

The political impact influenced by the Berlin Wall on the architecture of the surrounding buildings



History thesis

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*Figure 1 Divided Berlin East and West. Nuberlin.
<https://www.nuberlin.com/info/the-berlin-wall/>*

Abstract

This thesis investigates the impact of the political changes on architecture during the Berlin Wall. The political changes started during and after WW2 (1939-1961). The tension between the parties became larger, which led to the Berlin Wall in 1961. The Berlin Wall increased the division of the parties even more, which became visible in the architecture. The expression of their political ideologies has become visible on the streets in several ways. East and West Berlin had their own methods to implement their ideologies. Some of the methods are more visible than others. By going in-depth between four case studies from East and West Berlin these methods and ideologies become visible. The case studies are located in Mitte Berlin, the central heart of the city. The case studies that were chosen are large-scale projects that can be seen as monuments or icons. Their common interest lies in their symbolic meaning combined with the architectural expression.

Introduction

Berlin is the capital of Germany and is a city with a lot of history over the last century. Think about the First and Second World War and also the Cold War. The Cold War, specifically the Berlin Wall period, is the period where the city changed the most on an architectural scale. The reason for these changes already started during the Second World War. The tensions eventually escalated to such an extent that they led to the Berlin Wall. The Wall separated the city and its people. The daily routine had to be rearranged because functions were separated. The city had to adapt in a short period of time influenced by communism or socialism to keep functioning. The image of the city changed because of the political parties and people were forced to change their life and their freedom of expression. The questions of this subject lie in the buildings and streets that were influenced by political ideology during the Berlin Wall. This thesis goes in-depth on the architectural scale of buildings located in Mitte, the city centre of Berlin. The main question of this thesis is:

How did the political changes as a result of the Berlin Wall become visible in the architecture of the surrounding buildings?

Many buildings were built during the Berlin Wall, each with its own look. But also a look that had overlapping characteristic features. These characteristics originated in politics and eventually led to the division of Berlin. But the origins of these choices began to form during the Second World War. This means that a period of around 22 years has led to these designs. This thesis zooms in on 4 case studies in Mitte on both sides of the wall. The research question will be examined with the use of sub-questions:

1. *What influence had postmodernism on the political situation of Berlin?*
2. *How is monumentality used in the Berlin architecture during the Berlin Wall?*
3. *How are the buildings perceived by society?*

In order to answer the research question, four different case studies have been studied and implemented in this thesis. The case studies are large-scale public or political buildings located in Mitte, the city center of Berlin. The cases will be explained with the use of the book by Emily Pugh. Alongside the primary source, the research question will also be answered with the use of secondary sources. The secondary literature consists of a paper from Vergeer and a paper written by Pugh.

Because of the rich history of Berlin, it is also important to address which subjects are not investigated further. There is chosen to not go in-depth with the political and administrative pillars of both parties. The general overview of the parties gives perspective on the movements in and around the architecture. This also applies to all historical events. There are a lot of local events that influenced some buildings around the Wall. However, the chosen case studies were not influenced only minorly by these events. This is because of the size and importance of these projects for the city. The last subject is the history of the case studies after the Wall. Some projects developed a lot after 2000. There is chosen to only analyse the changes during the Berlin Wall. This results in a study that focuses on the case studies that lay in the period of the Wall and not the further development of Berlin. It is about understanding the impact of the Berlin Wall on the surrounding architecture. By zooming in on Mitte in the city centre of Berlin, the development can be reflected on both sides. What was the actual political impact of the allies and nation on the architecture and development of the city? The goal is to get a better understanding of the perspective of society and politics on the architecture used in this period. However, Berlin has a long history and these events affected the decisions that were made in that period. The sub-questions will help as guidance through the case studies.

Chapter 1 of this paper is a timeline with an overview of all important events during the period from 1939-1989. To get a better understanding of the growth and destruction in Berlin, maps are added to the timeline. In Chapter 2 Political positions and ideologies of East and West Berlin are put into perspective. What were their main goals and what were the biggest differences? In this chapter, we zoom in on the cultural and artistic side of society. In Chapter 3 the city center called Mitte is analyzed. What makes this neighborhood so interesting to investigate compared to the other areas? In Chapter 4, these case studies are analyzed by the sub-questions and compared in the different aspects. All this information combined gives insight into the conclusion of the research question.

Timeline Berlin

This timeline is an overview of events that will be discussed in Chapter 1.

