budget allowance showed precisely where its jurisdiction lay: in the generation of ideas and their presentation to the public. Such responsibilities to produce an exhibition were not responsibilities to build subsidized housing. IBA had no money to develop buildings, and given its place in the structure of the city bureaucracy, it had no immediate contact with those who produced them." (Wallis Miller, "IBA's 'Models for a City': Housing and the Image of Cold-War Berlin," *Journal of Architectural Education* 46, no. 4 (1993): 207.)

also, as part of the 750th celebration, provide proof of the city's commitment to doing the same.[53]

IBA was intended as a critique of postwar reconstruction efforts but also as a series of suggestions for how future planning and building could proceed. Architects attempted to restore the sense of community that had been lost in "satellite cities" like Gropiusstadt by creating projects that brought people together. Frei Otto's "*Ökohaus*," for example was composed of various "cells" which residents could design themselves, with the help of architects if they chose (Figure 62). Architects also looked to fields like psychology and sociology in order to create buildings that people responded to emotionally. Leon Krier's submission for "Residential and Recreational Facilities" at the Tegel Docks, for example, evoked warm feelings of nostalgia, according to Kleihues, with its inclusion of "ancient" spatial arrangements such as the piazza (Figure 63).[54] In this way, IBA strove not just to create more housing, but to boost West Berliners' morale and also improve the city's literal and figurative image. "When we consider the character of a city," wrote Kleihues in the *Berliner Morgenpost* series, "then we are considering—whether we know it or not—the basis of how humans identify with this city." Thus it was important that IBA "take the mutual relations between man and his architectural environment seriously," and design buildings in which people enjoyed living.[55] In addition as part of this, IBA represented the attempt to

[53] IBA was in fact often tied to the 1981 shift towards the CDU and the political right in the Berlin Senate. In a brochure detailing the events connected with IBA, Georg Wittwer, then Senator for Architecture and Housing writes that, "the new political orientation in all areas of the new Senate (1981) has also completely changed the methods of city-renewal (*Stadterneuerung*). From now on, so-called clearance- and luxury-renovation belongs to the past." ("Veranstaltungsprogramm, IBA 1987," LArch Berlin B Rep 168, B87/042.)
[54] Heinrich Klotz, "Interview on the IBA Exhibition," in *International Building Exhibition Berlin 1987: Examples of a New Architecture*, ed. Josef Paul Kleihues and Heinrich Klotz (New York: Rizzoli, 1986), 14.
[55] Josef Paul Kleihues, "30 Jahre Bauen seit dem Kriege: Vorschlag für ein Reparaturprogramm," *Berliner Morgenpost*, 18 January 1977, IV.

reestablish the relationship between street and façade that had been ignored in the designs for Interbau.

IBA represented a snapshot of not only theoretical but stylistic trends of the 1980s as well, specifically Postmodernism and what would later be called Deconstructivism, and this remains its most well-known attribute.[56] IBA projects reflected the global rejection of Modernism in that the approaches to design and planning employed were the opposite of those outlined in CIAM's Charter of Athens. Rather than zoning areas of the city according to their use, for example, IBA projects often repurposed spaces and/or united residential with commercial and institutional facilities. Abel Volkmann, for example, created designs for a kindergarten that was to be installed in a former factory and residential building (1985), while Gino Valle designed a building intended to house both an elementary school and wholesale flower market (1983) (Figure 64). Other projects incorporated historical decorative motifs or referenced past uses of a particular site through layout or design. The plan for Peter Eisenman's apartment and office building, built near Checkpoint Charlie, was an elaborate reference to the city's grid system (Figure 65, 1985-8).[57] Indeed the grid, a major leitmotif of Postmodern architecture, appears and reappears throughout IBA designs, in Eisenman's building but also in Stanley Tigerman's design for Tegel Docks housing (1985, Figure 66), O.M. Unger's design for an apartment complex on Lützowplatz (1979-81, Figure 67), Gottfried Böhm's "Urbanistic Survey" for Prager Platz (1978, Figure 68) and the IBA-*Altbau* scheme for "Residential Shelving" ("*Wohnregal*"; Kjell Nylund, Cristof Puttfarke, Peter

[56] The term "Deconstructivism" would not be coined until 1988 when an exhibition of the same name, which included IBA architects like Peter Eisenman, Zaha Hadid and Daniel Libeskind, was held at the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

[57] Peter Eisenman, "Das Symbol," in *Das Neue Berlin: Konzepte der Internationalen Bauausstellung 1987 für einen Städtebau mit Zukunft*, ed. Dankwart Guratzsch (Berlin: Gebr-Mann-Studio-Reihe, 1987), 88-9. As part of his design, Eisenman included a symbolic "museum for the artistically excavated city," which was not included in the finished project. There is a possibility that Eisenman was thinking of the Holocaust specifically when he designed this memorial, and indeed its visual similarity to his 2005 Holocaust Memorial is striking.

Stürzebecher, 1986; Figure 69). Indeed, the influence of Postmodernism is so evident in the projects submitted and built as part of IBA that the exhibit is now commonly regarded as a collection of "Post-Modern clichés."[58] Like Interbau in 1957, IBA was clearly a product of its cultural, historical and political moment.

A Second Interbau?: IBA 1987

In many ways, IBA was a decisive break from those developments in architecture and planning that had so influenced Interbau in 1957 and it was, and is often discussed in such terms. Ultimately, however, the relationship between the two exhibitions is not so straightforward. In his 1981 book on the plans for the *Neubau* division, then still planned for 1984, Kleihues explains that IBA was initially intended not only in the spirit of the earlier exhibition but, "as a replica of the Interbau 1957 and the Hansa quarter," remarking that, while Interbau had its problems, "it was nonetheless popular and well-liked."[59] Indeed, in the early planning stages of IBA, the exhibition was sometimes referred to as "Interbau '84" and was generally understood to be a second Interbau.[60] Later however, Kleihues argued that that while others had advocated for a central demonstration area analogous to the Hansa district, he had argued that, "there must be no repetition of the 1957 Interbau," insisting IBA's buildings be integrated into the existing urban fabric.[61] Clearly, the earlier exhibition was something IBA's planners wanted their exhibition to connect with and yet be separate from, a

[58] Max Page, "Checkpoint Check Up," *Metropolis* (March 2005): 107. Though today it is closely associated with Postmodernism, at the time it was not viewed as so narrowly focused. Peter Blake, for example, even commented on the "dearth" of Postmodern examples at IBA, while Heinrich Klotz questioned Josef Paul Kleihues as to why "American postmodernism" was "under-represented." (Peter Blake, "Berlin's IBA: A Critical Assessment," *Architectural Record* (August 1993): 52; Klotz, "Interview on the IBA Exhibition," 10.)
[59] Kleihues, "Architecture as Desire," 61.
[60] See for example, "Jetzt geht auch in der SPD die Debatte um 'Interbau '84' los," *Die Welt,* 11 February 1980, press clipping; LArch Berlin B Rep 002/16997.
[61] Klotz, "Interview on the IBA Exhibition," 9. In response to Kleihues, Klotz points out that the idea of an integrated rather than stand-alone exhibit area had existed before Kleihues made this statement.

"sequel to Interbau, yet critical of it."[62] In part for the reasons discussed above, I would argue that IBA was a break with Interbau in terms of its architecture and planning approach. However, in terms of the political goals of IBA, especially considering its relationship to the celebration of Berlin's 750th anniversary, IBA was essentially Interbau redux.

Like Interbau, the international building exhibition in 1987 was an attempt to reestablish West Berlin's legitimacy and superiority in the field of architecture by inviting renowned architects from outside of Germany to build "experimental" projects in West Berlin. More specifically, architects like Peter Eisenman, Zaha Hadid, Aldo Rossi, Alvaro Siza and Rem Koolhaas were invited to create "examples of a new architecture" that would respond to the "requirements of modern life and the social, technical and economic conditions of the city."[63] Also like Interbau, the avant-garde architecture of IBA served a political function as well: it suggested that West Berlin, as opposed to East Berlin, had the more exciting and successful future ahead of it. In the struggle for its legitimacy, staging an architectural exhibition was once again a way for West Berlin to create a "Berlin of the future" in its own image. The difference was that this time, the "new Berlin" was constructed not only as an alternative to the Berlin on the other side of the Wall but to the West Berlin of the 1950s and 60s.

Also like Interbau, IBA not only suggested a bright future for West Berlin, it created continuity with the country's prestigious architectural past and thus implied that West Berlin was the more appropriate heir to the historical tradition of German architecture. Whereas

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[62] Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani, "Die Innenstadt als Wohnort--ein Modell für Metropolen," in *Das Neue Berlin: Konzepte der Internationalen Bauausstellung 1987 für einen Städtebau mit Zukunft*, ed. Dankwart Guratzsch (Berlin: Gebr-Mann-Studio-Reihe, 1987), 14.

[63] Klotz, "Interview on the IBA Exhibition," 10. It should be noted that IBA was a much larger exhibition than Interbau, and that its roster of participating architects was larger and more international than the 1957 exhibition.

Interbau had honored Berlin's unique significance in the history of Modernism by featuring buildings designed by masters of the movement like Le Corbusier and Alvar Aalto, IBA did the same by maintaining its reputation as the German city with the "most noteworthy tradition of architecture and building exhibitions."[64] Moreover, the buildings included in IBA represented the cutting-edge in theory and style, and thus could be understood as the continuation of Berlin's "long, impressive 20th-century history of architectural innovation."[65] This effort to give IBA a place within Berlin's architectural history was made particularly clear in the exhibit entitled "750 Years of Architecture and Urban Planning in Berlin," held from March to May in the New National Gallery in the *Kulturforum*. The exhibit provided a comprehensive overview of architecture and planning in Berlin from 1237 to 1987, showing "how the International Building Exhibition sees itself as a contemporary constituent of the architectural history of Berlin."[66]

Though both IBA and Interbau sought to establish West Berlin's historical continuity, how this was achieved was different in 1987 than in 1957, reflecting the social and political changes of the intervening years. In the 1950s, direct references or allusions to the past in West Germany and West Berlin were avoided, either because of an unwillingness to disturb the still-fresh wounds left by World War II or, in relation to architectural style, because such allusions were considered regressive. However in 1987 the interest in history, evidenced by the decision to celebrate the city's 750th anniversary celebration and the approach taken by IBA's planners, was presented as a sign that West Berlin was forward-looking and progressive. Moreover, in acknowledging its past mistakes, from the errors of postwar

[64] Lampugnani, "Die Innenstadt als Wohnort," 14.
[65] Ada Louise Huxtable, "Housing vs. Art in West Berlin," *New York Times*, 18 October 1981, D29.
[66] Josef Paul Kleihues, "Examples of a New Architecture," in *International Building Exhibition Berlin 1987: Examples of a New Architecture*, ed. Josef Paul Kleihues and Heinrich Klotz (New York: Rizzoli, 1986), 8. This exhibit provided a direct connection between the jubilee celebration and IBA as well.

reconstruction to the atrocities of the Nazi regime, it was argued, West Berlin was proving its worthiness as a symbol of "openness and tolerance" as compared to the "other" Berlin. While, "[w]ith their 750th celebration, East Berlin...is trying validate the role it wants its part of the city to have, and to address only the positive aspects of Berlin's history," the celebration in the West, argued the West Berlin Senate, stressed a multiplicity of perspectives and interpretations of history.[67] It was not supposed simply to celebrate Berlin, but also to engage in "reflective, self-critical and also somewhat skeptical self-questioning."[68] Similarly, IBA was an attempt to acknowledge the critiques of the squatter movement and furthermore to incorporate such critiques into the planning and construction process. In employing approaches like "critical reconstruction" and the inclusion of residents' input, the exhibition, it was argued, exemplified the "pluralism" of a democratic society in contrast to the "conventionalism" of the totalitarian.[69]

The historical approach employed by IBA was of course also related to a then-current interest in creating architectural designs that established historical continuity and in the use of historical styles and motifs, both trends which are associated with Postmodernism. However, as we have seen, it would be a mistake to interpret IBA simply as Postmodern exhibition or as a repudiation of Modernism. Indeed while IBA stressed allusions to history and Interbau did not, the particular historical narrative presented by the 1987 exhibition worked hard to connect IBA with Interbau in a mostly positive way. Again and again throughout the publications associated with IBA and in the historical exhibit in the

[67] "Mitteilung Nr 105, Programm der 750-Jahr-Feier, Grundlinie," 2-3, LArch Berlin, B Rep 150/416. The willingness in the 1980s to confront the shameful epochs of Germany's past was of course also the result of the social protest movements of the 1960s and 70s, which had succeeded in bringing previously taboo issues into the public sphere. See Chapter 9, "Politics and Memory since 1960" in Herf, *Divided Memory*, 334-72.
[68] Interview with Ulrich Eckhardt, director of Senate Commission on Berlin's 750th celebration, 9 January 1987, LArch Berlin, B Rep 150/416.
[69] Kleihues, "Architecture as Desire," 63. The GDR is here implied, though not named.

Kulturforum, the history of Berlin's architectural development is told, with special reference given to the rise of the *Mietskaserne*, the city's relationship to Modernism and to the "second destruction" of the postwar period. It is intimated that IBA, in following these developments, took the best aspects of each and combined them to correct the errors of all three. In terms of Modernism, such "errors" are exemplified by the rectilinear style of, for example, Mies van der Rohe's work or the Bauhaus after 1924, an approach that had influenced the designs of West Berlin's satellite cities.[70] According to IBA's planners, "classical modernism," in its "strict"[71] forms had since Interbau led to planning that "stagnated...into routine" and had resulted in the mistakes of the 1960s.[72] Kleihues and his co-planners wanted, not to completely disavow, but to revive Modernism, which, in their eyes, had "degenerat[ed] into apolitical technicism."[73]

Such narratives offered examples of Modernist architects who saved the style from itself. Alvar Aalto and Hans Scharoun are two such architects, noted for their interest in expressive forms and for their consideration of buildings' users. Scharoun in particular is a constant presence in the literature related to IBA, becoming a kind of patron saint of the exhibition. For example, according to Julius Posener in his essay in the IBA publication *Das Neue Berlin*, Scharoun's work, particularly the *Philharmonie* in the *Kulturforum*, offered the first "legitimate departure" from classical modernism, "legitimate because he was, after all still a Modern master." Kleihues begins his essay "Architecture, This Was What I Wanted to

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[70] Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani, "Architectural Exhibitions: A Fragmentary Historical Survey for Europe and the U.S.A.," in *Internationale Bauausstellung Berlin 1984. Die Neubaugebiete: Dokumente-Projekte*, ed. Josef Paul Kleihues (Berlin: Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1981), 42. It is important to note that the work of Mies and others was not completely rejected, but rather were seen as less accommodating to individuals' needs as compared to the work of, for example, Hans Scharoun.

[71] Julius Posener, "Der Schauplatz Berlin--750 Jahre Städtebau im Zeitraffer," in *Das Neue Berlin: Konzepte der Internationalen Bauausstellung 1987 für einen Städtebau mit Zukunft*, ed. Dankwart Guratzsch (Berlin: Gebr-Mann-Studio-Reihe, 1987), 30.

[72] Josef Paul Kleihues, "Typologische Vielfalt versus Standardisierung," *Baumeister* 5 (May 1987): 17.

[73] Klotz, "Interview on the IBA Exhibition," 9.

Say, Needs the Care and Support of Us All" (1986) with a long quote from Scharoun, using it to make a plea for the increased prominence of architects within debates about modern urban planning. In addition, although Kleihues, Posener and others acknowledge problems with Scharoun's postwar designs and with Interbau, both are continually referenced as rare examples of postwar architecture that did not suffer from an over-dependence on "Rationalist" or "Functionalist" tendencies.[74]

In 1957, the system of display connected with Interbau had been a crucial way of contextualizing the architecture featured in the exhibition and guiding visitors' interpretations of it. Again in 1987, the overt and public display of West Berlin's values, ideals and political affiliations were of course key factors in the decision to celebrate the city's 750th anniversary and to hold another international architecture exhibition. In 1987 as in 1957, the entire city became an object of display.[75] However once again, though the goal was the same, the approach was different. Whereas in the earlier exhibition it was the display of consumer products and practices that had been used to align West Berlin with particular political and economic values, in 1987 the "display" component of both IBA and the 750th celebration focused less on specific objects and more on the staging of democratic values in the form of a large-scale public discourse. As part of this focus on discourse, for example, there was no motto selected for the jubilee year festivities, because, as its director Ulrich Eckhardt argued,

> The eventful history of Berlin [and] the multifaceted character of the city...could not be summed-up in a single, pithy motto. We don't want back-slapping events where we cheer "we are somebody!" as is often the case in such occasions. Naturally we want to celebrate, but we also want to pause and reflect, to raise

[74] Kleihues, "Architecture as Desire," 59, 62; Kleihues, "Typologische Vielfalt Versus Standardisierung," 17; Posener, "Der Schauplatz Berlin," 30. Scharoun's vaunted place in architectural history was emphasized in the 750th celebration as well, as the completion of the Scharoun's Chamber Music Hall was one the jubilee's major construction initiatives.

[75] In relation to both the 750th jubilee and IBA, West Berlin was repeatedly called a "showplace" or "stage." See for example, Interview with Ulrich Eckhardt, 9 January 1987; LArch Berlin, B Rep 150/416, 1 and Dankwart Guratzsch, "Berlin—Eine Schau," *Die Welt*, 16 May 1987, 2.

> questions, to set new initiatives in motion. The leitmotifs of the program are: remembrance—renewal—dialogue.[76]

In terms of events, this focus on dialogue and debate was represented by the extensive program of conventions and congresses, including IBA, which not only created an international presence in and therefore support for West Berlin, but provided proof of the city's commitment to the open exchange of ideas as well.[77] In addition, the interest in presenting a variety of perspectives on Berlin's history was reflected in a series of books published by the Berlin Historical Commission, which dealt with the city's history, as well as with the history of its various districts and historical sites, and with "images of Berlin life."[78] Similarly, IBA was not about devising a single solution for architecture and planning in the city, but rather offering a variety of different possible solutions. As part of this IBA's planners wanted the exhibition itself to embody discourse and thus used different styles and approaches to stage a kind of physical "debate." Moreover the exhibition encouraged discussion around its proposed urban visions. Twenty percent of the exhibition budget was given to bringing IBA's various urban planning and design ideas to an "intensive confrontation with the public" in the form of books, pamphlets, maps, guides, official tours, and conferences.[79]

Because IBA was engineered both to embody and to symbolize debate, the exhibition's visual impact was very different from Interbau's. Where photos of Interbau had conveyed the image of a singular, cohesive aesthetic, no single photo could even capture the

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[76] Interview with Ulrich Eckhardt, 20 October 1986, 2, LArch Berlin, B Rep 150/416. This interview was prepared by the 750th Commission's Press Bureau and distributed to West German and international media outlets.
[77] While most were not all of these congress were directly related to the jubilee. For example, Eckhardt mentions the international congress of city mayors in this 1986 interview.
[78] "Mitteilung Nr 105: Programm der 750-Jahr-Feier Berlins 1987, Grundlinie," LArch Berlin B Rep 150/416, 6.
[79] The Parliament of West Berlin, Section A.3.5. Quoted in Miller, "IBA's 'Models for a City'," 205.

totality of IBA, given the wide disbursement of its buildings. The use of different styles derived from various sources created a mélange of different aesthetics, motifs, and approaches. Considering IBA-*Neubau* projects, for example, the free-wheeling collage of Frei Otto's *Ökohaus* (1987-9, Figure 62), is in sharp contrast to the symmetrical façade and pitched roofs of O.M. Unger's Lützowplatz development (1979-83, Figure 67), which itself contrasts with the traditional, classical and Japanese-inspired forms of Kisho Kurakawa's Japanese-German Center (1985-8, Figure 70). This hodge-podge aesthetic is perhaps even more evident in the projects of IBA-*Altbau* which were often renovations of or additions to existing structures, such as the "Residential Shelving, do-it-yourself" project (Figure 69) or the design for a day care center on the ground floor of a nineteenth-century building (*Werkfabrik*, 1985, Figure 71), both in Kreuzberg. The numerous publications of the designs and drawings of both built and unbuilt IBA projects similarly lacked a single or cohesive aesthetic. The Rizzoli publication *International Building Exhibition Berlin 1987: Examples of a New Architecture* (1986),[80] for example, features designs executed in a wide variety of media and presented in numerous different ways, from axonometric views to photomontages to hastily drawn sketches, including one from the back of an airline ticket jacket (Figure 72).

