

Potsdamer Platz and Development in Reunified Berlin

by

Nomi V. Brakhan

B.A., Architecture  
Wellesley College, 1994

SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF URBAN STUDIES AND PLANNING  
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF CITY PLANNING  
AT THE  
MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

JUNE 1996

copyright 1996 Nomi V. Brakhan. All rights reserved.

The author hereby grants to MIT permission to reproduce and to distribute  
publicly paper and electronic copies of this thesis document in whole or in part.

Signature of Author: \_\_\_\_\_  
Department of Urban Studies and Planning  
May 23, 1996

Certified by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Alice H. Amsden  
Ellen Swallow Richards Professor of Political Economy  
Thesis Supervisor

Accepted by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mark Schuster  
Chair, MCP Committee

MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE  
OF TECHNOLOGY

JUL 02 1996

LIBRARIES

The author wishes to thank in particular: the thesis committee for their support and contribution throughout this process; Tony Mannarino and Florian von Buttlar, who both showered me with amazing hospitality, generous help and intellectual stimulation during my stay in Berlin, and without whom this thesis could not have been written.

# Potsdamer Platz and Development in Reunified Berlin

by

Nomi V. Brakhan

Submitted to the Department Of Urban Studies and Planning  
on May 23, 1996 in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of Master of City Planning

## ABSTRACT

This is a thesis about Berlin and its handling of the first major development project after the fall of communism in 1989. It examines how a city administration imposes some type of organization and structure to the process of shaping the city, when it is starting not even from scratch, but burdened under heavy historical issues and pressures of modern development.

The central research question is: What can be learned from the Potsdamer Platz project as a representation of contemporary real estate development in Berlin? To fulfill the research goals, I have relied on literature dealing with political economy, urban form, and economic development for background information. Given the contemporaneousness of the topic, recent newspapers, journals and government documents provided specific information. By far the most informative source, however, has been a series of interviews conducted in Berlin with parties participating in the Potsdamer Platz project (developers, planners and investors), as well as parties knowledgeable on the subject of post-reunification planning in Berlin (journalists and architects).

I begin with a general background and overview of post-reunification development in Germany, then discuss Berlin and its specific issues, then move on to discuss in increasing detail the Potsdamer Platz project. The journey reveals a need for an administrative restructuring of the Berlin planning agencies, as well as a need for healing time in which officials and the public alike can adjust to Berlin's amazing sociological transformation. Central and Eastern European cities might expect similar issues to surface in their first major development projects as were present during this project in Berlin.

Thesis Supervisor: Alice H. Amsden

Title: Ellen Swallow Richards Professor of Political Economy



**Table of Contents**

**Potsdamer Platz and Development in Reunified Berlin** .....7  
    Research Question .....7  
    Objectives/Theory/Hypothesis .....7  
    Methodology .....7  
    Outline .....9  
**General Background and Overview** .....11  
    Germany as the Gateway to the Opening Eastern Europe .....11  
    Berlin as a Whole .....13  
    The Treuhand .....14  
    Other Barriers to Development .....16  
**The Significance of History in Potsdamer Platz** .....18  
    Friedrich Gilly and the Monument for Frederick the Great .....19  
    Karl Friedrich Schinkel and the Cathedral to the Wars of Liberation .....19  
    Industrialization, The Weimar Era and Potsdamer Platz Flourishes .....20  
    Occupation: Potsdamer Platz is Divided .....21  
    June 17, 1953 Riots in Potsdamer Platz .....22  
    The Wall 1961 .....22  
    The Wall Comes Down .....23  
**The Administrative Structure of Planning in Reunified Berlin** .....26  
**The Tradition of Competition in Berlin Spatial Structure** .....34  
**The Media and Public Sentiment over Development in Berlin** .....38  
    Media Weapon .....52  
**The Competition System** .....57  
    Overview .....57  
    The Urban Form Competition Concept .....57  
    debis Project History .....61  
    The Urban Form Competition at Potsdamer Platz .....63  
    debis Project Description .....75  
    Sony Project Description .....77  
**The Development of a Theme for Development in Berlin** .....80  
    Democracy as a Theme .....83  
**Conclusion** .....88  
**Works Used** .....91  
**Appendix of Figures** .....99



## Potsdamer Platz and Development in Reunified Berlin

### Research Question

What can be learned from the Potsdamer Platz project as a representation of contemporary real estate development in Berlin?

### Objectives/Theory/Hypothesis

This is a thesis about Berlin and its handling of the first major development project after the fall of communism in 1989. My fascination of this topic lies in how a city administration imposes some type of organization and structure to the process of shaping the city, when it is starting not even from scratch, but burdened under heavy historical issues and the pressures of modern development. This examination began under the conviction that it is in such times of total chaos that the most imaginative planning solutions surface. Arguably by necessity, the Berlin agencies took on a relatively defensive role in the first major post-reunification development project. A critical analysis of its handling of Potsdamer Platz begs undertaking, especially now that Berlin's status is even iffier -- the municipal financial situation worsens daily, and investment interest has slowed. Additionally, other democratizing cities in Central and Eastern Europe may learn from Berlin's early experiences.

### Methodology

To fulfill the research goals, I have relied on literature dealing with political economy, urban form, and economic development for background information (see "Works Used"). Given the contemporaneousness of the topic, recent newspapers, journals and government documents provided specific information. By far the most informative source, however, has been a series of interviews conducted in Berlin with parties participating in the Potsdamer Platz project (developers, planners and investors), as well as parties knowledgeable on the subject of post-reunification planning in Berlin (journalists and architects). These individuals are often referred to in the body of the text. Questions asked centered around their individual development experiences in Berlin, particularly with respect to the Potsdamer Platz project. I left the interviewee the freedom to fill in the details in an effort to get at the most salient points from each perspective, hoping that the end result would be a rounded, comprehensive view of the process and of the story of Potsdamer Platz redevelopment to date.

The area I refer to throughout the text as Potsdamer Platz actually encompasses two distinct squares: Potsdamer Platz itself, and Leipziger Platz, the adjacent octagon. Sometimes the area is simply referred to as "the square". It lies in central Berlin, just south of the Brandenburg Gate and adjacent to the Tiergarten, Berlin's huge central park (see Figures 1 and 2). As shown in Figure 2, several major investors are involved in the development of this important area; the first to build were Daimler Benz (debis) and the Sony Corporation. The thesis concentrates on their experiences.

The thesis is organized first by level of generality, and then by chronology. I begin with a general background and overview of post-reunification development in Germany, then discuss Berlin and its specific issues, then move on to discuss in increasing detail the Potsdamer Platz project. As I hone in on each more specific level, I discuss it chronologically, filling in the relevant history as I go. The following outline maps out the sequence.



- I. What Can be Learned from this Topic?**
  - A. Research Question: What can be learned from the Potsdamer Platz project as a representation of contemporary real estate development in Berlin?
  - B. Objectives/Theory/Hypothesis
  - C. Methodology
  
- II. General Background and Overview**
  - A. Germany as the Gateway to the Opening Eastern Europe
  - B. Berlin as a Whole
  - C. The Treuhand
  - D. Other Barriers to Development
  
- III. The Significance of History in Potsdamer Platz**
  - A. Potsdamer Platz's Origin and the Inherent Symbolism
  - B. Subsequent Plans and Personalities
    - i. Friedrich Gilly and the Monument for Frederick the Great
    - ii. Karl Friedrich Schinkel and the Cathedral to the Wars of Liberation
    - iii. Industrialization, The Weimar Era and Potsdamer Platz flourishes
    - iv. Occupation: Potsdamer Platz is Divided
    - v. June 17, 1953 Riots in Potsdamer Platz
    - vi. The Wall 1961
    - vii. The Wall Comes Down
  
- IV. The Administrative Structure of Planning in Reunified Berlin**
  - A. The Pre-Reunification Structure
  - B. Why Current Structure is Unique within Germany
  - C. Difficulties in Establishing Regional Planning
  - D. Senatsverwaltung für Stadtentwicklung und Umweltschutz
  - E. Senatsverwaltung für Bau- und Wohnungswesen
  - F. Considerations to Combine the Two Agencies
  - G. Anecdotal Descriptions of Agencies and Differences Between Them
  - H. The Minimal Role of the District Planning Agencies
  
- V. The Tradition of Competition in Berlin Spatial Structure**
  - A. Early History
  - B. Interbau 1957
  - C. IBA 1987
  - D. Importance Today
  
- VI. The Media and Public Sentiment over Development in Berlin**
  - A. Mistrust of Big Corporations
  - B. Importance of Potsdamer Platz in Setting an Example for Investors
  - C. Major Personalities and Rivalries; Their Conflicting Ideologies
  - D. Recap of Major Controversies
    - i. Overriding Issue of Public/Private Balance of Power

- ii. Traditionalism
    - iii. Skyscrapers
  - E. Media Weapon
    - i. Lack of Public Sympathy
    - ii. Benz's 'Cultural Advantage'
    - iii. Hoffmann-Axthelm
    - iv. The European City's Role in Planning
- VI. The Competition System**
- A. Overview
    - i. Introduction of the Two-tiered System: Turning to Tradition
    - ii. Method Employed for Potsdamer Platz
  - B. The Urban Form Competition Concept: Who Creates Urban Form?
    - i. Potential Problems Posed by the Competition
      - a. Architect Participation
      - b. Investor Flight
    - ii. Star Architect and His Ego
    - iii. City Competence/Credibility
  - C. debis Project History
    - i. Reuter and the Background
    - ii. Pricing the Plot
    - iii. The Timing Issue
  - D. The Urban Form Competition at Potsdamer Platz
    - i. Competition as Ersatz Method in Institutional Unpreparedness
    - ii. The Jury
    - iii. Power Play Continues; the Richard Rogers Saga
    - iv. The Winning Scheme by Hilmer & Sattler
  - E. debis Project Description
  - F. Sony Project Description
- VII. The Development of a Theme for Development in Berlin**
- A. Competition Themes as Indicators of Ideology
  - B. Forming a Contemporary Theme
    - i. Critical Reconstruction
    - ii. Democracy and How it Has Confused Those in Charge

**VIII. Conclusion**

## General Background and Overview

### Germany as the Gateway to the Opening Eastern Europe

Eastern Germany has the significant role as gateway between eastern and western Europe. Central- and Eastern European political systems are 'democratizing', and their economies are adjusting toward western free market systems. In tandem with the exultation of newly acquired relative freedom, the pains of transformation in these regions appeared immediately. From want of capital and investment, difficulties continue today as the much hoped-for private investment flows have remained a myth.

Societies of today grapple with these comprehensive changes in hopes of a more stable future, and the citizens of these countries bear the brunt of the transformations through everyday sacrifice. In Central- and Eastern Europe, this means dealing with a spectrum of insecurities, from the very real and tangible unemployment caused by economic restructuring, to the vague chaos caused by political precariousness. The tumultuous ideological, political and economic issues seep through to the practical day-to-day, and have detrimental effects on contemporary quality of life as well as future economic prospects.

Amid these sweeping changes, the physical form of the city holds an important role. Changes in the urban form can indicate investment taking place, and thus economic prosperity (or at a minimum, expectations of prosperity). The enhancement in quality of life following such prosperity will in turn be reflected by improvements in urban form, in two ways: deliberately, by means of real estate development that promotes or supports the willed-for changes; and indirectly, through spillover development that comes as a result of these changes. To serve as an example, suppose the city government undertakes a large-scale infrastructure investment to emphasize freer mobility and better public access to labor and service markets. The new infrastructure makes certain pockets of the urban area accessible, indeed helping people move around with greater ease. A private developer then capitalizes on the heightened traffic level by building a retail center, thus translating the traffic into sales activity, providing citizens with access to further services. The intentional and the unintentional together shape the physical transformation of the city as it experiences the systemic and institutional transformation.

Nowhere will these symbiotic reverberations be more evident than in Berlin, a city where expectations for its future role in the world run sky-high. In many ways the proposed German capital city has it easiest of all regions

undergoing democratization and the move to a market economy. First, because half of the city had remained part of Western Europe after World War II, political and institutional transformation of East Berlin was a matter of its appendage to West Berlin systems. The adoption eliminated many hazards of starting from scratch that plague the rest of Central and Eastern Europe. Indeed all of eastern Germany had western Germany as a stabilizing force and model. Public subsidies from the richer West have been essential to development in the East.

I believe that more significantly, this political and geographic closeness to the West created an environment in Berlin that, in the eyes of the rest of the world, was and is secure, stable and credible. To be sure, expectations surrounding the future of the almost magically symbolic city have run high. Berlin is considered by foreigners part of Western Europe, and is therefore more familiar and approachable than a city in Eastern Europe. This impression has allowed for an initial, relatively low level of risk-aversion from foreign investors, and a consequent inflow of private investment interest. This sequence has been conspicuously absent from cities in the rest of Central- and Eastern Europe, much to the detriment of their development efforts. But as these economies stabilize, Berlin's development experiences will set an important precedent.

For better or worse, most of the potential investors' initial frenzy surrounding the opening of Berlin waned quickly. Five years after reunification, vacancies are high, rents are high, building starts are low, and most importantly, morale is low. A real estate Catch-22 has settled in, whereby development is not happening because investors are waiting for development to happen. Everyone sees locating in Berlin inevitable in the future; no-one wants to deal with the risk today.

An exception to the hiatus in development activity is the Potsdamer Platz project in former East Berlin. After relishing prewar fame as a bustling, fashionable urban center, Potsdamer Platz withered into wasteland during Communist rule. After the Wall came down it was adopted by large-scale investors such as Mercedes-Benz and the Sony Corporation for development of a huge, mixed-use complex which anticipates a revival of Potsdamer Platz's former glory. The project began not long after reunification, and is now in the early stages of construction.

I examine here in detail the privately-financed development project in Potsdamer Platz, in light of the development process in Berlin. My objective is to analyze critically the steps taken that have provided for the successful execution of the project under complicated economic and institutional circumstances. This entails an analysis of the current development process in Berlin, and how it has been affected by the economic transition as illustrated by this project in particular.

Of course, these characteristics I claim to have made Berlin's transition "easier" than other cities' have also marked the transition with unique complications which will distort the appropriateness of this project for other cities. Berlin has a complex history, for one in its role within Europe, but especially in regard to the endogenous relationship between East- and West Berlin. This history has political, social, and economic implications that distort what lessons we may apply from Berlin to regions elsewhere, as well as what recommendations we can make for Berlin in the future. The body of my text, therefore, includes an analysis of these unusual characteristics that set the city apart.

### Berlin as a Whole

Berlin is a city like no other. Modern history transformed it from a unified, cosmopolitan European hub to a divided island. The city spent 45 years in isolation, a sentence long enough to create habits completely out of sync with the rest of Europe. In a cathartic reunification in 1990, Berlin was brought together and presented to the world. Society as the Berliners knew it was left reeling in the wake of the change. Six years later, the pieces are still being collected and put in order.

I propose that two important elements denote the shape of Berlin from the time the Wall came down to the present: the human capital and the physical capital. In terms of productive capacity relative the West, 1990 found both in a significantly deteriorated state. The buildings, factories and transportation linkages had all been long neglected, and showed it. Because of this state of disrepair, when the borders opened and shed light on what was available and uniformly operating across the West, the equipment in the East instantaneously was found obsolete. Implicitly, the workers were as well. For it was not simply their skills that no longer were relevant in an open economy, but a complete system of integrated business practices that the Easterners had relied upon. The detriment to their morale that arose from the surprise of how

obsolete these systems were further compounded their troubles. In effect, the more modern West yanked the eastern citizens' entire employment carpet out from under them.

Like their parallel states of relative deterioration, the human and physical capital had similarly exultant experiences upon reunification. While the people entertained ideas of their prosperity when their living standards would soon match those of western Germany, the capital stock received a rush of investment interest from foreign and domestic parties alike. A 1991 article headline in the Wall Street Journal announced: "Building Boom Sweeps Eastern Germany; Construction Seen Leading Economic Recovery" (Roth, 25 September 1991). At the onset of reunification, hopes were high indeed and Berlin was poised for rapid development. In the same article, a construction company's chairman guesses that "within two years it [the east] will be a different world".

Indeed, it is a different world, but probably not in the same way the optimistic chairman meant. Whereas the Easterners were originally encouraged by the West to expect impending economic equality, the burden of bringing them there became so great that morale on both sides was decimated. And that is not to stage the East as the victims of some pernicious political scam from the West; the grave underestimation of the eastern economy's backwardness came as a disappointment to all sides. The growing impatience makes development in Berlin an increasingly sticky issue.

### The Treuhand

No examination of post-reunification development in Germany is complete without discussion of the *Treuhandanstalt*, the agency in charge of privatizing the state-owned industries in the east. The Treuhand existed as the first of its kind from 1990 to 1994, in which time it had to balance a precarious position amid wildly conflicting interests. On the one hand, the agency was responsible for the transformation of eastern Germany to a functioning market economy based on private ownership; on the other hand, it was to protect the thousands of jobs that a total overhaul of the antiquated industrial sector would have eliminated. An examination of this agency alone provides useful insight into the issues surrounding development in a reunified Germany, and its experience is in many ways representative of those of Berlin planning agencies.

The most obvious parallel that can be carried over is that naturally, in striking a middle ground, the Treuhand was flogged by criticisms from either side; Berlin planners often had to take an unenviable no-win position. On one

extreme is the school that would have preferred the Treuhand to facilitate a complete and sweeping conversion of the east to the market economy. They argue that subsidy merely draws out the inevitable death of unviable businesses and slows the regeneration process, and at a great cost to the government to boot.

The opposing school retorts that the playing fields of the industries in the east and industries in the west are so unequal that otherwise viable businesses simply cannot compete under these circumstances. They maintain that the Treuhand should have lingered longer and offered more assistance until these firms could stand alone. Otherwise, Germany loses all industry in this region, a situation in their view neither necessary or practical, given the high labor and opportunity costs.

Aside from opposing viewpoints on the overall purpose of the Treuhand within German reunification policy, there were criticisms concerning its everyday operations<sup>1</sup>. Complaints focus on unwieldy, multiple layers of bureaucracy that burdened the potential investor. Indeed, if the staffing of management is a barometer of internal troubles, the Treuhand abounded, churning through three chief executives in the first half year, and suffering through the assassination of the fourth. Sideline rumors of scandal and corruption floated around, as well. These bureaucratic red tape tangles and sideline rumors have also been part of the planning agencies' experiences.

On the operational side, the Treuhand's role in the development process has much in common with the permanent planning agencies. Before any purchase, the Treuhand required that the buyer present a proposal for the property. A passable proposal included a capital commitment, a guarantee for job preservation, an agreement not to resell the land for up to ten years, and a similar land use on the site to that at present. These caveats proved in practice to be points of departure rather than outright criteria; even as points of departure they were loosely adhered to. We will see that in this way, the Treuhand represents a 'typical' post-reunification Berlin institution where rules have been established but conduct proves largely makeshift anyway.

Apart from its efficacy, the mere existence of the Treuhand deserves some inquiry. As one German investment banker put it, "What the Treuhand is doing now is disguised industrial policy" (WSJ, 1/2/92). The banker argues its

---

<sup>1</sup> See, above all, documentation by *the Wall Street Journal* as listed in "Works Used".

activities demonstrate that the German government is abandoning the free market and embracing a far more interventionist approach. However, I disagree: rather, the formation of the Treuhand was a strategic cushion to absorb some of the inevitable pains of reunification. Whether it was intended so is doubtful, but it seems clear that the Treuhand was less effective at what it set out to do than in what it did not explicitly set out to do: smooth social tensions in tumultuous times by acting as scapegoat, for a limited period. I will argue that the planning institutions had to take on a similar function. By design the Treuhand self-destructed after a set amount of time. The planning agencies, on the other hand, intend to carry on in their present form; for this reason critical analysis of this form is warranted.

### Other Barriers to Development

To achieve a well-rounded understanding of the Berlin development climate, a few other barriers to development should be acknowledged. One of the main hindrances to real estate development in eastern Germany was the issue of property rights. The often-conflicting claims on property in this region stem from the Nazi period, the Soviet occupation, and the Communist era. Thus, when a firm attempts the purchase of any piece of land in eastern Germany, it runs the risk of former owners cropping up and further delaying the process. The German unity treaty complicated the predicament by assuring citizens the right to reclaim. Controversial legislation later changed this, giving priority instead to potential investors and compensating former owners separately.

Another big obstacle is the labor force skill level. The labor situation in the east resembles the Catch-22 of development mentioned earlier. The problems of outdated industry and massive restructuring create widespread unemployment. The oversupply of workers fosters dire labor unrest, which in turn heightens the region's risk and uncertainty from the investor's perspective, effectively squelching investment, further dragging down the re-industrialization process, and driving up unemployment yet farther<sup>2</sup>.

Compounding the problem of skills was the problem of wages. The fiscal policy adopted by the government to resolve the monetary union between East and West simply equated the two currencies at a one-to-one

---

<sup>2</sup> See in particular Jrolf and Schmidt-Gothan, Sinn.



exchange. This decision has received much criticism, because it put upward pressure on prices and wages. The general complaint is that the east German worker is far less productive than the west German worker, and the wage equality eliminates any competitive advantage the easterner might have had<sup>3</sup>.

---

<sup>3</sup> See Bös, Corker et al.

## The Significance of History in Potsdamer Platz

The Potsdamer Platz project received so much attention not only because it was the first major development project after the Wall came down in Berlin, but also because it is a node of rich historical significance within the urban structure. This chapter provides a succinct history of what this square and Berlin have experienced together over time.

### Potsdamer Platz's Origin and the Inherent Symbolism

Though the square holds high value today because of its centrality, its conceptional function was as a gateway to the city. In the late 17th century, the road that passed through Potsdam Gate led to Sans Souci, the favorite country palace of King Friedrich I (1657-1713), and eventually it came to stretch all the way from Aachen at the German-Dutch border to Königsberg. To mark the 1730s expansion of the city wall, the surveyors of Friedrich Wilhelm I turned to the ideas behind the reconstruction of central Paris under Louis XIV. This 'enlightened' city form included the erection of three great public spaces at three major gates: a circle around Hallesches Gate, a square around Brandenburg Gate and an octagon at Potsdam Gate.

In *Berlin: The Politics of Order*, Alan Balfour clarifies the highly political symbolism of these figures. The octagon and its comrades were "solely a demonstration of the desire for a rational autocratic order, free from the confusion of history" (p. 17). At the time, Friedrich Wilhelm I wished with these open areas to display the consolidation of power he had achieved through disciplining the army and centralizing the government; they had the practical function of massing the troops. But more generally, the new Berlin city configurations represented a turning point for urban form: in direct contrast to the medieval city's random, organic nature of growth, this was an aristocratic imposition that "molded reality in relation to rational prediction and to simple notions of universal order, demanding that the city be the project of ideas rather than random incident" (p.17). Instead of growing out of the past, the city sought to create the future. And indeed Berlin never formed the old city center that can be found in most medieval European cities; this foundation has lasted through today in that Berlin is still a city never having had a center but which has formed many smaller centers dispersed throughout.