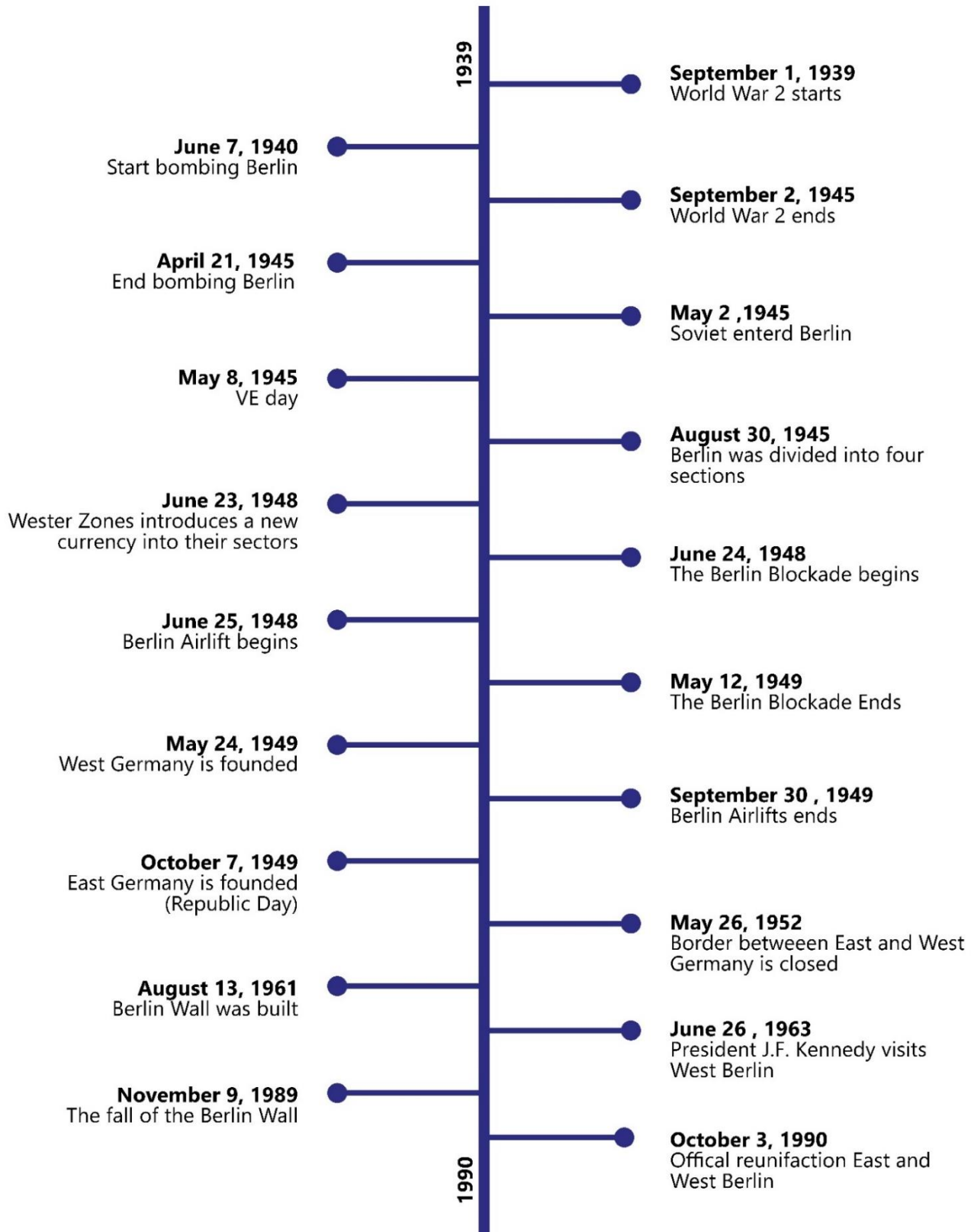


Figure 2: Luca Laponder, LJF (2023). Timeline Berlin. Own design

Chapter 1: The Scars of Berlin

The demographic changes and development of Berlin were caused by several events, it is important to know what historical events happened from 1939-1989. The influence before 1939 weights small compared to the events after 1939 for the Berlin Wall. The events after 1939 started from the Second World War. During this time, events happened that had a historical and demographic effect on Berlin. The maps will help to understand these changes.

Before the Second World War started in 1939, Berlin was growing. This map shows the latest developments in Berlin before the War started. Around this time Berlin was at its peak of growth. The city expanded and the infrastructure improved over time. The interesting part of these maps lies in the future in and around Mitte. Then the bombing of Berlin started. From June 7, 1940, until April 21, 1945, Berlin was bombed by the four different allies. This was America, France, Britain, and the Soviet Union. During this period, a lot of bombs hit the city and destroyed big parts of it. The second map is taken on April 21, 1945 (Ryan, 2015). This is after the bombing had stopped. The map is made in black and white to highlight which buildings were destroyed. All black buildings are the remains of the standing buildings in this area. We see that a big part of the city center was destroyed. Tiergarten is the center of this map and it shows that it was destroyed. But the Waterfront and other areas were also destroyed severely. However, this allowed the city to think about how to improve the city and what they want to preserve (Friedrich, 2008).

During this period of bombing several big airstrikes were executed. The Eight Air Force also called the Mighty Eighth executed eight planned bombings on Berlin between 1942-1945. It was arranged by the United States at strict daylight. These bombings played a key role in the Allied victory in 1945 (8th Air Force/J-GSOC, z.d.).

On April 21, 1945, the first Soviet units entered Berlin. It was a period when America wanted the Soviets as an ally in the war against Japan. However, the Soviets had other plans in mind. The Soviets continued the air and ground offensive in Berlin. This led to May 2, 1945, when Berlin surrendered to the Soviet army (Naimark & Naimark, 1995).

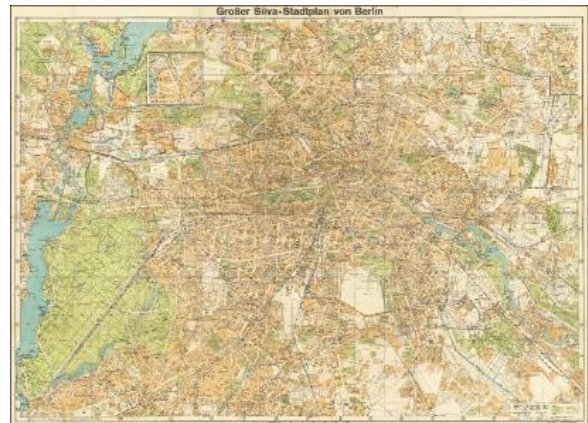


Figure 4: Silva, (1939). *Grosser Stadtplan Berlin*. Photograph. Berliner- stadtplansammlung.

<https://berliner-stadtplansammlung.de/index.php/karten/einzelblaetter/item/4849-1938-grosser-silva-stadtplan-von-berlin>

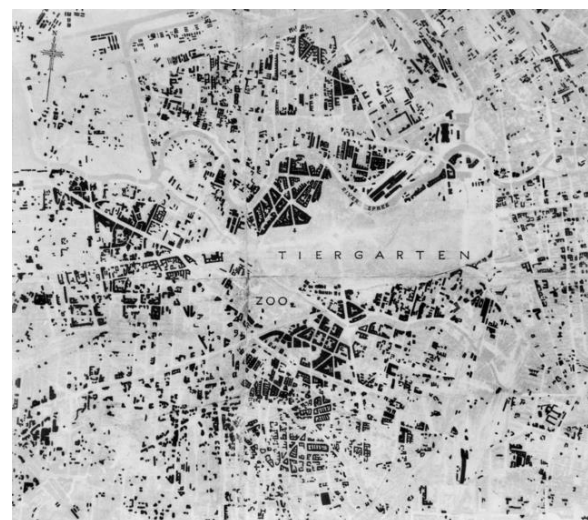


Figure 3: Australian War Memorial, (1944). *Berlin Germany 1944*. Photograph. Awm.