For many, IBA's visual plurality was an appropriate expression of democratic values and a fitting contrast to the built environment in the GDR. In 1993, for example, Peter Blake wrote that,

> [In the East,] the commissars over the past 40 years wiped out large areas of what was left of East Berlin and replaced its neighborhoods with monumental avenues lined with precast-concrete apartment blocks, perfectly aligned—row upon row of communist prison cells all precisely identical, all miserably built, and all today rapidly falling apart. On the other side, a different pattern developed: a free, slightly

[80] *International Building Exhibition Berlin 1987: Examples of a New Architecture*, ed. Josef Paul Kleihues and Heinrich Klotz (New York: Rizzoli, 1986).

> chaotic collage of all the many factors that make life in cities so exciting, including, above all, the visible and audible presence of the arts.[81]

Blake's comments reflect the larger goal of IBA and all the building initiatives related to the 750th jubilee: the effort to restore legitimacy to institutions of political and cultural power in response to the challenges to this power presented by West Berlin's Alternative Scene. Throughout the 1960s and 70s, West Berlin's problems with government corruption and protest groups had left the impression that the Berlin Senate was ineffectual, "foundering," and had lost control of the city.[82] With the jubilee celebration, the Senate hoped to restore Berliners', Germans' and the world's faith in its ability to govern the city successfully in a way that ensured its success without disenfranchising its citizens.

In a related effort, the reinterpretation of Berlin's architectural development presented in IBA was designed to reassure West Berliners' that the city's architects, planners and the municipal building authority of the new CDU-led administration were competent and in control. For example, by blaming "financiers and developers" for the mistakes of the 1960s, IBA's planners exonerated architects from the crimes of postwar reconstruction and moreover, in distinguishing between the positive and negative aspects of Modernism, found a way to forgive certain architects and critics for their praise of these earlier approaches. Not only did IBA's organizers claim that architects and planners were not the problem, they argued that architects and planners were the only figures who could, along with the post-1981 city government, restore West Berlin's "urban-image" and reestablish a strong and positive urban identity for the city. West Berlin could once again be a "model city"

[81] Blake, "Berlin's IBA," 52. Blake's description of architecture in East Berlin is, of course, partially incorrect. Though the *Plattenbauten* were indeed poorly built and improperly maintained, they were not always built in central districts. In addition, neighborhoods like Prenzlauer Berg and Friedrichshain had throughout the period of division remained virtually intact, for better or worse, and at the time of reunification were in many ways better preserved than similar neighborhoods in the West.
[82] Joachim Nawrocki, "Wird West-Berlin zum Hinterhof der Nation?: Psychogramm einer Siechenden Stadt," *Die Zeit*, 23 July 1976, 3.

representative of mainstream Western values and, while it would not ignore the voices from the fringe, it would no longer be consumed by their cacophony. West Berlin's political and architectural leaders would integrate the squatters' critique while at the same time regain control of the urban space.

However, the success of either IBA or the jubilee in achieving all of these goals is highly debatable. For example, while IBA's projects were designed in part to respond to the critiques of West Berlin building policies leveled by the squatters, many of the movement's members decked their squats with anti-IBA banners and in one instance a formal ceremony celebrating the exhibition was interrupted by a protest action.[83] On May 1, 1987, the day after the opening ceremony of the 750th celebration, 50,000 people filled the streets to protest Ronald Reagan's visit to the city and West Berlin's transformation into the "largest amusement park in the world."[84] In addition, though the effort to incorporate many different voices and perspectives was no doubt appealing in theory, it had proved difficult in practice. In the case of IBA, the inclusion of so many different groups in the planning and construction process, from residents to local administrations to credit institutes to property owners and speculators, resulted in what was characterized as a "small war." Even within IBA's administration, disagreements between Kleihues and Hämer eventually led to a split in the *Neu-* and *Altbau* divisions so that in the end the two functioned as more or less separate exhibitions.[85] And while for Blake, at least, the effort to connect IBA's aesthetic and political expression was a readily apparent and successful one, others interpreted IBA's jumble of styles and approaches as either kitsch (more than one critic compared it to Disneyland) or as

[83] Peter M. Bode, "Kreative Experimente kontra Spekulation," *Abendzeitung*, 29 January 1987, press clipping, LArch Berlin B Rep 150/461; Peter Hoffmann, "Report from West Berlin," *Architectural Record* 173 (February 1985): 67.
[84] Joachim Nawrocki, "Gewalt zum Geburtstag," *Die Zeit*, 19 June 1987, 5.
[85] Karl-Heinz Krüger, "Das Pathos Endet an der Haustür," *Der Spiegel*, 1 June 1987, 200.

evidence of "overreaching, confusion, and misdirection."[86] Architecture critic Colin Rowe famously called IBA's plans for West Berlin "several suburbs in search of a city," noting that the exhibitions' goals were too ambitious and resulted only in a "hostile examination of details" rather than any real, workable solutions.[87]

In the opinion of many, IBA failed in its goal of making West Berlin a model city. The city's peculiar and unique political and economic situation meant that the experiences and results of IBA could not be easily exported beyond Berlin.[88] Moreover, IBA's planners were repeatedly accused of focusing too much on architectural theory and not enough on creating practical, useful architecture. As critic Max Page remarks in a more recent assessment of the exhibition, "[t]he most frequent criticism of IBA was that it produced no great works of architecture. It would be hard to argue this point."[89] However at the same time, IBA was reasonably successful in bringing West Berlin back into the international limelight, particularly in terms of architectural critique. Every major architectural publication featured articles on IBA and some of them did so twice, in the early 1980s when the exhibition was scheduled for 1984 and again in 1986-7. Many of the architects who either constructed projects or submitted designs for IBA, though less well-known in 1987, later became superstar architects, including Peter Eisenman, Zaha Hadid, and Daniel Libeskind. Like Interbau, by opening up West Berlin to the world and by reestablishing its preeminence

[86] Paul F. Duwe, "Immobilien, Baukuhlen und Attrappen," *zitty* 10 (1987), 9, press clipping, LArch Berlin B Rep 150/170; Hoffmann, "Report from West Berlin," 67. Peter Blake also made this argument in his remarks at the opening ceremonies for IBA, arguing that the democratic spirit evident from IBA's collage aesthetic was the exhibition's greatest achievement. ("Diepgen eröffnet Internationale Bauausstellung," *Berliner Morgenpost*, 16 May 1987, press clipping, LArch Berlin B Rep 150/461.)

[87] Rowe, "IBA: Rowe Reflects," 93. A more extensive version of Rowe's comments was published as "Ein offener Brief zur verschwundenen Öffentlichkeit" in *Modelle für eine Stadt: IBA 84, Neubaugebiet*, ed. Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani (Berlin, Sieder, 1984), 129-44.

[88] Hoffmann, "Report from West Berlin," 67; Manfred Schonlau, "Die Berliner Wohnungsbauförderung," *Baumeister* 5 (May 1987): 20. At the same time, IBA was made a "special case" within West Berlin housing and building policy. It was explicitly an exhibition, "rather than permanent modifications to a system to change the way of producing housing." (Miller, "IBA's 'Models for a City'," 207.)

[89] Page, "Checkpoint Check Up," 135.

in the realm of architecture and planning, IBA did go a long way towards repairing the city's public image and strengthening its urban identity. While both IBA and the 750th jubilee may have failed in terms of creating great architecture or solving West Berlin's housing crisis, the political goals of these events were certainly accomplished.

Berlin, Actual and Imagined

Particularly in the context of Berlin's 750th anniversary, the divide between East and West Berlin and Germany was in the West treated as temporary, even though it did not seem as though the reunification of Germany would happen anytime in the immediate future. Even before the 1987 celebration, this had presented a challenge for West Berlin's leaders in terms of political discourse. There was a persistent need to accommodate the presence of the Wall and the very real political, economic and social challenges it presented: for practicality's sake, West Berlin's leaders had to act as if it were a single and complete city. However, at the same time, West Berlin's role in the Cold War meant that it had to appear unaffected by the Wall, and, therefore in public discourse, the city was treated as incomplete, one half of a whole. In his speech at the opening ceremonies of the 750th jubilee, for example, West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl stated that,

> ...one knows that normalcy cannot be spoken of as long as a wall and barbed wire divide this city, our fatherland and Europe.
>
> In Berlin this division is a daily experience. It is a wound that the people suffer from. We feel this division on both sides as unnatural and painful.
>
> As long as Germans' freedom is denied, as long as basic human and civil rights are violated in the middle of Germany—that's how long the German question will remain an open one.
>
> Berlin is the symbol of this open German question.[90]

In suggesting that present-day West Berlin was an aberration and at the center of an unresolved issue, Kohl was suggesting the possibility of another, more complete and perhaps

[90] Ansprache von Bundeskanzeler Dr. Helmut Kohl beim Festakt zur Eröffnung der 750-Jahr-Feier der Stadt Berlin, 30. April 1987, 3, LArch Berlin B Rep 150/444.

more authentic Berlin. Indeed, one result of such discourse was the emergence of two images of Berlin, often cast as antithetical to one another. The first was of the "actual" West Berlin, related to everyday life in the city during the period of division, and second was of an "imagined," sometimes idealized Berlin, which was alternately tied to the city's past or its future.[91] In the 1970s and 80s, this ghost image of a second, romanticized West Berlin was a continual, sometimes uncanny presence, and one that often provided a sharp and telling contrast with the reality of day-to-day life in the city. In the postwar, this idealized image of Berlin would influence the efforts to construct the city as a the capital of the newly-unifed Germany.

This "other" Berlin took a series of different forms, one of which—and the one implied by Kohl—was tied to the future Berlin of post-reunification. The West Berlin Senate's, for example, insisted that the celebration not "create the impression of two, autonomous urban entities." Rather, it was their duty to use the jubilee to argue for Berlin's "shared history and future." The Senate furthermore argued that the Wall "as a power-instrument of division [was] proof of an awareness of [Berlin's] togetherness (*Zusammengehörigkeit*)" and that, while East Berlin's celebration would deny the city's unity and focus on "demarcation" ("*Abgrenzung*"), "this effort must fail."[92] The 750th celebration would therefore be used to argue for the West's stake in and ownership of a future, as-yet-unrealized Berlin. Similarly, IBA's organizers tried to plan West Berlin as it was, as if the Wall were its final limit, but also anticipate the Wall's eventual absence. As art historian

[91] Of course other cities are well known for their "imagined" or fictionalized forms. For example, the stories of Raymond Chandler or films such as *Chinatown* (Roman Polanski, 1974) have undoubtedly had a profound influence on the urban identity of Los Angeles and which has been chronicled in, for example, Mike Davis's *City of Quartz* (1990).
[92] "Mitteilung des Präsidenten Nr 105: Programm der 750-Jahr-Feier Berlins 1987," 3, LArch Berlin B Rep 150/416.

Wolfgang Braunfels then argued, "IBA cannot, and does not want to, side-step taking an opinion on the Wall. The dialectic in IBA's proposals, which accepts and neglects it simultaneously, seems to be the only philosophy which does justice to the present situation." He further argues, "one is able to develop artistic solutions by accepting the Wall only in the hope of its removal."[93] Unlike, for example, the 1957 "*Hauptstadt* Berlin" competition, IBA did not create a theoretical plan for the whole of Berlin, including those parts located in the East, but accepted West Berlin in its then dimensions. However, IBA's plans for West Berlin also did not assume the city's division was a permanent one.[94] This position was perhaps best expressed by the continued refrain of the West Berlin Senate and 750th jubilee planners that, despite its division Berlin was one city: "one city, two worlds? In the consciousness of its citizens, Berlin is still *one* city [emphasis in original]."[95] Thus IBA, and to a large extent the 750th celebration as a whole, were attempts to respond to the needs of the "actual" city and create an "ideal" city, both in so much as every architectural exhibition tries to create an ideal city, and in terms of a future, unified Berlin.

It was not only the "imagined" Berlin of the future that seemed always in the background of discussions of West Berlin in the 1970s and 80s, but also the Berlin of the past, the city of the Prussian kings, of the Weimar "golden years," even of goosestepping Nazis. The notion, that West Berlin was "haunted" by the Berlin of the past, was continually referenced in magazine and newspaper articles but also in novels and films of the period.

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[93] Wolfgang Braunfels, "The International Building Exhibition and the Question of Berlin," *Architectural Design* 53, no. 1/2 (1983): 16, 17.
[94] Miller, "IBA's 'Models for a City'," 204.
[95] Information zur 750-Jahr-Feier, Pressemappe, 26, LArch Berlin B Rep 150/348. See also Attachment to letter from Marion Döring (Koordination und Öffentlichkeitsarbeit Abteilung des Beauftragtes des Senats von Berlin für die 750-Jahr-Feier 1987) to press affiliates, 20 October 1986, "Interview with Dr. Ulrich Eckert," 4, LArch Berlin B Rep 150/416 and "Mitteilung des Präsidenten Nr 105: Programm der 750-Jahr-Feier Berlins 1987," 3, LArch Berlin B Rep 150/416.

While writing his *Rolling Stone* article on David Bowie's and Iggy Pop's period of self-imposed exile in West Berlin, for example, journalist Chris Hodenfield meets Artur Vogdt:

> ...Artur Vogdt has been a hotel porter in Berlin through many regimes, and he knows where people's pasts are buried. Now he runs the Hotel Continental on Berlin's main drag, the Kurfürstendamm. In the Twenties this was a house owned by a wealthy Jewish family. And now after you climb a winding flight of stairs, you find Artur holding court at the front desk, ready to tell tales.[96]

A similar, though fictional version of Artur Vogdt appears in Len Deighton's "Game, Set, Match" trilogy of spy novels, published in the 1980s. Lisl Hennig is an old family friend of the novels' main character, Bernard Samson, and owns the hotel where Samson stays during his frequent trips to West Berlin:

> Lisl Hennig's hotel, just off Kantstrasse, in the Western Sector, was unchanged. No one had tried to repair or repaint the façade pockmarked by Red Army shell splinters in 1945…
>
> There were photos on every side: sepia family groups in ebony frames, faded celebrities of the thirties. Actresses with long cigarette holders, writers under big-brimmed hats, glossy film stars from the UFA studios, carefully retouched prima donnas of the State Opera, artists of the Dada movement, trapeze performers from the Wintergarten, and nightclub singers from long-vanished clip joints.[97]

Like Artur Vogdt, Lisl Hennig is presented as a vestige of the city's grander era who provides a reminder of what Berlin once was and perhaps what it still might be, if it were not for the war's destruction and the city's subsequent division. In the 80s, West Berlin appeared to be full of such figures, relics of the past who, like the city itself, seemed at times stuck in it, but who were regardless always ready to bear witness to Berlin's glorious and tumultuous history.

Wim Wenders' 1987 film *Wings of Desire* (*Der Himmel über Berlin*) is perhaps the most famous example the use of this motif of West Berlin's omnipresent past. Wenders' film,

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[96] Hodenfield, "Bad Boys in Berlin," 43.

[97] Len Deighton, *Berlin Game* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1983), 108-9. The other novels in the trilogy are *Mexico Set* (1984) and *London Match* (1985). Lisl Hennig appears in all three.

made upon his return to the city after a long period of living abroad, follows two angels, Damiel (Bruno Ganz) and Cassiel (Otto Sander), as they watch over Berlin listening to the thoughts of the city's inhabitants to whom they are invisible.[98] The angels are there to "assemble, testify, preserve" everyday life in the city and it becomes clear that this is what they have always done, that they always have been and always will be a presence in the city. The angels are not aware of the passage of time, and for them the past, present and future exist simultaneously. Thus for Damiel and Cassiel, the past is always present. During a cab ride, for example, Cassiel looks out the window of the taxi and observes the passing urban landscape. He sees not only the current buildings, but images of the city's past, as shots of the world outside the cab window are inter-cut with newsreel footage of aerial bombings and of women collecting rubble, suggesting the conflation of time and space.

The past's presence is not only felt by the angels, however. As he wanders a desolate area near the Berlin Wall, an old man, Homer (Curt Bois), "looks for" Potsdamer Platz in the space where it once was:

> I can't find the Potsdamer Platz. Wasn't it here? It cannot be. That's where the Cafe Josti was...in the afternoons I would sit and have conversations there and drink coffee, watch the crowds pass after having smoked my cigar at Löhse and Wolff, the well-known tobacconists. Just here, across the way. This can't be Potsdamer Platz, and there is no one around to ask. It was such a lively place...streetcars, horse-drawn omnibuses and two cars: mine and the one from the chocolate shop. The Wertheim department store was also here. Then suddenly the flags appeared...there and there. The whole Platz was covered with them. And the people weren't friendly anymore. Nor were the police.
> I will not give up until I find Potsdamer Platz.

For Homer, the Platz was not only the physical space, but also the places that were once situated there and the people who filled them. The absence left by their destruction is felt not

[98] Roger F. Cook, "Angels, Fiction, and History in Berlin: *Wings of Desire*" in *The Cinema of Wim Wenders*, ed. Roger F. Cook and Gerd Gemünden (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1997), 164. Apparently Wenders arrived in the city to make *Until the End of the World* (1991), and made *Wings of Desire* while he was waiting for the preparations necessary for the former project to take place.

only as a loss of the physical buildings, but of the social order they represented. For many characters in *Wings of Desire*, the past weighs heavily on West Berlin. It is a constant presence that is expressed as an absence, not only in the city's empty spaces, but also in the absence of contact between individuals, most of whom seem permanently lost in their own thoughts.

It is not only the past Berlin, however, but also the "other" Berlin, the city on the other side of the Wall, that impinges on West Berlin and the daily life of its inhabitants in *Wings of Desire*. The film's German title translates as "the sky over Berlin," and indeed Wenders is interested exploring possible cracks in the Berlin Wall. Not only does the sky remain unbroken and undivided above East and West Berlin, the angels can move freely within the city, even pass easily through the Wall and into the "death strip" zone between the walls. Works of literature, for example, also raised such issues, such as Peter Schneider's novel *The Wall-Jumper* (*Der Mauerspringer*, 1982). Schneider's novel traces the efforts of an author, presumably Schneider himself, who is trying to write the story about "a man who is trying to lose his 'I' and become no one." Throughout the novel, the protagonist travels to and from East Berlin, collecting fantastic stories about people who have been able to cross over from East to West. Herr Kabe, for example, had the ability to simply jump over the Wall, while in another story three boys tunnel through a movie theater in East Berlin in order to go and see American films in the West. These fables provide a counterpoint to the protagonist's daily life and in particular his interactions with his friends Robert and Lena, both of whom are from the GDR but have defected to the West. Though the stories of "wall jumpers" are clearly fiction, the writer himself moves from East to West Berlin fairly easily throughout the novel, suggesting that the Berlin Wall is not as impenetrable a barrier as it might seem.