This juxtaposition of past versus present, of passive versus active urban growth carried through to the struggles of post-reunification development at

Potsdamer Platz. Embedded in contemporary development, however, is over 250 years of rich history the square owns. Aside from an array of different functions through time, the area has also been the subject of various plans for functions in the times the area did not physically change much. Just as Berlin's overall city form did not follow the 'natural' growth patterns of other cities, Potsdamer Platz never had a fully accidental appearance, it was always the subject of much attention; Berlin was highly planned as a symbolic capital city and Potsdamer Platz represented that status on a small scale. The following paragraphs outline the more notable uses and plans through time.

### Subsequent Plans and Personalities

#### Friedrich Gilly and the Monument for Frederick the Great<sup>4</sup>

Potsdamer Platz's early history, from 1732-1800, was a time of physical stasis but visionary activity. The legacy begins with the architect Friedrich Gilly and the deeply symbolic assignment from Friedrich Wilhelm II to honor his uncle, Frederick the Great. Friedrich Wilhelm II came to rule Prussia in 1786, and commissioned the monument to do justice for the memory of Germany's powerful leader in the then-contemporary "enlightened" architectural forms. He decided its most suitable location would be in the center of the gateway between the city and Frederick's favorite summer palace, in Potsdamer Platz. Gilly's design called for a massive and simple gate to frame the impressive temple and to mark the edge of the city (see Figure 3). That such a monument would occupy this square is a testimony to the square's significance within the city structure, as early as the 1700s. Shifting artistic sensibilities and the increasingly influential Napoleon (who ended up occupying Berlin from 1806 to 1813) caused the plans never to be realized.

#### Karl Friedrich Schinkel and the Cathedral to the Wars of Liberation<sup>5</sup>

Not much later another scheme for Potsdamer Platz was conceptualized, yet it was completely different in nature and spirit. In 1814 the famous German architect Karl Friedrich Schinkel designed an elaborate cathedral in Gilly's memory for this site, to celebrate the Wars of Liberation's victory over Napoleon and political freedom in united Germany (see Figure 4). In short, "within the flow of ideas that informs Leipziger Platz, Prussian culture, in less

---

<sup>4</sup> Summarized in large part from Balfour 1990.

<sup>5</sup> *ibid.*

than two decades, moved from the project for a monument to the memory of an absolute monarch to a symbol of the prospect of political freedom; and with it the architectural model moved from a Greek temple to a medieval cathedral" (Balfour, p. 31). True to form, tides shifted again soon thereafter: the hope of political freedom diminished, and Schinkel's plans for a 1000-foot national cathedral shrunk into a 62-foot iron obelisk. It was placed in 1821 in a park in a separate Berlin district instead of in Potsdamer Platz.

Schinkel stayed on to design what would happen in the square, however. In 1823, his placid and practical design for the new city gates with updated customs post and police station appeared, and the Leipziger Platz octagon (meant originally for a marketplace) transformed itself into a private park surrounded by residences. The timing aligns this relatively halcyon development of the square with the early stages of the industrial and commercial 19th century; for Balfour it "marks the decline of the metaphysical, the demise of romanticism, and the inception of pragmatism and socialism" (p.41). Thus already in its young pre-industrial life did Berlin's tumultuous culture manifest itself in the built form of Potsdamer and Leipziger Platz.

### Industrialization, The Weimar Era and Potsdamer Platz flourishes

As Berlin embraced the status of a turn-of-the-century, industrializing, commercial city, Potsdamer Platz mirrored this personae as it had Berlin's previous personas. The railway, the facilitator of Berlin's industrial leaps, ran through the Potsdam Gates starting in 1838 and brought massive numbers of migrant workers to serve the labor demands of the city's factories, assisting Berlin in its huge population growths during this period. This marks the official 'baptism' of Potsdamer Platz with that name, for the first time applied to the area in front of the Potsdamer train station. Adding later to this early rail traffic came the activity of the streetcar and the automobile, with Berlin's first traffic light finding its home in Potsdamer Platz.

The square from its baptism point became synonymous with transportation, and the volumes of passers-by attracted much commerce and trade in the area. The buildings lining Potsdamer Platz housed shops on the ground floors and apartments above, in what late in the century might have been seen as a desirable mixed-use setting (see Figure 5). A newspaper reports on the Leipziger Street in 1838 as: "... a stream in both directions of pedestrians, taxis, carriages, and other vehicles; the tight, massive houses roar from the

continual shaking, and residents, who earlier sought here a still, pretty, street, with the privileges of being close to the land and the green of the trees and the fields, wish to go deeper into the city to find the lost peace. Industry will henceforth probably inhabit the Leipziger Street ..." (*Dokumentation*, p.8) The activity levels climbed and plateaued when they reached a frenzy. This early description seems to hold for the rest of the 1800s: the square was the stage for much action, and the stage set retained its frenetic character.

One of the few structural changes undertaken in the area was the addition of the Wertheim Department store (finished 1904, see Figure 6), what Alan Balfour views as the quintessential temple of consumerism in its time. The building stood directly on Leipziger Platz, representing perhaps the culmination of the square's role in the city personae as burgeoning symbol of industrialization. One visitor remarked in her 1895 journal: "The bustle of the main traffic streets such as Leipziger and Friedrich Streets is formally stunning; the electric cars and the trams create a continuous line, cars of all types, taxis, hundreds of bicycles and tricycles drive next to, in front of, behind and often on top of one another, the noises of all these vehicles, the rattling of the wheels is ear-ripping, the crossing of streets an art for the city folk, a fright for the provincial. When crossing the Potsdamer Platz, Mrs. von Beulwitz claimed at the beginning she effusively hugged herself each time she found herself on the island in one piece! Wertheim heaved in and out like a beehive. . ." (*Dokumentation*, p. 12).

This trend of commercialism continued and grew in Berlin well into the Weimar Republic's championing of capitalism. Likewise, Potsdamer Platz's role as the embodiment of this activity only increased in the first half of the 20th century. It came to be known in the 1920s as the symbol of the fascinating world-class city, and "subways, streetcars and buses, as well as the long-distance rail brought ten thousands of people into the heart of the city every day. Hotels and shops, restaurants and entertainment centers marked the dense, multifaceted face of the square. By evening it was bathed in a sea of light by hectic, shifting, luminous advertising" (*Dokumentation*, p.15). This was a peak of life and activity in Berlin that the square would not witness again.

### Occupation: Potsdamer Platz is Divided

The second world war left Potsdamer Platz severely bombed apart, but with enough traces of street pattern left so as to allow there a new, provisional

life (*Dokumentation*, p.19). Berlin was divided up by the occupying forces placing Potsdamer Platz on the seam between East and West. Naturally, this situation created for the square a new role that brought with it a new personality. Activity now centered around the informal market for coveted western goods that the East Berliners could buy here. Above the still-high levels of traffic, the visibility of the square to both the East and the West made it a propaganda magnet. In the same way that Times Square shows off New York's entertainment glitz, Potsdamer Platz in the post-war era became the somber stage for the cold war; Figure 7 demonstrates the playing out of the East-West conflict on the square. The billboards read: "We love life, therefore we fight remilitarization" and "The youth of the world united in Berlin help us to maintain the peace".

#### June 17, 1953 Riots in Potsdamer Platz

Another significant sign in its role as political stage, Potsdamer Platz found itself host to the 1953 people's riots against the government and against communism. Russian tanks confronted the 25,000 demonstrators at Potsdam Gate to try to quell the uprising, while West Berliners observed the chaos from behind the lines. A man recorded in memoirs that weapons were called for by the Allies, but they stood aloof, for intervention would have meant war (Thieme in *Dokumentation*, p. 18). The uprising on Potsdamer Platz was a turning point: shortly after, the department store on the border to the West was closed, and eventually demolished with all buildings that stood on the land that projected into West Berlin (Balfour, p. 147). The bodies of power sought to squelch not only the 1953 riot but all activity of the volatile area.

#### The Wall 1961

These destructive actions by the East German government along the border were part of the overall plan to permanently divide the city (Balfour, 147). In 1961, the Berlin Wall was built straight through this area, "... representing the most momentous action of the Berlin post-war developments" (*Dokumentation*, p.23). The Wall's path excepted a small triangular bit of land which was too difficult to control (see Figure 8). This site was left loosely fenced in, a trespassing attraction for daredevil West Berlin teenagers (Villiers Conversation). Thus Potsdamer Platz, the onetime raucous symbol of a world-class city, was, unbelievably, broken down and emptied. Its appearance at this

time (see Figures 9 and 10) resembles a recently fallen leaf, once-living, moments ago three-dimensional, that has disintegrated into the sidewalk and has marked its landing spot with only a two-dimensional darkened silhouette. Only the flattened traces of city streets were recognizable. The earlier center of one complete city eerily became the outermost edge of two disparate halves.

Sucked of its life and character, Potsdamer Platz once again took on the gateway role between two worlds. The worst of each materialized on either side of the square: while the eastern side bulldozed any impediments to perfectly effective control, the western side annihilated any historical fragments that conveyed a connection. Therefore, while half decayed into desolate prohibited grounds, the other half decayed into neglected periphery (*Dokumentation*, p.23).

The West's physical neglect of the area did not apply for what was being imagined there, however. With awareness of the rich history embedded in this city square, it is not surprising that the City administration had already in 1988 been active in the creation of a document covering the area's historical development. The editors of the final version explain that "it was already at that time clear that the area around the Potsdamer Platz could and should become a part of the so-called central area in terms of the West-Berlin city concept (of a unified city), as well as a decisive point in the development of Berlin and its center" (parentheses mine, *Dokumentation*, p.5). The desolation was a misrepresentation of political trends and intentions, but since those were recondite, its appearance reflected the mystery both East and West perhaps wished to portray.

### The Wall Comes Down

After a long depraved period, the sudden opening of the borders in November 1989 found Potsdamer Platz once again host to Berlin's most momentous and history-making events, and once again under circumstances that can be paralleled to the city as a whole. There was first an overnight delay in opening the Potsdamer Platz crossing, during which many people camped on site. In the morning the cranes lifted parts of the Wall away almost ceremoniously, and the crowds were left to flood the square's gates. They drowned the area in enough exuberance to make up for all the years it had stood as wasteland, at least for a while. Of the event, a journalist wrote: "Police officers from the East and West rushed to exchange caps. Here it goes:

thousands wait on the other side for the exchanges in the heart of old Berlin. The experiences on Potsdamer Platz are only a small segment of the almost orgiastic mood in a city enjoying the end of her division in a huge Volksfest this weekend" (*Dokumentation*, p.40). Again the activities of Potsdamer Platz reflected the city's occasion.

Once the opening's initial euphoria subsided, the pervasive confusion became bothersome as it seeped through to affect daily life. Adding pressure, the entire world trumpeted Berlin's imminent and inevitable status as world-class city, overwhelming the city already frozen in the headlights of open capitalism. The post-reunification hype seems to have been initiated more by outsiders or those tangentially connected to the city than by Berliners themselves -- this was a new occupation of western marketing to replace the recently halted military occupation.

Efforts by the City to organize enough to meet the challenge of the western world proved confounding. The major German newspaper *Die Zeit* reported the mood in 1990: "Time-plans into the next century are sketched out, then made obsolete within weeks by reality. Extravagant special-edition catalogs stand across from empty cash registers. The concern is growing that the lack of a plan is seizing politics and the future is being decided in the scuffle" (*Dokumentation*, p. 43). This ominous assessment proved unfortunately accurate, making the socio-political and institutional foundations for the nascent development of Potsdamer Platz precarious indeed. Figure 11 shows the area's vacuous appearance at this time.

Mayor Momper candidly put it best in late 1989: "But it will take a little while, before this is really settled into our minds. Everything went too quickly. In these history-making days, the headlines of the world are formulated in Berlin. Now, after the initial giddiness and feelings of good fortune, we have to get used to the new situation. Günter Neumann's picture from "Insulaner", which unswervingly hopes that his island would one day again be a propitious mainland, has become reality. And with the day-to-day comes disillusionment. We now see the problems we must overcome more clearly. We are planning and building now not just for the political island of West Berlin, but for a city embedded in her surroundings. Berlin is the metropolis in the center of Europe, in a Europe that wants only to establish greater peace" (*Dokumentation*, p. 40).



The mayor's synopsis envelopes the major issues in Berlin at that point which then, true to form, became the major issues for Potsdamer Platz. "There is no other place in Germany weighed down by so much leaden national symbolism as the fallow land around Potsdamer Platz, a 360-degree open-air panorama of German history. To the north looms the Reichstag and the Brandenburg Gate, scaffolded for reconstruction, sticking out of the treetops of the Tiergarten. To the east the ministries of Goebbels and Göring still stand, the seat of the Gestapo and the Court of the People were bulldozed. A solely inconspicuous hill testifies for the new Reichs-chancellery and the bunkers" (*Die Zeit*, 3 August 1990). Potsdamer Platz's long history of embodying such significant cultural trends serves to burden contemporary development with symbolic meaning.

### **The Administrative Structure of Planning in Reunified Berlin**

Before the Wall came down in Berlin in 1989, the separate cities of East and West Berlin each had their own planning agencies, and did not work together to determine the unified, citywide structure. Upon reunification, the eastern offices were basically swallowed up by the western. The following is a brief overview of the pre-reunification planning approaches from the western perspective, followed by descriptions of what emerged administratively from reunification.

Throughout the division, the West remained, in a way, nostalgic (from some perspectives hopeful), and planned accordingly. Memoirs from 1951 provide an illustration of the illusory practices. The owner of the now historically preserved Winehouse Huth, which opened in the year of the last German unification (1871) on Potsdamer Platz reports: "Willy Huth still dreams that everything would be as it once was on Potsdamer Platz. The Westberliners also still dream of reunification of the city, the officials plan streets as if Berlin were not divided and the city center were so lively as it was in the 'twenties" (*Dokumentation*, p.18). Similarly, the western zoning plans incorporated both East and West, and maintained an orientation toward Berlin as Germany's capital city. Figure 12 displays the official Senate map that still in 1984 outlines the footprints of the buildings that existed before the war and before the division (Balfour, p. 185). Development goals were laid out in spite of the East's treaties confirming the status quo of the divided city, and remained officially invalid. Meanwhile, in practice, planning officials handled the area around Potsdamer Platz as a peripheral, barricaded buffer zone (*Dokumentation*, p. 25).

In planning what would take place in West Berlin, the administrators there wished to get as much of an idea about what was being built in East Berlin as they could. A City planning official described to me of that time: "We were always of the opinion that at some point the two halves would communicate with each other again, would in some form assume better contact" (Müller-Stüler). Information-gathering visits were thus allowed the western officials by the GDR in the east. However, the western agencies were not allowed to include the meager collection of knowledge in any official plans that were made; it was politically too touchy.

With the opening of the Wall, the first unified planning efforts between East and West Berlin were directed toward outfitting the border entry points.

In the time between the opening and actual reunification, Potsdamer Platz was considered the key passage. The official proposal stated: "Potsdamer and Leipziger Platz should become the new binding link between the two cities, just as they represented the connection between the city center and the New West in the past. The next inner-city border passage should be constructed here. The political development of East and West and the practical cooperation between the cities make this central passage wise and increasingly necessary..." (*Dokumentation*, p.5) The long lapse in Potsdamer Platz's activity evidently had not dimmed its significance.

In general, concerns during this in-between period centered around where the control huts and fences should be placed, how to historically preserve landmarks such as the Brandenburg Gate, and methods for controlling and checking passports. In this way changes in Potsdamer Platz's built form recalled the practical attitude of Schinkel's redesign in the 1800s. The agencies from East and West remained intact and worked together in this way for about a year and a half. A similar structure was adopted for the areas of West Berlin bordering East Germany: representatives from the West Berlin planning agencies and East Berlin planning agencies met with officials from the neighboring areas (Müller-Stüler Conversation).

Economic reunification brought the eastern agencies under those established in the West, as far as the East Berliners passed the political testing and had not been active with the Communist secret police. Generally the subsuming seems to have gone smoothly and is regarded positively by participants I interviewed in the administration. They reported no problems in terms of technical competence or skill levels of the eastern colleagues. As in all professions scrutinized by the juxtaposition of eastern and western experts through the reunification process, bumpiness arose from a different set of work ethics and expectations that had been ingrained in 40 years of separation. The adjustment is difficult but manageable.

Others have responded differently, however. Many interviewees complained off the record of administrative incompetence, not usually in the eastern colleagues as compared with the western, but for all of the officials. Complaints centered around fundamental incapacity to manage the scale of activity suddenly presented in 1989. One architect confided: "I believe that at the top of the authorities there are some totally incompetent people. They do not have an image themselves, and are not used to taking tough decisions and

being responsible for them ... the problems which they were faced with for a long time were comparatively tiny, miniature problems as compared to the problems they have to decide now about. Because the real problems, I mean the dangerous political problems were decided at the federal government level together with the Allies. Our people didn't do anything about it. So they are slow, they are inefficient, they are timid, they are overestimating their importance and influence and value, they are building up a self-profile which is unnecessarily over-bloated and ridiculous."

The 'exceptional' nature of Berlin planning does not end with the historical circumstances. Berlin's administrative planning structure today is unique within Germany because, like Washington D.C., the city is officially both a city and a state. This condensed structure effectively removes a layer of scrutiny in the development process by simply eliminating the in-between step of examination of municipal plans by the state; the proofing agency is one and the same. In the words of one planning official (Villiers), "Thus we check our own accounts; just as I check in my own wallet to see if I have all my money and have paid all my debts, so is it here". Although this is in his estimation problematic, the condensed arrangement did not arouse controversy as far as I could tell from other interviews, likely because of planned integration of Berlin into the surrounding state of Brandenburg.

Complications arose directly after reunification, however, in arranging Berlin's regional planning policies. The 'open' areas to the west, north, and south of the former West Berlin, called the *grüne Wiese* ('green meadows'), are directly affected by development in Berlin simply because of their proximity. Perhaps the most loathed phenomena of post-Wall investments are the huge shopping centers that have been sprouting up across this untouched landscape. Legally of course the *grüne Wiese* lie in a different state from the city, and the task remained of coordinating planning activities between the two. In January 1996, a united office of 100 planning and land-use officials -- 86 from the state of Brandenburg and 14 from Berlin -- opened in Potsdam (*Berliner Zeitung*, 9 January 1996). It was an early step toward further administrative integration of the two entities.

Within Berlin's urban boundary, two top-level agencies are presently responsible for new development: the *Senatsverwaltung für Stadtentwicklung und Umweltschutz* (Senate Administration for Urban Development and Environmental Protection) and the *Senatsverwaltung für Bau- und*

*Wohnungswesen* (Senate Administration for Construction and Housing). In a quite cryptic division of responsibilities, the two administrations oversee each new project from conception to realization point. The following roughly describes their individual tasks and the relationship between the two.

Each Senate Administration is headed by one leading Senator, who oversees the agency's various divisions. For example, in the Senate Administration for Construction and Housing, reporting directly to the Senator are the Senate's Director of Building and the State Secretary. Under these two, the agency is divided up into nine departments: General Concerns; Building Inspection; Urban Development and Architecture; Housing, Construction, and Urban Renovation; Land Surveyor's Office; Project Preparation and General Legal Examination; Main Office for Surface Engineering; Main Office for Underground Construction Engineering. The nine departments then break down into various smaller offices.

For long after World War II, the Social Democrats (SPD) were the dominant political party in Berlin, and at that time controlled the Senate Administration for Construction and Housing, which existed as the sole planning agency in West Berlin. When the Christian Democrats (CDU) took power for the first time in the early 1980s, however, one statement of their new power was the creation of another planning agency, the Senate Administration for Urban Development and Environmental Protection. Since then, the two agencies have actually reversed parties, so that the Senate Administration for Construction and Housing is CDU dominated, and the Senate Administration for Urban Development and Environmental Protection falls under the SPD.

In terms of contemporary development in Berlin, the two agencies share responsibility in a very ill-defined manner. Roughly laid out, the German planning law has two levels, and the two levels are divided between the two separate agencies. The first level is a type of zoning plan, which is the comparatively regionally-oriented responsibility of the Senate Administration for Urban Development and Environmental Protection. This plan includes the layout of public streets, the areas of public transportation facilities, and the general uses and structure of the public and private areas.

The Senate Administration for Construction and Housing is then responsible for the more detailed local plan which follows in the next stages of this process. This plan regulates the placement, design and heights of

individual buildings of the project, as well as their internal planes of development, and the mass devoted to each use.

Much thought and hypothetical discussion has concerned itself with the possibility of combining and streamlining the two agencies. Mr. Müller Stüler at the Senate Administration for Urban Development and Environmental Protection had hoped from the beginning for a complete centralization of planning activities in Berlin, including a union of the two Senates, with traffic planning brought in as well. He said, "Then everything would be negotiated much faster, overall organization would run better, and all pertinent issues would be present together. The result is simpler work." He described his agency's current position in the planning process as mediator between two fronts: they have to ensure that the districts and also the Senate Administration for Construction and Housing implement the planning decisions once they are made.

Mr. Villiers at the Senate Administration for Construction and Housing also expressed concern about one Senate's decision being upheld by the other Senate, especially given the present lack of regulation. Of greater concern for him was that the two agencies often unknowingly duplicate their activities. On the positive side, he pointed out that in the conflict of the division there exists a creative tension, presumably meaning that the competition between the agencies may result in more imaginative solutions. He was of the opinion that retaining both Senates would be favorable, but with a more straightforward method to oversee this tension, and to ensure tasks are not completed separately but simultaneously.

Wolfgang Süchting, the Competition Leader at the Senate Administration for Urban Development and Environmental Protection, agreed that the division is inefficient. In principle, he saw the advantages of combining the two agencies, but said everyone has so much to do that it did not really stand as an option. Additionally, he likes the small size and specialized activity of his department (seven people responsible for competitions), a situation he implied would change with a joining. I believe Süchting's sentiments represent those of many in the administration: opinions are based on a desire to get a handle on the changes that they already are dealing with, before creating even more headaches for themselves.

Criticisms based on the negative repercussions of this one-step-at-a-time approach came from non-administrators I interviewed. One architect described

that the investors above all "are absolutely bothered. They are bothered because there are essentially two administrations within the same city which are rather working against one another ... They are bothered by the fact that there is tremendous fighting within the administration, where its very difficult for one person to take responsibility for what is happening." Indeed, if the division is confusing for the administrators within the agencies, it must be completely baffling to those coming from the outside.