<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C225581>

VE day stands for Victory in Europe Day and was on May 8, 1945. It was the day Germany surrendered and World War 2 was ended. In the summer of 1945, on June 23, Germany got divided between the United States, Britain, France, and the Soviet Union. This was the start of a divided Germany and Berlin. Berlin was divided into four sectors on August 30, 1945. The reason to divide the capital of Germany was World War 2. The four sectors had administrative purposes, it was called the allied control council (Naimark & Naimark, 1995).

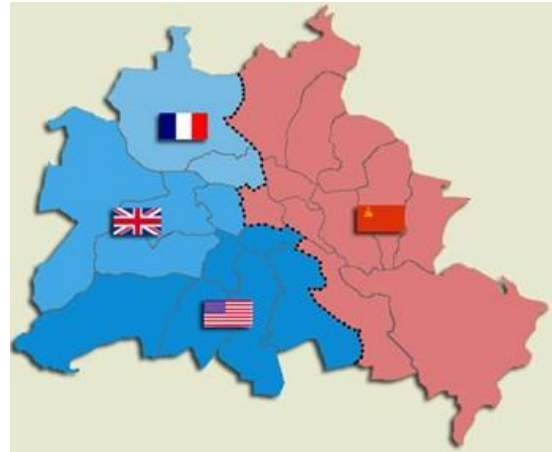


Figure 5 Allied Sectors Berlin. Photograph. Western-allies-berlin.<http://western-allies-berlin.com/maps/sectors/sectors>

A few years later, tensions between the Western Allies and the Soviet Union were still rising. The Soviet Union decided to start interfering with the communication between West Germany and West Berlin. Even to the point that West Berlin's infrastructure was cut off. This was done on June 24, 1948. This meant that all communication over land and water was cut off. The Western Allies responded with the Berlin Airlift on June 26, 1948. This was the air bridge between West Berlin and West Germany. The Airlift supplied West Berlin with food and other necessities. In the next few months, West Berlin showed the Soviet Union that it could sustain the operation indefinitely and supply itself through the sky. At the same time, the West Allies made a counter-blockade on East Germany. This caused severe shortages for them, up to the point that the Soviet Union had to stop the Blockade due to political reasons (Milestones: 1945–1952 - Office of the Historian, z.d.).

On May 26, 1952, the East German government decided to close the border. They put a barrier around West Berlin to close it off for East Germany. After the lock around West Berlin, it was only possible to get to the West from West Berlin by the Airlift (Major, 2009).

On August 13, 1961, East Germany decided that the border needed to be properly closed. This resulted in the start of building the Berlin Wall. The purpose of the Wall is to keep the so-called Western fascists from entering East Germany. They didn't want people to undermine the socialist state (Major, 2009).

The maps that are chosen from this time point are made at the beginning of the Berlin Wall. We can already see its influence in these drawings of the city. First of all, West Berlin is a blank part. The government chooses to not show it to its people. They live separately and in private. On the other map, it is visible how West Berlin is enclosed in the surroundings. West Berlin is a piece of land that is surrounded by the other party. We can also spot the different airports on the West Side. There are three different airports in West Berlin. This is because West Berlin consisted of a French, British, and American sector.



Figure 6: Berlin. Photograph. Berlijnsemuur.
<https://www.berlijnsemuur.info/ontstaan-van-de-tweedeling/>

Something visible in all West Berlin maps is the infrastructure of East Berlin. They show that the city street continues and sometimes what to expect on the East Side. However, East Berlin does the opposite. If people were lucky, they would see some kind of infrastructure on the maps. But for most of the maps, it was an unknown area. Another aspect of the drawings of West Berlin is the wall. The wall with its checkpoints is always clearly highlighted. This shows how West Berlin is enclosed but also what points are important for the city.



Figure 7: (1988). East German Map of West Berlin. Photograph. Brilliantmaps. <https://brilliantmaps.com/east-german-west-berlin/>

On June 26, 1963, J.F. Kennedy came to the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin to give a speech to the citizens. The speech offered American solidarity to the citizens of West Germany. Kennedy was not the only important speaker over the years. But his speech gave hope to the citizens and can be seen as a turning point in the Cold War. The speech showed the Soviet Union that the Western Allies were not going to leave West Berlin (Taylor, 2019).

“All free men, wherever they may live, are citizens of Berlin, and therefore, as a free man, I take pride in the words ‘Ich bin ein Berliner.’” (Pugh, 2014)

This picture is taken in 1966, we see that the St. Matthew Church is still standing after the bombings and we see the newly built Philharmoniker building. It shows that the surroundings of this area are still empty because of the bombings. It also shows that they are working hard to create a new cultural heart.



Figure 8: Koehler, (1966). View of the Kulturforum. Photograph. Nationalgalerie20. <https://www.nationalgalerie20.de/en/kulturforum/geschichte-des-kulturforums>

The night that the Berlin Wall fell. November 9, 1989, was the day that Schabowski gave the official orders that the borders were going to open again. This news spread directly and people wanted to know when the gates were going to open. Schabowski answered this question with, the moment this interview is over it starts. That weekend more than 2 million people visited Berlin to participate in the celebration (Engel, 2011). The next map is made just after the fall of the wall. The scars of the wall are still clearly visible in the streets. However, the city demolished big parts of the wall. In this way, the city starts to heal and becomes one city again. In this map is visible that the rail transportation between East and West is restored. Another important aspect of the healing of Berlin is the remains of the Berlin Wall. When the wall came down a lot of people gathered to demolish as much as they could. However, not everything on the wall was demolished. The government secured highlights of the wall. In this way, different parts of the wall are still visible in the daily life of the citizens and tourists. The remains can go from checkpoints to part of the wall but also the art that was created on the wall during the separation (Taylor, 2019).



Figure 9: (1990). General Berlin Map.
Photograph. Tundria.
<http://www.tundria.com/trams/DEU/Berlin-1990.shtml#Sources>

Chapter 2: Political Positions and Ideologies

Before diving deeper into the case studies, it is important to understand what ideologies both parties had. Their political structure influenced the choices that were made during this period. Not only in architecture but also in their culture. This chapter dives deeper into the cultural and artistic aspects of the parties. These aspects are not limited to their own ideology but have an impact on society as a whole. Before looking at East and West Berlin it is important to know why the city was split up in this manner.