However at the same time, the division that the Wall represents and enforces has created other, less material barriers. As he discovers in his conversations with Robert and Lena, the physical Wall as created a mental wall, and "the effort to rip out the wall in the head will last longer than any effort to remove the visible wall."[99]

With *Wings of Desire* and *The Wall-Jumper*, Wenders and Schneider began to explore aspects of Berlin's and Germany's division that had not yet been broached, due in part to the then-current political environment and a rhetorical stance bent on denying the Wall's influence on West Berlin. Specifically, these works deal with the psychological effects of living in a closed-off city and with the Wall's possible long-term effects, themes considered anathema to officials who were insisted that West Berlin was unaffected by the Wall. In addition, Wenders and Schneider raise questions about what is missing and what is absent in West Berlin, questions about what was *not* being discussed. In *Wings of Desire*, for example, the angels congregate in Scharoun's State Library Building, a location no doubt chosen in part for its expansive interior spaces. However Wenders' depiction of the building also suggests what was not discussed in contemporary architectural critiques of the building. Assessments of the building by, for example, Peter Blundell Jones's present a cohesive and singular interpretation of the building which fits within a similarly cohesive urban identity for West Berlin: the building is as unambiguously democratic as the city itself. In contrast, Wenders' uses the building to suggest that such cohesion was in fact impossible in a divided city and to address the contradictions inherent in living in West Berlin: the contradiction, for example, between living in the capital of freedom while being surrounded by a Wall, or the contradiction of living in a divided city where this division is so often denied.

[99] Peter Schneider, *Der Mauerspringer* (Reinbeck bei Hamburg: Rowohlt Taschenbuch Verlag, 1982; reprint, 1995), 30ff, 44ff, 110.

In Wenders' and Schneider's works, West Berlin is continually measured against an "other" Berlin, a Berlin which is absent but of which one is nonetheless continually aware.[100] This recurring trope can be viewed as the product of the Cold War discourse in the West around Berlin. It is the result of an inherent conflict between the need for West Berlin to have a role or "mission" within West Germany, and the requirement that this mission be somehow temporary, so as to be easily disposed of upon reunification. As journalist Joachim Braun put it in 1987, "For decades West Berlin has existed by negating its geo-political location."[101] Part of negating its location, meant maintaining the contradictory stance that it was not held back by the Wall but also could not realize its full potential as long as the Wall stood. This was obviously a delicate and difficult balance to strike and, as Wenders and Schneider suggested, perhaps an untenable one as well. The West German and West Berlin governments' continued insistence that despite the division Berlin "remained one city," for example, surely rang hollow in the ears of many West Berliners, as such pronouncements no doubt served only to remind them that there was a large portion of the city to which they did not have access and which, though it might be part of Berlin, was not a Berlin that they knew or were likely to have visited. Indeed one might have wondered how long this stance could have been maintained if the opening of the inter-German border and subsequent reunification of Germany had not made the question a moot one. These events and the West's victory in the Cold War seemed to validate the political rhetoric that had framed and defined West Berlin especially in the 1980s, and which would increasingly inform discussion of Berlin's construction and reconstruction as a whole after 1990. Now that "normalcy" had been

[100] This remains to some extent a common theme in all kinds of discussions of the city. Histories of the city have, for example, dealt with Berlin's "ghosts," or discussed its reconstruction in terms of "voids," "hauntings," and memory, as in Brian Ladd's *The Ghosts of Berlin* (1997), Andreas Huyssen's essay in *Critical Inquiry* of the same year entitled "The Voids of Berlin," and Karen E. Till's *The New Berlin: Memory Politics, Place* (2005).
[101] Braun, "Berlin ist keine Hauptstadt," 33.

restored, it seemed architects and planners could go about closing the city's "wounds" and realizing the Berlin that until then could only be imagined.

East Berlin: Collapsing Borders

As the 1980s began in the GDR, the hope and optimism of the early 1970s had long since faded. The economic and social gains of the early Honecker era had ended there, changing little after about 1976. Indeed, these gains did little more than raise East Germans' expectations, making the lack of economic and social improvement in the 1980s all the more frustrating.[102] The expatriation of singer and activist Wolf Biermann in 1976 brought an end to the liberalizing cultural reforms of the early 1970s and East German artists who publicly protested the government's action against Biermann were targeted as dissidents. In 1979, several prominent GDR writers were kicked out of the country's major literary group, the *Schriftstellerverband* (writer's union) as a result of their anti-government critique.[103] The early 1980s also saw the formation and rapid growth of protest organizations, many of which emerged from artists' groups and the increasingly politicized Protestant church. Often these groups did not have as their main goal the downfall of the GDR, but rather government reform and a more "democratic socialism." After 1983, these groups, which were usually organized around issues like nuclear disarmament, peace, and/or environmental activism, began to work together as an "informal opposition."[104]

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[102] Fulbrook, *Anatomy of a Dictatorship*, 146ff.
[103] Dennis, *The Rise and Fall of the German Democratic Republic*, 236-7; Weber, *Geschichte der DDR*, 415.
[104] Dennis, *The Rise and Fall of the German Democratic Republic*, 240-1; Dieter Rink, "Ausreiser, Kirchengruppen, Kulturopposition und Reformer," in *Zwischen Verweigerung und Opposition: Politischer Protest in der DDR 1970-1989*, ed. Detlef Pollack and Dieter Rink (Frankfurt/Main: Campus Verlag, 1997), 58. The "cultural opposition" and the church-based anti-SED groups were in the 1970s viewed as separate and distinct movements, not allied with one another either formally or informally. It is important to note as well that there was always some amount of dissent and discontent in the GDR. (Fulbrook, *Anatomy of a Dictatorship*, 201; Rink, "Ausreiser, Kirchengruppen, Kulturopposition und Reformer," 54.)

However, even as dissatisfaction rose in the late 1970s and 80s and even as the country's social and economic crises became more and more evident, Honecker made no attempt to change his policies, but rather tightened his grip on the government as well as the East German people. In 1976, he made himself chairman of the State Council (*Staatsrat*) and of the National Defense Council (*Nationale Verteidigungsrat*), meaning that from this point, Honecker directly controlled all of the highest branches of the GDR government. To control the population, Honecker continued to rely on the Stasi and as a result the Security Ministry grew steadily throughout this period, commanding 1.3% or 3.6 billion Marks of the country's already-compromised budget by the late-1980s.[105] Indeed, In terms of the GDR's economic, social and political policies, the mid- to late 1970s looked much like the 1980s.[106] While the gross national product had risen 12% from 1973 to 1975, from 1976 to 1980 it rose only 3.9%. Because of government subsidizing, the cost of basic needs like rent and of food staples like milk and bread were low and thus affordable to most East Germans. The cost of other consumer products, however, was disproportionately high. For example, non-native fruits such as bananas (*Südfrüchte*) were scarce and exorbitantly expensive when available, as were more pedestrian items like ladies' hose, which in 1977 cost three times more in the GDR than in the Federal Republic. In addition, the country's infrastructure was rapidly aging, with 21% of the GDR industrial plant over twenty years old and 72% of its telephone technology more than thirty years old. By the end of the 1970s, the GDR economy was in a

[105] Weber, *Geschichte der DDR*, 405, 467.
[106] The East German economy was affected by the global oil crisis though not directly. Before the crisis, the GDR had benefited from selling the oil they received from the Soviet Union at a below-market price. In 1981, however, the Soviet Union limited oil deliveries to the GDR, thus cutting off one of East Germany's primary sources of income. (Dennis, *The Rise and Fall of the German Democratic Republic*, 164-5.)

continuous state of crisis. In 1978 the country was already in $5 billion of debt to western banks, and these trends only grew worse in the 1980s.[107]

One perennial source of both optimism and disappointment throughout the 1970s and 80s was housing policy. Upon his assumption of power, Honecker had made housing construction the centerpiece of his social and economic policy, claiming that in doing so he would bring about the "unity of social and economic politics" promised by socialism. The country's limited construction resources were poured into Honecker's Housing Construction Program (*Wohnungsbauprogramm*), which, predictably, focused on prefabricated construction of huge housing settlements, the largest of which was the Marzahn development located on the northeastern outskirts of Berlin. This program, which represented the largest capital investment in the nation's history, produced millions of dwellings and resulted in the complete industrialization of the GDR building industry, a process that had begun in the 1960s.[108] It is largely because of the Housing Construction Program that, in the wake of reunification and the end of the GDR, East German architecture—and indeed Eastern Bloc architecture as a whole—was and is viewed in terms of these prefabricated *Plattenbauten*.

However, at the same time GDR housing policy focused on new construction, many architects and planners, from both within the government and without, began agitating for the preservation and renovation of older housing stock. Particularly in relation to East Germany's celebration of Berlin's 750th jubilee, the arguments for preservation took a similar form and purpose as those in the West and resulted in projects like the reconstruction of the city's

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[107] Dennis, *The Rise and Fall of the German Democratic Republic*, 264, 148; Weber, *Geschichte der DDR*, 418-20, 426, 442-3. Despite these economic difficulties, the GDR economy remained by far the strongest in the Eastern Bloc until its collapse.

[108] Günter Peters, former East Berlin building director, has argued that because of its huge expenditures, the Housing Construction Program was a major contributor to the GDR's economic collapse. (Ladd, "Socialist Planning," 603, note 58.)

oldest quarter around the Nikolai church. Such projects in fact represented many of the same principles as those embodied in IBA. The push to focus less on new construction, for example, and more on preservation of older buildings began at around the same time, if not earlier in East Germany than in the West. Approaches like "careful urban renewal" and participatory design were central to both the discussions surrounding and execution of preservation projects in East Berlin as well.[109] Of course the crucial difference is the degree to which such approaches became part of government policy in East versus West, as well as how and to what extent such goals were realized.

Both the discussion around preservation and the realization of the national Housing Construction Program were ultimately undermined by the country's deteriorating economy. At the same time, the East German population grew increasingly dissatisfied and demoralized by the social conditions of life under the SED government. The fragile sense of national identity that had begun to coalesce in the late 1960s and which was strengthened by the period of stability and economic success in the early years of the Honecker era was compromised by the government's refusal to enact any real or lasting changes. The notion of "*Heimat*-GDR" thus continued to be divided between a public, officially-created national identity, which appeared more hollow and meaningless with each passing year, and a private and personal sense of national identity based on the details of daily life in the GDR and the practices associated with "accommodation" or *Anpassung*. This double-sided view of national identity was increasingly evident in representations of private versus public space, notions of which were clearly imprinted by East Germans' double-consciousness. In terms of architectural space, the *Altbau* in which most East Germans lived, which in East Berlin

[109] Simone Hain, "Between Arkonaplatz and the Nikolaiviertel," in *City of Architecture of the City: Berlin 1900-2000*, ed. Thorsten Scheer, Josef Paul Kleihues, and Paul Kahlfeldt (Berlin: nicolai, 2000), 339.

consisted primarily of the *Mietskasernen*, became closely associated with private space and the freedom and individuality which such space allowed. *Plattenbauten*, in contrast, came to represent the public spaces of the GDR, or more specifically, the lack thereof. These built forms worked as metaphors, but were also used to suggest that, as in the West, the divisions both symbolized and enforced by the Wall had become internalized, defining physical space as well as personal identity.

The Housing Construction Program

Though the Palace of the Republic had proved so successful in bolstering East Germans' burgeoning national pride, in terms of architecture and identity the weak GDR economy could never hope to sustain the "prestige project" approach the Palace of the Republic represented.[110] In an attempt to achieve the same goals in a more cost efficient manner, Honecker's regime instead focused the bulk of its energies and resources on the construction of housing, in the hopes of essentially winning the support of GDR citizens one by one as they moved into the new dwellings.[111] As in the 1960s, housing policy was united with an overall social policy, and thus housing construction was framed as an instrument of socialist ideology. Therefore by creating dwellings for East Germans, Honecker could argue not only that he was addressing the country's continuing housing crisis, but also that he was providing the kind of real, material benefits to the "common people" (*kleine Leute*) he had promised upon taking power in 1971.[112] In terms of building technologies, housing and indeed all construction in the GDR, focused more than ever on prefabrication methods in the 1980s. This meant that the Housing Construction Program created not just millions of

[110] Ladd, "Socialist Planning," 585.
[111] While it is sometimes said that Honecker was not as concerned in architecture as his predecessor Walter Ulbricht, I would argue that this was not the case. While Honecker was not, as Ulbricht had been, involved with questions of aesthetics or style, he was clearly interested in the use of architecture as an instrument of both ideology and social policy.
[112] Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 295.

dwellings, but millions of *Plattenbau* dwellings and therefore that the hated concrete high-rises became more, rather than less prevalent in the GDR built environment. Specifically, "Dwelling-Series-70" *Plattenbau* developments rose along the outskirts of cities in ever larger numbers in the 1980s, even though architects in East Germany had, as in the 60s, continued to rail against the monotony of this kind of construction and the decay of inner-city districts which resulted from the increasing urban sprawl.

Even by the late 1970s, East Germany had never overcome its post-World War II housing shortage, and the problem was made worse each year as the aging housing stock, 80% of which dated to the pre-war era, deteriorated along with the country's economy.[113] In 1981, 40% of GDR dwellings did not have a dedicated bathroom and 36% were not supplied with hot water.[114] Ulbricht had of course also attempted to address this issue but had met with limited success, in part since he had ultimately concentrated on industrial production rather than on consumer goods, of which housing was considered a part. In contrast, Honecker had pledged to focus more of the country's resources on the construction of housing, and accordingly, between 1970 and 1980 the GDR's building production increased by 78%.[115] After the short period of economic success in 1972-3, Honecker announced the expansion of the housing program and his goal to "solve" the "housing question" by the construction and renovation of between 2.8 and 3 million dwellings by 1990.[116] By the end of the 1980s, 200 billion Marks had been spent on the Housing Construction Program and by 1990, 2.1 million dwellings had been either newly constructed or renovated.[117]

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[113] Ladd, "Socialist Planning," 588.
[114] Wolle, *Die Heile Welt der Diktatur*, 183.
[115] Ladd, "Socialist Planning," 585; Sieber and Fritsche, *Bauen in der DDR*, 62.
[116] Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 303-4. Honecker promised a "solution to the housing question as a social question by 1990" ("*Lösung der Wohnungsfrage als soziale Frage bis 1990*").
[117] Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 291; Sieber and Fritsche, *Bauen in der DDR*, 63.

The issue of housing remained an important, if not more important one in the Honecker as compared the Ulbricht era. In the 1950s and 60s, the home had of course been framed as the central site for the development of "socialist community," and thus city-building (*Städtebau*) meant not only the physical construction of the city, but the creation of a sense of fellowship and belonging that, it was thought, would result. Personal and collective identities were to be organized around social relations, rather than specific spaces such as the home, so as to avoid any dependence on private property. The organizing elements of society were therefore residential community and specifically the nuclear family (*Kleinfamilie*), which was called the "smallest cell" of socialist society. This latter concept had been borrowed the Soviet Union in the 1950s, and had retained its rhetorical significance in the 1970s.[118] As an extension of this sociological discourse, the Housing Construction Program and the effort to create comfortable housing was presented as the realization of Honecker's promises of 1971 and 1973, but also of the socialist utopia which provided "good dwellings for all, not luxurious dwellings for few."[119] Honecker argued that his Housing Construction Program was the "unity of social and economic policies," promising that solving the "housing question" would mean solving the "social question," which had of course existed in various forms since the nineteenth century.

East Germany's continued shortage of labor, raw materials and a technologically-advanced infrastructure meant that, as before, the "rationalized," industrial approach to building based on prefabricated concrete slabs or *Platten* remained the construction method

[118] This was despite the fact that "alternative forms of living," for example couples that chose to remain unmarried, were on the rise in the 1970s-80s. (Hannemann, *Die Platte*, 105, 106.)
[119] *Architektur der DDR* (April 1975): 207. Quoted in Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 305.

of choice.[120] Indeed by this time, the GDR building economy had for so long been oriented towards producing *Plattenbauten*, that retooling it to create different kinds of buildings would have been very difficult, even had government wanted to do so. In any case, prefabrication methods ruled the day in the 1980s, though the enduring criticism of their lack of individuation resulted in the push for the development of a new kind of *Plattenbau*. Accordingly, the Building Academy developed the *Wohnungsbauserie*-70 (Dwelling-Series-70 or WBS 70, Figure 73) in the early 1970s in an effort to create *Plattenbauten* that were more visually interesting. The WBS 70 provided economic advantages over earlier prefabrication technology as well, since the WBS 70 required even less labor per unit to construct than earlier methods. Its aesthetic advantage was in that these buildings could be arranged in configurations of greater scale and variety. It was thus hoped that the "open and dynamic" WBS 70 would correct the problems of earlier prefabrication systems by increasing the dwelling units' size as well as the buildings' degree of differentiation, within and without. In the end, however, the inherent uniformity of the WBS 70 prefabricated slabs meant that the visual impact of these buildings was no less monotonous than the *Plattenbauten* of the 1960s.[121]

The fruits of Honecker's Housing Construction Program were born relatively quickly. In 1972, the GDR was for the first time able to construct more than 100,000 dwellings in a single year.[122] In the end, however, in terms of housing East Germans the efficacy of the program was limited at best, and one of the largest of the housing developments that resulted

[120] Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 296-8. The situation was in fact even worse in the 1970s and 80s than it had been in the 1950s and 60s. While 64% of the population was of working age in 1950, only 58% were working in 1973. Technologically the GDR never caught up to the West and the gap was more pronounced as time wore on. (Weber, *Geschichte der DDR*, 389-90.)
[121] Hannemann, *Die Platte*, 90-1; Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 297-8.
[122] Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 303.

from the Housing Construction Program, Berlin-Marzahn (1975-85, Figure 74), is emblematic of the program's limited achievements and its shortcomings.[123] Begun in October 1975, the complex was one phase of the East Berlin portion of the Housing Construction Program, which was outlined in a Politburo resolution of March 1973 and was to create a total of 80,000 dwellings by 1980. When finished, Marzahn was to provide 35,000 dwellings to house around 170,000 residents, 60 percent of whom, in keeping with the government's focus on the nuclear family, would be working families with children and young married couples.[124] Located in a section of the northeastern district of Berlin known as Lichtenberg, Marzahn was so large that it was made into a its own city district complete with its own postal code.

To lead the design collective and construction of the Marzahn complex, the Building Ministry chose Heinz Graffunder, the architect who had of course led the MZG collective that designed the GDR's premier architectural expression of national identity, the Palace of the Republic. A native of Berlin, Graffunder's first major project in the 1950s had been an apartment building, and in 1965-68 he had designed the East German embassy in Budapest, Hungary. In 1972, Graffunder was appointed head of the Building Academy's Institute for Dwelling- and Communal-Construction (*Institut für Wohnungs- und Gesellschaftsbau*) where he worked on the development of the WBS 70.[125] Graffunder's experience with the WBS 70 was clearly part of the reason he was chose to lead the Marzahn collective, but his experience designing GDR "prestige projects" was no doubt another important factor. The Housing

[123] Simon Hubacher, "Berlin-Marzahn: The Would-Be Town," in *City of Architecture of the City: Berlin 1900-2000*, ed. Thorsten Scheer, Josef Paul Kleihues, and Paul Kahlfeldt (Berlin: nicolai, 2000), 350.
[124] "Vorschlag für die Bebauungskonzeption des 9. Stadtbezirkes (Biesdorf/Marzahn)," SAPMO-BArch DY 30/J IV 2/2/1150. By 1983, the still-unfinished complex housed approximately 100,000 people; by 1989, Marzahn was home to 170,240 East Germans. (Ribbe, *Berlin 1945-2000*, 156.)
[125] Lebenslauf, AdK Berlin, HGA, NL I, 11.