To add to the vagueness, on a separate level from the two Senate agencies exists a set of district planning agencies. Berlin is divided up into 23 districts, each having its own planning office responsible for the development affecting the neighborhoods within. The district agencies work with the Senate in a relationship even less clear than that between the Senates. According to Mr. Müller-Stüler at the Senate Administration for Urban Development and Environmental Protection, "It is a very complicated relationship ... we work together, but often also in competition, because the districts often have other concerns than we do, and at some point that has to be resolved; sometime there has to be a decision or development". Similarly an interview between Heinrich Klotz and the famous Berliner architect Josef Paul Kleihues already in 1986 sketched out this relationship:

HK: "But you have to admit that these very Berlin politicians were not always so idealistic ... they also tried to throw spanners in the works -- no way could you call it unanimous approval. The various district administrations in Berlin, for instance, had their eyes on local interests and repeatedly set up obstacles ..."

JPK: "... The district administrations have always been very involved in questions of city planning and architectural development, and have quite often been in conflict with the city senate's policies in these matters" (IBA Berlin 1987, p. 9).

The final word in those cases rests with the Senate, leaving the district agencies voices to add to the din of conflicting interests in planning matters. In the handling of Potsdamer Platz, the appropriate districts were represented in the collective negotiations, but do not seem to have played a significant, decision-making role.

This confusion among and within Berlin's planning agencies and its problematic nature for official relations with investors here is a subject which will make up a large part of later chapters. To serve as an introduction to these

woes, the following interview between a large investor and Berlin's major news magazine, *der Spiegel*, provides particular illumination. Because of its exceptional relevance to later discussions, I present here a large part of the interview.

**Gentz:** The entire city had big problems with the new role of a reunified metropolis, and still has them. Our plans for the Potsdamer Platz were hindered for a long time by petty Berliner quarrels.

**Spiegel:** In what way?

**Gentz:** It took far too long until visions for the future city development were laid out. We were under the impression initially that a row of politicians and administrators would have preferred conserving the Wall-ideal over bringing the city to become Germany's capital and building it up to a European metropolis. It then came down to torturous processes to harmonize our visions with those of the Berlin planners.

**Spiegel:** Would you have been for the free intrusion of all investors?

**Gentz:** Political foundation-planning is one thing, trifling perfectionism is another. These should not be confused. What has been lacking in Berlin are obvious signs for the population and for external investors that a new beginning is being made.

**Spiegel:** Is that still true today?

**Gentz:** In certain areas it is unfortunately still true. For example, for someone who comes from outside to Berlin, it is difficult to understand with which agencies he should deal and when. Many interested in Berlin find the Berlin bureaucracy unhelpful and incomprehensible.

**Spiegel:** Is that the fault of the small administrators?

**Gentz:** The Berlin Senate does not give the impression of knowing exactly what it wants ... To be fair I must say that in the last six to nine months much has improved. The administration seems to have come along relatively far with the planning concept for contemporary Berlin. The number of new construction sites in the city has luckily shrunk.

**Spiegel:** Do you get the feeling of being welcome as an investor?

**Gentz:** A few ideas that we have introduced to strangers have been embraced, even when defensively. Above all when our approach is in traditional Berliner patterns.

**Spiegel:** You have reproached the Berlin economy for small-mindedness and subsidizing-mentality.

**Gentz:** The Berlin economy has to stop lamenting the dismantling of subventions. Of course this is a difficult shift. But there has to finally be a movement forward.

**Spiegel:** Do you see the danger that Berlin will remain aimless if the German reunification is not successful?

**Gentz:** I absolutely see the dangers. West-Berlin's economy is in the slump because subventions are falling, East-Berlin has to survive the dramatic dismantling of antiquated industries. Both are difficult. Politics and



Economics must therefore develop concepts as quickly as possible to maintain Berlin as a location for industry. There must be a regional concept worked out together with Brandenburg.

*Spiegel:* How should it look?

Gentz: Berlin has to develop a vision. The city has to make clear to itself how it will look in 20 years. To that end, political, economic, scientific and cultural ideas have to develop together.

*Spiegel:* The Executive Manager supports a round table?

Gentz: No, we need only intensive discussions between all of those who do business, who plan and who think. Berlin has many of all of these, but they are not knitting in the same stitch. The politics alone will not make a complete vision in any case.

*Spiegel:* The current mayor propagandizes Berlin as the future service center and East-West gateway. Is that enough vision?

Gentz: Berlin will have more roles to fulfill: capital and government location, East-West gateway, powerful industry- and economic-location, cultural metropolis.

*Spiegel:* What can the Senate do?

Gentz: It could do a lot. Above all it has to guide and bundle its powers. It has to hold business- and mixed areas ready, so that not too many firms flee the city because of high property prices or rents. It has to make Berlin a more attractive location, in that it courts for that. It has to make clear, what kind of chance it is to live and work in Berlin.

*Spiegel:* Berlin sells itself too poorly?

Gentz: The city sells itself poorly and under worth. Berlin's advantages, such as the economic concentrations or the experience with the rebuilding of an economic system, are not displayed enough. But above all, what is lacking is the accompanying vision of what the city wants to be. Only with such a vision can individuals and firms induce investors to come. Everyone has to feel positive about being a part of the building of this new Berlin. But up to now Berlin has not always given the newcomers the feeling of being welcome.

*Spiegel:* The old city Elite fears for its perks.

Gentz: That's shortsighted. This is not a battle between natives and newcomers. Berlin as a whole stands in competition with other cities and regions and must prove itself. The Nineties have brought Europe a location competition like it has never seen before. Therefore Berlin has to be more active. The Berlin politicians believed for a long time that after the fall of the Wall the city would take off on its own. But it has not. Berlin does not advertise sufficiently and impresses no concept (*Der Spiegel* 16/1993, p.146).

## The Tradition of Competition in Berlin Spatial Structure

As was introduced above, many invisible forces shape the development climate in contemporary Berlin. The above chapter "The Significance of History" outlined some such historical socio-political forces and their relevance on urban form. Another of the most powerful forces today is the effect of Berlin's history of architectural and urban planning competitions. An understanding of the planning process in post-reunification Berlin requires an understanding of how fundamental an institution the competition system has become. The following section is devoted to revealing the influential strength of this tradition, and the later chapter called "The Competition System" relates the relevance to Potsdamer Platz.

The history of building competitions in Berlin dates back at least to 1879, in the plans for the never-realized Berlin World Exhibition. The World Exhibition Palace caused a row in its new approach to spatial organization, and subsequent late 19th century architectural exhibitions followed this infamy, always pursuing the cutting edge in urban design ideas.

The Union of Berlin Architects announced in 1907 a competition to rebuild the urban pattern of scattered concentrations into one more coherent Berlin, declaring that without a more regional planning approach, "... no unified solution could be produced which would take account both of the 'demands of traffic' and 'those of beauty, public health and economy'" (Russell, p. 10). The competition culminated in the famous 1910 Royal Academy of the Arts *Allgemeine Städtebau Ausstellung*, or General Urban Development Exhibition, catching Berlin at the tail end of a growth spurt which realized its status as an industrialized metropolis.

The competition results were exhibited with international projects for the purpose of comparison. The exhibition commanded great professional respect and won widespread public response. Notably, the projects turned out to be more influential in the town planning realm than the architectural, the individual architecture represented in the plans remaining quite conservative (Russell, p. 10). Interestingly the same held true 85 years later in the urban form competition for Potsdamer Platz as we will see.

Direct relevance of the competition lineage for contemporary Berlin probably begins in 1957 with Interbau. This building exhibition was meant to symbolize the economic upswing that had been made possible by the Marshall Plan, the currency reforms and the inauguration of various economic

cooperation organizations (Russell, p. 13). Like the 1910 exhibition, it was the focus of professional achievement, and participating architects included the international elite of the 'Modern Movement' such as Alvar Aalto, Walter Gropius, Oscar Niemeyer, and Le Corbusier. The 1957 exhibition also won widespread public interest as in 1910, with some 12,000 visitors per day. The central project, a progressive residential quarter where the architects were invited to express their lifestyle ideals in built form, can be considered successful in that it is even today a desirable address.

Not to be outdone by the hoopla West Berlin was creating for itself, East Berlin retorted in October 1958 with its own competition. The obvious political motivation is revealed in its title, "Competition for the Socialistic Remodeling of the Center of the German Democratic Republic Capital City, Berlin". East Berlin further promoted its political statement by limiting the competition to include the eastern purlieus alone: West Berlin, in what arguably was as politically motivated a statement, had considered the entire central area of greater Berlin. The standoff thus adumbrates the symbolic significance of reinstating Potsdamer Platz as the central area after the fall of communism in East Germany.

The parallel of these two time frames in their respective symbolic political meanings applies to their respective architectural symbolism as well. To illustrate, one opinion of Interbau: "Nonetheless, the balance in terms of architecture and urban planning is not positive. The pathos-laden, demagogic aim of 'demonstrating the strengths of the technology and design of the Free World in all the variety of their forms' produced merely an insufficiently coordinated collection of over-individualistic forms, whose unnecessary arrogance concealed little real cultural substance. For this...was unable to be truly urban. What was planned as a model quarter became at best an exception, legitimised in ideological terms" (Russell, p. 14). The author feels that the societal aims of development in this case failed miserably.

In early 1996, renowned Berlin architect Hans Kollhoff similarly expressed this same concern for the high-technology development at Potsdamer Platz: "Development is not something that can go as fast as technological development. So if you look at what happened in technology in this century and if you then look at what happened in the living environment, it's not as different. The tables have remained the same, and the chairs have become a little more flexible, but if you want to have a very comfortable chair

you might look for an English leather piece. So I believe that architecture and urban design is just something that develops in a much slower pace than technology." For Kollhoff, this development's aims of creating urban space which will reflect the coming turn of the century's technology era could prove as misguided as Interbau's aims; in any case, the symbolic power of urban form is evident.

Thirty years after Interbau, the competition structure in Berlin was still thriving, leading critic Wolfgang Braunfels to declare: "More often than any other German city since the war, Berlin has been preoccupied with itself in exhibitions, symposia, planning commitments, official research, and architectural competitions" (Russell, p. 15). The famous International Building Exhibition (IBA) in 1987 quintessentially represents this preoccupation that continues into contemporary times.

The hugely publicized IBA program to address the urban form of various sites around the city began in the late 1970s. The method was to sponsor international competitions for designs of these areas in the city that had not hosted the work of foreign architects in 200 years (Balfour, p. 230). It was during the IBA process that the presently-hot idea to 'mend' the city together developed; East Berlin, without IBA, disdainfully considered this mending as bowing to the "legacy of capitalist land speculation" (*Art in America*, p. 81). The exhibition of the completed IBA designs took place with worldwide recognition in 1987, Berlin's 750th anniversary.

To the results of the IBA and other similar projects, Balfour comes to a conclusive statement that testifies to the fundamentality of the competition system in Berlin while assessing its futility in the then-political structure. He writes: "It may not be possible to create a center at the edge, to impose coherent order on a culture that rejects it. The tolerance for opposing tendencies has reduced the architectural project to fragments. In the longer view of history it is the inevitable by-product of the dialectic struggle. For over a quarter of a millennium Berlin has housed a succession of symbolic projects, increasingly framed in opposition to one another, creating a spiraling polarization which could only end in the destruction and division of the culture. The division of the city has neutralized the struggle of authentic opposites, leaving Kultur Forum<sup>6</sup> at the abandoned edge in an accumulation of

---

<sup>6</sup> The Kultur Forum is the area adjacent to the western side of Potsdamer Platz, host of such cultural institutions as the federal library, new national gallery and philharmony.

disordered residue" (Balfour, p. 243). Balfour's analysis also illustrates the monumentality of this area's opening up to actually see a project realized here.

The most important lesson in this cultural history is the intangible phenomenon that competitions are completely ingrained within the Berlin culture. The Berlin citizens are in love with debate; they almost indignantly demand free access to information and discussion on any topic. When the subject is their city, the characteristic magnifies. One Berliner told me how "With the tradition of the IBA and everything, Berliners are totally used to looking at the things, and discussing them and getting used to them, and changing them; that to build a gigantic tart, a cake, and banging it on the table and this you eat or you leave it, this is not the way at all how Berlin works. Even on this level we feel very estranged, that with what a Berliner thinks fantastic speed, for the investors what is tremendously slow, that with this fantastic speed this tremendous intervention into the city space taking place!" Whether this intellectual nature was fostered by the competition system or arose out of it is a hapless chicken-and-egg exercise, but let its importance not be under emphasized. It has been key in post-reunification development and will surface here again repeatedly. In the first set of the post-Wall development game that was the Potsdamer Platz project, this tradition determined the first moves.

## The Media and Public Sentiment over Development in Berlin

The last chapter, "The Tradition of Competition," addressed the importance Berlin places on public debate. This chapter carries that foundation into current times to show that the tradition of debate has continued, and recounts major points in the discussion from 1990 through 1995 having to do with post-reunification planning and development. It means to bridge Berlin's past with the details of the present: I summarize here how history influences this current debate, introduce the more vocal public figures today taking part in this debate, outline the more egregious controversies concerning contemporary investment in Berlin, and explain Potsdamer Platz's significance in this moment of time as precedent. In other words, this chapter seeks to set the framework for the Potsdamer Platz story; later sections will supplement what is here introduced.

As far as investment is concerned, Berlin's post-war experiences heavily influenced contemporary approaches. The city existed for about forty years before German reunification as an island, not only ignored by big firms as they sited their worldwide offices, but also crippled by losses of key Berlin-based giants such as Siemens. Inexperience meant that no guidelines existed for the workings between public and private parties in Berlin. As a consequence of this deficiency, a large part of immediate post-reunification planning, both formally and informally, has devoted effort towards establishing these guidelines.

The journalist Sibylle Wirsing described the changed situation in April 1990 as follows: "The happy feeling that comes from having a potent capital partner on our side stems from the time when West Berlin, in its island situation, far away from the western economic centers, could not determine its own circumstances. Whoever offered themselves as an investor of rank, was welcome -- the sooner the better. Since that time this mentality, where the opportunity is ushered in without deference to the priority of the city's planning interests as a whole, is no longer valid ... It is impossible not to suspect that West Berlin, with its forced actions, wishes to verify its isolated existence, a status which has already become an anachronism" (*Chronik*, p. 3). Wirsing is convinced that the old occupation-era habits of the West Berlin administration are affecting its attitude today.

The question remains that when the old habits do die, what will replace them? Now that it is no longer a dependent, island city, what is Berlin today,

and does it have value to the rest of the world? This insecurity has plagued planning officials in Berlin since the Wall came down. With the rush of investment interest following the opening of Berlin seeped also a climate of automatic mistrust for the suddenly-interested corporations. In not knowing what to expect of the investments, some people have expected the worst while others have lauded it as a beacon of hope; this dichotomy has warped contemporary negotiations between the City and the investors. To add to that, further confusion in the City's dealings with the private firms stemmed from a widespread lack of internal institutional cohesiveness. The following frames some of the major overriding controversies within the post-reunification development agencies.

It should be noted that the situation was particularly touchy with the Potsdamer Platz project, as the first large scale investment project taking place in Berlin after the Wall came down. "With Potsdamer Platz as the example, the future of the united city is being fought over. Should Berlin adhere to the ecological, postindustrial metropolis of the West Berliners, or should it develop according to the primacy of the economy into a conventional Million-Mark metropolis?" (*Die Zeit*, 3 August 1990). Clearly, this first project would constitute a profound statement in the answer to this heavy question of identity when Berlin's identity lay so fragile.

In the words of newspaper journalist Christoph Hackelsberger, "Without such a pilot project of the large investors, all other smaller investors will be left without orientation. Without large, dazzling success it will not be possible to handle the subsequent proceedings in a publicly beneficial manner; that is, with the correct mixture of private and public, in architecturally sensitive form" (*Chronik*, p. 11). The pressure to set a precedent for all investment loomed large, and exactly during the time of greatest administrative confusion. Just when the City had the chance to send a signal to the world, was when its ability seemed most dubious.

Seeing this large scale pilot through was thus no simple proposition. In an October 1991 public forum speech, the Senator for Urban Development and Environmental Protection, Volker Hassemer, addressed the pressures of development-waiting-to-happen at Potsdamer Platz: "Ten years ago I was already responsible for city planning. At that time there was extremely little to 'curtail'. For that reason my hope for this spot is that multiple forces come together and show that they want to make something in the city and with the

city" (*Bauwelt*, p.2230). Hassemer's evident concern was justified: as will soon become more clear, the multiple forces had a difficult time of it coming together. The negative ramifications of Berlin's being previously so isolated logically surfaced during this first project. Predetermined expectations that those multiple forces' plans would stand in conflict over what exactly would be made in and with the city tarnished negotiations before they were even underway.

The overriding issue from the outset, then, was that concerning the balance of power in the public-private dealings. From the City's side, their weight in the power balance depends on how actively involved they are in the development process from conception to completion, as well as the nature of that involvement. Consider a spectrum of municipal involvement: at one extreme, the City plays the role of the grateful host; that is, practicing minimal involvement, allowing the investors many concessions, heralding their investment in Berlin as a much-needed and welcome event. On the opposite extreme, the City plays the protective, hyperactive isolationist; suspicious of the investor's interest and intentions, considering any concession from their side a loss for overall public welfare. The issue for the Berlin administration was to identify its spot on this spectrum.

The Daimler Benz chairman of the board Edzard Reuter, pushing for the realization of the proposed property sale to Daimler Benz, expressed in February 1990: "The decision expresses the commitment to strengthen the firm's engagement in Berlin in the future. It signals the development of Berlin as an economic center of European status, with the background of the political changes in Central and Eastern Europe tied to the opening of the European Common Market in 1993 as well as the reckoning of the necessity for strengthening the services sector in Berlin, whose economic structure has usually been formed by the production economy" (*Chronik*, p.2). Benz's representative subtly sends the message that Berlin needs firms like Mercedes in the landscape of the reunified city. The implication is that the City should act accordingly.

Self-lauding public statements such as this one on promoting large-scale investment in Berlin can hardly be taken as winning over the whole of the administration, however. In reality the administration could not be 'whole' on anything, and in approaching the Potsdamer Platz project, the agencies suffered particular internal confusion finding a workable level of involvement.



To begin with, the system's structure (see "The Administrative Structure") hardly promotes cohesiveness, and has done little to unite the planning officials. Above all the existence of two very similar agencies, the Senate for Urban Development and Environmental Protection and the Senate for Construction and Housing, immediately pits them against one another, for they each have different political backing and there exists a fuzzy division of responsibility between them. This double front in the administration cancels out any chance for a unified approach in negotiations with private investors.

The administration-wide confusion results not only from the disputes among the different planning agencies as they work to protect their turf, but also from the individuals that make up those agencies. Wolfgang Söchting from the Senate for Urban Development and Environmental Protection described his personal experience: "When you do too much [to make the city attractive for the investor], then the investors do what they want; it's a riddle. The City naturally wants to work together with the investors. Earlier I was of the opinion that working together meant only that you sold to them, they then do what they want, and for that reason one should not work with them at all. But now I think that is wrong. Because without knowing what the investment intentions are, you don't have a chance. To know those intentions, you have to be involved" (Conversation). With each official in the administration needing to come to his own resolution concerning the investor, the effort was quite disjointed.

And as individuals began to take their ideological positions, rifts began to form, in particular between various key personalities. The initial open clashes after the opening of the borders occurred perhaps between Wolfgang Nagel, the Senator for Construction and Housing, and Michael Schreyer, the Senator for Urban Development and Environmental Protection. Concerning the initial sale of the first Potsdamer Platz site, the individual decision bills released in April 1990 display the dichotomy in stance: Nagel expressed the desire to close a contract with Daimler Benz on the sale of the Potsdamer Platz property as soon as possible, while Schreyer warned that Daimler Benz should not be granted unnecessarily strong influence in the proceedings on what to do with the land (*Chronik*, p. 2). The chasm between the two developed into refined public personas: Nagel was eventually portrayed as Daimler-Benz's insider man in the administration and Schreyer the crusader for public interest.

Shortly following the April bills from the heads of the two Senates, an alternative party committee in Parliament released a statement in favor of suspending all planning until after the May vote in the former East Germany. With respect to the sale of the land, the statement diplomatically struck a middle ground. It expressed the wish not to oppose Daimler Benz's relocation to Berlin, out of the belief that the proposed services center increasingly promises a signal to Berlin's development, but warned at the same time that city planning must not be allowed to fall into the hands of private investors.

In the case at hand, the committee representative Hilde Schramm explained that if private investors take the role of planners, "Then this military contractor gets the jewel of the city, where reunified Berlin is supposed to stand for worldwide disarmament!" (*Chronik*, p. 3). She called it sheer arrogance that the firm that had been the national socialists' largest provider of military equipment now intended to locate at this history-laden site (*Die Zeit*, 3 August 1990). Schramm, who had been active in the freedom movement and would become Edzard Reuters heaviest critic, made her position clear: symbolically Daimler Benz did not belong on Potsdamer Platz.

The results of the subsequent Parliamentary vote were that a park at the site of the former Potsdamer Railroad Station would be constructed, and that an urban form competition would be held by the Senate for Urban Development and Environmental Protection (*Die Zeit*, 3 August 1990). Both marked a clear victory for Michael Schreyer.

In May of 1990, the association "Perspective Berlin" held a political hearing called "Pots-Daimler-Platz?" in which participants had the chance to further solidify their positions. Here Building Senator Nagel explained almost verbatim the point of Daimler's Manfred Gentz in the *Spiegel* interview above: that the City must free itself from its isolationist and subventionist mentality, and must learn from the competition with other metropolises. Toward this end, he pressed for the most expedient possible signing of the Daimler Benz contract. In opposition, Volker Hassemer criticized the lack of public openness practiced by the Senate, saying that the results displayed snotty pronouncement (*Chronik*, p.4), and supporting a slower, less rash, more public sale.

Nagel further explained his will for an expedient sale about six weeks later, in a June 1990 podium discussion. He maintained that for the present, the economic signal (presumably meaning the realization of efficient negotiations with Daimler-Benz) holds greater importance than the urban form signal (the

conscientious, i.e. slow, formulation of a respectable building process). Furthermore, he stated that jobs take immediate priority over built environment, presumably attempting to justify to the skeptical public his support for the investors<sup>7</sup>.

The concern about speed and 'catching the investor in time' likely stems from a fear that Daimler-Benz might not be the first of imminent teams of investors coming to Berlin, but instead stands as an isolated interested firm. Mayor Walter Momper voiced this perspective early on, in a June 1990 interview with the magazine *zitty*:

*zitty*: Finding potent investors for the Potsdamer Platz cannot possibly be a problem?

Momper: Oh no? Name me a few.

*zitty*: At the moment I do not have any on hand, but after all, we are talking about the center of the new Berlin.

Momper: I see. This is an interesting attitude, one which I encounter all over the City. Of course there are groups of speculators. All over they try to get a cheap deal, but a real investor, that stands as such also financially, so that he can make something there? It is not true, that this city is the most desired investment spot in the world, and that firms stand in line here. I can only give an urgent warning of that. The West German and international economy have a very wait-and-see attitude about this city" (*Chronik*, p. 5).