After the Second World War, Berlin was destroyed and the citizens were traumatized by the events. There was an agreement signed at the Yalta Conference by the Allies that the city would be divided into four sectors. The allies would be administered jointly by occupying powers. This means that four powerful nations: the United States, Britain, France, and the Soviet Union were put in charge of this division. The result was four different zones with each their own characteristics of the Allie. This division would ultimately lead to a divided Germany (Pugh, 2014).

East Berlin (DDR)

East Berlin and Germany known as the DDR, Deutsche Demokratische Republik, were under influence of the communist state. The DDR was created on October 7, 1949. Communism was introduced in Russia in 1917 when Lenin started the revolution. Communism is based on a one-party rule. This means that one party rules the country. In this case, it means that the Soviet Union owns and controls all communication and transport in the country. This allows for manipulation or changing incoming information or goods. The DDR was established in the Soviet-occupied zone and is seen as a socialist state, they stand for a classless society. This means that everything is public property and not private anymore. Its objective was the subjugation of the whole of society to ideology and the exclusive leadership of the Communist Party (Childs, 2014). If we go deeper into one of the main differences between the rules of the DDR and the BRD (Bundes Republik Deutschland), art and culture, we find the following aspects. In the DDR there was no right in Freedom of the Arts. In West Berlin, art had the purpose of educating and it was seen as a related method. The DDR didn't allow this way of communication, the socialist culture was planned, with limited access and less excellence. This culture was non-profit and the creators were asked to produce work that glorifies the socialist activities otherwise they were canceled in their work field. In this way, all culture and news were controlled by the DDR and this resulted in a big stream of artists leaving East Berlin (Childs, 2014).

West Berlin (BRD)

West Berlin also known as the BRD, Bundes Republik Deutschland, was a capitalist democracy and was occupied by the Western Allies, aligned with Western powers. The West German government was based on a parliamentary system with multiple parties. The reason why these allies were based in West Berlin was due to the symbolic effect Berlin had on the whole country. It was known for its freedom and openness, and it became a symbol of the West's commitment to democracy and human rights. It was a status of power to have ground in the (upcoming) capital of Germany and insurance that the government was under control. It was also called the Federal Republic of Germany. West Berlin was also called the capital without a country. In West Berlin, people were free to express their opinion in public. Not only in art but also in the news. West Berlin was the cultural hub for artists all over Europe. This made it possible to create a transparent layer in politics. The citizens were not limited to the expression of the BRD but got knowledge from both sides (Rottman, 2012).

Chapter 3: Mitte

Mitte is the central district of Berlin. It is the part that was destroyed the most during the Second World War. A total of 54% percent of the housing was destroyed. However, it is also the heart of most government offices, cultural buildings, and monuments. Most of these buildings were built after the Second World War, at the start of a divided Berlin. The destruction of the area allowed for new urban planning combined with the new ideology of the parties. When the city got divided in 1961, some districts got divided because of the Wall. Mitte was one of these districts. The location of the Berlin Wall resulted in a district where landmarks and monuments got split up, think about the Reichstag on the West side and Brandenburg Gate on the East side. In the map below we see the location of the Wall and a few important buildings that were divided because of the Berlin Wall (Arandjelovic, 2014).



Figure 10: Districts East Berlin 1986-1990. Photograph. Wikipedia. <https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oost-Berlijn>