Construction Program was certainly the largest project undertaken by Honecker's regime, and arguably considered the most significant as well. Along with the Palace of the Republic, the program was intended to be Honecker's chief legacy and, as its largest development in the country's capital city, Marzahn was in many ways the focal point of the Housing Construction Program. Choosing Graffunder, then, would have made sense given his particular experience not only with prefabrication methods, but also in designing the public face of the Honecker regime.

Marzahn was and is the quintessential product of Honecker's Housing Construction Program and provides a clear example of its goals as well as its flaws. As with the program as a whole, Marzahn was designed for quantity more than quality, although the apartments were, in comparison to contemporary GDR dwellings, comfortable and well-appointed.[126] Unlike older apartments in inner-city districts, apartments in Marzahn were equipped with telephone lines, central heating and dedicated, interior bathrooms, so that residents did not have to share hallway toilets as in most *Mietskasernen*.[127] Marzahn reflected the larger social goals of the Housing Construction Program as well, including as it did not only residential units, but other kinds of facilities as well, including schools, senior homes, shopping areas, sports facilities and even its own cultural center (*Kulturhaus*). In addition, an entirely new plumbing and electrical system was constructed to provide Marzahn with the infrastructure necessary to support its large population of residents, and to compensate for its remote

[126] Marzahn was built primarily out of WBS 70 *Plattenbau*, and as such, apartments ranged in size from about 348 square feet for the smallest unit to about 1,135 square feet for a four-bedroom unit. A majority of the apartments, however, were the one- to two-bedroom units, which ranged from 570 to 713 square feet. (Hannemann, *Die Platte*, 175-80.)

[127] As Stefan Wolle points out, the new apartments' telephone lines were a particular advantage considering the wait for telephone installation in older dwellings could and often did last years. (Wolle, *Die Heile Welt der Diktatur*, 187.)

location, new transit links were constructed connecting Marzahn via S-bahn and bus to central Berlin.[128]

Efforts were expended to make Marzahn an aesthetically pleasing development as well. The Politburo's 1973 resolution stipulated that the housing development should feature an "appropriate arrangement of buildings with differing heights, diverse groupings of buildings and contrasting color designs" as well as "interesting landscape design." This was of course part of the effort to avoid the dreaded monotony of *Plattenbauten*, but was also connected to Honecker's promise to attend to the needs of the "common people," and thus pacify the increasingly dissatisfied East German populace. Of course housing construction in general and the *Plattenbau* in particular had always been thought of in sociological terms, given the connection between the housing and "the social question" in the GDR. In the 1970s and 80s this connection was made more explicit in the rhetoric around Honecker's Housing Construction Program.

By the 1980s, this interest in the "social question" was also accompanied by an increased interest worldwide in the relationship between architecture and the social sciences, such as psychology or urban sociology, and in the possibility that such fields could inform building and planning.[129] Specifically, architects in the GDR were influenced by books such as Kevin Lynch's *The Image of the City*, published in 1965 in the GDR and in West German publications such as *The Inhospitality of our Cities* (*Die Unwirtlichkeit unserer Städte*, 1965) by psychoanalyst Alexander Mitscherlich.[130] Also influential was *Architecture as an Instrument of Communication*, subtitled "an investigation into the ideal appropriation of

[128] Vorschlag für die Bebauungskonzeption des 9. Stadtbezirkes (Biesdorf/Marzahn), SAPMO-BArch DY 30/J IV 2/2/1150.
[129] Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 184, 306, 307.
[130] Ladd, "Socialist Planning," 588-9.

informational, semiotic and psychological aspects into the built-space environment," published in 1973 and written by East German architects Friedrich Rogge, Olaf Weber and Gerd Zimmermann.[131] Such books outlined the problems of earlier approaches to planning, but also offered solutions, for example suggesting that the city's "imageability" encouraged citizens' identification with it, as in the case of Lynch's *The Image of the City*, or by arguing that the emotional and psychological effects of architecture and planning be considered, as in the case of Rogge, Weber and Zimmermann's book.

In looking to the social sciences, architects in the GDR were trying to create buildings that would have an emotional impact and contribute in a positive way to both the individual, personal identities of its residents and, by extension, to their senses of collective or national identity.[132] As in the West, government officials in the East had by this time recognized that heeding the needs and desires of buildings' users was a way to establish legitimacy and build citizens' confidence in their government. In particular, "living environments with high identification-value (*Identifikationswert*)" would, claimed the Building Academy, help individuals forge a connection with the "socialist *Heimat*." To achieve this, architects and planners began to conceive of architecture not simply as built form or the products of particular social or economic measures, but as an "instrument of communication" that would influence an individual's "system of perception" ("*Wahrnehmungssystem*").[133] Anticipating arguments made by, for example, Kleihues and Siedler in the 1977 *Berliner Morgenpost* series, East German architects began to insist that the form and appearance of architecture was an important part of building civic and national identity. Aesthetic diversity was not, it

[131] The book's full title in German is *Architektur als Kommunikationsmittel. Eine Untersuchung ideeller Aneignung baulich-räumlicher Umwelt unter informationallem, semiotischem und psychologischem Aspekt.*
[132] Ladd, "Socialist Planning," 590.
[133] Friederich Rogge, Olaf Weber and Gerd Zimmermann, *Architektur als Kommunikationsmittel* (Erfurt, 1973), 266. Quoted in Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 307.

was argued, mere decoration, but would help residents feel connected to their homes by maximizing their individuality and "memorability" (*Einprägsamkeit*).

To this end, the attempt was made to include mosaics, sculptural details and other artistic embellishments in *Plattenbau* developments of the 1970s and 80s, often featuring "'friendly-colored' symbols" such as flowers, sailboats and suns.[134] Already in 1974, resolutions adopted at the Building Academy's Thirty-first Congress advocated the use of sculpture, murals and landscape design to improve the appearance of prefabricated buildings. Including decorative elements like these would, argued the Academy, help make the *Plattenbauten* more effective in achieving their "social and cultural goals."[135] Two years later at the Academy's Sixth Building Conference, it called for a "strengthening of the social-political meaning of architecture and city-building (*Städtebau*)," arguing that dwellings were a crucial aspect of "personality-development" ("*Persönlichkeitentwicklung*").[136]

In its early years, Honecker's Housing Construction Program did achieve some measure of success. Whereas the GDR building industry was unable to meet housing construction quotas before 1971, from 1972-3 these quotas were not only met but exceeded. By 1972, 100,000 dwellings had been constructed under the program and in 1975 the number of dwellings per person in the GDR was higher than that of the Federal Republic. These accomplishments were, however, largely a result of the short-term economic success East Germany enjoyed in the early 1970s and could not be sustained. By the early 1980s, the GDR was again unable to meet housing construction quotas and Honecker's program remained

[134] Ladd, "Socialist Planning," 590; Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 307, 212-3, 308-10.
[135] *Architektur der DDR* (April 1975): 207. Quoted in Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 306.
[136] *Architektur der DDR* (January 1976): 7. Quoted in Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 306-7.

behind schedule for the rest of its duration.[137] In 1990, 53% of East Germany's total housing stock still dated to before 1945 and of that, 34% dated to before 1919.[138]

The Housing Construction Program's lack of productivity was not its only flaw. Despite the increase in available housing, waiting lists grew longer as did the length of time one had to wait to receive an apartment. By late 1989, 800,000 requests for housing were sitting in state housing commission offices, waiting to be filled. In particular, pensioners and unmarried singles and couples had difficulty getting housing, as it was primarily reserved for working families. Indeed, even working families had difficulty securing apartments in the new complexes, since government officials, especially SED functionaries, and other prominent or well-known GDR citizens were at the top of the housing distribution lists. Moreover, in the absence of a real estate market, housing became a way to reward party loyalists or pay bribes and was thus distributed based on cronyism rather than need.[139] Even those average citizens who were lucky enough to be allocated an apartment in one of the new developments often used them to trade up for larger apartments in the older buildings of more central urban districts. Though the newer dwellings featured sought-after amenities, they were more expensive than *Mietskaserne* apartments and in addition their paper-thin walls and cheap construction materials made *Plattenbau* life noisy and unpleasant.[140] These developments were also far from the lively inner-city areas, with which the meager cultural offerings of the new complexes ultimately could not compete. Thus, efforts to create a sense

[137] Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 303.
[138] Wolle, *Die Heile Welt der Diktatur*, 184.
[139] Hertle and Wolle, *Damals in der DDR*, 234-5; Wolle, *Die Heile Welt der Diktatur*, 185-6.
[140] Rent for a small apartment in an older building was about 40 Marks per month, while a three-room apartment in a new construction cost about 100 Marks per month. (Hertle and Wolle, *Damals in der DDR*, 237.)

of belonging and unity with the *Plattenbauten* were undermined by their distance from larger urban communities of which they were a part.[141]

The effort to make the new housing developments more appealing by improving their appearance and the variety of their configurations also failed.[142] Ultimately, any embellishments on the buildings' façades were visually overwhelmed by the aesthetic expression of the buildings' concrete slabs. These decorative elements could likewise never hope to overcome the inherent similarity among the buildings themselves, given the fact they were all constructed out of the same *Platten*. Though they were less monotonous than the prefab buildings of the 1960s, these later *Plattenbauten* were nonetheless considered "atrocities" of urban design and architecture, nicknamed "worker's lockers" (*Arbeiterschließfächer*) and "snore silos" (*Scharchsilos*) by their inhabitants.[143] A look at images of Marzahn, as it was photographed in the 1970s makes it easy to see why. Such images inevitably emphasize the housing development's uniformity by showing it from a distance, making its high-rise buildings most apparent and the buildings' limited decorative elements difficult to discern (Figure 75).[144]

Another problem with developments like Marzahn was that, though the *Plattenbauten* themselves were relatively cheap to build, the transit connections and infrastructure needed to create such large districts outside of the city were very expensive and ultimately an inefficient use of the country's limited resources. At the same time, any headway the program made in terms of catching up with housing demand was undermined by the continued

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[141] Hertle and Wolle, *Damals in der DDR*, 240-1. This was particularly a problem in a country where not very many people owned cars. In 1989, 54% of GDR households owned cars, most of which were more than ten years old, and the wait for a new car could be as long as 12-15 years. (Weber, *Geschichte der DDR*, 474.)
[142] As usual, this was in part because economic constraints made the realization of many of the government's aesthetic goals impossible. (Hannemann, *Die Platte*, 91.)
[143] Wolle, *Die Heile Welt der Diktatur*, 187.
[144] Hubacher, "Berlin-Marzahn: The Would-Be Town," 357.

deterioration of older housing stock. For all of these reasons, while the Housing Construction Program continued, in the late 1970s the regime began to give more attention to the preservation and restoration of existing housing stock rather than focusing solely on the construction of new housing developments.

Architectural Preservation and the 750th Jubilee in the GDR

In East Berlin as in West Berlin, the nineteenth-century *Mietskasernen* in older neighborhoods bordering the Berlin Wall had, since the end of World War II, been neglected in favor of new construction. As the GDR government attempted to address the housing crisis in the 1970s and as critics complained of prefabricated buildings' "lack of identity" (*Identitätsverlust*), many architects and planners began to argue for preservation as a way of alleviating both problems.[145] In addition, architects and government officials alike began to value the previously-maligned *Mietskasernen* as expressions of the city's unique architectural heritage and urban identity, particularly as Berlin's 750th jubilee approached. Just as the renewed appreciation for Berlin's pre-war housing stock had in the West coincided with an attempt to revitalize the city's identity and citizens' sense of pride, so too was the call for preservation in the GDR related to questions of morale, East Berlin's urban identity and, of course, national identity. Similar to the historic turn of the 1950s exemplified by Stalinallee, the interest in past architectural forms in the 1980s was an extension of the effort to establish continuity between pre-war Germany and the GDR. As before, this continuity was framed as temporal, but also as geographic, since Berlin was inside the borders of East Germany. However unlike in the previous era, wherein the interest in historic architectural forms had not, for example, been enough to save the Berlin *Stadtschloss*, the debate around historic

[145] Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 293.

forms in the 1980s was much more oriented towards preservation, rather than on the decorative schemes of new structres.

The interest in Berlin's architectural heritage in the 1980s was part of a general reevaluation of German history and its role in the establishment of national identity by the East German government. Historical figures and developments, previously repudiated by the regime, were now redeemed as part of an effort to use history as an instrument of political legitimization. Friedrich the Great and Otto von Bismarck, for example, were recast as "progressive," proto-revolutionaries and no longer considered ruling-class oppressors. In the 1980s, East Germans' increasing discontent further fueled this effort to improve the SED's "historical image" ("*Geschichtsbild*") and in 1984, for example, the SED state used the occasion of GDR's 35th anniversary to argue that it was "rooted deeply and firmly in the entirety of German history."[146] As in the 1950s, figures from Germany's architectural past were similarly connected to the SED and its policies. Karl Friedrich Schinkel was once again lauded as a hero of German architecture, and in 1981 the 200th anniversary of his birth was celebrated with a series of publications and exhibitions. Unlike the 1950s, however, Modernist movements and figures, such as Bruno Taut and the Bauhaus were also given praise and, like Schinkel, appropriated by the GDR government.[147]

The increased interest in the *Mietskasernen* in East Berlin neighborhoods such as Prenzlauer Berg and Friedrichshain and on the restoration of historic monuments was part of this return to Germany's architectural past. Before the late 1970s, these buildings had been dismissed as products of a repressive, capitalist system. In part for this reason the housing in these areas of East Berlin had been ignored and allowed to fall into disrepair, as had these

[146] Weber, *Geschichte der DDR*, 410, 446-7; Wolle, *Die Heile Welt der Diktatur*, 131-4.
[147] Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 325-6, 313-4, 317. In 1976, the GDR celebrated the founding of the Bauhaus and Bruno Taut was honored in 1980 on the 100th anniversary of his birth.

neighborhoods' cafés, shops, and other amenities.[148] At the same time, because rents had been permanently frozen at their 1936 levels there, was no incentive for owners to maintain or improve their buildings.[149] Already in the late 1960s, officials recognized the need for improvements in these districts. In 1969, for example, a resolution passed by the local council of East Berlin's Mitte district stipulated that the housing quality in older areas had to be adjusted to meet those of the newly constructed dwellings.

The interest in the preservation of older neighborhoods was of course closely connected to the ongoing criticism of the *Plattenbau*. Just as the "satellite cities" in West Berlin were in the late 1960s and 70s connected to the decay of inner-city districts, the construction of *Plattenbauten* on the outskirts of East German cities had, it was argued, led to urban sprawl and the neglect of the *Mietskasernen*. In 1964, the GDR Building Academy adopted "Principles for Urban Planning and Design" which were very similar to the planning approaches advocated by IBA's planners in the 70s and 80s, and included a demand for "compact" construction in urban centers as opposed to widely-spaced developments on the outskirts of cities. The guidelines also reflected a concern for the aesthetic aspects of architecture and for the restoration of cities' "individual character," arguing for the use of color in architectural designs, the incorporation of two- and three-dimensional artworks, and for the preservation of old housing stock.[150] Indeed architect Hermann Henselmann argued in 1966 that "socialist community" could be better forged in the older, pre-war buildings than in the *Plattenbauten*: "In the new construction-areas, dissatisfaction is readily apparent, whereas a comfortable, at-home feeling is obviously higher in the old-building areas...Here, we must

[148] Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 301. The lack of resources for construction and building maintenance were of course another reason these buildings were left to deteriorate.
[149] Around 40% of dwellings in the GDR were privately owned as of 1990. Landlords derived a paltry 2.4-4.1% of their income from rent. (Wolle, *Die Heile Welt der Diktatur*, 184-5.)
[150] Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 205-6.

listen to what the people want, which milieus they wish for."[151] However, as so often proved the case, both Henselmann's plea and the 1964 principles were largely ignored, partly due to the country's economic troubles.

Beginning in the early 1970s, architects along with architecture critics like Silvio Macetti argued for planning models based not on building methods that were cheaper in the short-term, such as *Plattenbau*, but on methods and approaches that were economically sustainable in the long term, such as inner-city redevelopment. In an essay entitled "House and Landscape," the philosopher Lothar Kühne argued similarly for an urban planning and construction that was ecologically sustainable, in "harmony" with the natural world.[152] These critiques eventually gained wider political support in part because of the SED's new-found interest in "heritage and tradition." For example, the East Berlin neighborhoods of Prenzlauer Berg and Friedrichshain, like Wedding, Neukölln and Kreuzberg in West Berlin, had originally been populated by the working class, were early strongholds of the SPD and were newly appreciated in part because of this history. As a result, the preservation and restoration of buildings in districts like Prenzlauer Berg was easily bound with Honecker's "social politics for the common people."[153]

Modernization efforts could be characterized as an extension Honecker's "social politics" not only because of these buildings' past tenants, but because of their current ones. Most of East Germany's housing stock dated from before World War II meaning that a majority of East Berliners lived in these older pre-war buildings. Architects like Henselmann had already acknowledged that, despite the poor quality of the housing in these areas, the

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[151] *Aufgaben und Arbeitsweise der Deutschen Bauakademie in der 2. Etappe des Neuen Ökonomischen Systems der Planung und Leitung*. 18. Planartagung 7-8 Juli 1966. (Berlin (Ost), 1966), 266. Quoted in Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 212.
[152] Hain, "Between Arkonaplatz and the Nikolaiviertel," 338-9.
[153] Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 301.

people who lived there felt more connected to their neighborhoods, had a greater sense of community and "living-satisfaction" (*Wohnzufriedenheit*) than in the new housing developments. In 1976, Wolfgang Urbanski, newly-appointed head of the GDR Building Academy wrote in the academy's journal that, "it was wrong to pull apart the growing and well-tested housing- and street-community, to separate younger citizens from the older, to move workers far from their factories."[154] Studies by urban sociologists supported such observations, and argued that these were the areas of the city in which "socialist community" and both personal and collective identities were strongest.[155] Thus, if Honecker wanted to improve the lives of everyday East Germans and to strengthen their loyalty to the state, these districts, it would seem, were the places to start.