The prospect of Berlin returning to its previous status as a city left unconsidered for an investment was a rattling one indeed. More than ever Berlin needed the capital that the investor brought in: reunification has meant weaning the city off of the earlier federal subsidies. In the January 1991 words of district representative Frank Bielka, the question today is increasingly one of how Berlin will earn its keep. For him, economic stability ranks higher than other concerns, and "Decorative conflicts such as those by the Daimler-Benz relocation can no longer be afforded" (*Die Tageszeitung*, 4 January 1991). Even as early as 1991, he implies the need for a more regular method of dealing with investors.

---

<sup>7</sup> The rivalry meanwhile between Schreyer and Nagel did not let up as time passed. In 1990 the newspaper *die Zeit* reported that for "Michaele Schreyer the conflict over the star above Potsdamer Platz is far from lost. 'I am not resigning, quite the opposite', she said, a bit defiantly. 'The urban form competition is now more important than ever.' She also expects shortly 'a dogged struggle with the Senator Nagel'" (3 August 1990).

Compounding upon concerns that Mercedes might be a single isolated investor, publicized objections to the proposed sale heightened proponents' anxieties to get the deal completed and fast. Symbolic of increasing opposition to Daimler Benz, beginning in May of 1990 a group of squatters occupied the site in huts and tents. One journalist recounts seeing curious tourists being asked to spare some change "for the battle against Daimler on Potsdamer Platz" (*Die Zeit*, 3 August 1990). The squatters were a small group of a larger segment of Berlin that saw the sale as nonsensical at that point in time.

The same article summarizes some different sources of opposition:

Daimler on Potsdamer Platz? Architects, city planners, historians and journalists almost unanimously reject the project. Likewise for the educated West Berlin citizenry interested in city history. "In wanton haste", according to Manfred Sack in *der Zeit*, the mayor Walter Momper and his cronies began the "mistake of the century". "The checkbook is creating figures" accused the *Frankfurter Rundschau*, the *taz* called the "dubious Daimler Deal" a "robust construction scandal" . . . The layers of conflict are thus blurring. With moralistic recourse the leftist anti capitalist resentment mixes with the national socialistic past of Daimler Benz. Experts and interested citizens view themselves as overlooked by the undemocratic, rushed set of proceedings. House minority parties are agitated by the "jabbering between Reuter's cronies and Momper", city planners fear the 1980s concept of 'reactivating' old urban fabric with modern architecture ... Adding to the opposition to the rash sale of the won-back city center is the fear that the new center could mutate into a small Manhattan" (*Die Zeit*, 3 August 1990).

As the clock ticked by on the deal, critics such as these grew louder and more numerous.

Of these critics, the most influential in actually stalling the closing were those within the government. In April 1990, as Daimler held a ready-to-sign contract for the sale, the Social Democrats in Parliament rebelled, enraged by the feeling that they had consistently been passed over by the Momper-Nagel conspiracy. Particularly upsetting was a recently released calculation that Daimler's floor-area ratio allowed for the erection of 22 skyscrapers on the site (*Die Zeit*, 3 August 1990).

Presumably in an effort to hasten the process and further prove his point, Nagel presented in July 1990 a rough study model for the area around Potsdamer Platz. For him, the model confirmed the ability of Berlin's built form to carry the mass of a large-scale investor complex. The presentation heightened rivalry to the level of personal attacks from Michael Schreyer, who

accused Nagel of wishing only to influence the competition before its opening and to prove his competence. The Construction Speaker of the Parliament Otto Edel further illustrated that this was not a professional debate: "Nagel finally succeeded in forcing the muzzle on them!" (*Chronik*, p.7).

When the elections in December 1990 replaced Schreyer with Volker Hassemer, the conflict with Nagel remained. Hassemer, who before taking post had voiced much criticism against the secrecy and speedy recklessness of the planning proceedings, introduced an open city forum in March 1991. His rationale, as expressed in a January 1991 press hearing, was that all powers must be ready to send the united Berlin on its way into the 21st century. The forum was also to encompass the planning work at Potsdamer Platz specifically, for as Hassemer saw it, the future outfitting of such an important place called for a far more publicized, more broadly secured set of proceedings than had formerly been planned (*Chronik*, p. 9).

Regardless of its other functions, the city forum as Hassemer's vehicle obviously meant to undercut Nagel's intentions and previous handlings. At the opening, Hassemer trumpeted the fact that planning Potsdamer Platz would never start again from ground zero, and offered reassurances that the forum would never serve as an investment bottleneck. In retort, Nagel treated the effort with condescension, warning that he would stick to the competition schedule, regardless of whether or not their forum had reached any conclusion (*Chronik*, p.13).

Four months later, the news magazine *der Spiegel* questioned Hassemer about the planning process thus far and the Senate's relationship with the investor. The interview illustrates Hassemer's conviction about the city forum, and presents a new rivalry which had formed in the administration, that between him and Hans Stimmann, the Senate Director of Construction and Development.

Hassemer: We do not submit ourselves [to the will of the investor]. You know very well, that neither Daimler has the say nor I the cleverness to claim it for myself. The only thing I know is that for five months in the so-called city forum I have allowed for the collection of critical objections and organized arguments and counter arguments. The results of this forum have influenced a competition, to which I invited 18 international architects. At the end of September they will present their suggestions for urban form, and I hope, with the work of these excellent architects, to really arrive at a new type of central city.

*Spiegel*: The Senate Director of Construction and Development Hans Stimmann, widely known as your opponent, has already clearly stated his abhorrence toward skyscraper-stalks on Potsdamer Platz; Berlin need not be rediscovered.

Hassemer: I can save myself the expense of the urban form competition if I were simply to designate: Build there 24, 67 or 72 meters high. Of course Berlin need not be rediscovered. We are building on the foundation of the existing Berlin, but not the old Berlin. We are building a new level. Otherwise we would not need architects, we would need archivists (*Chronik*, p. 16).

As Hassemer's last statement illustrates, another significant rift in the administration formed, which was based on attitudes toward how heavily history should play into mending the post-1989 Berlin urban fabric. The debate was an ideological, symbolic one, though it is realized in built form and therefore often identified as an aesthetic one. Often certain highly-visible figures were identified by little more than their stance on old versus new; how 'traditionalist' they were.

In this stream, Hans Stimmann quickly became known as perhaps the quintessential traditionalist. He explains his feeling that "people who think Berlin has to be newly invented are from either Houston, London or West Germany, or have a very strange view of investors" (*Die Tageszeitung*, 11 May 1991). Instead of reinventing the city, Stimmann promoted consultation of its past for future development.

A biographical newspaper article summarized his ideology such: "Stimmann wanted the isolated big city, and not the urbanized landscape. His urban ideal had its roots in the 19th century, somewhere between James Hobrecht and Camillo Sitte<sup>8</sup>. Just do not mention "Cybercity"! That would enrage the guy!" (Stegers in *Der Tagesspiegel*, 25 January 1996). Stimmann's assuming this traditionalist label marks a turning point in the historicism

---

<sup>8</sup> James Hobrecht was a Berlin planner in the mid-1800s, just before major industrialization took place in the city; a time when planning first began to be seen as having social responsibilities and the public interest began to take priority over private building rights. Hobrecht was a practitioner and not a theoretician, and was criticized for planning the 'stone-faced Berlin, the biggest tenement city in the world'. Despite complicated and competing political and administrative forces and the city's tumultuous late-1800s development, the Hobrecht Plan remained largely in place until 1919 (Ribbe, p. 219-234).

Camillo Sitte was a Viennese planner and architect around the turn of the century. In 1893 he published the book which made him famous: *City Planning According to Artistic Principles*. Sitte did not approach city planning as merely a formal problem, but as a creative art. Sitte came to regard style as something alien to the urban context, to the process of change, and something to be avoided because it was usually associated with a lack of humility vis-a-vis the totality of the city (Collins, p. 19).

debate, bringing both the man and his ideology into the spotlight of contemporary planning. By doing so he forced all other involved parties to posit their level of traditionalism.

With the exception of a few more vocal high power personalities, much of the ideological debate had been between various organized groups. Early on, the "Group of the 9th of December" pitted itself against the social democratic politicians. The "Group of the 9th of December" was a self-organized collective of architects, city planners, historians and journalists from East and West Berlin. It drew together in early January of 1990 to protest the GDRs construction of housing at the border of Leipziger Platz. From the beginnings they began to formulate their more moderate, 'progressive-traditionalist' stance. By April the group had released a charter to publicize their perspective on what should happen in Berlin's city center. Included in the charter were the following points:

- after so many various phases of destruction, the center of Berlin is no place for utopian experiments in city building, rather a place with precise historical-political circumstances.
- It has to do with the careful reconstruction of individual quarters by means of new architecture within reflective historical structures.
- It is of value for the dialectic to concentrate both on the extraordinary nature of the situation and on achieving normality. Architecture that leans toward just one side -- either 'super design' or simple reconstruction of the past -- will not do the site justice.

The deference to what sense of 'place' Potsdamer Platz owned escaped the opposing politicians, namely Nagel and Mayor Momper. As alluded to above, they placed higher priority on the economy, thereby taking the non-traditionalist stance, although both had identified themselves as historians by training. *Die Zeit* reported that "The social democrats perceive such [aesthetic or urban design] ideas as intellectual, elitist follies ... Walter Momper shortly before the vote over the contract of sale threatened with reference to the economic problems of the city: "We will recruit jobs in completely other ways and need to offer the investors much more than is the case today" (*Die Zeit*, 3 August 1990). Nagel, Momper and their cohorts were part of the historicism argument insofar as they opposed it altogether.

One branch of the historicism debate boiled down to the most contentious urban form issue in contemporary Berlin. Above all, public

concern in this very low, spread out city has come to concentrate on high-rise buildings. One Berlin historian accredited this to their isolated past: "historically because of this entire idea of having inwardly to create what outwardly was cut off has turned the Berliners into totally un-urban people. When they see building structures more than 12 stories they freak out, they think its gigantic, its mammoth, its metropolis, its evil." In fact, the traditionalism-cum-high-rise discussion often narrowed even further into only two sides: whether one was for or against skyscrapers. The Schreyer-Nagel rivalry itself posited on the skyscraper issue: in defense, Nagel used downtown San Francisco as an attractive model of urbanity, noting that "fascinating skyscrapers stand there", while Schreyer protested that "The allure of a city is not its skyline" (*Die Zeit*, 3 August 1990).

The king traditionalist Hans Stimmann naturally speaks out against high-rises in Berlin. In a May 1991 newspaper interview, Stimmann states that "most Berlin architects and politicians have an almost naive backlog demand with respect to skyscrapers. They are like the Eastern Germans with their Western cars. We got it out of our system, we have cars, but we are not so crazy about them anymore. But for the Easterners this is the dream of the future, the have to have a BMW or a Manta. And most Berlin architects approach high-rises exactly in this fashion" (*Die Tageszeitung*, 11 May 1991). Stimmann's condescension makes his anti-skyscraper stance out to be the more sober one; a clever appeal to widespread concern over the recklessness of investor-frenzy.

As this debate's character foil to Stimmann, the man who has come to be most highly associated with the pro-skyscraper stance is Berlin architect Hans Kollhoff. In a newspaper article from November 1990, he challenges the anti-high-rise viewpoint: "In the 1970s the former Senate Director of Construction Müller said one could pack in all one wished in Berlin, the result would always be a "boulette"<sup>9</sup>. This very Bouletten-syndrome is making itself alarmingly widespread. In planning the Daimler Benz site at Potsdamer Platz, the holy cow of the Berlin 22 meter eaveheight is being frantically clung to, despite the fact that because of its high level of utilization the building program cries for verticality. The typical Berliner Bouletten footprint, from the Kudamm square to the Europa Center, is neither block nor tower. Whoever is familiar with American skyscrapers, Rockefeller Center, the Empire State, the Chrysler,

---

<sup>9</sup> The "Boulette" is a German hamburger, ground beef blended with onions and fried, eaten cold.



knows the alternative" (*Frankfurter Allgemeine*, 26 November 1990). For Kollhoff, these successful New York examples constitute a far more humane city than what Berlin currently has to offer architecturally.

But the anti-skyscraper movement has nipped Kollhoff's visions in the bud, opting for the comfort of the familiar. About an early run-in with the issue, he explained: "I was mad too. That was at the point where we did not succeed with our proposal for the Potsdamer Platz competition -- for the first one. However, I understood the decision of the jury, especially the position of Stimmann at that point (but that became much clearer to me afterwards): if they had decided in favor of this high-rise project, they would have been confronted with a lot of projects of that scale in all kinds of places. I think Stimmann was very sensitive at that point and he blocked high-rise dreams of many kinds with that decision" (Conversation).

What is interesting about Kollhoff's particular case is that he otherwise produces quite conservative, and therefore favorably accepted by the administration, architectural designs. His opinion is that skyscrapers fit into the traditionalist approach. He explained: "I know where I would like to live, and I know that architecture has to be made for living, for decent living, and probably to perform as an architect that serves this kind of living, one has to be old-fashioned ... To keep most of the city flat, you might have some points which, just because of their infrastructure, because of the mythical quality probably, they have a sense of place -- where you can increase the density, which you can turn into special places." It is perhaps this moderate perspective that has kept him in the small circle of architects getting work in Berlin, despite his radical affinity towards height.

Even in a later competition for another area, these numerous players remained steadfast in their stances. Of his skyscraper design here, Kollhoff said: "I think even Stimmann might have been not so much against this concept at this spot, but he tried to avoid the high rise discussion sort of spread all over the city" (Conversation). The architect's assessment of Stimmann's position implies a certain stubbornness and inflexibility in the planning official's approach to urban form issues. Both Stimmann and Kollhoff had personal interests at stake. Stimmann needed to uphold his reputation, and by taking such a definitive stance, also made his job easier because people knew what to expect of him here and in subsequent projects. He could be spared the questions and discussions.

Kollhoff, likewise, is looking out for his job. After the Bauhaus lecture, the Berlin architect and friend of Kollhoff's, Florian von Buttlar explained to me that "what Kollhoff neglected to mention was how much he just really wants to build a skyscraper". And one can imagine how Kollhoff's already busy office would fill up if the effective skyscraper ban were no longer a barrier. As the man to break the stubborn administrative stance on this issue, Kollhoff would surely become a worldwide household name instead of only a German one; arguably this might have already happened if he had won with the high-rise design at Potsdamer Platz.

Before that competition's decision had been reached, Dieter Hoffmann-Axthelm summarized the connection between the skyscraper at Potsdamer Platz and the touchy question of who would build the city. He writes: "For the hi-rise supporters to win, this is then the precedent for Leipziger Street, Friedrichstrasse Train Station, Alexanderplatz ... The stakes are high: the particular professional future, money, success, jury decisions, not to mention the hoped-for connection into the international architecture scene. Without the huge capital, without Mercedes, without Sony and others, all of this is not possible. This is the entire explanation for the barrage from Frankfurt and Munich in Berlin's direction that has been going on for months, but also for the inner Berlin architectural controversies" (*Der Tagesspiegel*, 25 October 91).

Indeed it seems to be popular consensus that as time passed and debate grew more fervent, Stimmann became more bull-headed about his traditionalist views. He was described to me as "a very interesting guy who I think the power has gone to his head, because I knew him from the times when he wasn't powerful, when he was a very reasonable interesting person to talk to, now I think those times are over. But this happens to politicians; very nice guys then they come to power and you don't recognize them because they forget everything they think. So I think Mr. Stimmann was overdoing it, I think he's overplaying his power, I think that he is unnecessarily bossing people around." And the journalist Rudolph Stegers demands of Stimmann that "Instead of concerning himself so greatly with the tastes of the men, he could have -- just as an example -- required that their buildings have natural lighting and ventilation as well as convertible foundations (*Der Tagesspiegel*, 25 January 1996).

One of the most controversial sagas in the early stages of the entire Potsdamer Platz project centered around a tiff between Stimmann and the

Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas at a highly publicized competition. After an exchange between the two, Koolhaas left the event, although he was a jury member. The press excitedly reported a fallout between the two personalities as an illustration of the low level to which debate had fallen.

Anecdotal evidence suggests a less fiery scene. Architectural critic Schäche was part of the jury proceedings and explained that Koolhaas left simply because he had his ticket already in hand. As he had done before, Koolhaas booked a flight to leave before the end of the competition, and then "afterwards he presented himself to the press as if he had left incensed over Stimmann. That is simply ridiculous. It has nothing to do with reality." Schäche indicates that the episode was less a dramatic conflict of strong-willed personae than a disagreement of quite ordinary scale by such a competition. Whichever the true case, the story represents an example of the real and perceived rivalries that characterized planning proceedings.

We can conclude that although traditionalism in planning is hardly an uninteresting topic, relying on it to label planning officials was unfortunate for contemporary Berlin debate. As strong as Stimmann may have been during the time when the administration needed strength, he is to blame for dragging the ideological and architectural discussions down to this. First, discussion about the personalities and their viewpoints became so pared down that it was often one-dimensional; take the case of traditionalism and its narrow mutation into the pro-or-con skyscraper issue. Also, the label seems to have begun to determine the personalities rather than the other way around (although this is not necessarily the fault of the label). That is, as time passed, public planning figures who became known for certain beliefs clutched onto those beliefs still more extremely.

The result of this ossification spelled demise for Stimmann. Upon his leaving the Senate, opinions varied on whether another should fill the vacant position, or if the post was perhaps best left unfilled. The Christian Democratic Secretary of Parliament Volker Liepelt describes the sentiments of many: "Stimmann blocked more than he moved. Especially his particular way of manipulating competitions and his shaping of the historical center harmed the city" (*Berliner Allgemeine Zeitung*, 19 January 1996). Even Stimmann's colleagues who supported him explained that they did so "despite the reserved ways of his demeanor and his way of butting people in the head" (*Berliner Allgemeine Zeitung*, 19 January 1996). In the end, Mayor Eberhard Diepgen was quoted as

saying: "It is a blessing for Berlin that before long Stimmann will be unable to do his dirty work" (*Berliner Allgemeine Zeitung*, 19 January 1996).

### Media Weapon

Swaying public sentiment by means of the media is often attempted as a support-building tool. As an example, the City Director of Competitions described to me one episode over the floor-area ratio discussions. To reach settlement, he said the investors bit the bullet and agreed on the City's number. The next day, however, the papers quoted the investors complaining about not getting a higher ratio from the City; that they actually wanted double what they had been granted. Proceedings were greatly muddled amid the confusion; the City was displeased about the deceptiveness, so negotiations were effectively thrown backwards, resulting in long delays (Süchting Conversation). Underhanded ploys like this one surfaced intermittently throughout the early stages of the process, but in the end, the investors received little public sympathy for their chicanery.

In fact, the investors have received little public sympathy overall, an unsurprising situation given Berlin's history of public skepticism concerning large multinationals' intentions as discussed above. In trying to disprove this widespread suspicion, the large firms learned to handle public relations with sensitivity -- they were forced to through such experiences as with the floor area ratios. I would argue that it was lucky that the first firm to go through these motions was the prized German concern, Daimler Benz. Although Benz had never been especially immune from public criticism in Germany, the firm was more knowledgeable on the 'turf' than a foreign firm (such as Sony) would have been. One Berlin architect supported this theory, saying "Sony, coming out of a totally different cultural tradition, in what they were used to, and in paying, and all of the world's projects the way they do it, had much greater difficulty, and the public resistance against Helmut Jahn (Sony's head architect for the project) is much greater than against Renzo Piano (Benz's head architect). Because it is projecting a cultural image which the Germans do not identify with."

Benz's "cultural advantage" included knowing how to circulate through the ranks of officials. Journalist Michael Sondheimer reports in 1990: "While Nixdorf, Ford and other big investors had in their search for property previously turned to the State Agency for Economic Development, Daimler

took the direct path. 'Mercedes was more refined than the others', recalls a high official in the Senate about the first communications. 'They knew that the Senator for Construction Wolfgang Nagel, as former Party Election Leader for SPD, was intimate with Momper. Edzard Reuter spoke with Momper, Momper with Nagel'" (*Die Zeit*, 3 August 1990). Daimler knew how to set the ball in motion, and thereby championed in securing the first deal.

As mentioned above, one major glitch in Daimler's public image was its failure to address past involvement in Nazi Germany. A Senate committee recommended in April 1990 the display of an ongoing exhibit of this involvement in the Daimler complex. In August 1990 Edzard Reuter finally countered the criticisms in an interview with the newspaper *die Zeit*. He says: "We were the first firm to admit that we had employed forced laborers, and the first to voluntarily undertake the attempt toward compensation" (*Chronik*, p. 8). Although Daimler's involvement represented another layer of symbolic circumstance in the Potsdamer Platz project more than a concrete issue they needed to deal with, facing up to it was important for public sentiment toward the firm.

From there, publicized negotiations between the City and Daimler-Benz consisted of Benz's delicate and crafty push-and-stand-off approach. It was important that these negotiations be handled delicately also because Daimler Benz was still a going concern with production facilities in Berlin, meaning that they were subject to the same business climate as all firms located in the city: restructuring and cost-cutting was an inherent part of reunification for these German firms. Those restructuring and cost-cutting measures often included factory closings and large-scale job loss, in turn attracting the scrutiny of the Treuhänder. In May of 1990, the public relations director for Daimler Benz, Matthias Kleinert, addressed the hold-ups in the sale of the property: "Because we love the bride, we are willing to allow her time ... the primacy of politics are to be acknowledged, and the forthcoming competition's architectural and planning points are to be followed" (*Chronik*, p. 4). Benz comes across here as completely conciliatory.

Not long after, Benz began to up the pressure, but carefully. Edzard Reuter was a participating speaker at April 1991 city forum where he declared: "You understand, the interconnectedness of the issues makes it impossible to remain silent about Potsdamer Platz. We at Daimler Benz advocate for the urban form competition to be held at the latest this fall ... in reality, a pair of

key decisions on transport axes and railroad stations suffice for the development of the city center. For me, the situation presents itself to draft the theme for Potsdamer Platz, because here the decisive parameters for economic indicators and the urgently necessary architectural and physical-planning flexibility of the center will be set or neglected" (*Chronik*, p. 14). Reuter's diplomatic tone displays concern for what happens in Berlin while subtly applying pressure to have it happen fast, and stressing the importance of Daimler's investment. As a whole, Benz's negotiations with the City seem to have followed this kind of pushing-just-far-enough adroitness; further proof of their cultural advantage.

Arguably the City received far less public scrutiny than did the investors, perhaps with a touch more trust that the city acts in the citizens' best interest. In light of the suspicion over the large investors, the pressure lay on the City to keep them at bay. Any public impatience with the City seems to have more to do with the general consensus that the officials were ill-prepared at best, completely incompetent at worst, to deal with what was presented to them after the Wall came down; hence the fascination with certain high-level planning officials and their rivalries.