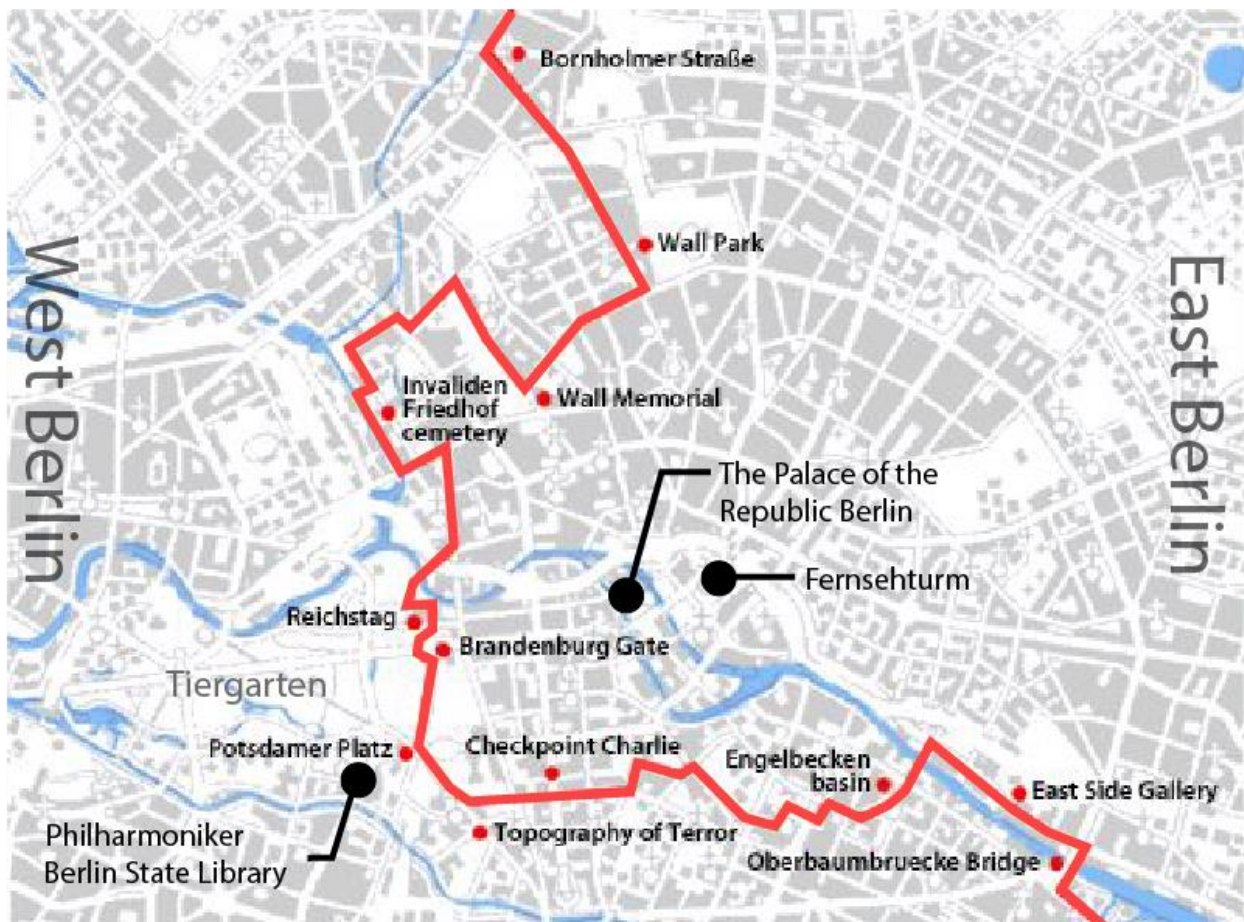


Figure 11: Laponder, LJF. (2023). Case study locations. Own design

Chapter 4: Analysis of the case studies

The district, Mitte is chosen for the four case studies. Two on the East and two on the West side of the Berlin Wall. The buildings fit in the category of government, public buildings, and icons. By analyzing these buildings using the next questions, a relation or difference can be detected.

1. *What influence had postmodernism on the political situation of Berlin?*
2. *How is monumentality used in the Berlin architecture during the Berlin Wall?*
3. *How are the buildings perceived by society?*

West Berlin art and cultural buildings

At the end of the 1950s, plans were already made to build a cultural axis across Berlin. This idea came from the architect Hans Scharoun, the man that was president of the Academy of Arts at that point in time. After the destruction of the Second World War combined with the building plans from the Nazi era, the sight remained fallow. It was an ideal location to fulfill this cultural center. The new cultural forum would boost morale in the city and prevent mass immigration. This area is also called the Art, Music, and Science in Mitte. (Vergeer, 2022)

Then the Berlin Wall was built. The Kulturforum was going to be close to the Berlin Wall. This means that it was going to get a prominent location for West Berlin and the DDR. The location resulted in a long period where there was a lot of debate about the design of this area. Finally, in 1963 the first building was opened in this area. It was the Philharmoniker by Hans Scharoun. This building is the home of the Berliner Philharmoniker, one of the best orchestras in the world. Five years later came the second building, the New National Gallery. This building was designed by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and houses classical modernism. The design is relatable to van der Rohe, steel and glass architecture with a tent-like roof. Even later came the Kammermusiksaal in 1984, the Musikinstrumentmuseum in 1987, and the State Library in 1978 (Kulturforum, z.d.).



Figure 12: Laponder, LJF. (2023). Kulturforum. Own Design

This long list of projects made the Art, music, and Science Center of Berlin. An area that after the Wall remained its value. For this thesis, the Philharmoniker and State Library are analyzed for West Berlin.

Philharmoniker

Introduction

In 1944 during World War 2 the original Berlin Philharmoniker was destroyed by British bombers. The new Berlin Philharmoniker is designed by Hans Scharoun and was built between 1960 and 1963. Philharmoniker was the first building that opened as a part of the Kulturforum in West Berlin. The building is characterized by its organic aesthetics and the configuration of the concert hall, where the stage is surrounded on all sides by seats. This new arrangement of seating was called the vineyard style (Vergeer, 2022).

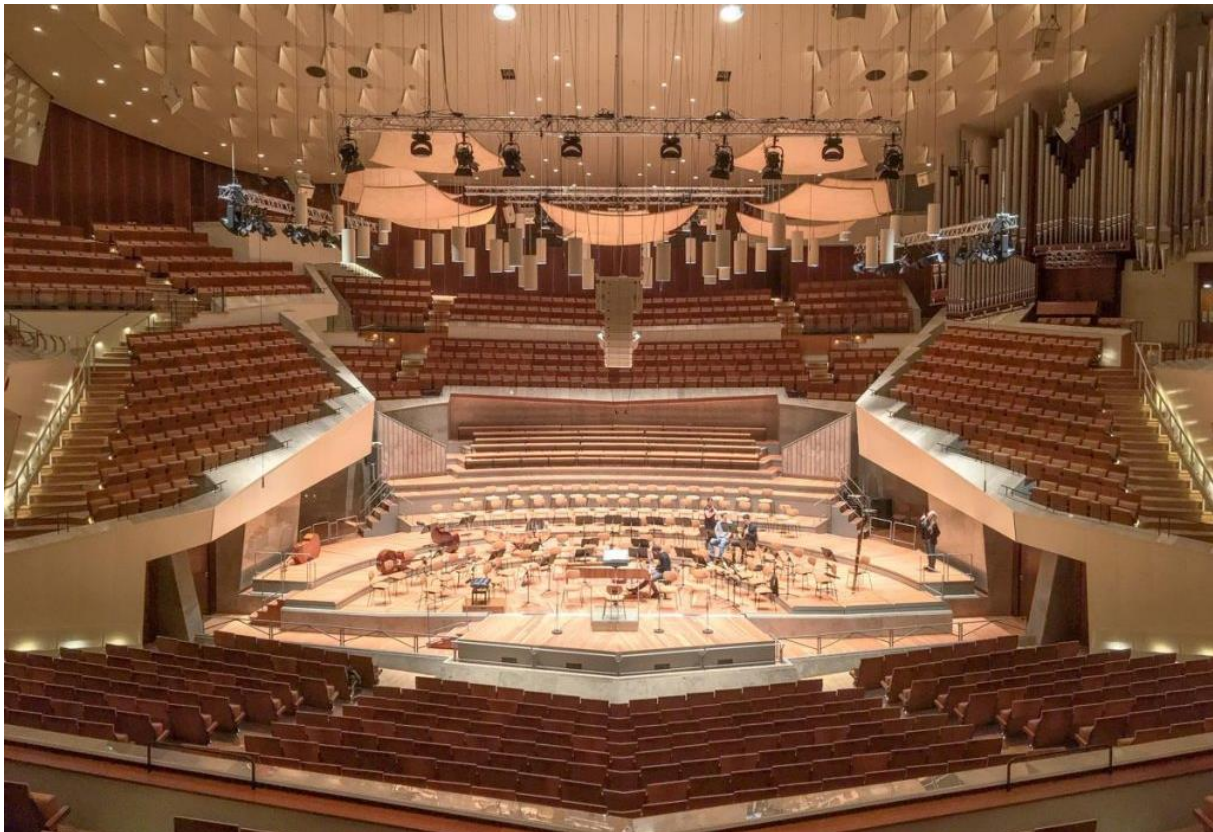


Figure 13: Hörsäle der Welt: Philharmonie Berlin. (2021). Photo. fidelity-online. <https://www.fidelity-online.de/hoersaele-der-welt-philharmonie-berlin/>

What influence had postmodernism on the political situation of Berlin?