In addition to political and social goals, there were also economic reasons for refurbishing the GDR's pre-war housing stock. Not only would preservation help to alleviate the housing crisis, it was in some ways less expensive than building new *Plattenbauten*. By renovating existing stock, the state could avoid the expense of constructing entirely new districts since modernization, as opposed to new construction, required fewer raw materials. However, because the country's building economy had been oriented towards *Plattenbau* to the near exclusion of all other construction methods, the renovation of older buildings did entail some added complications. Craftspeople who were, for example, familiar with techniques necessary to restore aging façades were difficult to find in a building economy that had for so long relied on unskilled labor. Specialized equipment for restoration was also scarce, and construction equipment, built to erect huge *Plattenbauten* in wide-open spaces,

[154] *Architektur der DDR* (March 1976): 135. Quoted in Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 310.
[155] Ladd, "Socialist Planning," 590.

was often too large to fit in the cramped spaces of inner-city neighborhoods.[156] Despite such problems, there was some headway made in terms of changing GDR building policy in favor of architectural preservation. In 1979 a moratorium on demolition was declared, partly as a result of the worldwide spike in the cost of building materials in the wake of the global oil crisis.[157] In addition, experimental renovation projects were begun around Arkonaplatz in 1970 and Arnimplatz in 1973 (Figure 76), both in East Berlin's Prenzlauer Berg district. Foreshadowing IBA's approach in West Berlin, these projects involved the use of "gentle refurbishment" and design processes that included residents' input.[158] In 1976, when the Politburo passed a resolution outlining the development of East Berlin through 1990, modernization projects in Prenzlauer Berg and Friedrichshain were included in the plan along with new construction initiatives, both presented as part of the larger Housing Construction Program.[159]

The main focus of East German building policy and resources, however, remained on the construction of new *Plattenbau* developments. Indeed though many supported preservation efforts, the state building concern (*Baukombinate*) and economic planning offices had continuously opposed this approach, since it interfered with the fulfillment of construction quotas and because the per-unit building costs were higher.[160] Furthermore, government building officials and planners argued against preservation because it required

[156] Ladd, "Socialist Planning," 588, 595, 591-2.
[157] Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 316.
[158] As Hain explains, the concept of "carefully" or "gently" restoring buildings is specifically related to Lothar Kühne's critique of GDR building policy, "Räumlich Organisation des menschlichen Lebensprozesses und Gegenstandsfunktion," as published in *form+zweck* 4 (1983). (Hain, "Between Arkonaplatz and the Nikolaiviertel," 338-9.)
[159] Roland Korn, "Zur künftigen städtebaulichen Gestaltung der Hauptstadt der DDR, Berlin" *Architektur der DDR* (September 1976): 518; AdK Berlin, HGA, NL II, 28.
[160] Ladd, "Socialist Planning," 595. In many cases, however, preservation efforts only seemed more costly but in reality were actually cheaper than new construction, as Manfred Zache had proved with the Arnimplatz development. (Hain, "Between Arkonaplatz and the Nikolaiviertel," 341.)

adaptation and reconfiguration of standardized building methods, which, as far as they were concerned, did nothing but further raise costs and slow productivity. By the late 1980s, the GDR's ever-growing economic crisis had essentially thwarted the nascent renovation efforts, leaving nothing but the continued production of *Plattenbau*.

Of the few projects that were undertaken to preserve older housing stock, most of these were focused in East Berlin, as were most of the new construction projects related to the Housing Construction Program. The East German government had of course long focused the bulk of its resources, policies and attention on its capital city, considering it the central site for the formulation and expression of East German national identity. As in the 1950s and 60s, the selection of consumer goods in East Berlin in the 70s and 80s was much more varied than in the rest of the GDR and the quality higher. The nation's construction efforts also continued to be concentrated primarily in the capital, which was still designated a model of architecture and planning to be emulated in cities in the rest of the country. In the case of the Housing Construction Program, more dwellings were built in East Berlin than anywhere else in the GDR, resulting in a disparity in the amount of available housing in the capital as compared to other East German cities. Furthermore, workers and supplies were often brought from other parts of the country to help realize building initiatives in East Berlin, meaning that the rest of East Germany were expected not only to countenance but finance this uneven development. Though it often galled those East Germans who did not

live in East Berlin, the government made no secret of the city's favored status, which was formalized in a series of government resolutions in the mid-1970s.[161]

Indeed, this preferential treatment only became more apparent and more pronounced as Berlin's 750th anniversary approached. As in the West, the jubilee was a political as much as a cultural event, designed to legitimize the GDR and its leadership by establishing its place in the history of Germany and Berlin as well as to showcase the city's (and thus the country's) economic, cultural and social achievements. The 750th celebration asserted the relevance of East Berlin in terms of East Germany, but also in international terms, showing that the city, like the state itself, was "deeply rooted in German history and an integral part of European and world affairs in multiple ways."[162] As before, the country's capital was framed as the literal and metaphorical center of East German identity, "the beating heart of the socialist German Democratic Republic, the pride of our socialist fatherland."[163] In celebrating the anniversary of East Germany's capital, the government was simultaneously celebrating the country as a whole, and in this way the jubilee events represented the attempt to revitalize East Germans' sense of national identity.

Whereas in West Berlin the city's division was blamed on the aggression of the East, in East Germany, not surprisingly, the city's division was blamed on the West:

> The glorious Red Army liberated Berlin from Hitler-Fascism. Through their efforts, the path towards a new, democratic beginning was opened. This was begun in

[161] These resolutions included the "General Plan for the Capital of the GDR, Berlin" from July 1973 as well as resolutions in 1975-6 outlining the city's industrial, cultural, economic, and physical development to 1990. Though Berlin's 750th anniversary is not mentioned in these documents, these efforts were later tied to the city's jubilee. (Hertle and Wolle, *Damals in der DDR*, 238; Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 311; Ribbe, *Berlin 1945-2000*, 154-5.)

[162] Maßnahmen zur Vorbereitung und Durchführung des 750. Jahrestages Berlins, 1 January 1985, 1, SAPMO-BArch DY 30/J IV 2/2/2095.

[163] Maßnahmen zur Vorbereitung und Durchführung des 750. Jahrestages Berlins, 1 January 1985, 3, SAPMO-BArch DY 30/J IV 2/2/2095.

> all of Berlin by the anti-fascistic-democratic powers but, after the Western powers' division of the city, continued only in democratic Berlin.[164]

The GDR continued to regard the occupation of West Berlin by the Western former-Allied powers as illegal and a violation of the Potsdam Agreement that had established the terms of Germany's postwar occupation. Because of this, the GDR would not publicly acknowledge West Berlin as connected to the Federal Republic and, though it agreed to take part in some of the events associated with West Berlin's celebration of the 750th jubilee, would not do so if representatives of the West German government were in attendance.[165] Thus unlike in the West, East Berlin was presented not as an aberration, but as a whole and complete city, its development supposedly having continued unabated in the period since the end of World War II. In the context of the 750th anniversary celebration, East Berlin was feted as the supreme example of the GDR's accomplishments rather than, as in the West, a celebration *and* public lament for its past wrongs and continued division.

While West Berlin's decision to celebrate Berlin's 750th anniversary might have seemed arbitrary, in East Germany it was arguably more self-evident. Of course, the city officially deemed the most politically, economically and socially important of the GDR, but in addition, the celebration of cities' founding anniversaries had in the 1950s been adopted as part of a new calendar of socialist holidays.[166] For these reasons, it is not surprising that Berlin's 750th anniversary was not only celebrated in the EAst, but that the celebration was larger and more extensive than in the West. In the GDR, as opposed to in West Berlin, the celebration lasted not six months but for the entire year and included, among other events,

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[164] "Maßnahmen zur Vorbereitung und Durchführung des 750. Jahrestages Berlins," 1 January 1985, 2, SAPMO-BArch DY 30/J IV 2/2/2095.
[165] "Anlage Nr. 7 zum Protokoll Nr. 10 vom 10 March 1987," 2, SAPMO-BArch DY 30/J IV 2/2/2209.
[166] Jan Palmowski, "Building an East German Nation: The Construction of a Socialist *Heimat*, 1945-1961," *Central European History* 37, no. 3 (2004): 388.

eighty-three mass demonstrations, 154 conferences and meetings, and 749 performances by visiting orchestras and musical ensembles.[167]

Regardless of their sizes, the jubilee celebrations in the East and West both featured many of the same kinds of events.[168] Historical and cultural exhibitions were prominently featured in both, often with the same or similar goals, though articulated in different ways. For example, while the "Science in Berlin" exhibit in the West showed viewers how the city's "scientific potential" would ensure the future creation of a "modern industrial city," the "Science and Production in the Service of the People" exhibit in East Berlin focused on displaying for visitors "how scientific knowledge in the GDR both builds the nation and likewise how the nation builds scientific knowledge."[169] In East as in West Berlin, city-wide festivals were accompanied by celebrations in local districts as well as throughout the country. Cultural performances and exhibitions, international conferences and congresses, and the publication of a variety of books, journals, brochures and other materials dealing with Berlin's history were also presented as part of the festivities. Finally, building initiatives played central roles in the both anniversary celebrations. In East Berlin, the GDR mounted its own building exhibition, entitled simply "Building Exhibition GDR" ("*Bauausstellung DDR*"),[170] built new construction, and undertook the renovation of historic buildings and

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[167] "Information über den Stand der Verwirklichung des Programms zum 750. Jahrestag von Berlin," 6 January 1987, 1, SAPMO-BArch DY 30/J IV 2/2/2200. The fact that the celebration in East Berlin was larger was cited in the West as proof of the GDR's pomposity and its own modesty. (Interview with Ulrich Eckhardt, director of Senate Commission on Berlin's 750th celebration, 9 January 1987, LArch Berlin B Rep 150/416.)

[168] A full description of the events related to the celebration in East Berlin can be found in "Information über den Stand der Verwirklichung des Programms zum 750. Jahrestag von Berlin," 6 January 1987, SAPMO-BArch DY 30/J IV 2/2/2200.

[169] "Information über den Stand der Verwirklichung des Programms zum 750. Jahrestag von Berlin," 6 January 1987, 4, SAPMO-BArch DY 30/J IV 2/2/2200; "Mitteilung des Präsidenten Nr 236: über das Programm der 750-Jahr-Feier Berlins 1987," 5, LArch Berlin B Rep 150/416.

[170] The "Building Exhibition GDR" consisted of an exhibition of drawings, plans and models held in the Dynamo Sport Hall in East Berlin. There is no reason to think this exhibit was a direct response to IBA. ("Information über den Stand der Verwirklichung des Programms zum 750. Jahrestag von Berlin," 6 January 1987, 4-5, SAPMO-BArch DY 30/J IV 2/2/2200.)

monuments. In addition, any Berlin-based projects related to the Housing Construction Program were yoked to the 750th jubilee celebration. As in West Berlin, the goal of all of these efforts was to improve the city's "urban-image" ("*Stadtbild*") as well as to show that the GDR was up-to-date on then-contemporary architecture and planning discourse.[171]

One of, if not the most important of these jubilee building initiatives was the reconstruction of Berlin's oldest district, the Nikolai quarter (*Nikolaiviertel*) on Museum Island (Figure 77). The plans for this reconstruction project had been underway since the early 1970s, when it was announced that the area around Berlin's city hall would be developed into a leisure and entertainment district, featuring cafes, fine dining restaurants and shops.[172] In 1978 architects submitted proposals for the redesign of the area around Nikolai Church, which was heavily damaged during World War II and which was to be restored into a small residential community and tourist destination. When plans were delayed, the Nikolai quarter project became part of the 750th celebration in East Berlin, allowing the GDR to showcase the fact that the oldest parts of the city were located in the East, as well as to establish its place in a longer tradition of Berlin architecture and urban development.

Though the government had moved away from the construction of prestige projects in the early to mid-1970s, the rising costs of new construction coupled with the GDR's historical turn in the later 1970s resulted in a push to restore historically significant buildings, such as the Semper Opera in Dresden and the Berlin Cathedral. The restoration of the Nikolai

[171] Ladd, "Socialist Planning," 595; Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 330. See also "Information über den Stand der Verwirklichung des Programms zum 750. Jahrestag von Berlin," 6 January 1987, 4-6, SAPMO-BArch DY 30/J IV 2/2/2200.

[172] The hope was in part to restore the lively street culture in this area of the city, the remaining vestiges of which had largely been destroyed in the 1960s when some of Berlin's oldest buildings in the nearby Fisher's Island had been demolished to make way for high-rise modernist apartment buildings. In addition, since it included housing, the Nikolai quarter project was also considered part of the Housing Construction Project. (Ladd, "Socialist Planning," 597.)

quarter was one such historical prestige project, and was, like the others, designed to be an expression of "socialist national culture" which was supposed to create a positive "homeland feeling" (*Heimatgefühl*) within East Germans.[173] In terms of Berlin specifically, the refurbishment of the city's "typical and well-known streets and squares" was also intended to revive a sense of pride and identity in not only the city, but the country as a whole. In the case of the Nikolai quarter project, the intention and hope was to recreate the district's original medieval buildings as faithfully as possible. However, the GDR's continuing economic problems and its inflexible building economy resulted in the abandonment of this goal. Instead, prefabrication methods were adapted for use in the Nikolai quarter, resulting in buildings that had a historicized look, but which were constructed out of the prefabricated *Platten*. This approach had already been used to construct "historic" buildings in other GDR cities as well, and became increasingly favored as the country's economic troubles and *Platten*-oriented building industry came in conflict with the push towards preservation. Indeed for these reasons, the government dropped most all of its preservation initiatives by the late 1980s and focused solely on new construction.[174]

In large part because of the use of *Platten* to create historic-looking buildings, the finished Nikolai quarter project was derided as a kind of "Disneyland," echoing similar critiques of IBA in West Berlin (Figure 78). Efforts to create urban centers for *Plattenbau* developments that were more enjoyable in both a practical and an aesthetic sense were similarly unsuccessful. In Marzahn, a lively and differentiated design for the community's central *Promenade* district was rejected in favor of more high-rise, largely unembellished *Plattenbauten*. Architects who had in the early 1970s been critical of the new *Plattenbauten*

[173] Roland Korn, "Zur künftigen städtebaulichen Gestaltung der Hauptstadt der DDR, Berlin" *Architektur der DDR* (September 1976): 520; AdK Berlin, HGA, NL II, 28; Palutzki, *Architektur in der DDR*, 318.
[174] Hain, "Between Arkonaplatz and the Nikolaiviertel," 346; Ladd, "Socialist Planning," 597-9.

and who had advocated renovation of older urban districts were left feeling disheartened and demoralized by the return in the late 1980s to monotonous new construction. They felt that the government had responded to their critiques with surface changes, and had not addressed the root of the problem. Rather than work to create an authentic, viable socialist community, only the appearance of community was created. As architectural historian Simone Hain has written, "[w]hat was needed was not so much the exclusive historicizing and picturesque staging of urbanity, but rather, and especially, the development of socially informed responses for locations of everyday life."[175]

The sense of disappointment and even betrayal that many architects felt as their attempts to change the GDR's monolithic building policy were ignored reflected a growing national sense of frustration and despair. Indeed many East Germans had come to view the failure of the Housing Construction Program, which had done little more than erect endless rows of blank and brutal *Plattenbauten*, as symptomatic of the government's overall cruelty and ineptitude. In contrast the decaying *Mietskasernen*, with their gray, bullet-pitted façades were increasingly associated with a real and genuinely beloved sense of community and identity. Honecker's regime had, however, failed to make any headway in the preservation of the cities' older neighborhoods, leaving the *Mietskasernen* and other pre-war buildings in more or less the same state of decay they had been in for forty years.

Arguably, the only single building in the GDR that spoke to a sense of East German national identity that was both collectively embraced and government-endorsed was the Palace of the Republic. The building continued to be the chief staging area for the "dreamed-of GDR," an extension of East Berlin itself where the cracks in the GDR's economy and society were lacquered over with a veneer of prosperity and abundance. However, though

[175] Hain, "Between Arkonaplatz and the Nikolaiviertel," 344.

East Germans had long agreed to maintain and to some degree believe in the illusion both symbolized and presented by the Palace, by the late 1980s their willingness to pay "lip service" to either that illusion or its sponsoring regime was fast deteriorating. East Germans' show of allegiance had been predicated on their enjoying some degree of financial security and some degree of privacy and personal space; however, with the GDR economy's impending collapse and the Stasi's infiltration of virtually every aspect of East German society, even these modest comforts had disappeared. Though oppositional groups in East Germany did not organize until much later as compared to similar groups in countries such as Poland and Czechoslovakia, when they did band together in 1989, their impact was felt remarkably quickly. By later in the same year, the GDR's "peaceful revolution" had dismantled the country's elaborate regime of borders.

The Spaces of Everyday Life

As East Berlin's built environment evolved in the 1970s and 80s the issue of housing, already of central political importance, emerged as the "number one theme"[176] of East Germans' daily life and a major point of contention between them and their government. The promises and problems of Honecker's Housing Construction Program were increasingly viewed as a microcosm of the promises and problems of the GDR government as a whole, and eventually the buildings of the former came to symbolize the misdeeds of the latter. At the same time, the increasingly powerful Stasi was a growing threat to the privacy of those "niches" of everyday life that were previously thought of as at least somewhat sacrosanct and outside of government control. As a result, the spaces associated with the "everyday" (*Alltag*), especially the home, became the central battlegrounds for East Germans' struggle to

[176] Wolle, *Die Heile Welt der Diktatur*, 182.

maintain a meaningful sense of personal and collective identity despite the blatant contradictions and brutal policies of Honecker's government.

An examination of selected representations of "everyday spaces" in East German popular culture is one way of understanding how the GDR's "regime of borders" was understood politically, personally but also spatially. Specifically, the way private versus public spaces are represented in, for example, DEFA films of the 1970s and 80s gives insight into how individuals negotiated the "borders" between public and private space on a daily basis. In films like *The Legend of Paul and Paula* (*Die Legende von Paul und Paula*; Heiner Carow, 1972) and *The Architects* (*Die Architekten*; Peter Kahane, 1990), particular spaces are associated alternately with the possibility of individual freedom and personal expression or the lack thereof under the impositions of the state. Furthermore, these films' representations of the "everyday" gives insight into how the lack of differentiation between public and private space in the GDR was negotiated and challenged by filmmakers as well as the East German public.

In his 2002 book *The Triumph of the Ordinary*, film historian Joshua Feinstein describes how the notion of "everyday" (*Alltag*) or "everydayness" (*Alltags*) gained currency in the 1970s and 80s in the GDR. Not only was the *Alltag* "an increasingly central concept among East German artists and thinkers," it was acknowledged by East Germans generally and to a certain degree by government officials, as a locus of meaning in GDR society. In 1973, for example, a writer for the GDR literary weekly *Sonntag* commented that,

> Everydayness seems to have always been identical with the boring and monotonous. For this reason, genuine, meaningful human existence has never seemed accessible in the prose of *Alltag*. Now, however, literature and art compete to uncover the poetry of "ordinary *Alltag*."... In concern for everyday activity, a healthy skepticism toward

> idealized exceptions combines itself with a decisive orientation toward that which animates millions of people every day and everywhere.[177]

The government's interest in the "everyday" was clearly related to Honecker's oft-touted interest in the "common people," but the popular interest in the concept was no doubt an outgrowth of the "unofficial" and informal definition of *Heimat*, which was partly based on the seemingly mundane details of daily life. The home, central site of the "everyday," had grown increasingly important to East Germans particularly since the 1960s when a shorter work week and higher wages encouraged people to spend their leisure time at home rather than in, for example, state-sponsored *Kulturhäuser*.[178] The home was a place of refuge from the pomp and ceremony of official culture, as well as a place to relax and unwind from the trials of daily life. In comparison with West Germans, East Germans worked far longer hours and the percentage of women in the work force was among the highest in the world. Thus in most households there was no single person dedicated to maintaining the home and, since activities like shopping took up an inordinate amount of time given the shortcomings of the GDR economy, East Germans enjoyed relatively little free time.[179]

As the place where East Germans spent the majority of their time outside of work, the home became the primary site for the construction of a personal, but also a collectively-shared sense of GDR identity. The home became a rare and treasured space of personal expression and freedom, however limited. The home could even be a site of passive resistance against the SED, since, in the tense political environment of the late 1970s and

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[177] Feinstein, *The Triumph of the Ordinary*, 202.

[178] Hain, "Die Salons der Sozialisten." East Germans spent even more time at home in the 1970s and 80s. A 1974 poll found that of 1,000 people questioned on three days in August and September of that year, 75% at been at home by 7pm the previous evening. (Michael Meyen and Ute Nawratil, "The Viewers: Television and Everyday Life in East Germany," *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 24, no. 3 (2004): 359.)