A newspaper series of five essays in June 1990 featured the critic Dieter Hoffmann-Axthelm, who would prove quite active and controversial throughout the next half decade's debates. He expressed the fear that the planning of Potsdamer Platz would boil down to an alliance of money-powered investors, easily-extorted politicians and narrow-minded ecologists. "All at once the entire debate over the qualities that the City was supposed to settle on became concrete and political ... One has cultural standards for public discussion so as not to be torn apart by the media as a barbarian. In effect, one sides with the powerful, and feels good not to be in his way. Opposing opinions are taken nowadays as elitist" (*Chronik*, p.5). Hoffmann-Axthelm makes clear his assertion that healthy discussion falls victim under a weak administration.

Indeed his prognosis for the results in this scenario is grim. He writes: "In the end, the victim of this politicking is not the present urban configuration. That issue will disappear. However, in its many layers the existing urban configuration is the only measuring stick for the coming construction tasks. What is there now is after all more distinct than what will come. To live up to that, would be the task of a political building culture that knows what it is

doing, when it builds on this historical battlefield. The entry into such a culture has been missed" (*Chronik*, p.5). This pessimism over a fundamental deficiency for the City to deal with the issue at hand did not find widespread public support -- Hoffmann-Axthelm was chided as a traitor for this series -- but I believe represented widespread tacit concern.

In later writings, Hoffmann-Axthelm repeatedly makes clear that his fears are being confirmed; indeed he has been consistent in calling them as he sees them. A particularly biting essay in the newspaper *die Tagesspiegel* called the investors' actions "imperialistic trademark politics", efforts to create symbols of corporate identity in the open colony-land from Berlin outwards. As for Potsdamer Platz's status in this, "it lies in the presuppositions that were made at the beginning of the affair ... at today's standing point nothing is remaining. The variety of the historic square is being stamped out as we speak by the procedure of taking a comprehensive design as the basis. The only thing left to hope for is a richly multifaceted design in the victorious scheme. One by one everything is being erased, with respect to the current topic, what traces still exist of the of the square, the inner-city and culture forum, with respect to everything else, ex-urban wilderness and urban flexibility, everything accidental, a historic has-been in favor of a logistical division cast in stone" (*Der Tagesspiegel*, 29 October 1991). We can assume that from Hoffmann-Axthelm's perspective, no matter how 'historically' built the development would be, it could never possess a historical character simply because of the circumstances surrounding its realization.

For the optimist, the Potsdamer Platz project represented a chance for the City to redeem its competence in the public eye. The journalist Klaus Hartung expressed in June 1990 that Potsdamer Platz "is the heart, the joint between East and West and thus the paradigm for the new metropolis. That it must be built through publicly open and acceptable rules ... is not only sensible, but the reasoning of the [contemporary political] red-green Coalition: it gives a political chance for heightened responsibility from the public" (*Chronik*, p. 6). Obviously with smooth proceedings here on Potsdamer Platz, the administration could gain much respect.

It must be emphasized to an American audience that city planning in Europe is and always has been publicly assumed and accepted to be the job of the City. Süchting explained that "In German society it is actually clear that the City is responsible for the planning of the city ... for building the city -- and that

can be broadly interpreted -- the City is responsible. As a rule people are aware of that. And when they notice that the investors so blatantly put the City under pressure, then the public becomes very upset" (Conversation). Public sentiment can therefore presumably become a powerful force in the protection of the City's hegemony in planning negotiations.

Berlin presents no exception to the rule of municipal responsibility in planning the city, though their system can be seen as a sort of Berlin adaptation on this European tradition. The Berlin architect and critic Heinrich Klotz takes Frankfurt, popularly regarded as architecturally inhumane, as a city lacking the competition tradition and summarizes the consequence: "... in Frankfurt they didn't have years of discussions -- they adopted a very ad hoc policy. And that was the difference between a municipal building programme and an IBA" (*International Building Exhibition 1987*, p.9). The Berlin hybrid crosses the preferable competition method of IBA with municipal responsibility, resulting in the City-run competition.



## The Competition System

*"The typical developer in the United States would go bonkers if he had to put up with architectural competitions the way they're done there."*

*-Jerry Speyer, president of Tishman Speyer Properties, on Berlin.*

In approaching the physical and administrative black holes Berlin faced upon reunification, the city turned to its tradition of holding competitions. This chapter tells the story of these competitions as they have been applied in post-reunification Berlin. It describes how they were conducted, the major issues that were present, how those issues were dealt with to get at the results, and the reactions from the public and the press.

### Overview

Two rounds of competition comprised the procedure employed at this pilot project, the Potsdamer Platz: the *städtebaulicher Wettbewerb*, what I will call the urban form competition, followed by the *Realisations-wettbewerbe*, the individual architects' competitions. To handle the competitions administratively, each of the two Senate planning agencies took responsibility for one level of competitions: the urban form competition is conducted by the Senate Administration for Urban Development and Environmental Protection, and the architectural competitions, held by individual investors, are overseen by the Senate Administration for Construction and Housing.

### The Urban Form Competition Concept

Upon reunification, several major firms proverbially stood at the Potsdamer Platz lunch counter with wallets in hand, waiting for the tab and their plate. The first and most notable, as discussed above, was Daimler-Benz. However, it was unthinkable in many Berlin minds to proceed development of Potsdamer Platz without the intermediate formulation of an urban form concept; as discussed in "The Administrative Structure" the logistical chaos of reuniting Berlin left no city-wide general plans.

Much had been discussed for this particular area in the last years, between the IBA and other competitions, Daimler's interest, and general acknowledgment of this square's significance. However, most of the projections had centered around smaller isolated projects rather than contextual pieces of city. The City took this bias as problematic, feeling that a focus on the

details shortchanged the broader area in question. Officials felt that plans for what would happen on Potsdamer Platz "... in increasing ways threaten to create prejudices, without having yet found a feasible general urban form concept" (*Dokumentation*, p. 5). Therefore, a competition would first be held that would not show what would be built, but that would determine and guide the competition for what would be built. In other words, before architecture would come urban form.

There seems at least two points to this concept that could backfire. First, from the design participation standpoint: the urban form competition for the architect is a huge sacrifice of much time, effort and money, all for only a chance of winning; and at that, a chance of winning what will not result in a tangible built object. If the architect is indeed willing to bear the sacrifice in order to contribute to the city-building process, nothing guarantees that the winning design will be competently seen through to influence the subsequent built object. The administration is afterwards responsible to control adherence to the urban plan throughout the architectural competitions.

Second, from the investors' perspective: the intermediate step of the urban form competition significantly slows the development process. Moreover, the delay is not to their benefit: not only does it cost them time, but they also have no say on the outcome of the competition. Wolfgang Süchting at the Senate for Urban Development and Environmental Protection recalled that when the investors received the news that an urban form competition would be held by the city, they "had something completely different in mind. In other cities the big investors and their architects formulate a competition, as the investors like it" (Conversation). After all, the result of a City-run competition will more likely than not impede the investors' plans for the area in question, imposing restrictions and limitations on what they will be allowed to build.

The City's decision to hold the competition therefore took the risk of offending the investor, in the delicate balance of power that has been described in earlier chapters. And according to the Süchting story, the risk became reality. But the glitch was apparently not so unconquerable; Süchting reported that upon hearing the bottom line from the City, the investors "didn't want to believe it at first, but the City made clear to them, the plans will be made on that foundation [of the urban form competition] ... you can either build there then, or walk away and we will sell the property. And they accepted this"

(Conversation). This was evidently a point on which the administration united and stood fast.

Hans Stimmann took position on why there must be the conflict of placing such demands on the investor. He explains that the urban form competitions "are generally based on the model of the 'European city', with public streets, squares and parks strictly separated from private areas (contradicting the plans of many developers, who wanted to create semi-public 'shopping malls')" (parentheses his, *World Cities Berlin*, p. 52). In Stimmann's eyes, the urban form competition, led by the public servants, would protect the citizenry from inevitably inhumane architecture.

Stimmann's argument illustrates the earlier-discussed suspicion of the large investors, which led in turn to the mistrustful public assumptions concerning the built form results of the investors' developments. And indeed, this mistrust motivated employment of the competition system, in that a municipally-run competition avoided firms' influencing the structural configuration: it was a guarantee that no building in the shape of a giant Mercedes star would be erected on this spot. In a more realistic bad-case scenario, Berlin could avoid ending up with a piece of Frankfurt (Office City), or with a piece of the United States (Commercial City) in the center. The urban form competition sought to eliminate these possibilities.

With the City competition safeguarding urban form from investors' influence, the public mistrust for the architects' intentions surfaced. Berlin architect Hans Kollhoff explained in our interview that "What makes things so difficult is that politicians in this country, for good reasons, don't accept the architects and the planners as an authority anymore. I guess that is counting for all the world in the future. People have made their bad experiences with a lot of what planners and architects have created and they get careful -- that's good. And that makes life very difficult for architects sometimes ... ". Fears circle around the phenomenon of the "star-architect" who has with each project self-promotion more in mind than a public-serving approach.

In this vein, a November 1991 article describing designs for Potsdamer Platz states: "Incomprehensible is why a large portion of the works neglect the physical connection between East and West that they were supposed to articulate, in favor of an imposing piece of city of new US-American form that they sell as "futuristic" or "innovative" but in reality just use as self-aggrandizement (*Bauwelt*, p. 2210). It was hardly intended that the avoidance of

the multinational firms' corporate imageries in the design should result in the architects' personal imageries.

However, the fame and publicity architects receive might offer some explanation to the other potential problem raised above; why the urban form competitions at and since Potsdamer Platz have enjoyed such successful professional participation. Many architects submit designs despite the low chance of winning and despite the fact that nothing actually gets built by the winner. Süchting described: "What is interesting is that the [architects'] interest is so big, although no commission is bound to it: the winner does not build a house nor a city. But he has the feeling that he has made a contribution towards the development of the city, for the building of the city. And the winners of these competitions are celebrated much more than the winner of an architectural competition" (Conversation). Apparently the intangible rewards outweigh the costs for significant numbers of architects.

Additionally, winning the urban form competition represents a surefire way of a lesser-known architect to get his foot in the door. And in the small circle of architects working in Berlin, the term 'lesser known' is very loosely used. The urban form competition for Berlin's *Spreinsel*, the area inhabited by the former East Berlin government buildings, shocked the city by awarding the winning design to then-little known architect Bernd Niebuhr. Proponents of the open- as opposed to the invited-competition argue that this potential creates a system of greater fairness for architects.

That only a handful of architects get most of the work in Berlin is a hotly contended stream of debate. Many blame the narrowness on favoritism. Journalist Paul Goldberger states that "To be an architect on Stimmann's good side is to get plenty of work in Berlin; otherwise you might as well be in Helsinki"; he speaks with an opponent to Stimmann and the historically-oriented ideologies who complains that "Young architects are excluded here and they don't dare speak up about it, his power is such" and concludes that "What is troubling about the city's present architectural picture is the sense that in post-wall Berlin, the very openness to new ideas and new forms that for so long defined the city's culture is threatened by a desire to make Berlin too comfortable, too smooth, too easy" (*The New York Times*, 5 February 1995). In such a hotbed of architectural activity the threat of limits on who gets the commissions angers anyone who values creativity or an honest competition.

From the popularity in architects' submitting work in the urban form competitions, we might conclude that there exists a perception in the profession of the administration's competence. The keystone in the procedure is that the City will successfully see to it that the winning urban form design will indeed influence the later, individual architects' competitions. Süchting described the City's role here as the "decisive point; if the politician fails to say that the competition result must be the standard and the foundation for the plans for construction, then the entire competition is worth nothing" (Conversation).

Furthermore, according to Süchting the experience at Potsdamer Platz was the breakthrough for the credibility of the urban form competition. He explained that "earlier, the urban form competition had the kind of function, whereby nobody knew if it was to be taken seriously, if something really would come of it. Many of the results disappeared into a drawer, and there were few participants because there were no contracts that would see something realized anyway. But now it's different" (Conversation). At the heart of the prototype urban form competition's success, then, was that it was taken seriously politically here at Potsdamer Platz.

### debis Project History

At the beginning of 1989, the Stuttgart based Daimler-Benz founded the spin-off Daimler-Benz Interservices, shortened 'debis'. As of July 1990, debis handled Daimler's collective services, including leasing, marketing, and electronic data processing. The suggestion to headquarter debis in Berlin came soon after its founding from top manager Edzard Reuter, son of Ernst Reuter, the earlier Berlin SPD municipal council for transportation and then city Mayor. Peter-Hans Keilbach, the Berlin representative of Daimler's executive board, recounted that Reuter had commissioned him in early summer 1989 to top-secretly explore potential sites.

The Senate eventually assembled a four-person group to publicly work with Daimler on finding a site. Of the three initial properties the Senate offered, Reuter was from the beginning enticed by the Potsdamer Platz location. Keilbach was reported as saying of his boss: "He sought to take on the responsibility of rebuilding and revitalizing the onetime city center" (*Die Zeit*, 3 August 1990). With his long family history in Berlin, Reuter knew the significance of this address.

Serious discussions between the Senate and Daimler about this land began in December of 1989. The first hurdle was determining a selling price for the property. Although no-one viewed the task as simple, the unbelievable controversy that resulted surprised many.

According to the state budget regulation, government pieces of property were allowed to be sold at their market value only. The edition of the market evaluation tables in effect at the time (from December 31, 1988) placed a ridiculously low value of 450 Marks per square meter on the property. Both sides realized the price was way under value, and discussions in December revolved more around 850 Marks, in January up to 1000 Marks. On the 28th of May 1990, the Senate for Construction and Housing released a report officially determining the market value of the Daimler property to be 1505 Marks per square meter.

Although the selling price had been established, the timing of the sale remained up in the air. The central question here was whether the Senate should require Benz to wait until after the urban form competition. On the one hand, the length of delay in that case was frighteningly indeterminate (no date for the competition had been set), but on the other hand, many felt that having the owner be already present at the urban form competition was against its very principles.

Following a June 6, 1990 parliamentary committee meeting, ten architects stated their position against completing the sale before holding the urban form competition. They explained: "The participating architects will be crammed into an inadmissible conflict between the free collecting of ideas and the open bearing of expectations from the competition-holders. The jury itself has to fail in this conflict, because at a minimum the jury member of the Land Berlin cannot vote impartially. What should the competition participants then search for? For the best solution for the connection of both city halves or for the best solution for a large investor?" (*Chronik*, p. 5). These architects and their many political supporters were concerned that special interests would tarnish the competition process.

Parallel to the objections based on the timing of the sale to Benz in relation to the City competition, more extreme objections still came from those who outright opposed the sale. Such arguments were usually based on the sentiment that large corporations should not be shaping the new Berlin, similar to earlier discussions. On denying the sale, the landscape architect Almut Jirku

wrote in the newspaper *Die Tageszeitung*: "It would be the chance to display ourselves as a truly cultural society and to deny hegemonic power to the Enterprise Culture. This is hard to come by under the design code of a Corporate Identity, with New York as an example. There, office buildings at street level are outfitted as public open spaces, but nevertheless remain in the right of way of the firms, who then decide who has access and what he/she may do there..." (*Die Tageszeitung*, 12 July 1991). The people-versus-corporation perspective hardly got watered down as the sale to Daimler Benz neared.

Nor did the issue of timely handling so as not to lose the investor as covered in the above chapter, "The Media and Public Sentiment". In a counter effort to above objections, the side wishing to complete the sale was working just as hard to push it through. Later in that same month, Finance Senator Norbert Meisner released a draft of a selling contract with Daimler, and announced that it was to be decided upon a mere few days later. The action triggered accusations such as that from architect Volker Härtig to Wolfgang Nagel. Härtig rallied the audience at a public podium discussion, decrying the Senate for letting Daimler bully it around (*Chronik*, p. 6). When the day to vote came, Senate discussions were so heavy that they delayed decision.

The day before the Daimler Benz stockholder meeting, the Senate and Municipal Council decided in favor of the contract to sell at the total market price of 92.87 million Marks, or 1505 Marks per square meter. The Benz Director of Public Relations said in an interview that that price lay at the "uppermost border that we could bear" (*Chronik*, p. 7). Incorporated into the contract was the caveat that the buyer would have to adhere to the results of the urban form competition. The deal was officially closed on July 16, 1990.

### The Urban Form Competition at Potsdamer Platz

The urban form competition was announced on April 10, 1990. The decision to employ this competition method makes sense in light of the ideological discrepancies within the administration alone (never mind those with the architecture and planning professions) discussed in "The Media and Public Sentiment". Amid so many differences, no common approach and no accepted level of involvement would ever be reached, so it was reasonable to open it up and have different representatives vote on what would be the shape of the city. That being the case, the City administration was still very much

involved as a regulator without needing to necessarily unite and agree on the details. Mayor Momper called this advent the Decision of the Century.

The administrative jumble thus led to the urban form competition and thus effected openness in the proceedings for Potsdamer Platz. The Senate's decree for the competition reflected this vagueness: "The Potsdamer Platz should be composed of a mixed development of urban functions. The development on Potsdamer Platz and its surrounding area should contain shops and gastronomic and cultural establishments in the lower levels, so that the built-up square borders are alive. The Potsdamer Platz must be clearly defined both in its internal spatial structure and within the urban context, and must remain bound to the Leipziger Platz. The rest of the historical city pattern ... and the few remaining old buildings ... must be respected and must be the point of departure for the new urban form ordering" (*Chronik*, p.3). Basically, anything could happen here.

Not everyone was so impressed at what the competition would achieve as Mayor Momper. In the newspaper *die Zeit* Manfred Sack renamed the Mayor's advent 'the Mistake of the Century'. Opponents such as Sack insisted that what was certain to be a monofunctional office project was completely inappropriate for the center of the city. In a podium discussion, architect Hardt-Waltherr Hämer worded in an accusation against the Senate and Daimler Benz, who he said were working in partnership to bring together 'power' and 'center' (*Chronik*, p.4). The protests echoed Jirku's early sentiments mentioned above, but with greater emphasis on the symbolism of the dealings adding to concerns about what would come of the urban form.

A late April 1991 advertisement in the magazine *Stadtbauwelt* for the competition received responses from about 75 interested offices (*Chronik*, p. 14). The high level of interest induced the City to raise the number of invited architects from the originally settled-upon ten to between 15 and 18. The final decision came on May 2, 1991, when Volker Hassemer announced after intensive discussions with the city forum steering committee that 16 offices would be invited to submit designs in the City's urban form competition.

Protests from groups such as the Berlin Architects Association arose concerning the decision for an invited as opposed to an open competition. In a public protest against the Senate for Urban Development and Environmental Protection they demanded employment of the latter, stating that "the special historical situation requires this claim to quality that must be justly judged"



(*Chronik*, p.14). In a later press conference, they were joined by a German architects' association; together they criticized the competition participant selection as having a predilection toward one certain architectural type, and as blocking out Berlin architects.

One of the most active of the protesting groups was the Berlin Society of Architects and Engineers. In February 1991 they expressed their position in an open letter to Volker Hassemer; while they lauded his creation of the city forum, they could not support his conceptions of the planning process at Potsdamer Platz (*Chronik*, p. 12). Later, in challenge to the City's proceedings, the Society held an open competition parallel to Hassemer's invited competition. The protocol at the end of the two-day committee meeting in September 1991 remarked on the high quality of the designs, which to them confirmed the Society's perspective that "excellent innovations in urban configuration solutions can be won through the process of open idea competitions" (*Chronik*, p. 18).

Clearly most of the criticism surrounding the choice of competition and the choice of competitors was based on equity issues; many saw too much room for personal favoritism in the invited competitions. Architects worried about their role in shaping the new development taking place. Among all else, the concern was that politicians were making consequential aesthetic decisions for which they were ill-prepared. Meanwhile the politicians were eager to display a decisive and commanding hand. The inherent tension illuminates touchy issues that lay at the background of every step of the process. All involved or interested parties grappled with the question of how collective the development decisions should be, and who gets to have their voice heard in decision making.

The Senate for Urban Development and Environmental Protection forged ahead with the invitation of sixteen offices for the urban design competition. The final decision among the City's jurors took place on October 2, 1991. The 15 jurors participating included some highly influential architects and planners in contemporary Europe:

Thomas Sieverts, City Planner, Bonn (Presiding Judge)  
Jürgen Sawade, Architect, Berlin  
Gustav Peichl, Architect, Vienna  
Rem Koolhaas, Architect, Rotterdam; represented later by  
Hilde Leon, Architect, Berlin

Kurt Forster, Art Historian, Santa Monica  
Bruno Flierl, Building Historian, Berlin  
Maria Auböck, Landscape Architect, Vienna  
Hans Stimmann, Senate Building Director, Berlin  
Volker Hassemer, Senator for City Planning and Environmental Prot.  
Wolfgang Nagel, Senator for Construction and Development  
Ingo Schmitt, National Secretary of the Senate for Transport and Commerce  
Barbara Jakubeit, President of the Federal Building Commission  
Benno Hasse, District Representative/Mayor, Berlin-Mitte  
Wolfgang Naujokat, District Representative/Mayor, Berlin-Tiergarten  
Erika Romberg, Building Consultant, Berlin-Kreuzberg

In addition, London Architect Richard Rogers sat in on the jury deliberations as an invited guest. With this invitation, Berlin got more than it had bargained for: as ongoing exclusive consultant to the investors since April, Rogers had been commissioned on the side to prepare a complete design for the area. Although Senator Hassemer had at an earlier press conference announced that he did not wish to see even a sketch from Rogers before completion of the City's competition, Rogers released his 1.8 million Mark (over \$1 million) project along side the competition designs. It was a blatant challenge to the entire system.

Rogers's super-chic presentation naturally wowed everyone. Berlin architect Florian von Buttlar described to me the discrepancy in appearance between Rogers's project and the competing architects' designs: "all the people liked it [Rogers's] very much because it was much more visible, it was not better, it was much more visible, it was already something you could imagine, the other [projects of the urban design competition] you can't imagine, because people are not used to reading urban design ideas, they are used to reading beautiful architectural simulation drawings, which Rogers did, at a very high level... this is a very dangerous situation. Because on one side, there were these kind of wooden boxes structuring in a very strange and unintelligible way this Potsdamer Platz area, conforming of course to some historical pattern which was the base of the competition. And on the other side you see finished architecture, I mean with interior drawings, with beautiful models". The investors' money and predetermined, lucid building program set their result apart from the City's.

Thus in one fell swoop, the investors undermined the City's fragile credibility in handling the competition proceedings. Their message: look how

efficiently and beautifully the results will turn out if the City would simply step back and let us handle it. One journalist wrote: "Just ten days later, the expensive, laborious competition threatens to become a farce" (*Bauwelt*, p. 2212). It was not a bright moment for Berlin city planners.

The way the administration handled this slight was therefore crucial. Luckily, the public rose up to show some support. Süchting described the experience as follows: "The investors at Potsdamer Platz went through extraordinarily heavy criticism from the public -- from the press, from the grass-roots political groups, from the citizens -- they were so angry about Daimler and Sony. Because Daimler and Sony put the City under so much pressure, for instance with the counter design. This damaged the firms so severely, damaged their image" (Conversation). Instead of the City's competition becoming the farce, the investors ended up in the public eye as the bullies in the Berlin playground.