Philharmoniker was the first finished building that was going to be part of the Kulturforum in West Berlin. This plays a big role in the political aspect because of its visibility to East Berlin. It is the start of the large-scale projects between East and West Berlin. In the design are several references to the political situation between East and West. The first sign is the location of the building. Philharmoniker is in the first row of the Kulturforum, this is the closest building to the Berlin Wall of the new development area. Combined with the tent-roof structure and bright color makes it a visible building in the eyesight of East Berlin (Campbell, z.d.). The next point is in the seating arrangement of the hall. The vineyard-style seating arrangement reminds the politics of the balance between individual and community. Something that marks West Berlin and gives a hint to East Berlin (Vergeer, 2022). The last point is the extravagant design of the building. The architecture draws a lot of attention, not only for its function. West Berlin got a lot

of publicity for the exterior and seating arrangement (Campbell, z.d.). The publicity was not intended to be connected with politics, but during the period, it was also used for it.

Monumentality

The building was intended to be a monument. It can be seen as an icon because of its unique shapes and design methods but that was not the intention of this building. The tent roof-like structure is described as a beacon of democracy and is visible on the East side of the Wall (Vergeer, 2022). Because the Philharmoniker was the first building at the Kulturforum it got a symbolic significance in the city's post-war reconstruction. The site of the Kulturforum was at that time point mostly ruins. Therefore, the Philharmoniker was seen as a clear expression of a political statement directed toward East Berlin.

How is the building perceived by society?

The Philharmoniker was designed with one thing in mind Scharoun said. It was to turn visitors into active participants in the building (Campbell, z.d.). The auditorium has a unique seating arrangement that gives the visitors the feeling that they belong to a collective. This was achieved by the vineyard-style platforms, the platforms have different shapes and heights that embrace the podium of the hall. Every view is mixed with the audience and musicians. The seating arrangement was new and innovative at the time. People were drawn to participate in the event but were also free to move around in the seating arrangement. This meant that the concert hall had a balance between the individual and the community, which marks an open democratic society. In this way, Scharoun's design shows that the active participants are a reflection of democracy. However, Scharoun wanted the building to be the ultimate performer (Vergeer, 2022). He achieved this concept due to the organic shapes in the building.

Berlin State Library

Introduction:

The Library is a realization of the 1940s sketches Scharoun made with ambitions and intentions for the architecture after the war. The library is constructed between 1967 and 1978. Something that can be seen directly when walking in the Kulturforum, is the similarities between the architecture of the Philharmoniker and the Library (Pugh, 2014).



Figure 14 Berlin State Library: Departments of General Philology Institute: (n.d.). [Photo].
www.chechs.com. [https://www.chechs.com/institute-of-the-chechen-and-general-philology/`](https://www.chechs.com/institute-of-the-chechen-and-general-philology/)

What influence had postmodernism on the political situation of Berlin?

The idea of the Library was to help anticipate the upcoming reunification of Berlin and Germany. However, by the time construction began, the political and cultural circumstances were changing. When the library was completed the ideology of the government wasn't in line with the original plan. Even the original building schedule and budget were totally different from the original plan. The total cost of the project went from 90 million DM to 225 million DM. This is an increase of two and a half times (Pugh, 2014). As a result, the State Library can be seen as a development in a changing government during the Cold War and also the changing architecture in West Berlin. It provides insight into how postwar architecture and art were perceived by the critique of modernism and by countercultural groups (Pugh, 2014). Besides the postmodernism style, it can also be connected with the renewed interest in expressionism. These two styles tend to overlap in this design when looking at the lack of rational forms, anti-symmetry, and playfulness of the design (Vergeer, 2022).

Monumentality

Scharoun described the State Library as 'anti monumental' on the 'human scale and free (Vergeer, 2022). This can be seen in the lack of centrality or formal symmetry. However, the State Library was designed from a foundation and their intention was to create the largest library in Berlin and even in Germany. This is also in line with the intention to gain the trust of the citizens. The West Berlin politics aimed to return and restore the belongings of the SPK's collection. This collection had been stored in the small town of Marburg for the War (Pugh, 2014). For these reasons, the State Library can be seen as an intentional monument.

How is the building perceived by society?

The design Scharoun made for the State Library is largely influenced by his interest in what Blundell Jones calls Wegführung and Lichtführung (Path-leading and light-leading). The concept of Scharoun consisted of the experience of the individual visitor. The visitor path would serve as the link between the entry level and the Reading room (Pugh, 2014). In the design were several other visions implemented. Such as light and glass that would symbolize the societal transformation. He called this 'light experience' and it would help to achieve 'space of the intellect'. The glass would help create a more open and unified social order that would evoke an emotional response and bring people together (Vergeer, 2022). It is interesting how the design of the State Library is influenced by the symbolism and formal language of the pre-war period of the West's transcendence, and the divided Berlin during the Wall. The symbolism had increased significantly within the divided city, turning the State Library into the center of the formation of a new harmonious community (Vergeer, 2022). The opening of the State Library resulted in a mix of different opinions. From critic Julius Posener: "Cultural sanctuary" is a building that liberated the people compared than limiting them. Edgar Wisniewski talks about the classical library as a description of the State Library (Pugh, 2014).

East Berlin political and cultural buildings

The chosen case studies are buildings that fit into the categories of governmental, public, and icons. This is different from the cultural case studies in West Berlin.

Fernsehturm

Introduction

One of Berlin's contemporary icons in the skyline of Berlin is the Fernsehturm located at Alexanderplatz. The Fernsehturm is built between 1965 and 1969 on the East side of Berlin. The tower is 368 meters tall and stands alone in the city (Pugh, 2014). Who designed the building is unclear. It is clear that it was a group of various architects and that the first concept came from Henselmann. In 1958 he made a drawing of a 300-meter-tall tower, similar to the existing tower (Vergeer, 2022). The Fernsehturm had a prominent location in the city center of East Mitte and had a symbolic meaning for East and West.