[179] Dennis, *The Rise and Fall of the German Democratic Republic*, 151; Weber, *Geschichte der DDR*, 325, 389. Because products were in such short and sporadic supply, East Germans often spent a great deal of time simply locating goods and/or buying whatever was available, whether it was needed at the time or not. (Wolle, *Die Heile Welt der Diktatur*, 192-3.)

80s, the seemingly mundane experiences, habits and activities of the "everyday" (*Alltag*) could become politically charged.[180] In decorating their homes, for example, East Germans increasingly preferred antique or antique-looking furnishings and housewares, which were viewed as "anti-modern," "individualistic," and, as such, an expression of anti-government sentiment. In contrast, the industrial aesthetic of the brightly-colored, often plastic goods produced in the "peoples'-owned factories" (*Volkseigene Betriebe*) suggested conformity and "soullessness." Indeed, because the home was one of the few places where one could express one's personal tastes, it is no surprise that East Germans spent "much time and care" in decorating their homes. This was a place where "fantasy knew no bounds," where residents in a dour *Plattenbau* could individualize their cookie-cutter dwellings with "Walt Disney figures," posters, pictures, and "old-fashioned" motifs such as decorated "planks of wood with wagon spokes or bridles."[181]

The importance placed on the private sphere by the East German public was no doubt also a reaction to the government's attempts to blur the boundaries between private and public space. Not only was society considered an extension of the nuclear family (*Kleinfamilie*), there was of course no private property under the socialist system and therefore the government saw no need to distinguish between public and private space. As has already been discussed, one result of this lack of differentiation was the neglect of the shared areas around and in the *Plattenbauten* and the subsequent emergence of "half-public" spaces. Despite, or perhaps because of the absence of any official distinction between private and public space, there was in East German society a clear interest in defining the borders between these spheres. For example, several DEFA films of the early 1970s, informally

[180] The notion of *Alltag* is discussed in depth in Feinstein, *The Triumph of the Ordinary*.
[181] Wolle, *Die Heile Welt der Diktatur*, 219, 187. As Wolle notes, eventually the peoples' enterprises began producing antique-styled products in response to the public demand for such items.

known as "*Alltagsfilme*" or "films of everyday life," reflected a preoccupation with daily life and, as part of this, presented views of various home spaces to GDR audiences. In these films, particularly *The Legend of Paul and Paula*, delimiting one's personal space and private life becomes an essential part of expressing one's self, and moreover these actions are often interpreted politically as acts of resistance or at least critique.[182]

The Legend of Paul and Paula, one of the most popular DEFA films ever produced, tells the story of Paula (Angelika Domröse), a young single mother of two, who falls in love with Paul (Winifred Glatzeder), a married, party-loyal government employee. The two make an unlikely match, as Paula's free-spirited nature and unconventional lifestyle is in sharp contrast to Paul's reserved air and button-down life. Paula encourages Paul to leave his unhappy marriage and though he initially resists, Paul eventually becomes convinced that he can only be truly happy and fulfilled by being with Paula and adopting her impulsive approach to living. He thus leaves his own family and chooses, like Paula, to make his own way, even after Paula dies after giving birth to their child.

The Legend of Paul and Paula is in many ways a hackneyed melodrama, and indeed the film was criticized by feminist critics in West Germany for its portrayal of the in some ways shallow and frivolous character of Paula.[183] Viewed with Western eyes the film may seem like a fairytale—and of course it was explicitly called a "legend"—but contemporary East Germans considered it a rare example of a "down-to-earth, realistic" portrayal of daily life in the GDR, which did not "shy away" from criticizing East German life or from making

[182] Other films of this group include *Dr. med. Sommer II* (*Dr. Sommer No.* 2; Lothar Warneke, 1970), *Mein lieber Robinson* (*My Dear Robinson*; Klaus Poche, 1971) and *Zeit der Storche* (*Time of the Storks*; Siegfried Kühn, 1971).
[183] See, for example, Helke Sander and Renate Schlesier, "Die Legende von Paul und Paula. Eine frauenverachtende Schnulze aus der DDR," *Frauen und Film* 2 (1974), 8-47.

"sharp points."[184] Audiences clearly sympathized with Paula's desire for happiness and even her choice to have a child, though she knows it will probably kill her. Furthermore, her insistence on self-actualization and expression was no doubt considered a politically radical act in a society where, as Paul's character clearly shows, conformity is often the easier and indeed safer choice. Its depiction of a conventional versus unconventional lifestyle seemed to ring true with East German audiences, and as such its representation of "public"/semi-public space and private space is noteworthy. In *The Legend of Paul and Paula*, personal values and identity are defined spatially, and in addition, space becomes a way to define oneself.

This use of space is primarily evident in the characters' dwelling types. Whereas the emotive Paula lives in a tumble-down *Mietskaserne* apartment, the repressed Paul lives in a nearby *Plattenbau* (Figure 79, Figure 80). Though Paula must, for example, gather coal from the street in order to heat her apartment, her home reflects her unique and warm character. It is cluttered and colorful, full of flowers and mismatched furniture such as her old-fashioned, cut-in-half bed. Her expressivity is conveyed by her personal space, where her values and priorities are clearly and unabashedly displayed in her decorative scheme, but also in her choice of dwelling. The fact that she lives in an older apartment building clearly brands her as an iconoclast, or at least someone who has positioned herself outside of the party-led system that builds the *Plattenbauten* and distributes the apartments within them. Paula has forgone certain comforts in exchange for some degree of personal freedom and autonomy and in this way, her apartment indicates her preference for a life of accommodation rather than subjugation. In contrast, Paul lives in a newly-built apartment where comforts like central heating and a television set do not compensate for the emotional coldness of those

[184] "Besuchermeinungen zu dem Film 'Paul und Paula,'" n.d., I, BA Berlin DR117 3115 (DEFA Archiv). Quoted in Feinstein, *The Triumph of the Ordinary*, 212-3.

who live within it. Shown relatively briefly, the interior of Paul's dwelling is characterized by a cramped sterility, as his in-laws and his spoiled son and wife sit in a small living room stuffed with gimcracks and plastic flowers, watching TV and chattering inanely. The *Plattenbau* apartment is anything but a personally-expressive niche, and its crowded hostility makes it an alienating place, rather than a place of community, privacy or refuge. Despite the apparent oppressiveness of such apartments, the shots of collapsing pre-war buildings that bookend the film suggest that the construction of both *Mietskasernen* and the lifestyle they represent will continue unabated.[185]

The opposition between *Mietskaserne* and *Plattenbau* presented in *The Legend of Paul and Paula* represents an articulation of the growing divide between official and unofficial notions of *Heimat*-GDR, and also helped to establish this metaphorical use of architectural types. In Konrad Wolf and Wolfgang Kohlhaase's *Solo Sunny* (1980), the title character, a struggling pop singer, lives in a crumbling tenement in East Berlin's Prenzlauer Berg neighborhood. As in *Paul and Paula*, her choice of residence reflects her political and social values, even more so because by this time Prenzlauer Berg's reputation as a center for East Germany's nascent counter-culture was well known. Also like the earlier film, Sunny's *Mietskaserne* dwelling is connected with an alternative lifestyle, specifically that of a single and sexually open young women. However unlike Paula, who is for the most part left free to pursue her own path, Sunny is often harried and abused for the liberties she takes and enjoys.[186] The darker and more bitter view of the struggle for self-realization and the demarcation of personal space in *Solo Sunny* as opposed to *The Legend of Paul and Paula* in

[185] Hain, "Between Arkonaplatz and the Nikolaiviertel," 339; Ladd, "Socialist Planning," 589. The motif of demolished buildings was used in other DEFA films before *The Legend of Paul and Paula* as well, such as *The Lord of Alexanderplatz* (*Ein Lord am Alexanderplatz*; Günter Reisch, 1967).
[186] Sunny is, for example, leered at by a lascivious neighbor who lives across the *Hof* from her, and who in one scene watches her while masturbating. (Feinstein, *The Triumph of the Ordinary*, 246.)

part reflects the rising disillusionment and dissatisfaction in GDR society that would eventually lead to the 1989 revolution.

In the 1950s and 60s, most East Germans were part of or grew up in a nuclear family, and family life was an important part of GDR society.[187] This meant that the rhetorical use of the nuclear family as the building block of socialist society did present any obvious contradictions with East Germans' experience of daily life. The 1970s and 80s, however, saw a sharply rising divorce rate in East Germany, along with a growing acceptance of alternative lifestyles and living arrangements. In light of these social changes, the government's evocation of the nuclear family seemed increasingly out of touch with reality. This was problematic in relation to housing policy, because this social model was the basis for such policy and thus meant that many East Germans were implicitly excluded from the Housing Construction Program and its attempt to construct "socialist dwelling complexes" ("*sozialistische Wohnkomplexe*").[188] In addition, during the same period, the Stasi's growing power and presence in GDR life was increasingly felt and beginning to undermine what little sense of privacy East Germans had. By the late 1980s, there were anywhere from 109,000 to 180,000 Stasi operatives at work in the GDR, and some estimate that about every thirtieth East German had worked for the Stasi at one time.[189] Though many of these were no doubt "unofficial associates" (*Inoffizieller Mitarbeiter* or IMs), whose work for the Stasi was extorted rather than voluntary, the awareness of the government's constant surveillance

[187] Dennis, *The Rise and Fall of the German Democratic Republic*, 149-50, 151-3.
[188] Hannemann, *Die Platte*, 105-6, 111.H
[189] Fulbrook, *Anatomy of a Dictatorship*, 50.

further stoked feelings of fear and paranoia. "We lived," East German author Stefan Heym later wrote, "as if under glass."[190]

As the Stasi directed its gaze to the "innermost corners of society," even coercing family members to spy on each other, the sense of security and freedom once associated with private niches like the home began to erode. In her story "What Remains" ("Was Bleibt"), written in 1979 but not published until 1989, Christa Wolf detailed the process by which those faint borders between public and private space that did exist in East German society were burned away under the glaring eyes of the secret police. In her East Berlin apartment, watched by Stasi operatives in a car parked across the street, Wolf's mundane daily tasks are transformed from unselfconscious, private acts, to small performances played out for their benefit:

> The small tricks which I permitted myself every morning: gathering a few newspapers off the table and sticking them into the newspaper rack, smoothing out a table cloth in passing, arranging glasses, humming a song...I did knowing all the while that everything was a pretense...

Not knowing exactly when she is being watched, Wolf begins to engage in self-surveillance, watching herself in her mind's eye as a means of vetting her own behavior. With her physical, inhabited space compromised, the only "space" of freedom where she can truly express herself becomes her mind, where she retreats from the "isolating feeling of otherness" she suffers from in the company of other people. The Stasi's surveillance alters her experience of space, private and public, as well as her experience of the city itself, which is transformed "from a place into a non-place, without history, without vision, without magic, ruined by greed, power and violence."[191] The tone of mounting fear and despair that

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[190] Stefan Heym, *Der Winter unseres Mißvergnügens. Aus den Aufzeichnungen des OV Diversant* (Munich, 1996), 14. Quoted in Wolle, *Die Heile Welt der Diktatur*, 152.
[191] Christa Wolf, *Was Bleibt: Erzählung* (Munich: Luchterhand Literaturverlag, c. 1993), 6-7, 38, 34.

characterizes "What Remains" is also evident in late-period DEFA films, particularly those that depict the life in and around the *Plattenbauten*. In 1983's *The Island of the Swans* (*Insel der Schwäne*; Herrmann Zschosche) and 1990's *The Architects*, the studio's last film, the oppressive space created and represented by the *Plattenbau* seems to have overtaken what vestiges of private space had until then remained.

In *Island of the Swans*, Stefan (Axel Bunke), along with his mother and younger sister, must move from the countryside to the Marzahn development in East Berlin. This move is meant to be a step-up for the family, allowing them to live in modern comfort and be close to Stefan's father, a building engineer who is working on the still-under-construction development. However, compared to life with his grandmother in the country, Stefan's life in Marzahn is harsh and alienating. Though more confident and mature than his schoolmates, he nonetheless suffers abuse at the hands of bullies who terrorize younger children in the elevators and hallways of the high-rise buildings. The *Plattenbauten* themselves are shown towering over a desolate, half-developed landscape and, though surrounded by a vast expanse of empty space, the environment around the buildings seems anything but free (Figure 81). Indeed, this spatial emptiness is used to suggest the lack of community amongst the residents of these buildings, most of whom seem suspicious and wary of one another. Frequent tracking shots of the building's uniform, endlessly repeating façades, help further to convey the oppressive and isolating environment the *Plattenbau* create. The *Altbau* dwelling, featured more centrally in *The Legend of Paul and Paula,* appears only briefly in *The Island of Swans*. On a visit downtown, Stefan's schoolmate, Rita (Britt Baumann) takes him to visit her former home in Prenzlauer Berg, an apartment in an abandoned *Mietskaserne*. Rita describes with fondness her life in the rundown tenement, explaining how her window

looked into the room of her best friend, who lived across the building's interior courtyard. The older apartment presents the vision of a community that contrasts sharply with that of Marzahn and one that, given the empty and ruinous state of the *Mietskaserne*, has apparently been left behind. Stefan's brief visit to the *Altbau* is the only image of this kind of space in *The Island of the Swans*.

In the 1990 film *The Architects*, this notion of community and of personal space has faded even further into the background, and images of *Mietskasernen* are presented as fragments (Figure 82). The film, inspired by the thwarted attempt to bring street life and diversity to Marzahn with the *Promenade*,[192] tells the story of architect Daniel Brenner (Kurt Naumann) whose stalled career gets jump-started when he is selected to design a town center for a new housing development. Brenner handpicks a group of colleagues all of whom are, like him, facing diminishing career prospects despite the fact that they are only in their late thirties. Though initially reluctant to believe the project will come to fruition, Brenner and his collective grow excited and reinvigorated by their work, and they design a cultural and leisure center for the housing development that is quite different in style and composition than in similar projects. Though it accommodates prefabricated building methods, their design is in the end rejected, and the town center is built using the same standardized approaches employed in all other GDR *Plattenbau* construction. The entire group is left embittered and disillusioned by the experience, none more so than Brenner, whose wife and child have left him to emigrate to the West. The film ends with the bleak image of Brenner's doubled-over body, as he collapses in despair in the empty landscape where the new town center is to be built.

[192] Hain, "Between Arkonaplatz and the Nikolaiviertel," 344.

Images of *Plattenbau* figure prominently in *The Architects*. As in *The Island of Swans*, these buildings are often shown in shots that emphasize their monotonous and blank appearance (Figure 83). The seemingly endless rows of undifferentiated *Plattenbau* stand as clear metaphors for the stark and dreary existence of life in a dictatorship but also the Party's insistence that East Germans bend to its will. The issue of compromise is central to the film's plot as Brenner is told repeatedly that he cannot expect to have his group's design realized exactly as it was envisioned. As he looks out onto the buildings that line Karl-Marx-Allee, Prof. Vesely (Joachim Tomaschewsky), Daniel's mentor, encourages Daniel to "compromise" his vision, saying "building is politics, an exhibition of power. Each dwelling reflects status, like it or not...architects have to fight for their rights, of course, but they also have to compromise." Compromise, however, becomes a euphemism for relinquishing any hope of individual expression and the *Plattenbauten* is therefore presented as both the product of individuals' submission to the SED hegemony and emblems of it. As becomes clear from Brenner's experience, the Party rarely states its wishes explicitly nor does it directly confront those who flout it. Rather, vague innuendo is used to subtly but firmly force individuals to conform to what the Party desires. Thus the oppressive and expansive empty space surrounding the *Plattenbauten* also symbolizes the constant, though silent and invisible presence of the government.

Also like *The Island of the Swans*, the empty spaces around the buildings in *The Architects* suggests an alienating and isolating environment, only here it is not restricted to the *Plattenbau* developments but seems endemic to life in the GDR as a whole. This is made explicit near the end of the film, when tracking shots of *Plattenbauten* lead to those of inner-city East Berlin, both of which are shown against the strains of a well-known *Heimatlied*

"Our Homeland" ("*Unsere Heimat*"), commonly sung by members of the GDR's Young Pioneers:

> Our *Heimat* is not only cities and towns;
> It is also all of the trees in the wood,
> Our *Heimat* is the grass in the meadow,
> The crops in the field and the birds in the air;
> The animals in the earth
> and the fish in the river are the *Heimat*,
> We love the beautiful *Heimat*,
> And protect it
> Because the People own it,
> Because our People own it.

Juxtaposed with the images of the urban landscape of East Berlin, the song becomes a grim commentary on notions of official *Heimat*-GDR, and specifically of individuals' lack of belief in or connectedness to it.

The Architects was shot from September to November 1989 just as the East German government lifted travel restrictions, and the film opened in May 1990, mere months before the dissolution of the GDR. Some critics have therefore argued that the film was rendered immediately "obsolete," as it dealt with life under a regime that was defunct by the time it was released. However, *The Architects* and in particular its representation of space, seems particularly relevant when considered in the context of the post-1990 construction of Berlin. It is clear that no concept of shared public space in any real sense existed in the GDR and also that the barrenness of the landscapes surrounding the *Plattenbauten* were produced by the specific economic, social and political conditions imposed by the SED. The palpable void at the center of *The Architects* is both the lack of human connection and community and the stifling presence of the government. The Berlin Wall, as a physical and political barrier, is the structure that contains and maintains these spatial relations. Once it is gone, so is not only this sense of an enveloping, non-public space but also one of the key constituent elements of

East German identity. While surely no East German would want to return to life under Honecker or the SED, the oft-cited statistic that one in every five Germans wants the Wall back is telling, if overstated.[193] Certainly it is not a physical barrier that is missed, but the clear and apparently uncomplicated definition of national identity that it helped to establish. In defining space, the Berlin Wall defined East and West Germans.