For a time it was expected that the bullies would win; it just seemed simpler and too obvious. However, the City surprised everyone and insisted on seeing a proper urban form competition to its fruition. Through public sympathy and their own steadfastness, the City was able to replenish some authority. Its success in this incident set the precedent for subsequent proceedings, both at Potsdamer Platz and in later projects.

But less forgiving post-competition reviews did not paint such a powerful picture of the administration. The architectural magazine *Bauwelt*, for instance, reflected that "In light of this blood bath the fear remains that city planning will after all be determined by investors and not by the Senate and their proven-legitimate architects. It will be interesting to see if Volker Hassemer as competition release agent and Wolfgang Nagel as the now responsible party will allow themselves to be blackmailed, or if Daimler Benz will mix the designs of Hilmer/Sattler and Rogers together, something that from the spirit of the designs does not work at all" (*Bauwelt*, p.2193). Although the City had logistically retained power and assured the competition's importance in the planning process, it was far from commanding authority.

Despite the precariousness of the City's power, it is unclear to me what the investors expected as an outcome from the Rogers folly. Having handled negotiations quite conscientiously up to this point, this seems an over-bold affront on the investors' part. The risk was obvious; in the event that their effort failed it could mean prickly negotiations and a longer, harder struggle

for them the rest of the way. Or did they truly believe the City and people would recede and accept the Rogers design? In any case, they were obviously willing to try; in fact, it was worth well over a million dollars to them to take the chance. This risk indicates either the investors' confidence that they could muscle past the City, or a desperation to avoid continuing on in working with the City.

Because the main statement to be made in this episode by the parties involved concerned a power play rather than the quality of design, Berlin built form perhaps suffered. Some, like critic Rudolph Stegers, believed that Rogers's design was indeed superior. In an October 1991 newspaper article, Stegers writes:

"To be sure, Rogers was given a hefty budget of almost two million marks to produce a voluminous study for his client, two thick binders in whose contents the public utilities and waste disposal services for the ruinous property -- where to with electricity and gas, where to with garbage and noise? -- are taken just as seriously as its pretty appearance under light and behind glass. The completeness of the master plan reveals in hindsight the wretched deficiencies of the Berlin officials. The city forum indeed weighed every question carefully, but demanded the impossible from the architects for twenty thousand Marks: to deliver with the overall city development the complete infrastructure.

Hardly three weeks after the Potsdamer Platz competition the Senate's shame is perfect. Nothing is helped, the design from Richard Rogers is simply better than that of Heinz Hilmer and Christoph Sattler. No misunderstanding, there were reasons to call the sale of the huge plot to Daimler Benz a scandal, and Walter Momper's "Decision of the Century" the "Mistake of the Century". And there are reasons to fear the grasp of money. But the stubbornness of a bureaucracy, that Rogers at all costs wishes to know nothing of, Berlin makes an unfavorable impression. Is the sentence "We have a solid first prize" the only answer from the Building Senator in the office on Fehrberliner Platz? The often-lauded Public Private Partnership remains a laborious business. Against expectations, at the moment this is valid far more for the community than for the developer (capital)" (*Der Tagesspiegel*, 22 October 1991).

In a completely separate, much later essay, Stegers describes how the administration's wherewithal in the Potsdamer Platz urban form competition was to the detriment of urban aesthetic quality overall. He writes: "Thus the first Potsdamer Platz competition marked a decisive moment in the development of urban planning policy -- the authorities' insistence on

adherence to an orderly urban pattern. ... The much-trumpeted partnership between public authorities and private enterprise has reached a nadir, yielding only homogeneous images derived from historical fantasies" (*World Cities Berlin*, p. 55). Indeed, one cannot help but ask how everything would have played out if Rogers's design had been adopted at the first Potsdamer Platz competition, from the political perspective as well as the aesthetic.

Rogers's project document, read by City officials in October 1991, made clear in the introduction what were the architect's projections. It explains: "The final report thus serves to help the investors find the form of organization that will be necessary to ensure that a development of this size can be accommodated, and completed in the set time frame" (*Chronik*, p. 20). The planning administration could not proclaim such confidence to the investors, and Rogers's assurances were surely welcomed. The statement went on to estimate that all construction would be completed by 1997; the concreteness of the Rogers scheme must have enticed the investors to no end.

And given the amount of strife so early in the process, the allure of Rogers's lucid work must have at least partially appealed to the officials too. Florian von Buttlar recalls, "Against all predictions the Berlin Senate stood fast. Everyone expected that at the last minute they would throw all their ideas into the garbage heap and say 'let Rogers do it' but no, they did not. Politically they carried it through" (Conversation). Indeed, Wolfgang Nagel explained on October 9, 1991 that although the City was flexible toward the wishes of the investors, the urban form competition's result would not be put into question.

The Rogers saga aside, the jury voted on the original 16 anonymous designs, finally choosing as the winning one that from the Munich architect team of Heinz Hilmer and Christoph Sattler. The conservative design consists of a regular block pattern across the site, meant as a recollection of the earlier urban fabric. It adheres to the Senate's decree in its clear internal definition, its connections to the surrounding area, and in keeping Potsdamer bound to Leipziger Platz. It neglects to acknowledge the historic buildings that were to be preserved.

Widely accepted is that this was the least colorful of the competing designs, an unsurprising result for two reasons at least: first, because the state of relations among involved and affected parties was highly flammable; and second, because the only concrete assignment for the design was that was to become the framework for later work. *Bauwelt* explained: "Admittedly, the

prize-winning work from Hilmer and Sattler comes across as modest and reserved; it is characterized by a marked soullessness ... The design is presented precisely according to its statement; a practical, self-explanatory framework, one of the few that leaves some freedom for the following architectural competitions, no more and no less" (*Bauwelt*, p. 2212). I would argue Hilmer and Sattler won because they knew how to design for the situation at hand as much as for the site.

Von Buttlar expressed that the Munich firm "knew the rules of the game. They knew that Berlin tradition is like a pancake, a rather thick piece of pizza, and there are some little things which are allowed to stick out of the pizza but not too much, and then you take a knife and you cut the streets and you open the urban spaces into the pizza, and this is the cityscape. And then you have to have large areas, because the Berliners are crazy for green".

The jury judgment statement reveals much about the aesthetic- and physical planning motivations behind the decision:

"The project is impressive in its simple, traditional built form pattern. The choice of block volumes lends a residential typology to the office building, effecting continuity with the traditional cityscape.

The author suggests a functional system of small blocks that he understands as city building stones. Thereby a small-scale mixed use is made successful, as something which is not only possible in the district, but also down to the individual block, and something which is expressly desirable ...

The types of uses, above all at Potsdamer Platz, come across as especially successful (film house, retail store, office, hotel, etc.). We strongly support that there are residences on the Tiergarten border, as well as the potential to incorporate residences principally in every block...

The spatial distribution of functions on Potsdamer Platz finds a positive solution for all transportation means and their patrons through evenly apportioned space. The network of connections on the street is well structured (short paths, good orientation). The entryways are clearly marked. This applies also to the characteristics of the street types. The parking question is well-solved ...

The jury recommends that the further plans based on the prize-winning work have the following modifications:

1. Reduction of the built forms to effect a better profile. For a sociable utilization of the property, the FAR as laid out in the competition guideline at 5,0 should not be aimed for.
2. The transport concept is to adjust to the higher overall concept.
3. The configuration of the large green open spaces should alternatively be considered" (*Bauwelt*, p. 2212).

As was to be expected, the investors vehemently opposed the decision in favor of Hilmer and Sattler. Matthias Kleinert, writing on behalf of Mercedes, released an essay in a Berlin newspaper on October 11, 1991. The General Deputy states: "In the end the builder is the one who is always chided, today's Senate will no longer be in office. We will then have some things to remember. It will apply to those that now praise the jury and Senate, but later sharply criticize the monotonous colossal fronts, altogether 600 meters in length, dark gorge-like inner courts, that even with the most successful solution in detail cannot deliver more to their unreasonable demands than satirical reminiscences of Berliner tenement housing or the Stalinallee" (*Der Tagesspiegel*, 12 October 91). The investor does not attempt to conceal his bitterness; he makes evident that the city has gone too far.

Kleinert's article provoked substantial response. A few days later Klaus Hartung wrote in one newspaper: "This is like the trampling of an elephant. The large investor is uncooperative and asks the politics for rapport. But these attacks insult the pride of the City. After the huge scandal of the property exchange business, after the dictation of the time plan for the urban form competition, the multinational concerns should put on the brakes with the dictating" (*Die Tageszeitung*, 15 October 91). To the City's defense, Hartung makes evident that it is the investors who have gone too far.

At the same time, critic Wolf Jobst Siedler was more forgiving of the investors' situation. His assessment was as follows: "The preprogrammed anger is there. The four international concerns that are to build on Potsdamer Platz are unenthused over the result of the competition that was arranged over their heads. The methods, with which things of this nature were handled without the participation of the people whose interests -- and money -- it concerns, shipwrecked again. After lost planning months, Hassemer and Nagel stand in front of a pile of broken pieces" (*BZ*, 15 October 91). Siedler indicates that the City holding its ground in the competition was for naught, the entire procedure did not advance either side but was an exercise in futility.

In response to the multifaceted debate, Wolfgang Nagel wrote a retort for the daily newspaper. He explains that the Kleinert essay agrees with all of the critics who represent the perspective that Berlin is at present in danger of ceding urban planning and politically legitimate expertises to large investors (*Chronik*, p. 21). Moreover, he defends the urban form competition winner, pointing out that certain other projects have succeeded in finding highly

varying results under strict urban form requirements and limitations (*Der Tagesspiegel*, 17 October 91). The implication is that the Hilmer-Sattler scheme can be worked with.

A mere ten days after Kleinert's statement, another essay expressing disappointment over the Hilmer & Sattler decision appeared in the paper, this time from high level Sony executive Rainer Wagner. He writes: "What now, after the depressing end to this competition? One could admit with sovereignty enough that the better design is the better design. If this should not be possible in this city, then may the Munich and London architects sit themselves down together" (*Der Tagesspiegel*, 22 October 91). Wagner presumably tries to promote this partnership of architects as representative of the public-private partnership to develop this land. Sony is hoping here to nudge at least parts of the Rogers scheme in.

Consequent to Wagner's essay, he and Dieter Hoffmann-Axthelm were invited to take part in an exclusive debate the next day in the daily newspaper, being interviewed about aesthetic philosophies and the inherent symbolism. That the interview was sponsored by the mainstream daily newspaper illustrates the public interest in the issue. This debate was not only between the administration and the investors; in fact investors' criticisms of the competition result were supplemented by public criticisms. Much of this discussion took place by means of the Berlin newspapers despite the fact that this was a City-held competition, and that these major firms were normally less than publicly accessible.

In a tone that displays the public-ownership attitude of this debate, a daily newspaper writer sums up: "It became apparent in the closing rounds of the jury that the courage to draw up a really exceptional concept for the city of tomorrow is missing. And that in the end a design was presented to everyone that intends to get away completely without counterpoint with a skyscraper configuration, that borders on ignorance and common halfheartedness" (*Chronik*, p. 19). Similarly, another newspaper columnist reported: "The solid design recommends the reknitting of the old stockings. For the heart of Berlin and Europe, for an international point of identification that is to crown the largest mass of city between Paris and Moscow, such city repair has neither enough sensual nor intellectual strength" (*Chronik*, p. 19). Such was the typical and widely practiced voicing of criticism.



From these commentators, we can gather that the biggest objection to the chosen theme was its disappointing humility. Many felt that Berlin was selling itself short in not opting for a bolder design. Though the historicism debate here is not directly breached, this trend of response to Hilmer-Sattler fits as its continuation. Architect von Buttlar made the connection between humility and historicism when he explained, exasperated, to me:

"Because this image they didn't have, and they were afraid of it, and this had very much to do of course with the political restoration, to turn back in history, which has to do with the endless government of the Christian Democrats and Herr Kohl. It's a *Zeitgeist*, totally different from the 70s when I was young and fiery so to speak, and now, turning back, the people want to reconstruct their historical buildings. They can't put up with the idea that you have to invent the world anew, which is normal life. One thing is gone and you have to think something up, to do something with it, you can't rebuild all these gone buildings and by so doing believing that you can reconstruct Berlin which is at that time socially were totally different. Now everything is different, the base is gone, the money is gone, the industry is gone, the monarchy is gone, it's all gone! So why the hell should you recreate this? ... I mean people are crazy. I don't know why. I don't know why they are so backwards-oriented right now. I think it's everywhere. Socially, and their outlook is not inventive, not with any kind of higher level, I think it's very full of resignation."

Many who were disappointed by the Hilmer-Sattler project see creativity and artistic tension as some of Berlin's greatest strengths.

What those see as 'creative' is regarded by others more as a threat to stability. In a publicly released essay, Senator Volker Hassemer upbraided the reproach of the Hilmer-Sattler design. He writes, "This is not only a hasty and also publicly released judgment, but also displays surprisingly little respect towards the work of one of Germany's best-known architectural offices. It is a deliberately uncooperative reaction to a fastidious, efficiently executed process in which the engaged works of many are involved" (*Chronik*, p. 21). Likewise, the Society of Architects and Engineers protested against the investors' pressure on the Berlin Senate in a press release in October 1991, imploring that the Hilmer and Sattler scheme must be immediately made into a binding condition (*Chronik*, p. 21).

The Parliament officially signed responsibility on Hassemer and Nagel to make the Hilmer and Sattler scheme the basis for further planning on October 23, 1991, but whether the Senate would actually vote for adoption of

the design remained open. The Potsdamer Platz urban form competition was hardly seamless, nor did its troubles pave the way for later efficiency on the project: all parties looked dreadingly at a long road ahead. Journalist Christian van Lessen called Senator Hassemer's position 'unenviable' given the mutinous ambivalence on all sides. He comments in a newspaper article that Hassemer and his "vehement advocates stuck their neck out too far for the pair of architects, without leaving the back door widely enough open. It will be hard for him to scrape by a retreat with bravado" (*Der Tagesspiegel*, 24 October 91). The description indicates the general mood that the complications were far from over for Potsdamer Platz.

In light of the wild and unsettled debate, the parliamentary committee for city planning and development unprecedentedly opened itself on November 6, 1991 to comments from both the top five urban form competition prize winners and from the investors. The committee leader described the unusual meeting's success at the end, saying that it was not often that the discussion of such a difficult issue ends with such unanimity of all parties (*Chronik*, p. 23). The comments can be summarized as follows:

*Daimler Benz:* It was decided to express clear criticisms because the contemporary planning frameworks seem to force us to structures with which we cannot identify.

*Hertie:* With the Hilmer & Sattler project as a foundation it is not possible for our firm to erect the new headquarters at the site as wished.

*Sony:* We wish to find a compromise with all interests. The two architects, but also the building administration and the investors, should sit down together until white smoke rises for the best of Berlin. It is not to be recommended that one of the two designs becomes the foundation for further planning. But that does not change the fact that we consider the Rogers plan the better one.

*Society of Architects and Engineers, German Architects' Union, and the Architects' Chamber:* We unite to express support for the Hilmer & Sattler design, in a clear backing of the Senate for Urban Development and Environmental Protection (*Chronik*, p. 23).

Interestingly, after this meeting, positive reviews on the City-Investor relationships began to appear in the press. A newspaper reported Wolfgang Nagel as saying "The increasingly ordinary din about the Potsdamer Platz seems to be abating" (*Der Tagesspiegel*, 8 November 1991). Similarly, Ortwin Ratei, the head of private investments at the Senate for Construction and Housing, described in the city forum that "after early difficulties above all with

the Daimler Benz Corporation as well as the Sony Corporation, a very good working climate had been found" (*Chronik*, p. 23) The experience in Parliament seems to have marked a turning point in relations.

On December 12, 1991, the Berlin Senate passed a reworked version of Hilmer and Sattler's urban form design of Potsdamer Platz. Incorporated into this draft were the following points:

- The floor-area ratio will be raised from those in the contracts with Daimler and Sony to an average of 5.0.
- Half of the net floor area should be for office use, a third for other services, and a fifth for residential use.
- Above the 35 meter edge, additional stepped back stories will be allowed, up to a height of 95 meters.
- The number of underground parking spaces is limited to 4000.
- Many different architects will take part in each project to ensure variety in the final built form; historical significance of the places is to be considered in building; further architectural competitions will be held together with the investors (*Chronik*, p. 24).

The process had been through the ringer, but with a winning design on hand, the only direction was to move forward to the architectural competition stage.

### debis Project Description

Unfortunately for Daimler Benz, the property sale was after all not settled upon the closing on July 16, 1990. On February 28, 1991, the European Commission undertook a formal proceeding to review the sale of the Potsdamer Platz property to Daimler Benz. The EC was to determine whether the selling price was fair according to true market value. Unclear was how the EC's attention was called to the issue; one official guessed it had to do with the dubiously-formulated appraisal that the Senate for Construction and Housing had adopted as a basis in May 1990 (*Chronik*, p. 13).

Many months passed in which debis remained in the dark on the issue. In August 1991 the *Berliner Morgenpost* reported that the European Commission had released an independent report that estimated a market value for the plot at approximately 140 million Marks, or some 47 million Marks more than the City's selling price. In October, the *Tageszeitung* reported that figure to be wrong; a new report from the EC estimated the value at 179.7 million Marks (*Chronik*, p. 19). The Commission indicated the Senate might be punished for

violation of EC law against hidden subsidy, in which case Benz would have to deal with a heavy surcharge.

In early February 1992 a newspaper reported that the European Commission in principle disapproved of the contract between Berlin and Daimler Benz (*Der Tagesspiegel*, 1 February 92). Then finally in mid April, the Commission notified Benz that the firm must pay Berlin an additional 33.8 million Marks for the property. Daimler Benz replied that they would pay under protest; the firm claimed it was being held responsible for an unforeseeable increase in value resulting from reunification. Mayor Diepgen also protested the decision (*Chronik*, p. 27).

Daimler had meanwhile announced the architectural competition on March 24, 1992, and invited 14 architects to submit a design by July 15. The 21-member jury decided on September 3 and 4 to give first prize to Renzo Piano; to the joy of many involved, the individual buildings would be designed by the other prize winners on the basis of the Piano master plan. Other recommendations from the jury included the overproofing of underground connections, reduction of overall building volumes and the reformulating of the musical theater (*Chronik*, p.30).

Reactions to the design were uncharacteristically united and positive. Hans Stimmann called Piano's design brilliant, and Wolfgang Nagel enthusiastically explained that "Renzo Piano succeeded in mastering the almost unsolvable assignment of making the overwhelming magazine wall into an independent part of a complete composition that includes in it the culture forum" (*Chronik*, p. 30). The public statements from the administration certainly showed eager support for the investors' efforts.

Support also arose from the Berlin aesthetes. In optimistic expectation, columnist Michael Mönninger writes about the Benz competition: "The counter movement gaining ground in post-modern architecture toward island-thinking is as gratifying as it is straining, because the hidden urbanistic framework is still waiting to be filled with architectural realities" (*Frankfurter Allgemeine*, 7 September 92). Similarly, Falk Jaeger called Piano's design "No less than urban design harmony" and the individual efforts such as participating architect Hans Kollhoff's represent a "manifest, that when realized without ifs, ands or buts the quality and significance will be achieved that will make it world famous" (*Der Tagesspiegel*, 7 September 92).

Negative reactions to the Piano design stemmed from aesthetic and thematic objections. Interestingly, these reactions to the Piano scheme went in the opposite direction from the concerns about the Hilmer & Sattler project: instead of worrying about a thematic return to the previous century, traces of concern now began to emerge that this was an artificial, 'futuristic' architecture; what one journalist called a "Disneyland Paranoia of the architecture scene" (*Berliner Morgenpost*, 6 September 92). This particular trend of criticism would strengthen over the following few years.

### Sony Project Description

The Senate for Construction and Housing disclosed Sony's interest in the Potsdamer Platz for their European headquarters in February 1991. Initial concerns with the sale circled around the fate of the historic Hotel Esplanade, out of which the erection of a film house had been planned. Sony remained conciliatory, citing intentions to incorporate the historic building and realize the film house plans as part of their development.

In a sale which tried and failed to avoid such controversy as Benz had attracted a year earlier, Sony bought their plot from Berlin in the summer of 1991. The original contract between Senator of Finance Elmar Pieroth and Sony executive Rainer Wagner settled on a price of 3240 Marks per square meter for the property. Included in the deal was that Sony would incorporate the long-planned Esplanade Film house out of Hotel Esplanade in the development.

The Pieroth-Wagner contract received heavy criticism from all of Parliament, who demanded that it be checked by the property committee. One faction called the price ridiculous and raised a motion of no confidence against Senator Pieroth. Sony maintained that the Senate had made off with a "dazzling deal", especially considering the additional costs associated with the Esplanade. In Sony's support, arguments were raised that the concern's moving to Berlin had a certain value to the City (*Chronik*, p. 15). Finally in early February 1992 the European Commission announced the undertaking of the Sony contract's review, just as had been done with the Daimler contract not long before.

In July 1991 the motion of no confidence was rejected, as had been an earlier call for disciplinary actions against the officials that had handled the Benz sale. With the EC's involvement, the scandals surrounding the City's property sales threw the administration in an unwanted international spotlight. The Tokyo Sony representative told Mayor Diepgen in November that their

Berlin investment would have to be reconsidered in the event of a surcharge demand, to which Diepgen promised adherence to the original contract (*Chronik*, p. 31). Embarrassments such as this served as a catalyst for talks in the House of Representatives for a change in the state budget regulations; the need for a strengthening of parliamentary control over the sale of public properties had become evident. In the end it was ruled that Sony, like Daimler, had to pay additional amounts for their land according to EC regulations.

In the mean time, Sony marched onward and announced their architectural competition in May 1992, inviting seven architects to submit a design by July 31. A 15-member jury decided on August 15 for first prize in favor of the famous Chicago architect Helmut Jahn. The jury recommended a height reduction for Jahn's office tower standing directly on Potsdamer Platz and the realization of the separate buildings by different architects as was being done with the Benz area (*Chronik*, p. 29).

The Jahn decision did not fare so well in the public eye as did the Daimler competition proceedings. Michael Mönniger provided an early response, calling the reaching of the Jahn conclusion a Pyrrhic victory. "Indeed in order to see through its vision of European urbanity the community fought with all its might for a certain height and a certain mix of use in the Sony buildings, but then traded those for an American Entertainment Architecture" (*Chronik*, p. 29). Criticisms here clearly emphasize the fear of superficial architecture that had begun to rear its head to Piano.