Figure 15 Fernsehturm: Bildarchiv preussischer [Kulturbesitz]. (1973). Section of the Berlin Wall, Potsdamer Platz [Photo]. [www.ghdi.ghi-dc.org. https://ghdi.ghi-dc.org/print_document.cfm?document_id=2504](https://ghdi.ghi-dc.org/print_document.cfm?document_id=2504)

What influence had postmodernism on the political situation of Berlin?

The Fernsehturm became representative of East Berlin. However, Walter Ulbricht, leader of the SED declared the Fernsehturm as the emblem of Berlin. The tower consists of concrete and a silver dome. The function was not only to transmit radio or tv, but it also had a viewing platform and a restaurant (Pugh, 2014). The architecture was modern and showed that East Berlin could provide their future economically and technologically. The Fernsehturm was a contrast with the existing buildings in the Mitte district. Therefore, the surrounding buildings carry the historical responsibility of Germany (Vergeer, 2022).

The new tower contributed to the modern image of East Berlin and created competition between East and West. It also contributed to the plaza Alexanderplatz. Alexanderplatz, with its open space and the imposing Fernsehturm, has a strong emotional and psychological impact on visitors and residents. The scale of form creates cathedralic qualities and emphasizes the power of the state over the individual. Despite this, Alexanderplatz remained an important hub of East Berlin, connected in purpose to the neighboring Stalin Allee, and became a destination for tourists from the Soviet, this elevated the status of East Berlin.

Monumentality

The Fernsehturm is built for several reasons. The first reason is to show the West how economically and technologically advanced the East was at that time point. It shows what they are capable of. The second aspect is the location at Alexanderplatz. The location is in the city center of Mitte, which is close to the Berlin Wall. This meant that the tower is widely seen over West and East Berlin. The plaza was also chosen wisely. Because the architects already knew that the building was going to draw a lot of visitors, they chose a location, Alexanderplatz, where people easily could gather. In this way the citizens and visitors of Berlin are always reminded of the presence of the Fernsehturm and therefore the Socialist Party (Pugh, 2014). Out of these reasons, we can conclude that the impact of the tower was intentionally thought out and that it originally was created to be a symbolic monument. A symbol for Berlin and the situation between East and West. However, because of its restaurant and viewpoint, it also has a public function. Therefore, it can also be seen as a landmark.

How is the building perceived by society?

This tall standing tower is an icon and addition to the Berlin Skyline. But in the time, it was built, it had a positive and negative side to society. For East Berlin, it was a statement of their best work and development in technology and economy. In West Berlin, it was the constant reminder of the growth of East Berlin and with a height of 360 meters, it was widely visible throughout the city center. Another idea that was implemented into the building was the reflective panels on top of the tower. With a certain angle and sunlight, a cross would appear on the surface (Vergeer, 2022). This phenomenon embarrassed the DDR and in particular its president. The president was Walter Ulbricht and he stood for the separation of Christianity from his citizen's identities (Pugh, 2014).

The Palace of the Republic Berlin

Introduction

The Palace of the Republic Berlin was built between 1973 and 1976 and it can be seen as one of the best-known buildings ever built in the DDR. It evolved from the early Honecker regime's political, economic, and cultural changes. It was the SED's long-anticipated "Central Building," which in many ways embraces the ideology of the early Honecker era. The idea was to have a building where official governmental functions, leisure, and entertainment facilities were combined. It would be a "people palace" that would facilitate the individual interest of the "average people". The palace is a unique example that represents the architecture of the DDR. Because of the great importance of the building for the party, no costs were spared. The best material, construction, and details were used to create this building (Vergeer, 2022) (Pugh, 2014).



Figure 16 Palace of the Republic Berlin: Palace of the Republic Berlin. (1977). [Photo].
www.architectuul.com. <https://architectuul.com/architecture/palace-of-the-republic-berlin>

What influence had postmodernism on the political situation of Berlin?

The Palace of the Republic Berlin was a highly symbolic building, representing the political and cultural values of the East German government. The building was designed for politics and the citizens. That meant that all functions are under one roof, and it symbolizes the larger goals of socialism (Pugh, 2014). Besides the building, it was also placed in the Berlin context. MZG collective considered the building's spatial context and strived to unify the area from Alexanderplatz to Museum Island. The intention was to create visual and spatial connections that would harmonize the building with its surroundings, including the historic Unter den Linden boulevard and East Germany's "socialist street," Karl-Marx-Allee. While this approach to architecture was not directly related to the political situation in Berlin, it reflects the importance of urban planning and design in shaping the city's overall character and identity. The Palace of the Republic was intended to be a symbol of East German culture and identity, and its relationship to the surrounding urban environment was an important consideration in achieving this goal (Pugh, 2014).

Monumentality

The Palace of the Republic in Berlin is a building that embraces the concept of monumentality in its design and function. Although the trend towards monumental architecture was generally considered a Western phenomenon, The Palace of the Republic clearly fits within this category, highlighting the economic and cultural forces at work in the DDR (Vergeer, 2022).

Critics of the Centre Pompidou and the ICC also experienced similar criticisms at the Palace of the Republic, citing its scale, expense, and extravagant design as evidence of its monumental character (Pugh, 2014). The building's transparency and open plan were meant to promote communication and contact among people, while also serving as a symbol of DDR identity and the larger goals of socialism. The Palace of the Republic was designed to be a "zone of communication" that connected the social, political, and cultural aspects of East German life under one roof (Pugh, 2014). Besides its similarities to contemporary global trends in architectural design, the Palace of the Republic was also unique in its political and cultural context. The Palace of the Republic was meant to represent the socialist ideology and the East German state. Graffunder's concept of "city-openness" was reflected in the design of the Palace of the Republic, with its visual accessibility complemented by literal accessibility. The building could be entered from all four sides, and the main entrance was designed to be welcoming and expansive. The lobby was also conceived as a "zone of communication," providing a transitional space between the exterior street and the building's interior. Graffunder emphasized the importance of creating an inviting and accessible building that would serve as a symbol of DDR's identity (Vergeer, 2022). Its monumental character was not only a reflection of its physical appearance but also its cultural and historical significance as a lasting symbol of the socialist ideology and the DDR.