The End of the Berlin Wall

Virtually all of the SED's efforts to resuscitate its fading legitimacy and bolster East Germans' pride in their country did little more than hasten its own end. As East Germans became less willing to show public support for their government, the SED made attempts to legitimize itself by, for example, appealing to Marxist-Leninist ideology, arguing in the early 1980s that the GDR was about to make its long-promised transition from socialism to communism.[194] Such dogma had, however, lost its meaning and power as an instrument of indoctrination and merely made the GDR government seem more out-of-touch with reality than ever. Though these ideological pronouncements were a way also to further align the GDR with the Soviet Union, this also backfired once Mikhail Gorbachev became General Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party. Once Gorbachev initiated his liberal policies of *Glasnost* and *Perestroika*, the SED had a difficult time explaining why the Soviet Union, so long hailed as the GDR's closest ally and chief role model, was no longer to be emulated. The blatant contradictions of the East German government were growing increasingly difficult to ignore.[195]

As the divide between rhetoric and reality began to collapse, the SED grew increasingly doctrinaire, continuing to expound its stiff and hollow ideology rather than

[193] This statistic is based on a 2004 poll conducted by *Der Stern* magazine.
[194] Weber, *Geschichte der DDR*, 404, 409-10.
[195] Dennis, *The Rise and Fall of the German Democratic Republic*, 258-9.

attempting to acquiesce East Germans' demands. As economic catastrophe loomed, Honecker avoided enacting any kind of real or pragmatic reform, economic or otherwise, as if oblivious to the extent of the country's imperilment. In May 1989, Hungary opened its border with Austria and thousands of East Germans fled to the embassy of the Federal Republic in Budapest in an attempt to gain entry to the West. Shortly thereafter, the various GDR protest organizations, especially those connected with the Lutheran Church, began to coordinate their efforts and by September, virtually every oppositional group had been mobilized. Also in September, parishioners of the Nikolai Church in Leipzig began holding what became known as the "Monday demonstrations." Initially, several hundred East Germans attended these peaceful protests, and soon their numbers grew until on October 16, 1989, 120,000 were in attendance. As the number and frequency of such protests rose, the government began to arrest those who took part, but this served only to stoke unrest and encourage further demonstrations. Two days after the October 16 Monday Demonstration, undone by reform in the Eastern Bloc, the GDR's insurmountable economic crisis, and the now undeniable rising tide of protest, Honecker resigned from the SED party leadership and was succeeded by Egon Krenz, former Chairman of the State Council.[196]

On the evening of November 9, 1989, international journalists gathered in East Berlin for a press conference. Though the presence of Politburo member Günter Schabowski was unusual, the press conference itself was routine and most did not anticipate that the information provided would be especially noteworthy. However, pressed by Italian journalist Riccardo Ehrman to give details of the coming change in travel restrictions, Schabowski, to everyone's surprise, announced that East Germans would be able to travel freely outside of

[196] Dennis, *The Rise and Fall of the German Democratic Republic*, 273-6; Weber, *Geschichte der DDR*, 469, 472.

their country. When Ehrmann asked when this new measure would take effect, Schabowski hesitantly replied that, as far as he knew, it went into effect immediately. As news of Schabowski's surprising and unexpected announcement spread, East Germans began to gather at Berlin Wall checkpoints cautiously testing the veracity of his statement. Though border guards knew of coming changes in travel regulations, they had not been informed in advance of Schabowski's announcement, and in confusion began to let East Germans over the border and into West Berlin. Soon, East and West Berliners took to the streets, celebrating the apparent end of Germany's and Berlin's division.[197]

In fact, though eventually all East Germans would be able to travel outside of the GDR and within Berlin, it would not be as easy as simply walking across the border, at least initially. Regardless, Schabowski's unplanned announcement had opened the floodgates, and the photos and television footage of jubilant East and West Berliners popping open champagne and dancing on top of the Wall created a powerful and unforgettable image of liberation and of solidarity. As families were reunited and East Germans embraced once-feared border guards, it looked as though the long period of division had come to a quick and miraculous end. Indeed these images of November 9, 1989 are so powerful that for many they remain the images of the end of Communism and the Cold War, though the GDR remained a sovereign nation for another year.[198]

Once the SED was deposed in December 1989, a party system based on that of the Federal Republic was established, and on March 18, 1990 the GDR held its first free

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[197] Hans-Hermann Hertle, *Chronik des Mauerfalls: die Dramatischen Ereignisse um den 9. November 1989* (Berlin: Ch. Links Verlag, 1996), 143, 145, 155ff. Border guards' rather surprising decision to let East Germans cross the East-West Berlin border was perhaps also influenced by the general air of tumult and uncertainty resulting from the waves of protests and Honecker's resignation.

[198] Serge Schmemann, "A Jubilant Horde: Berlin Wall is Rushed by Easterners as Travel Limits are Lifted" *New York Times*, 10 November 1989, A1, A14; Ferdinand Protzman, "East Berliners Explore Land Long Forbidden," *New York Times*, 10 November 1989, A1, A14.

elections. The representatives who were elected to the *Volkskammer* did not, however, remain there long. In August, its members voted to dissolve the German Democratic Republic and become part of the Federal Republic of Germany, and in October 1990, less than one year after the end of SED rule, voters in the GDR elected new *Bundestag* representatives.[199] East Germans had been willing to demonstrate public support for the SED dictatorship as long as they had enjoyed some measure of social security and could retreat into spaces that were separate from the farcical constructions of the SED state. However, once the spaces associated with the "everyday" (*Alltag*), especially the home, had been violated by the state, East Germans lost their ability to maintain a meaningful sense of personal and collective identity. Ironically, it is this personal sense of national identity, constructed informally and out of ephemeral materials, that vanished virtually at the moment the border between East and West Germany was opened. The strategies of accommodation were rendered meaningless outside the specific context of life in the GDR and what remained were the more concrete, yet less meaningful, symbols and representations produced by the SED. As Thomas Lindenberger has written, the end of East Germany was,

> ...experienced not only as a material loss but also above all as an expropriation of social relations and structures, of moral values and habits of a specific East German culture, through which GDR citizens had mastered their lives in the preceding four decades and which they now regarded as their legitimate 'Ossiness'.[200]

On September 12, 1990, the former World War II Allied powers signed a treaty abdicating their rights to Berlin and in 1994, remaining Allied troops were replaced by members of the West German *Bundeswehr*. In 1991, the Federal Republic voted to once again make Berlin the country's capital, a measure which was passed by only seventeen

[199] Weber, *Geschichte der DDR*, 493.
[200] Lindenberger, "Everyday History," 53. The term "Ossi" is a sometimes derogatory term for citizens of the former GDR; the similar term "Wessi" refers to citizens of the Bonn Republic.

votes, despite the fact that West German politicians had long insisted that they wanted to restore the city's status as the capital of Germany.[201] As the process of constructing the city "anew" began, Berlin was cast in a mold conceived of and designed by the West, the fashioned as the "capital of the twenty-first century," and of the "Berlin Republic."[202]

During the Cold War, architecture and politics functioned as crucial elements in the construction of national identity for the governments in both East and West Germany. Not only style, but all aspects of architectural design, construction and planning were used to define, display and communicate the values and priorities of the socialist versus democratic-capitalist regimes of East and West. At the same time, the reception of particular projects and initiatives, such as building exhibitions or preservation measures, was informed by the political, but also social and economic milieus in which these projects and initiatives were designed and built. Indeed, as the example of Hans Scharoun's State Library clearly shows, social, political and economic changes could shift the interpretation of particular buildings, in the professional as well as popular spheres. In other cases, a building that was at one time viewed as successful, aesthetically or otherwise, and a true represenation of the values of its sponsoring regime, could later be viewed as a failure and betrayal of those same values. Though often discussed as if it were a period of stasis between the Wall's construction and its destruction, the period from 1961 to 1989 in Berlin is in fact one in which the seeds of the current reconstruction effort were sown and one that gives great insight into the role of architecture and urban planning in shaping urban and national identities.

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[201] Stephen Kinzer, "Berlin to Regain Full Capital Role," New York Times, 21 June 1991. Of course despite, for example, Kohl's speech at West Berlin's 750th jubilee opening ceremonies, many politicians disagreed with the notion that Berlin should be made capital of a unified Germany. As former East German Foreign Minister, Marcus Meckel, rightly pointed out, "We are only asking you to do what you said for so many years you wanted to do." (Kinzer, "Berlin to Regain Full Capital Role.")

[202] Andreas Huyssen, "The Voids of Berlin," *Critical Inquiry* 24 (Autumn 1997): 60; Ribbe, *Berlin 1945-2000*, 178, 185.

CONCLUSION

In this post-unification era, the Berlin Wall has become part of the city's history but also its mythology, transformed almost completely from a physical barrier to an image. On the Potsdamer Platz, for example, pieces of the westernmost Wall have been assembled as a memorial to the structure, and this installation is almost always surrounded by an eager crowd of tourists who snap pictures of the concrete slabs and pour over the historical placards affixed to them. However, it could be argued that this installation is not a memorial to the Wall as a structure, but to the Wall as a symbol and image. Sitting above ground, isolated, and covered on both sides by graffiti (much of which is contemporary), this is not an accurate recreation of the security barrier, but of the image of the Wall that exists in the minds of most Westerners.[1] Moreover, because it does not acknowledge a difference between the Wall's image and its existence as a physical structure, this installation on Potsdamer Platz also silently confirms the Western interpretation of the Wall and of the period of division.

The influence of this Western-oriented view on the current image of Berlin becomes even more evident when one considers the double-row of cobblestones embedded in the city's streets, which subtly mark the outer Wall's former path. The path's label, installed periodically along the row of stones, reads "The Berlin Wall" in English and German but can only be viewed right-side up when one is standing in the former Western zone. As these examples suggest, the numerous challenges that currently face Berlin serve to test the neat rhetoric forged during the Cold War, in some cases merely undermining it and in others flatly contradicting it, but rarely acknowledging it. Regardless, Berlin's urban identity has been decisively shaped by this rhetoric and thus it cannot be dismissed as "mere" propaganda, but

[1] A more "realistic" memorial to the Wall can be found at the Berlin Wall Documentation and Memorial Center on Bernauer Strasse, where sections of the westernmost wall and portions of the "death strip" have been retained.

must be understood within the larger context and history of the city's and Germany's identity construction. Whether acknowledged or not, Berlin today is a direct descendant of both West and East Berlin.

During the Cold War, rhetoric in the West, as in the East, had drawn clear lines of political, cultural and economic division and, in 1989-90, the collapse of the SED regime and the *Volkskammer*'s subsequent decision to dissolve the GDR and become part of the Federal Republic seemed to confirm the veracity of this black-and-white view. Newspaper articles covering the historic night when the Berlin Wall was first breached reflect the internalization of this rhetoric, painting a portrait of East Germans who were finally able to visit a "forbidden land" after having "gazed" at it for so long from across the Wall. Such articles even found it necessary to point out that, despite the sudden and unexpected opportunity to go to West Germany, most East Germans eventually returned to their homes, a fact that in the West was apparently surprising. In another article, the end of the GDR is described as a "great awakening" that will allow for the continuation of "the human march westward," a phrase that refers specifically to East Germans' mass exodus throughout 1989 but which also suggests a deeper, more elemental and universal pull towards the West, as a place and a concept.[2] The discourse around the "fall" of the Wall did and to a great extent still does convey an aura of inevitablity and finality to the events of November 1989, in which the Western discourse around the division as a temporary break in the continuity of Germany's history is implicit.

The use of the term "great awakening" also reflects the Western view of the Cold War as a period of stasis, which Germany and specifically West Berlin had been forced to wait

[2] "East Germany's Great Awakening" *New York Times*, 10 November 1989, A36; Ferdinand Protzman, "East Berliners Explore Land Long Forbidden," *New York Times*, 10 November 1989, A1, A14.

out.[3] Now that Berlin had emerged from its dormant state, the return to what Kohl in his 1987 speech at the 750th jubilee termed "normalcy" could begin, and the city could now continue on the path it would have traversed if not for its division. This interpretation of Berlin's recent history is particularly evident in the discussion about the city's physical construction, often discussed in terms of *re*construction. Long hemmed-in by the Wall, the process of redesigning city could finally begin, amidst heated discussion of how it would "be different this time around." How would the "new" Berlin avoid a "revival of Speer's megalomaniacal schemes, of the grandiose air of old Prussian ministries, or of Wilhelmine pomposity" and instead evoke the city's grander past, its "golden age"? How would the city's building administrators, architects and planners, make Berlin once again "look like Berlin"?[4] Such questions were predicated first on the notion that divided Berlin had been an aberration of the "true" Berlin, and second on the notion that confrontation with the city's GDR-related past was less important than with its past as, for example, a Nazi capital. Of course the evocation of a "golden age" was problematic, as opinions differed greatly on which epoch was to be considered the city's most appealing and successful. While some argued that the cultural and artistic foment of the Weimar era marked the city's highest point of ascension, others went further back in history to the turn of the nineteenth century and the age of Schinkel. To which period would planners hearken back? Which was the "real" Berlin?

The debate around the decision whether to demolish the Palace of the Republic and rebuild the Berlin *Stadtschloss* reveals both the absurdity of the search for a "real" Berlin, but

[3] A number of journalists and scholars have used the metaphor of sleep to describe Berlin after 1990. In her study of rebuilding Berlin, for example, political scientist Elizabeth Strom comments that, "Berlin, like the protagonist in the movie *Sleeper* who awoke to an unfamiliar world after decades in a freezer, 'woke up' in 1990 with an economic structure rooted in the 1960s." (Elizabeth Strom, *Building the New Berlin: The Politics of Urban Development in Germany's Capital City* (New York: Lexington Books, 2001), 91.)
[4] Paul Goldberger, "Reimagining Berlin," *The New York Times Magazine*, 5 February 1995.

also the place of the GDR (or indeed the lack thereof) within such notions of Berlin.[5] In 1990, the freely-elected members of the GDR's *Volkskammer* voted to close the Palace of the Republic in order to remove the large amounts of asbestos that had been used in its construction. The removal process lasted from 1997 to 2002, however already in 1992, the Federal Republic announced that it intended to raze not only the Palace of the Republic but the nearby Foreign Ministry and State Council buildings.[6] The asbestos removal process was therefore understood as the first step in the Palace's eventual demolition and was carried out without great regard for the maintenance of the building's fixtures or structural integrity.[7] As the debate over its fate grew in the later 1990s, the prospect of retaining the building was complicated by the high price of renovating the now-heavily-damaged structure. Its supporters argued that its significance as a GDR symbol was important enough to warrant the cost of its reconstruction, while its detractors dismissed it as the "ugly" relic of a "failed ideology."[8] Meanwhile, though the *Stadtschloß* was arguably never regarded as an important structure, either architecturally or in terms of Berlin's urban identity, proponents insisted that it marked the "beginning of Berlin architecture" and also that its reconstruction was necessary to restore the cohesiveness of the historic Museum Island's aesthetic expression. In addition, it was argued that the return of the *Schloß* would be an economic boon, since it could be a fittingly grand and historic venue for, as Berlin's then-Minister of Culture Michael

[5] Kramer, "Letter from Europe: Living with Berlin," 55; Michael Z. Wise, *Capital Dilemma: Germany's Search for a New Architecture of Democracy* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1998), 12, 15.
[6] The Foreign Ministry building was demolished in 1996. The State Council building was initially used as a government administration building by the Federal Republic, but was handed over to the European School of Management and Technology after a 35-million Euro renovation. It was granted historic landmark status in 1993. In the case of the Palace of the Republic, the presence asbestos at times seems implicitly to be regarded as proof of the ineptitude of the GDR building industry, though of course many contemporary buildings all over the world had to be similarly renovated once the dangers of asbestos became well known, including Scharoun's State Library Building.
[7] Kuhrmann, *Der Palast der Republik*, 70.
[8] Nicolai Ouroussof, "Trying to Save Berlin Relic From the Dustbin," *New York Times*, 9 January 2006, Section E, Column 2.

Naumann put it in 1999, "expensive European summits; offices for 'status clients,' like Brussels and the multinationals; [and] big parties..."[9]

However, by the late 1990s, East Germans who had so eagerly sloughed off the GDR and its trappings in 1989-90, were beginning to realize the implications of Germany's reunification in terms of their personal and collective identity. East Germans began to long not for the return of the GDR or the Wall, though this was sometimes how they articulated their desire for acknowledgement, but for the retention of some kind of memorial to their experiences and the challenges they had faced, recognition of the "accommodations" required by lives lived under the thumb of the SED. As it was the site of both positive memories and an official building, the Palace of the Republic no doubt seemed an ideal structure in terms of symbolizing the contradictions, illusions and even failures of the former GDR. In a survey conducted in 1993, for example, 88% of former East Germans were against the demolition of the Palace, but only 9% cited its significance with regard to the political life of the GDR as a reason for its preservation. Instead, most recalled "memories of concerts or family gatherings rather than political identification with its builders."[10] Though East Germans have been derided for their nostalgia or "*Ostalgie*,"—Jane Kramer insisted in 1999 that "no one missed [the Palace] until the East Berliners decided that it was *their* golden moment"—their sense of loss is entirely understandable when viewed in the context of the competing urban and national identities of Berlin and Germany. Regardless, in the end the decision was made to "dismantle" the Palace of the Republic, a process that began in 2006.

The debate over the fate of the Palace of the Republic was a rare moment when the urban identity of East Berlin, and the closely related national identity of the GDR, were

[9] Kramer, "Letter from Europe: Living with Berlin," 62.
[10] Strom, *Building the New Berlin*, 72, 73.

confronted directly by the "Berlin Republic." In most cases, East German buildings, such as the Foreign Ministry building and many *Plattenbauten*, were simply demolished without fanfare or debate. This was in part because the cash-strapped GDR government had been unable to perform the basic maintenance needed to keep buildings in good working order, and thus many of these structures were by 1990 simply beyond repair. Indeed, in addition to its reputation for "ugly" architecture, East Germany gained notoriety for the poor quality of its infrastructure, lending further credence to popular notions of the GDR's incompetence. For example, upon visiting East German government buildings to consider the possibility of their continued use, Federal Republic Finance Ministry official Hans-Michael Meyer-Sebastian remarked, "I asked myself if it were thinkable that the ruling class of an industrial nation would use such toilets. The conditions were dreadful."[11] Certainly it is easy to believe that, given the state of the GDR economy and prefab-oriented building industry, East German plumbing was not up to the standards of the Federal Republic. However, this sense of disdain and at times even disgust, helps to explain why many West and East Germans, particularly in the years immediately following unification, did not feel the need to restore or retain such buildings, or to incorporate the East German architectural aesthetic or approach into the plans for the "new" Berlin. However, it also explains why in the later 1990s, East Germans might have felt rankled by their treatment and status in post-unification Germany.

The GDR and former East Germans were left out of the post-unification "conversation" regarding Berlin's "new" architectural profile and urban development in a variety of ways. For example, the competition to design buildings for the new government quarter at the arch of the Spree River (*Spreebogen*) near the Reichstag attracted 835 proposals from forty-four countries, including hundreds of designs by architects from the

[11] Quoted in Wise, *Capital Dilemma*, 13.

former West Germany. However, only a few East Germans submitted designs to the competition, and those that did were convinced that they "had no chance."[12] As journalist Michael Z. Wise has put it, "Unification…effectively involved the consensual annexation of East Germany by the Federal Republic."[13] The poor reception of East German architecture in the West has furthermore been used as the excuse and explanation for the lack of attention paid to it, and its lack of representation within the urban fabric of contemporary Berlin. In a 1993 survey text entitled *The New German Architecure*, West German architectural historian Manfred Sack wrote an introduction in which he claimed that, "with a few isolated exceptions," the GDR created no architecture that was "worthy of the designation." "As a result," he continues, "new architectural history has been written only to the west of the Berlin Wall."[14] Certainly, Sack is commenting in part on the marginalization of the entire profession of architecture in the GDR, as well as that of architectural design. However, such sweeping generalizations, though they may connect to defensible facts, tend to discourage both in-depth examination of such facts and any efforts to thoroughly understand the architecture and planning of the GDR. While it is true that architects were relegated a limited role in the former East Germany, this cannot alone be reason to write them or the buildings of the GDR out of the history of architecture altogether.

In the years since 1990, the issues relating to the plans for Berlin's post-unification development and construction have enjoyed a high international profile, serving as fodder for a number of very heated, very public debates. The city has also been the subject of countless publications— books, scholarly and journalistic essays, magazine and newspaper articles—

[12] Günther Stahn, former East German and designer of the restored Nikolai quarter, in an interview with Michael Z. Wise. Quoted in Wise, *Capital Dilemma*, 59.
[13] Wise, *Capital Dilemma*, 59.
[14] Manfred Sack, "Introduction," in *The New German Architecture*, ed. Gerhard G. Feldmeyer (New York: Rizzoli, 1993), 19. Interestingly, Sack cites the Palace of the Republic as one of the "few isolated exceptions."

dedicated to its unfolding development and its post-unification construction. As the "biggest building site in the world" the city was also, particularly in the mid- to late 1990s, a "magnet" for architects.[15] In these ways, Berlin has once again become a primary site for contemporary debates about planning and building as well as a living exhibition of these debates.[16] As part of this, an extensive system of display was created in order to show off and to promote the "new" Berlin. For example, in Potsdamer Platz, the large, red Info Box (Schneider + Schumacher, 1995) was erected as a temporary structure in order to inform visitors of the future of Potsdamer Platz. However, not only did the "story" presented in the Info Box make no reference to the legacy of East Berlin or the urban identity created for it in the GDR, it made no explicit argument as to why this identity was excluded from post-1990 plans. Instead, the installation in the Info Box told a "story of uncomplicated progress" and urban development that was made to seem natural, inevitable, and desirable.[17] Like Interbau in 1957 and IBA in 1987, architecture and urban planning were, via an extensive system of display, presented as part of an overall ethos, embedded in a particular set of values and ideals that were not explicitly acknowledged, but accepted as fact.