And, aesthetically speaking, the emphasis was logical. One review describes: "Helmut Jahn's design for the Sony sector was generally greeted as one of his less bombastic efforts, although local commentators mocked the traces of what they called "American mall architecture." For the centerpiece of Jahn's plan--which includes a 25-story office high-rise, a cinema complex, a hotel and a Sony corporate headquarters--is a 23,000-square-foot roofed piazza in oval form, featuring terraces with shops and cafés as well as a giant video screen. In a shockingly un-European gesture, this piazza will be protected from the weather and accessible year-round" (*Art in America*, p. 83). In other words, the identity of this project clashed with that of many Berliners.

This clash became clear when one local explained to me: "Our way of moving in the city, our way of using the city, does not conform to this tradition of creating this kind of material oasis world, which estranged me very much when I came to the United States having grown up in Germany in a city where

street life is predominant, a city which at the time I didn't know was very safe ... for me it's very strange to come in cities where I see a guard and already sort of being a German I do like this ... then I get into one of these gigantic halls which are usually artificially ventilated which means I get a cough immediately, I'm not allowed to smoke in there, and then I see this kind of commercial world around me and I say it's interesting because the weather conditions aren't that extreme ... I do not understand why these protected environments are supposed to be more interesting than the city, the street of the city. And this of course structures and influences my attitude toward the Helmut Jahn plan."

While most commentators waxed optimistic at the end of the Daimler competition, the end of the Sony competition found many unhopeful. Falk Jaeger pessimistically claimed the jury decision was rumored to be the search for the lesser evil, and went so far as to despair that Hans Stimmann stood "in the losing struggle against the flow of commerce. Illusions of a lively inner city with multifaceted offerings for all Berliners are no longer in (Potsdamer) place" (parentheses his, *Der Tagesspiegel*, 19 August 92). Similarly Manfred Sack viewed the Sony competition result as a fiasco. He darkly comments in a newspaper article that "Sony Berlin got what they wanted; the jury voted in an odd unanimity for the design from Helmut Jahn" (*Die Zeit*, 11 September 92). Just as the mood seemed to be lifting around the project, with the Sony results it again turned somber.

### **The Development of a Theme for Development in Berlin**

*"When Berlin was physically closed, it was mentally open. But when it became physically open, it became mentally closed. Now Berlin is repeating what other cities have done. There is no progression into the twenty-first century."*

*Rudolph Stegers in World Cities Berlin, p. 56*

It is not only significant that Berlin has always employed competitions in shaping the city; the themes proclaimed by the competitions of the past reflected significant, often political, currents of thought present at the time. For example, Interbau was "Living in the City of Tomorrow"; meaning to make a statement against the earlier, foreboding and heavy "architecture of oppression" by means of the spirited, progressive, future-oriented "architecture of freedom" (Russell, p. 13). In understanding the nature of meaning placed at any given time on urban development in Berlin, these themes serve as useful indicators.

Today, the theme of new development in Berlin is a touchy subject. This thesis's chapters "The Media and Public Sentiment" and "The Competition System" both testified to the morass of conflicting planning ideologies present in contemporary Berlin. Everyone wants a theme, but nobody knows what the theme should be, leaving Berlin with little guidance amid its administrative confusion. That Berlin is to be the gateway between eastern and western Europe is clear, but this role provides limited help in conceptualizing built form. And, as *the New York Times* pointed out, "Architecture has become a subject that often serves as a touchstone for the larger question of what Berlin should be. The future of the physical city is debated today with the passion that just a few years ago was reserved for politics" (*The New York Times*, 5 February 1995).

The administration has used the motto "Critical Reconstruction" to guide early development. Dieter Hoffmann-Axthelm interprets the motto in terms such that "The City has to be historically recognizable, the places have to be namable. We cannot break them apart. We have to recreate urban identity, without denying the destruction" (*Bauwelt*, p. 2211). I first encountered the phrase when Christian Villiers at the Senate for Construction and Housing showed me the office's model of the city. Like Hoffmann-Axthelm, he stressed the placement of the modern architecture within the historic city patterns, and the avoidance "inventing something completely new with this high level of



investment" (Villiers Conversation). In other words, "Critical Reconstruction" is another manifestation of the historicism debate of contemporary planning.

Philosophically, the architectural conservatism is easily understood in light of the high levels of conflict. A strong proponent for the moderation in design has been the former director of the German Architecture Museum in Frankfurt, Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani. He argues for a "New Simplicity" for Berlin's architecture. His reasoning is that solid, geometric buildings of stone or plaster can provide Berliners with a badly needed sense of stability and stolidness (*Art in America*, p. 131). Arguments such as Lampugnani's stress the social implications of built form to add to the political, aesthetic and economic we have already discussed.

Perhaps the best explanation of Critical Reconstruction comes from Building Director Hans Stimmann, the controversially conservative proud beacon of the concept. He writes that "Following years of failed urban experiments, the prevailing wish was not for an entirely new city, but for a return to traditional urbanism. There was a desire for East and West to grow together across the strip where the Wall used to stand, and for a common future expressed in a re-defined city centre ... It promotes the idea of the integral urban quarter; the interaction of historical and contemporary architectural and economic life. The prime rules of critical reconstruction are:

- Historical street patterns and building lines must be respected and/or reconstructed.
- Maximum eaves-height: 22 meters, maximum ridge height: 30 meters.
- A building permit will be granted only if approximately twenty per cent of the overall floor space is designated residential accommodation.
- The building density is not prescribed, but is a result of the above policies, the planned land use and building regulations. Generally, this yields a density of around five.
- New construction must have the character of an urban building. It must be set on one lot: the maximum permitted lot size is the urban block" (*World Cities Berlin*, p.51).

The City's adherence to its policies was perhaps weakened by pressure from investors who saw the policies as shackles. The journalist Rudolph Stegers explains that, typically, in one standoff over several points in a downtown developer's building program, the City buckled and Critical Reconstruction wound up the loser. When it came right down to it, Stimmann "wanted to stay in his post. And so he complied [to the investors' demands].

Meanwhile Critical Reconstruction mutated from the being the reform of structure to merely ordering design. Was it ever effectively more than the day to day compliance to block borders and eave heights and the erection of holed facades?" (*Der Tagesspiegel*, 25 January 1996). Critical Reconstruction's lack of robustness has left many who hunger for a theme insatiate.

Stegers asserts that investors are big fans of Critical Reconstruction in its watered-down state. He claims "Most investors are anxious to make a quick deal, so they will readily adapt to the rules of 'building in stone'. Most, in truth, do not care what the building looks like -- whether it is solid or light. The much-trumpeted partnership between public authorities and private enterprise has reached a nadir, yielding only homogeneous images derived from historical fantasies" (*World Cities Berlin*, p. 56). If this is the case "Critical Reconstruction" becomes a farce, a petty glitch.

In short, "Critical Reconstruction" seems across the board to be a dud. It has served as a buffer, a token set of policies existing exogenously while decisions are obviously quite arbitrary and haphazard. Stegers gives another example where Critical Reconstructionist "Stimmann built under coercion instead of by consensus, according to the demands of the agencies rather than those of society" (*Der Tagesspiegel*, 25 January 1996). On a point-by-point basis, the implementation of an urban form solution has actually been the result of whichever interests win negotiations; and as we have seen, the post-reunification planning climate is rich in power struggles.

Moreover, many of these power struggles have focused on Stimmann. In the Potsdamer Platz proceedings he became more vocal and visible as time went on. Berlin's premier architecture magazine's headline for coverage of the urban form competition at Potsdamer Platz announced in 1991 that the jury members with this ruling "have decided: Berlin will stay moderate" (*Bauwelt* 41, cover). This is early on in Stimmann's tenure, but his influence as a jury member is evident; he entered the post with gusto, calling himself the 'aesthetic arm of the administration'.

Throughout the rest of his time there, he strove to promote that architectural moderation, with evident effects on the new architecture. "His bias towards an architecture with the etiquette of rationality and classicism made it easy for him to tolerate and support every actor whose name decorates the building signs of Friedrichstadt today" (Stegers in *Der Tagesspiegel*, 25 January 96, p. 25). Stegers holds Stimmann largely responsible for the

formation of the small handful of architects active in contemporary Berlin (see above chapter, "The Competition System").

Similarly, Brigitte Werneburg holds Stimmann largely responsible for the current conservatism in Berlin architecture. In a recent *Art in America* she writes: "Following Stimmann's lead, architectural competition juries have voted more often than not for risk-avoidance over innovation. The result is that among those conspicuously *not* building in Berlin today are such experimental architects as Frank Gehry, Rem Koolhaas, Zaha Hadid, Coop Himmelblau and Bernard Tschumi, or even such established figures as Richard Meier and Hans Hollein" (*Art in America*, Nov. 95, p. 80). Although the competition method means to promote diversity in design, Stimmann's influence is pervasive and seems to have thwarted this goal.

The policies of "Critical Reconstruction" can be seen as an official explanation for moderation, a sort of potential (however weak) rebuttal against these many critics. However, popular and professional discourse continues to favor themes more charged than the City's, probably out of that insatiate feeling mentioned above. "Critical Reconstruction" thus remains more an empty appellate in city-issued literature than a thread in mainstream development discussion.

### Democracy as a Theme

Like the exhibitions throughout Berlin's history, and arguably more so, contemporary politics are fundamental in the potential of Berlin's post-reunification built form. From my conversations with people active in Berlin planning surfaced a tacit and cryptic, *de facto* theme throughout: one of "Democracy". Though to me seemingly awkward at first, the term appeared ubiquitously throughout my time in Berlin, as well as in the literature once I was aware of it.

The above-mentioned tour by Christian Villiers tipped me off to the mainstream concerns first. In his words, the root is in the fact that "Berlin was heavily changed during the war, but even more so after the war, as a result of radical tendencies that did not acknowledge history and each time tried to produce something new" (Villiers conversation). Post-reunification urban form, then, should meld history with present and with future visions, and it should not come down from above, but should rise out of the voices of the democracy.

The concept of people as the source in the configuration of urban space fits into Berlin tradition: it has been shown that public participation is an essential part of urban development in late 20th century Berlin. Interesting is its direct opposition to the major autocratic development undertaken beginning in the 1700s that is outlined in the earlier chapter. King Friedrich I and Friedrich Wilhelm I succeeded in creating clear, readable urban form that even today is admired. It remains questionable, however, whether an urban form of such character and integrity can be achieved when so many parties are involved in the decision-making process. To answer that, first a workable decision-making process must be found -- this journey is the true Potsdamer Platz story.

Already in the early life of the two-tiered competition system for Potsdamer Platz and for Berlin did the democracy discussion play a major role. In July 1990, three months after the Senate's decision for the urban form competition at Potsdamer Platz, the Senators for Construction from western and eastern Berlin, Nagel and Thurmann, introduced a "model study for city sociability", or livability. Seeing the action as an official decree of urban form imposed by high-level administration and therefore a threat to democratic legitimacy, the Architects' Union barraged it with criticism. The ensuing battles over how to guide this early development in Berlin lasted until November 1991, when the official announcement of the competition ensured a democratic process, at least for a moment (*Der Tagesspiegel*, January 25, 1991). As we have seen, concerns over special interests, secrecy, and favoritism have rendered the democracy of that process debatable.

In actuality the democracy of any process is inherently debatable, which is a source of much confusion. In an interview about the IBA in 1986, the architect Josef P. Kleihues contrasts the ideas of historical competitions with those of modern, democratic competitions. He expressed that in the past, "despite their differences, the architects of the day aspired to a common political and artistic outlook, which was to find its documentation in an internationally accepted style. Today, we can no longer identify aspirations of this nature -- various trends exist contemporaneously, each with a will of its own" (*International Building Exhibition Berlin 1987*, p. 10). This pluralism in architecture and in city form arising from the idea of the democratic city provides a confounding complexity to the planning of the central area after the Wall.

Alan Balfour specifically addresses the tensions of democracy manifesting themselves architecturally in Berlin today: "Now, relieved of the burdens and the uniforms of ideologies, architecture has been freed to represent and enhance the myriad mysteries of existence. Yet, a new struggle arises as the significant record of the culture is moving into motion, into multiple images of a self-centered, self-generated experience in which the idea of permanence is an interference. Architecture must learn to coexist with the ambiguity and fertile chaos of a richer illusion" (Balfour, p. 244). Again, the richer illusion of the democratic city challenges urban planning in inexperienced Berlin.

According to some, the confusion results in mediocrity. Most common is the argument that conservatism like Stimmann's in the public agencies causes them to react to the pressure by electing boring, unlivable, watered-down solutions, both in the architecture and in the process. Perhaps amid the plurality, the multiple images cancel each other out. The result as the argument goes is that they miss out on the unique opportunity to create something fresh, original, and world-class in Berlin; instead they are left with simple, boring structures filling the empty spaces, and petty, mundane arguments shaping the debate over the urban landscape.

Werneburg's *Art in America* article outlines several examples of architectural mediocrity prevailing. Norman Foster in his renovation of the significant Reichstag building, intended initially to erect a free-floating flat glass roof, and was forced by a parliamentary committee to opt for "the most conventional solution possible: a latticed glass cupola" (p. 84). Similarly, Axel Shultes had won the competition for the new government complex with a wholly different design from what he now oversees to be built; the result again of politicians' demands. In these instances, even interesting winning designs have been minced down over time into a more lackluster solution, and the architect's freedom granted by the competition manipulated by political forces after the fact.

Interestingly, democracy in the planning process has surfaced to simultaneously support both sides of conflicts. In reaction to Richard Rogers' project unveiling at the urban form competition, journalist Michael Mönninger denounces it as a blatant attack on the democratic process, but at the same time almost reluctantly supports the project. He writes: "The four investors' independent design for Potsdamer Platz is a violent disgrace for the planning

culture and also for Berlin. For competitions should actually see to it that the faces of entire city districts are not formed by singular builders, rather that a generally binding solution should be found from multiple suggestions. Now it is apparent that the private design solution is more mature and more modern than the compromising and afraid official design. Indeed Richard Rogers did not write a new chapter in the history of European city form, and also presented little to impart observance of the historical fragility of this central stage of German history. But for the middle of the German capital city, the lesser evil is already a measurable progress" (*Frankfurter Allgemeine*, 16 October 1991). Though Mönninger supports the theory of the democratic process, he is displeased with the results as yet.

In the context of the potent symbolism present in the Potsdamer Platz development project, the democracy theme makes sense; when officials wish to prove their competence is more than anything their ability to operate democratically. Looking out for this symbolism, an open letter to the Senate rekindled the 'Democracy' theme. It recalls the West Berlin Academy of Arts's conviction in playing a part of the Potsdamer Platz proceedings, "whereby an intervention by the private sector cannot be tolerated in a regular process. The obligation of 'Democracy as Builder' must be perceived, also as a signal to the new [Eastern] states" (*Chronik*, p. 22). Berlin had the double burden of proving to the western world its ability to lead a democratic process and lead the eastern states through that process.

Like many positions taken early on, the Academy's recommendations from June 1990 seemed after all that had happened almost naive and unrealistic. At that time they had called for a moratorium on sales and development and all related activities in the central area and other similarly sensitive city parts, "until a democratic and professionally legitimate comprehensive structural planning has been worked through, the alternative locations for Berlin's coming important functions has been examined, and consensus-possible concepts have been proposed" (*Chronik*, p. 6). Obviously to stop the Daimler and Sony rolling ball was never an option; and even if it had been, whether such a democratic and rigorous structure as they propose would have been possible is highly doubtful.

'Democracy' as a planning theme can be seen as a type of abstraction on the earlier discussion about the balance of power between the public agencies and the private investors in Berlin. That is, just as the issue surrounding the

balance of power was 'How much public involvement?', that surrounding this theme is 'How much democracy?'. It was very important politically to project a democratic process on the Potsdamer Platz proceedings, but this process sometimes had its drawbacks, such as being slow and requiring institutional competence, to name but two huge hurdles for contemporary Berlin.

As far as those two hurdles are concerned, the fact that investment interest has slowed is now a source of relief to planning officials, not the source of concern it once was. The hiatus allows time and space for some institutional evaluation, building and catching up. As Werneburg writes, "With the depletion of government coffers, and with the Berlin real-estate market already beginning to slump, many of the current projects will doubtless take much longer than planned to be realized. Berlin may be provided with a needed breathing space, in which the coming generation of architects and planners will have ample opportunity to study its predecessors' mistakes" (*Art in America*, Nov. 95, p. 131)<sup>10</sup>. Werneburg concentrates on contemporary Berlin architecture, but her point can be carried over for the Berlin planning process as a whole; the coming generation of administrators is also now given breathing space in which to study recent problems.

---

<sup>10</sup> She describes the meanwhile struggle with pessimistic originality as follows: "What architectural historian Anthony Vidler has called "the long war against the feminization of architecture" appears to have found new recruits in Berlin, who are eager to lead a hard-edged, closed, manly architecture to victory over styles of building they regard as suspiciously female – open, multifarious, expressive. But so far, as with Kleihues's Kant-Triangle building, the result is only a half-erection. The masculine risk of possible impotence naturally requires compensation and consolation. Here is where femininity is prized, as one settles into the lightening-fast womb of a Mercedes S500 and flees to the nurturing countryside, which survives in astonishing quantity in the region outside Berlin. It is for this reason, no doubt, that the city must build splendid new highways" (*Art in America*, p. 131). Werneburg is one of the few commentators who has put a fresh bent on the historicism discussion – interestingly, what is historic and conservative is for her masculine; the progressive, forward-oriented is feminine.

## Conclusion

I believe a major function of this project toward post-reunification urban development parallels the existence of the Treuhand, in that it was absorptive. More than anything, Berlin lacked experience in approaching this project. The Potsdamer Platz development was an experience-building event above all else. When newly-democratizing cities in Central and Eastern Europe begin to tackle such monumental inner-city developments, they can expect many of the same issues to surface: political ideologies will manifest in personality- and aesthetic urban design conflicts, and institutional disorganization will exacerbate matters.

In this way the process can be seen as an emotional one for the city, a working through of certain insecurities concerning investment and identity; issues that can be intellectualized and analyzed to no end, but that simply need to be dealt with hands on. Unfortunate is that, considering the cultural, historical, and real estate value of the Potsdamer and Leipziger Platz area, as well as the absence of a reorganizational period, the stakes in Berlin were so high. But even that served to heighten the experience as a whole.

With the high level of sensitivity surrounding this location, the discussion tends almost automatically to become an architectural one, but architectural criticism is not the focus of this thesis. Whether Potsdamer Platz will in its planned form be a successful urban space, only time will tell. It will depend greatly on the developments of the city as a whole; in particular, on the economic situation (only if that is favorable will the public patronize this area), but also on other new urban projects in the city -- projects which may duplicate or bolster Potsdamer Platz's uses and functions, either serving to lure people away or bring them forth to our project.

As concerns practical lessons to be reaped by Berlin from this experience, I believe that above all, Berlin deserves a restructuring of its administrative structure. I see the major pains as revealed by the Potsdamer Platz experience as two-sided: on one hand, the administrative incoherence and vagueness over the logistical division of responsibilities, and on the other hand, the ideological struggles and power plays. Major progress towards efficiency and coherence could be effected by a few swift changes, and these improvements would eliminate many of the pains weighing down the development process today. The changes therefore should address those two categories.



As to the first, reorganization should include combining the two Senate offices responsible for planning. Opinions on this topic vary greatly, and there seems to presently lack any proactive force in the administration that would push a change through. I foresee more attention directed toward a joining when the development climate is calmer, but much could be gained by doing it sooner rather than later. Additionally, seeing through the intended regionalization of planning approaches would help effect a freer flowing, more normalized process.

As for the second, Berlin needs to break down the ivory tower of high-level officials. This demolition may already be happening in this post-Stimmann era; Stimmann's replacement would be a masochistic fool to follow in his example. A democratic process that includes many voices but does so efficiently is a matter of identifying what voices deserve how much weight, and then systematizing how they are heard. Reworking the Berlin planning process should recognize the risk of thwarting creative discussion through an over-regulated, sterilized process, and formulate ways to avoid that. With that risk heeded in the reorganization, greater efficiency and clarity will make the process even more democratic, varied and creative: a greater diversity of opinions will be heard in a more systematic fashion.

Now that investment interest has slowed, it is time to begin the restructuring. The temptation for officials to sit back and catch their breath at this juncture might preclude action, but this is a crucial moment and the opportunity should not be missed. When investment begins to pick up again, Berlin might consider creating some type of small one-stop office which entrepreneurs and investors can consult for an introduction to doing business in the city. The State Agency for Economic Development may have this function; if so it needs to become more mainstream and active, or else be replaced by an effective office. In my opinion, Berlin can sell itself; critical is to facilitate the free flow of information to potential buyers.



## Works Used

npc = no page citation

- Timothy Aepfel: "Agency That Helps East German Firms Go Private Struggles with its Huge Task" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 15 March 1991, p. npc.
- Timothy Aepfel: "Murder Heightens Eastern German Crisis; Death of Economic Official May Unnerve Investors, Stir Fears of Terrorism" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 3 April 1991, p. A17.
- Timothy Aepfel: "Agency Restructuring Eastern Germany Confronts Often Contradictory Goals" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 5 April 1991, p. npc.
- Timothy Aepfel and Brian Coleman: "Sixt AG Appears the Likely Winner in Interhotel Bid" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 6 November 1991, p. A14.
- Timothy Aepfel: "Treuhand Chief Woos Foreign Investors; Breuel Tours Eastern Germany as an 'Open Door'" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 11 November 1991, p. A9.
- Timothy Aepfel: "German Economic Proposal Cuts Benefits First, Creates Taxes Later" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 20 January 1993, p. A8.
- Timothy Aepfel: "New Jersey Luggage Company Bags Takeover of Eastern Germany Factory" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 29 January 1993, p. npc.
- Timothy Aepfel: "Germany's Economics Minister Rexrodt Sees Recession as Chance to Aid Industry" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 26 March 1993, p. npc.
- Timothy Aepfel: "German Bonds Draw Interest From Foreigners; Traditional Haven Status, Size of Market Work to Attract Investors" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 20 August 1993, p. B7A.
- Natasha Alperowicz: "Piesteritz Sale Imminent," in *Chemicalweek*, 26 June 1991, p. 24.
- Natasha Alperowicz: "Solvay Puts Pressure on Treuhand with H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> Proposal," in *Chemicalweek*, 7 August 1991, p. 8.
- Alice Amsden, Jacek Kochanowicz and Lance Taylor: *The Market Meets its Match*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1994.
- Alan Balfour: *Berlin: The Politics of Order, 1737-1989*. Rizzoli, New York, 1990.
- Alan Balfour, ed.: *World Cities Berlin*. St. Martin's Press, New York, 1995.
- Bauwelt*: "1. Preis" in *Bauwelt*, Heft 41, November 1991, p. 2212.
- Bauwelt*: "2. Preis" in *Bauwelt*, Heft 41, November 1991, p. 2214.
- Bauwelt*: "3. bis 5. Preis" in *Bauwelt*, Heft 41, November 1991, p. 2216.
- Bauwelt*: "2. Rundgang" in *Bauwelt*, Heft 41, November 1991, p. 2219.
- Bauwelt*: "1. Rundgang" in *Bauwelt*, Heft 41, November 1991, p. 2227.
- Bauwelt*: "Kommentare" in *Bauwelt*, Heft 41, November 1991, p. 2230.
- Daniel Benjamin: "Concern Grows as More Join German Strikes" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 2 May 1993, p. A10.
- Andrea Beyerlein: "Eine Verwaltung für Zwei" in *Berliner Zeitung*, 9 January 1996.
- Martin du Bois: "Germany's Privatization Agency Sees EC Approval of Latest EKO-Stahl Plan" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 5 November 1993, p. A5E.