How is the building perceived by society?

The perception of the citizens towards the Republic Palace was mixed. On the one hand, the structure was viewed as a cultural hub that offered space for a range of events. This includes concerts, exhibitions, and political events. It was seen as a symbol of East German modernity and technological progress. The Palace was also praised for its openness and accessibility, with its central location and multiple entrances allowing for easy access to the building. On the other hand, many Berliners were critical of the building and saw it as a show of the East Berlin government. The building was expensive to construct and maintain, and its modernist style clashed with the historic architecture of the surrounding area.

Results

The four case studies were tested on the topics of the political, architectural, and monumental aspects of the project in relation to the division of Berlin. This chapter dives deeper into the differences and similarities between the case studies.

The first comparison is between the State Library and The Palace of the Republic Berlin. Between the State Library and the Republic are many differences but also similarities. Both projects are a result of an architectural expression of political identity. They are designed to fit in the political goals and ideology. This means that the architect did his best to create a building that would enhance political values and ideas. However, buildings can be perceived differently by the public. This means that the way how they are presented is the changing factor. The Palace of the Republic is most of the time discussed in political terms combined with government officials. Compared to the State Library which rarely gets referenced directly by architectural critics. This approach is part of what made the State Library a more effective political symbol than the Palace of the Republic. By avoiding the political language, the building got a better connection with democratic values. It was perceived as natural and self-evident for this building. Public opinion is not only spread through people but also by critics in East and West Berlin. This can be seen in the Palace. False claims were made, and East Berlin tried to undermine West Berlin. On the other hand, we have the State Library which showed its openness and accessibility, which resulted in claims that were about these values.

The second comparison is between the Philharmoniker and the Palace of the Republic Berlin. The Palace tried to be a monument in the way it was used in West Berlin. However, their political ideology undermines the aesthetic and architectural ideology compared to the West. The physical size, visibility, and impact did fulfill the terms. The Palace is found wanting, a cheap copy of the Western models. Critics say that the tension is visible in the design Heinz Graffunder made, because of the conflict between the modernist elements combined with the political aspects. The building lacked originality and coherence. Therefore, it failed to live up to the avant-garde standards.

The third comparison is between the Fernsehturm and the Philharmonic. These two buildings are an asset in the skyline of Berlin but besides their unique or extraordinary design, there are some differences. First of all, the intention of why they were made. The function Philharmoniker is to house the orchestra compared to the tv tower for surveillance purposes by the East German secret police and to broadcast tv or radio. Their similarities lay in the location and the architectural intentions. First of all, the location, both buildings are located in the eyesight of the wall. One high above all buildings and one with a tent-roof-like structure so it can be seen on the other side of the wall. But the roof of the Philharmoniker had a political meaning, this is also used in the materials of the Fernsehturm. So, both projects have a political meaning, but one expresses it in their function and both in their design.

The fourth comparison is between the State Library and Philharmoniker. These two buildings are both public buildings but were built in different time periods. Philharmoniker was completed in 1963 and the State Library in 1978. Over the years the political positions changed and also the public opinions about these topics. This resulted in certain design choices in the State Library that were more focused on the symbolism and formal language of the pre-war.

Conclusion

Through the different ideologies of the parties, the DDR and the BDR both had common goals that they tried to achieve through their architecture. The differences lay in the execution to achieve these goals. Their goals were to gain the trust of the people, show the power of the party, and create an identity. Because of the contrast between the political parties, the Berlin Wall was a harsh line between the two sides. There was a left and right but no in-between. Architects needed to change their own concepts to the political developments during the Wall. But because of the changing political ideologies, the view on modernism changed for example in East Berlin. People were forced to agree with political ideologies.

Both parties had to encounter how society perceived the buildings, as their buildings were an expression of the political system they represented. The Philharmoniker represents democracy through the vine-yard shape venues. This allowed active participants to become a reflection of democracy. The State Library is seen as a pre-war symbol that was created to preserve the Prussian heritage. The Fernsehturm is an addition to the skyline of Berlin that reminded the people of the growth of their party. And the Palace of the Republic Berlin is a symbol of East German modernity and was used for many functions. All these methods have the purpose of gaining trust in society.

The definition of monumentality can variate between projects. But it can be categorized as an icon or as a monument, also if it is intentional or unintentional. The Philharmoniker and the State Library of Berlin are intended to be a monument, because of their symbolic meaning in the new Kulturforum. But Philharmoniker can also be seen as an icon due to its unique shapes and design. This also implied for the Fernsehturm. It was intended to be a monument that reflected economic and technological development. But it was also an icon in the Berlin skyline. The Palace of the Republic Berlin wanted to be a monument and can be seen as a monument, because of highlighting the economic and cultural forces of the DDR.

The development of a new identity in Berlin was a process. The expression of architectural symbolism of the Post-war combined with the new political developments. The Philharmoniker was the first building of the new Kulturform in West Berlin. Because of the prominent location of the plot and area, it got a significant role in the political situation because of its visibility from East Berlin. The modern artistic design also supported the idea of a beacon of democracy. The State Library of Berlin is a process on its own. This is because of the delay in the building process, which resulted in different political standpoints compared to the starting point. The State Library is built in a postmodernist style, it can also be connected with the renewed interest in expressionism. For the Fernsehturm it is clearly visible that was built in a modernist style. The unique design combined with the concrete structure reflected modern developments. The Palace of a Republic Berlin was designed to not only be interesting as a building for politics and citizens. But also, in the large-scale situation for the Karl-Marx-Allee. The building had an impact on the urban development of East Berlin.

This research refers to a small list of case studies on both sides of the Berlin Wall. It gives a perspective between the political and architectural influences. An in-depth investigation could be valuable for further research.

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Attachments

- A1: The Berlin Wall
- A2: Timeline Berlin
- A3: Grosser Stadtplan Berlin
- A4: Reviving Berlin
- A5: Allies division Berlin
- A6: East and West Berlin
- A7: Map East Berlin
- A8: View of the Kulturforum
- A9: Berlin metro lines after the wall
- A10: Case study locations
- A11: Districts
- A12: Kulturforum