The story told in the Info Box, as well as by other exhibits, by planners, architects, and municipal authorities, was one that should by now sound very familiar: now that the Wall was gone a prosperous era could now dawn and Berlin could finally come into its own. Following this line of reasoning, the Berlin Help Laws were sharply reduced and eventually rescinded, since it was expected that the Berlin economy would now be able to function on

[15] Paul Goldberger, "Reimagining Berlin," *The New York Times*, 5 February 1995.
[16] As geographer Karen Till describes it, "...the New Berlin was represented as a spectacular architectural exhibition. City officials, real estate developers, planners, and marketers encouraged this way of visualizing the city through virtual realities shows, live displays at construction sites, and exhibitions of the hundreds of architectural models and sketches submitted for different renovation and construction competitions." (Karen E. Till, *The New Berlin: Memory, Politics, Place* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), 31.)
[17] Brian Ladd, "Center and Periphery in the New Berlin: Architecture, Public Art, and the Search for Identity," *PAJ: A Journal of Performance and Art* 65 (2000): 8.

its own.[18] Based on this optimistic view, in the early to mid-1990s millions of square feet of office space were constructed—ten times more per year than in West Berlin—along with luxury shopping centers, hotels, and apartment buildings.[19] It seemed at the time as if capital and its display would fill the voids left by reunification, but yet the expected influx of tenants and visitors for such buildings did not materialize.[20] One reason for this was that those economic sectors, which had relocated to other cities during the Cold War, such as the publishing or media industries, had no real reason to return to Berlin. It soon became clear that, though unification was initially beneficial, it alone could not compensate for the lingering problems wrought by decades of division.

The city is still dealing with significant economic and social challenges related to its period of division, but which are also endemic to its status as a modern European metropolis. It is saddled with approximately 61 billion Euros of debt, in part because of the revocation of its favored economic status, but also because of the continuing absence of any major economic sectors.[21] As of October 2007, Berlin's unemployment rate was 14.4%, actually an improvement over previous rates.[22] Moreover, economic hardships have, since 1990, stoked the existing social tensions between ethnic and non-ethnic Germans, immigrants, and former East Germans. At the same time, Berlin's reputation as a center of a hip, young counter-culture has grown significantly unification, and so the city remains a favorite destination for the world's hipsters. Described as a place where "the pace of life seems to toggle between a kind of morning-after torpor and frenzied unrest," the city has become, for example, a rugged

[18] Strom, *Building the New Berlin*, 83. In 1985, 50.9% of Berlin's municipal budget was made up of federal aid; by 1993 this had been reduced to 26.3%. (Strom, *Building the New Berlin*, 80.)
[19] Strom, *Building the New Berlin*, 120.
[20] Ladd, "Center and Periphery in the New Berlin," 8, 9-10.
[21] Lars-Olav Beier, et al., "Großstadt ohne Größenwahn," *Der Spiegel*, 19 March 2007.
[22] Sven Behrisch, "Berlin verliert arbeitslose," *die tageszeitung*, 31 October 2007, 24.

and slick locus of the contemporary art world and of the electronic music scene.[23] Berlin's mayor, Klaus Wowereit, aptly captured this dichotomy between the city's cultural cachet and economic hardships, when he coined the city's unofficial motto in 2003: "Berlin is poor, but sexy."[24]

As numerous scholars and critics have noted, the removal of the Berlin Wall left behind both physical and immaterial voids. The subsequent literal and figurative construction of the city as the capital of the "Berlin Republic" has in many ways been a process of filling these voids. In his 1997 essay, "The Voids of Berlin," Andreas Huyssen discusses the reconstruction of Berlin in this context, considering how the empty spaces left by the Wall and the city's past, which according to Huyssen it is still haunted by, have influenced the effort to create a "new" urban identity for Berlin and a unified national identity for Germany.[25] Once again, architects, planners and politicians have set about constructing a "New Berlin" and in doing so, have been confronted by the myriad of past efforts to do the same.[26] However, considering the city's long history as a space of contention and its long-contested identity, it is perhaps more accurate to view this post-unification construction as a continuation of the longer process of forging Berlin's urban identity. More specifically, the efforts to define Berlin anew since 1991 have been indelibly marked by the city's urban identity as it was defined in the 1980s by the West, and thus its identity as capital of the

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[23] Guy Trebay, "Life is a Cabaret?" *New York Times*, 19 March 2006. New Berlin Wall
[24] See for example, "Poor but Sexy; Berlin," *The Economist*, 23 September 2006.
[25] Huyssen, "The Voids of Berlin," 57-81. The "voids" of Berlin are not only a result of the removal of the Wall, but, as many have noted, are a function of the city's large land area and remarkable lack of density. See for example, Goldberger, "Reimagining Berlin."
[26] The term "New Berlin" in reference to post-1990 construction in the city is used, for example, in the title of Elizabeth Strom's book *Building the New Berlin: The Politics of Urban Development in Germany's Capital City* (Lexington Books, 2001) and in Karen E. Till's *The New Berlin: Memory, Politics, Place* (University of Minnesota Press, 2005). The term was of course also used in reference to social housing construction programs in the 1920s (as in Martin Wagner's journal *The New Berlin*) as well as after 1945 in regards to postwar reconstruction and, finally, in connection with the plans of IBA in 1987.

"Berlin Republic" is an extension of this earlier iteration.

The competing mythologies, histories and even architectures of Berlin are often explained by way of art historian Karl Scheffler's famous 1910 declaration that, "Berlin is a city condemned always to become, never to be."[27] However, Scheffler's statement should perhaps not be viewed, as it often has been, in terms of the city's physical, economic or social development but rather in terms of its urban identity, which seems never to have been accepted, but has been and remains continuously contested, reconstructed and doubted. In other words, it is not Berlin itself that is always "becoming," at least not more so than any other city, but its image in the public's imagination.

[27] Karl Scheffler, *Berlin—Ein Stadtschicksal* (1910; Berlin, 1989), 219.

APPENDIX

Government Administration: East and West Germany

The German Democratic Republic (East Germany, GDR) was formally established in October 1949. when the country's first constitution was signed. Nominally, the GDR was a multi-party "socialist democracy," though in practice it was a one-party dictatorship. The leading party in East Germany was the Socialist Unity Party (*Sozialistiche Einheitspartei Deutschland*, or SED), formed in April 1946 by the forced union of Germany's leftist political parties: the Social Democratic Party (*Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands* or SPD) and the German Communist Party (*Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands* or KPD). The SED, dominated the political, economic and social life of the GDR and its General Secretary was effectively the country's supreme leader.[1]

Officially, the East German government was led by two main administrative bodies: the *Volkskammer* or People's Chamber, and the *Staatsrat* or State Council, created by SED General Secretary Walter Ulbricht in 1960. The *Volkskammer* was made up of representatives from the GDR's other political parties, the so-called bloc parties, and "mass organizations" (*Massenorganisationen*). The bloc parties, such as the Liberal Democratic Party of Germany (*Liberal-Demokratische Partei Deutschlands* or LDPD) and the German Democratic Farmer's Party (*Demokratische Bauernpartei Deutschlands* or DBD), had no real power but were created largely to maintain an appearance of pluralism.[2] Similarly, the GDR's mass organizations, such as the Free German Youth (*Freie Deutsche Jugend* or FDJ) and the national workers' union (*Freier Deutscher Gerwerkschaftsbund* or FDGB), helped to create an image of democratic discourse, though such organizations had little to no political power.

[1] Weber, *Geschichte der DDR*, 163, 93.
[2] These bloc parties and mass organizations were forced members of the National Front of Democratic Germany (*Nationale Front des Demokratischen Deutschlands* or NF), which was controlled by the SED.

The bloc parties and mass organizations were also instruments of hegemony, helping to spread the party's doctrine and enable it to dominate all levels of GDR society.[3] The GDR's other branch of government, the *Staatsrat*, was comprised of the government's ministries, the country's judicial bodies, and the National Defense Council (*Nationaler Verteidigungsrat der DDR*). Like the *Volkskammer*, these administrative organs were in principle separate from the SED, but in practice served merely to rubber-stamp SED policies.[4] In the GDR, there was no difference between the state and the party, despite the SED's insistence to the contrary.[5]

The organization of the SED itself in some ways mirrored that of the GDR government. There was, for example, a Ministry of Building (*Ministerium für Bauwesen*) that was part of the government, but also a Division of Building (*Abteilung Bauwesen*) that was part of the SED. In most cases, the actions and policies of the governmental bodies were, of course, identical to and informed by those of the party-affiliated bodies. In the end, however, all of these administrative organizations were subservient to the SED's highest echelons of power: the Politburo and the smaller Central Committee, made up of Politburo members. These two groups, led by the SED General Secretary, exercised total control over the GDR, particularly in the 1970s and 80s. During this time, Erich Honecker steadily increased the

[3] Historians of the GDR refer to it as a "*durchherrschte Gesellschaft*," by which is meant the party's dominance was threaded through all aspects of society at all levels. (Fulbrook, *Anatomy of a Dictatorship*, 14, 58ff; Lindenberger, "Everyday History," 52.)
[4] Walter Ulbricht, SED General Secretary from 1946 to 1971, was also chairman of the *Staatsrat* and National Defense Council upon their creation in 1960. Erich Honecker, SED General Secretary from 1971 to 1989, took over the *Staatsrat* and National Defense Council in 1976. (Weber, *Geschichte der DDR*, 289, 405.)
[5] In addition, Mary Fulbrook points out that there was no difference between state and society: "The East German state was not, in intention, clearly separate from 'society.' There was to be *no* area of society uncontrolled by the state, the organization of which was to penetrate even to the most basic, fundamental level of society." (Fulbrook, *Anatomy of a Dictatorship*, 19.)

power and control of specifically the Central Committee at the same time that he reduced its size and convened it less often.[6]

The SED explained its dominance through the principle of "democratic centralism," first described by Lenin in his 1902 text "What is to Be Done?". This concept dictates that the leading party, in this case the SED, was the supreme representative of the people. Since the people suffered from the "false consciousness" brought on by life in under capitalism, they were inherently unable to take charge of their own political fates, and it was therefore in their best interests to submit to the will of the party leaders.[7] In terms of East Germany, it was argued that the SED's leaders had a more thorough and advanced understanding of the country's political, economic and social development, making the party's policies automatically right and true. This meant the SED's Party Congresses, held every five years, were meaningful not only for the party, but for the country as a whole. At these party congresses, the SED outlined the platforms, initiatives and policies which would not only govern the party, but the country as a whole.[8] Similarly, the changes in party administration announced at SED Party Congresses were of more practical significance than, for example, the sham elections conducted to select *Volkskammer* representatives.

The GDR's "multi-party socialism" should be understood as distinct from, though closely related to, the Soviet Union's single-party communist government. The SED insisted that, as a socialist country, East Germany was in the process of *becoming* communist, but had not yet achieved this state of development. Throughout its history, the GDR was variously in

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[6] Georg Brunner, "Herrschaftssytem: Partei und Staat," in *Die Deutsche Demokratische Republik: Daten-Fakten-Analysen*, ed. Alexander Fischer (Cologne: Komet, 2003), 84. The *Volkskammer* met less often as time went on as well, eventually meeting for one day, two or three times per year. (Brunner, "Herrschaftssytem: Partei und Staat," 85.)
[7] Fulbrook, *Anatomy of a Dictatorship*, 8.
[8] Brunner, "Herrschaftssytem: Partei und Staat," 84.

the stage of "real, developing socialism" or on the cusp of communism. At the SED's Tenth Party Congress in April 1981, for example, Honecker announced that in coming decade the GDR would finally make its long-promised transition from socialism to communism, though of course this never transpired.[9]

The Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) was formally established in May 1949, founded as a federal parliamentary democracy. The government is made up of two legislative bodies, the *Bundestag* or Federal Diet and the *Bundesrat* or Federal Council, as well as an executive branch led by a chancellor and an independent judicial branch. The *Bundestag* is directly elected by the country's citizens while the *Bundesrat* is made up of representatives who are appointed by the legislative bodies of the German *Länder* or states.[10] *Bundesrat* representatives are also members of state cabinets and can be appointed or removed at any time. The Chancellor of the Federal Republic is indirectly elected by the members of the *Bundestag* and *Bundesrat*, and is chosen every four years after national parliamentary elections. The Chancellor cannot be forced to resign unless the *Bundestag* names her successor and calls a "constructive vote of no confidence."[11]

The main political parties of the Federal Republic are the Christian Democratic Union (*Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands* or CDU), known in Bavaria as the Christian Social Union (*Christlich-soziale Union* or CSU), the Social Democratic Party (SPD), the Free Democratic Party (*Freie Demokratische Partei* or FDP) and, since the 1980s, the Green Party (now known as the Alliance '90/Green Party). After unification, the SED was renamed

[9] Weber, *Geschichte der DDR*, 430.
[10] Once the French zones of occupation were incorporated into the Federal Republic in 1957, the West German *Länder* totaled ten: Baden-Württemberg, Bavaria, Bremen, Hamburg, Hessen, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Rheinland-Pfalz, Saarland, Lower Saxony, Schleswig-Holstein. Upon reunification, the five *Länder* of the former GDR (Brandenburg, Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt and Thuringia) were added to these along with Berlin, making the total sixteen.
[11] Nicholls, *The Bonn Republic*, 77, 81.

the Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS) or "The Left Party" ("*Die Linke Partei*") and enjoys support in parts of former East Germany.

Government Administration: East and West Berlin

During the period of division, East Berlin was governed by an administrative body known as the Magistrate of Greater Berlin (*Magistrat von Groß-Berlin*), which was first established by the Soviets in 1945. In 1977, this body was renamed the Magistrate of Berlin, Capital of the GDR (*Magistrat von Berlin, Hauptstadt der DDR*). The Berlin Magistrate was led by a mayor (*Oberbürgermeister*) who presided over eleven city districts or *Bezirke*, each of which had their own council or *Rat*. However, as in the GDR as a whole, these regional governments were ultimately subservient to the SED and its Central Committee, and enjoyed little real autonomy or political power.[12]

West Berlin's constitution, created in 1949, elevated the former zones of Western Allied occupation, twelve districts in all, to the status of both a city (*Stadt*) and state (*Land*). West Berlin was governed by a parliament or *Abgeortnetenhaus* and a cabinet, called a Senate (*Senat*), which was made up of up to sixteen senators and presided over by a ruling mayor or *Regierende Bürgermeister*. The Senate's representatives (Senators) are elected by the *Abgeortnetenhaus* upon the recommendation of the ruling mayor and act as the heads of various government administrative bodies.[13] For example, the head of the Senate Administration for Building and Dwelling Industry (*Senatsverwaltung für Bau- und Wohnungswesen*)[14] oversaw West Berlin's building industry and was also a representative to the Senate. West Berlin's government was, and is, characterized by a high degree of

[12] Ribbe, *Berlin 1945-2000*, 17, 68-9.
[13] Strom, *Building the New Berlin*, 21, 24.
[14] This is now known as the Senate Administration for Urban Development (*Senatsverwaltung für Stadtentwicklung*).

fragmentation, wherein multiple city agencies can be responsible for single, at times contradictory aspects of government administration. As political scientist Elizabeth Strom points out in her book *Building the New Berlin* (2001),

> …the Construction senator, for instance, is part of a process (carried out with no public input or information) for selling large chunks of central land to international investors, and then after, he heads the effort, carried out with a great deal of public comment, to force the investors to build structures that minimize the impact of their huge projects. In Berlin's fragmented administration, processes for land sales and land use, in spite of their close association, are carried out by different agencies (or parts of agencies) according to different legal mandates, with participation of different interests groups.[15]

As in East Berlin, West Berlin's city government was further subdivided into districts or *Bezirke*, each with their own local councils. Since 1990, the number of Senators has been reduced to eight and the city's administrative districts have been reduced from twenty-three to twelve in total.[16] The city continues to be governed by the *Abgeortnetenhaus*, Senate and a ruling mayor. As a so-called "city-state" (*Stadtstaat*), Berlin is still afforded the rights and privileges of a federal state or *Land* in the Federal Republic.

Nomenclature: East and West Berlin

Given the highly contested status of divided Berlin during the Cold War, the various names used. in relation to it were highly politicized and changed over time with the changing diplomatic tensions between East and West. Officially, West Berlin was referred to as "Berlin (West)" by the Federal Republic, while the GDR called East Berlin "Berlin, Capital of the GDR" or, from the 1970s, simply "Berlin (DDR)." East Berlin was also known in the GDR as the "democratic sector" ("*Demokratischen Sektor*") or "democratic Berlin" ("*Demokratisches Berlin*"), especially in the 1940s-60s. In setting up the government of East

[15] Strom, *Building the New Berlin*, 25-6.
[16] Strom, *Building the New Berlin*, 30-1. The reduction in the number of senators and of districts was an effort to reduce government expenditure.

Berlin, the GDR government adopted the terms that had been in use before World War II, such as *Magistrat* and *Oberbürgermeister*, while new terms were adopted in West Berlin. The use of the term "Greater Berlin" in the city government's official title, "*Magistrat von Groß-Berlin*," indicated the East German position that all of Berlin, that is the twenty-three districts that were in 1920 incorporated as Greater Berlin, belonged to the GDR. The East Berlin Magistrate was renamed in 1977 after the signing of the Four-Power Agreement in order to reflect its relaxed position with regard to Greater Berlin.

In East Germany, the government communicated its disavowal of West Berlin by referring to the city with the one-word term "Westberlin," thereby suggesting it was a district or region of the city (similar to Westkreuz or Westend, for example) rather than an autonomous political entity. Walter Ulbricht went so far as to once call West Berlin, "a western suburb of the GDR capital."[17] After the treaties of the early 1970s, however, the GDR adopted the official term of "Berlin (West)." Likewise, in West Germany and West Berlin, East Berlin was referred to derisively as either "Ostberlin" or "the Eastern sector" (*Ostsektor*), particularly in the 1940s-60s. The country as a whole was often dubbed "the Zone" or the "SBZ" (Soviet Zone of Occupation) even after 1949, terms which suggested East Germany was a puppet of the Soviet Union and also denied the GDR's sovereign status. The GDR was also sometimes referred to jokingly as "Pankow" in the West, a reference to the East Berlin district where the GDR president presided.[18] From the 1970s, East and West Berlin were known colloquially in the West as "Ost-Berlin" and "West-Berlin." In addition, the city was often referred to simply as "Berlin" within the East and West.[19]

[17] Ribbe, *Berlin 1945-2000*, 90.
[18] Hertle and Wolle, *Damals in der DDR*, 40; Wolle, *Die Heile Welt der Diktatur*, 72-3.
[19] Ribbe, *Berlin 1945-2000*, 135.

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DC 207 Palast der Republik
- DH 1 Ministerium für Bauwesen

Stiftung Archiv der Parteien und Massenorganisationen (SAPMO), DDR
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