- Martin du Bois: "Terni Bid Aids Plan to Revamp Steel in Italy" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 17 May 1994, p. A16.
- Barbara Bollwahn: "Der Spur der Kräne Folgen" in *Die Tageszeitung*, 11 August 1995.
- Barbara Bollwahn: "Lärmwerte Werden Ständig Überschritten" in *Die Tageszeitung*, 20 September 1995.
- Werner Borck: "Berlin and its Many Faces" in *Review of Politics and Culture*, number 33, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung e.V., Berlin, 1994.
- Dieter Bös: "Privatization in East Germany: A Survey of Current Issues," International Monetary Fund Occasional Paper, January 1992.
- Audrey Choi: "Eastern German Manager Takes a Stab at Privatization; Buy-out Crusade is Aiming to Steer Rubber Company Toward Viability" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 17 August 1992, p. B4A.
- Audrey Choi and Frederick Kempe: "Europe's Recession Stalls Privatization in East Germany, Agency's Chief Says" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 9 July 1993, p. A6.
- Lindley H. Clark Jr.: "Speaking of Business: In Countries or Horses, Don't Bet on Sure Things" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 30 August 1991, p. A6.
- Lindley H. Clark Jr.: "Speaking of Business: Germany: Beyond Strikes, Another Challenge" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 5 May 1992, p. A20.
- Doug Clelland, ed.: *Berlin: An Architectural History*. St. Martin's Press, NY, 1983.
- Brian Coleman: "Most of Deutsche Interhotel Goes to Team of Developers who Offered \$3 Billion" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 25 November 1991, p. A8.
- George R. Collins and Christiane Crasemann Collins: *Camillo Sitte: The Birth of Modern City Planning*. Rizzoli, New York, 1986.
- Commerzbank Economic Research Department: "How Unification Has Affected Germany's International Transactions" in *The Economist*, 30 April 1994, p. 77.
- Robert Corcoran, Robert A. Feldman, Karl Habermeier, Hari Vittas, and Tessa van der Willigen: "United Germany: The First Five Years," International Monetary Fund Occasional Paper 125, May 1995.
- The Economist*: "Try a Little Tenderness" in *The Economist*, 30 March 1996, volume 338, number 7959, p. 80.
- The Economist*: "The Visible Treuhand" in *The Economist*, 21 March 1992, p. 20.
- The Economist*: "East German Privatization: Fast and Loose" in *The Economist*, 30 April 1994, p. 75.
- The Economist*: "Farewell, Sweet Treuhand" in *The Economist*, 24 December 1994, p. 82.
- The Economist Intelligence Unit: *East Germany Country Report*, 1989-1990.
- The Economist Intelligence Unit: *East Germany Country Profile*, 1989/90-1990/91.
- The Economist Intelligence Unit: *Germany Country Report*, 1991-1992.
- The Economist Intelligence Unit: *Germany Country Report*, 1993-1994.
- The Economist Intelligence Unit: *Germany Country Report*, 3rd Quarter 1995.
- FAZ: "Die Investoren in Berlin Beginnen Vorsichtiger zu Werden" in *FAZ*, 17 July 1992.
- FAZ: "Diepgen Will Berlin Modernisieren" in *FAZ*, 9 January 1996.

- Paul Goldberger: "Reimagining Berlin" in *The New York Times Magazine*, 5 February 1995, p. 45.
- Peter Gumbel: "Kohl Wins Narrowly in German Elections; 'Chancellor of Unity' Now Must Address Problems Such as Jobs, Red Tape" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 17 October 1994, p. A11.
- Peter Gumbel: "Expensive Gamble: West German Program to Salvage East Shows Signs of Paying Off; Spruced-Up Companies Draw Private Buyers, But Cost of Effort Has Been Huge" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 9 December 1994, p. A1.
- Lothar Heinke: "Auf der Virtuellen Reise Rund um den Potsdamer Platz" in *Der Tagesspiegel*, 4 January 1996, p. 14.
- Heiner Heseler: "Sectoral Restructuring: the East German Shipyards on the Path to the Market Economy," in *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, vol. 17, 1993, p. 349-363.
- Dieter Hoffmann-Axthelm: "Jagdscenen am Potsdamer Platz" in *der Tagesspiegel*, 25 October 1991.
- Richard L. Holman: "German Agency Drops Pay Deal" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 26 February 1993, p. A11.
- Richard L. Holman: "Eastern Germany's Woes Mount" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 2 March 1993, p. A14.
- Richard L. Holman: "Germany May Aid Steelmaker" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 30 March 1993, p. A10.
- Richard L. Holman: "Germany Stretches Safety Net" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 1 April 1993, p. A10.
- Richard L. Holman: "Some Germans to End Strike" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 19 May 1993, p. A10.
- Richard L. Holman: "Germany Probes Selloff Agency" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 1 October 1993, p. A7.
- Richard L. Holman: "EC Steelmakers to Cut Capacity" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 28 October 1993, p. 1.
- Richard L. Holman: "German Treuhand to Live On" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 28 October 1993, p. 1.
- Richard L. Holman: "German Sell-offs Near Sunset" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 27 October 1994, p. A17.
- Richard L. Holman: "German Rail Sell-off Near" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 15 December 1994, p. A10.
- Bededikt Hotze: "Bulette, Fein Zerkleinert" in *Foyer Magazine*, Senatsverwaltung für Bau- und Wohnungswesen, Nummer IV, Berlin, December 1993, p. 49.
- Debbie Jackson: "Dalmia Clashes with Treuhand," in *Chemicalweek*, July 21, 1993, p. 16.
- Falk Jaeger: "Am Anfang War das Ei" in *Der Tagesspiegel*, 19 August 1992, p. 9.
- Mark J. Jrolf and Hanno Schmidt-Gothan: "Privatization in the Former GDR: Changing Institutional Roles in the Governance and Sale of Industrial Assets," MIT Alfred P. Sloan School of Management Master of Science in Management thesis, 1992.

- Frederick Kempe: "Plain Spoken Breuel Uses Delicate Touch in Privatizing East German Business" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 4 June 1991, p. A12.
- Stephen Kinzer: "City of Tomorrow (Then Why the Self-Doubt?)" in *The New York Times*, 7 January 1994, p. A4.
- Stephen Kinzer: "As All Eyes Turn East, Streets Will Soon Bloom" in *The New York Times*, 3 July 1995, p. 4.
- Stephen Kinzer: "Berlin Gets Overdue Bill for Uniting 2 Germanys" in *The New York Times*, 31 March 1996, p. 4.
- Christian van Lessen: "Wettbewerb zum Potsdamer Platz Gestoppt" in *Der Tagesspiegel*, 25 January 1991.
- Josef P. Kleihues and Heinrich Klotz, eds.: *International Building Exhibition Berlin 1987*. Rizzoli, New York, 1986.
- Helmut Knieper, Hildebrand Machleidt, and Wolfgang Schäche: *Dokumentation*. Senatsverwaltung für Stadtentwicklung und Umweltschutz, Berlin, 1990.
- Gert Leptin and Manfred Melzer: *Economic Reform in East German Industry*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1978.
- Christian van Lessen: "Wettbewerb zum Potsdamer Platz Gestoppt" in *Der Tagesspiegel*, 25 January 1991.
- Christian van Lessen: "Potsdamer Platz Ohne Verkehr ist Unvorstellbar" in *Der Tagesspiegel*, 10 November 1991.
- Christian van Lessen: "Wir Wollen Keine Elitäre Gestaltung" in *Der Tagesspiegel*, 10 November 1991.
- Christian van Lessen: "Esplanade-Kaisersaal vor dem Abheben" in *Der Tagesspiegel*, 19 January 1996, p. 9.
- André Leysen: "Privatization: East Germany," in *Eastern European Economics*, Fall 1991, p. 28-40.
- Leslie Lipschitz and Donogh McDonald: "German Unification, Economic Issues," International Monetary Fund Occasional Paper 75, December 1990.
- Robert Gerald Livingston: "Letters to the Editor: a Social-Conscious-Driven Economy" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 19 February 1992, p. A15.
- Matt Marshall: "Kohl's Failure to Cut Spending is Faulted" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 7 December 1995, p. A10.
- Nicolette Maurer and Rainer Stache: "Das Ende der Ära Stimmann" in *Berliner Allgemeine Zeitung*, 19 January 1996.
- George Melloan: "The New Germany of Angst and Opportunity" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 15 July 1991, p. A11.
- George Melloan: "Germany Has Big Woes, But Also Rays of Hope" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 4 October 1993, p. A15.
- Mark M. Nelson: "Germany's Privatization Agency, It's Task Over, Gets Mixed Reviews" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 2 August 1994, p. A10.
- Hans-Joachim Neumann: "Daimlers Schwäbisches Kleinstädtchen" in *Zitty*, Sept. 1993, p. 16.
- Mary Pepchinski: "Report from Berlin" in *Progressive Architecture*, Nov. 1993, p. 78.
- Ulrike Plewnia, et al: *Der Potsdamer Platz, Eine Geschichte in Wort und Bild*. Nishen GmbH, Berlin, 1995.

- Jan Prieue: "Privatization of the Industrial Sector: the Function and Activities of the Treuhandanstalt," in *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, V. 17, 1993, p. 333-348.
- Ferdinand Protzman: "Building Cranes Rule the Congested Sky of Berlin" in *The New York Times*, 8 February 1994, p. D1.
- Ferdinand Protzman: "Companies Join Huge Berlin Project" in *The New York Times*, 28 November 1994, p. D3.
- Sebastian Redecke: "Keine Gewalt! -- Zum Internationalen Wettbewerb Potsdamer und Leipziger Platz" in *Bauwelt*, Heft 41, November 1991, p. 2210.
- Philip Revzin: "Cold Shower: East European Market Beckons, Then Proves Daunting to U.S. Firm; Parker Hannifin Runs Plant in Germany that Produces Mostly Misunderstandings, Orders Fall, Output Does Not" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 13 May 1991, p. A1.
- Wolfgang Ribbe and Wolfgang Schäche: *Baumeister, Architekten, Stadtplaner: Biographien zur Baulichen Entwicklung Berlins*. Stappverlag, Berlin, 1987.
- Terence Roth: "Land Sale May Aid Eastern Germany's Faltering Economy" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 19 March 1991, p. A21.
- Terence Roth: "Kickbacks Are Alleged at Public Agency Handling East Germany's Privatization" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 12 April 1991, p. A9.
- Terence Roth: "East German Privatization Accelerates, with Focus on Investment, Employment" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 14 June 1991, p. A6.
- Terence Roth: "Building Boom Sweeps Eastern Germany; Construction Seen Leading Economic Recovery" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 25 September 1991, p. A6.
- Terence Roth: "American's Only Claim to a 7,400-acre Estate Gets Little Help From the New Germany" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 11 October 1991, p. A6.
- Terence Roth: "Schneider, German Developer, Discloses Financial Ills; Chairman is Missing" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 13 April 1994, p. A8.
- Kurt W. Rothschild: "Like a Lehrstück by Brecht: Notes on the German Reunification Drama," in *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, V. 17, 1993, p. 259-266.
- Frank Russell, ed.: *Architecture in Progress*. St. Martin's Press, NY, 1983.
- Manfred Sack: "Platz für Berlin" in *Die Zeit*, Nummer 42, 1991, p.63.
- Amity Schlaes: "Germany Needs Another Erhard" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 4 April 1991, p. A20.
- Amity Schlaes: "Germany's Treuhand -- A Too Visible Hand" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 2 January 1992, p. 8.
- John Schmid: "K.A.B., Once East German Giant, Restructures to Ensure Survival" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 25 February 1991, p. npc.
- John Schmid: "Berlin is Deep in Red Territory, Capitalist Style" in *The International Herald Tribune*, 6 March 1996, p. 1.
- Christian Schmidt: "Lock, Stock and Barrel" in *The Economist* (Letter to the Editor), 24 December 1994, p. 6.
- Peter Schneider: "Um Himmels Willen, Nehmt Euch Zeit (I)" in *Der Spiegel* 21/1993, p. 54.

- Peter Schneider: "Um Himmels Willen, Nehmt Euch Zeit (II)" in *Der Spiegel* 22/1993, p. 40.
- Joachim Sichter: "Das Zweistufige Bebauungsplanverfahren am Potsdamer / Leipziger Platz" in *Foyer Magazine*, Senatsverwaltung für Bau- und Wohnungswesen, Nummer IV, Berlin, Dec. 1993, p. 43.
- Wolf Jobst Siedler: "Welt aus Wille und Vorstellung" in *Der Tagesspiegel*, 13 July 1991, p. 13.
- Gerlinde Sinn and Hans-Werner Sinn: *Jumpstart, The Economic Unification of Germany*, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 1992.
- Michael Sontheimer: "Berlin, Potsdamer Platz" in *Die Zeit*, 3 August 1990.
- Jon Spayde: "Redesigning Berlin" in *The Utne Reader*, November-December 1995, p. 24.
- Der Spiegel*: "Urbanes Drama" in *Der Spiegel* 35/1992, p. 81.
- Der Spiegel*: "Vision für die Wüste" in *Der Spiegel* 38/1992, p. 83.
- Der Spiegel*: "Berlin Muss Aktiver Werden" in *Der Spiegel* 16/1993, p.146.
- Der Spiegel*: "Nicht Reich, Sondern Richtig" in *Der Spiegel* 41/1993, p. 109.
- Der Spiegel*: "Fünf Meter pro Minute" in *Der Spiegel* 3/1996, p. 60.
- Der Spiegel*: "Der Schönste Arbeiter" in *Der Spiegel* 7/1996, p. 74.
- Rainer Stache: "Vernichtendes Architektent-Urteil über Neues Berlin: Die Seele Fehlt" in *Berliner Morgenpost*, 17 January 1996.
- Rudolph Stegers: "Der Streit um den Potsdamer Platz: eine Chronik" in *werkstadt*, Deutscher Werkbund Berlin 10, 1990.
- Rudolph Stegers: "Eine Lösung der Jahrhundertaufgabe" in *Der Tagesspiegel*, 22 October 1991.
- Rudolph Stegers: "Ein Preusse aus Lübeck" in *Der Tagesspiegel*, 25 January 1996.
- Greg Steinmetz: "GE is taking on German Protectionism with the Help of the U.S. Government" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 9 March 1995, p. A14.
- Greg Steinmetz: "EU Panel Widens Probe of Purchase Planned by Dow" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 8 June 1995, p. A8.
- Jeff Sutherland: "Treuhand Tries Matchmaking" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 29 January 1993, p. A11.
- Der Tagesspiegel*: "Im Niveau zwischen Berlin und Possemuckel" in *Der Tagesspiegel*, 12 October 1991.
- Der Tagesspiegel*: "Daimler-Benz Muss für Gelände am Potsdamer Platz Nachzahlen" in *Der TagesSpiegel*, 1 February 1992.
- Der Tagesspiegel*: "Erfolgreiches Jahr für Debis" in *Der Tagesspiegel*, 25 January 1996.
- Die Tageszeitung*: "La Dolce Vita Zieht am Leipziger Platz ein" in *Die Tageszeitung*, 20 September 1995.
- Roger Thurow: "Tough Passage: In a Tiny Community in Eastern Germany, Change Comes Hard; People Find Western Ways Strange and Frightening, Mourn Loss of Security" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 18 January 1993, p. A1.
- timeline GmbH: *city.scope: Panoramabild-Dokumentationssystem zum Potsdamer Platz*. M. Potthoff, Berlin, 1995.
- Verlag Kommunikation und Wirtschaft: *Berlin: Die Stadt und Ihre Wirtschaft*. Verlag Kommunikation und Wirtschaft, Berlin, 1987.



Rainer Wagner: "Eine Flucht ins Vorige Jahrhundert" in *Der Tagesspiegel*, 22 October 1991.

*The Wall Street Journal*: "Eastern Germany's Economy" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 6 February 1991, p. 1.

*The Wall Street Journal*: "German Official is Fatally Shot in Duesseldorf" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 2 April 1991, p. A17.

*The Wall Street Journal*: "Review & Outlook (Editorial): Germany's Latest Victim" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 4 April 1991, p. A14.

*The Wall Street Journal*: "German Privatizing Agency Picks Breuel for Top Post" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 15 April 1991, p. A10.

*The Wall Street Journal*: "Crisis in the Soviet Union: German Business with Soviets" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 20 August 1991, p. 1.

*The Wall Street Journal*: "Treuhandanstalt's Deficit" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 28 October 1991, p. 1.

*The Wall Street Journal*: "Review & Outlook (Editorial): Tale of Two Bailouts" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 31 October 1991, p. A22.

*The Wall Street Journal*: "German Trust Agency's Deficit" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 1 October 1992, p. 1.

*The Wall Street Journal*: "Rexrodt Seen Leading Field for Germany's Top Economics Post" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 6 January 1993, p. A4.

*The Wall Street Journal*: "Germans Debate Choice of Economics Minister" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 11 January 1993, p. A10.

*The Wall Street Journal*: "EKO Stahl AG: Italian Steel Group May Buy Majority of German Concern" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 18 June 1993, p. npc.

*The Wall Street Journal*: "Thyssen AG: Inquiry of Board Members is Dropped by Prosecutor" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 1 November 1993, p. npc.

*The Wall Street Journal*: "Daimler's AEG to Reorganize Unit, Shut One Berlin Plant" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 10 November 1993, p. B12.

*The Wall Street Journal*: "ELF Aquitaine Wants to Reduce its Stake in Refinery Venture" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 15 February 1994, p. A11.

*The Wall Street Journal*: "Skoda Pilsen Acquires UTE, a Manufacturer in Eastern Germany" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 28 March 1994, p. B4B.

*The Wall Street Journal*: "Alcan Aluminum Ltd.: German Unit Will Acquire the Assets of Nachterstedt" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 23 May 1994, p. npc.

*The Wall Street Journal*: "Commercial Intertech Corp.: Construction Begins on Plant for Hydraulic Components" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 27 September 1994, p. npc.

*The Wall Street Journal*: "Agreement to Sell Germany's EKO Stahl May Face Hurdles" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 14 October 1994, p. npc.

*The Wall Street Journal*: "Dow is Mum on Size of Chemical Venture in Eastern Germany" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 20 October 1994, p. A11.

*The Wall Street Journal*: "Dow Chemical Agrees to Take Over Plants in Eastern Germany" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 23 December 1994, p. B4.

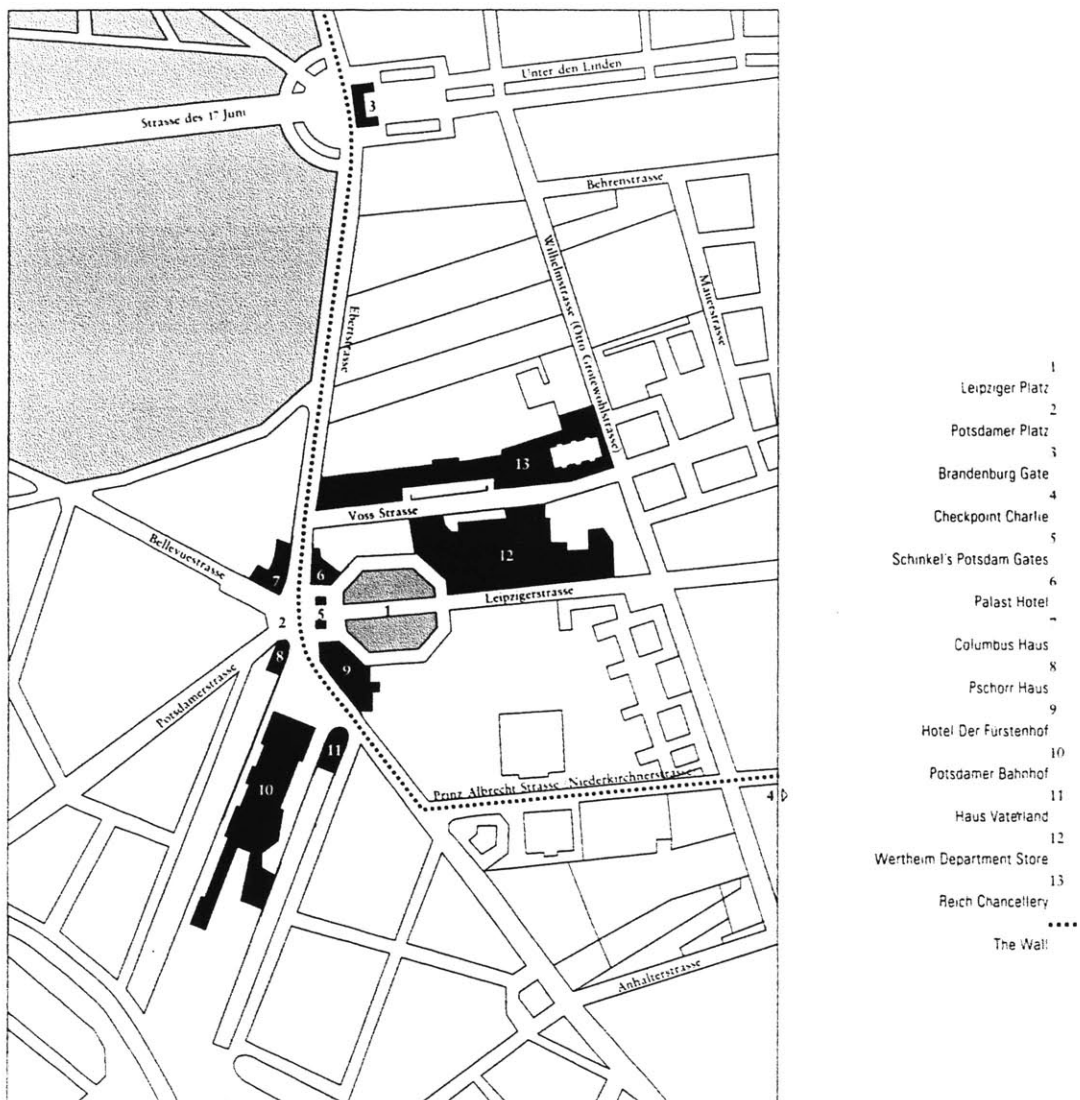
*The Wall Street Journal*: "Dow Chemical Co.: Firm Sets Accord to Take Stake in German Concerns" in *The Wall Street Journal*, 7 April 1995, p. B2.

Gerrit Weismann: "Treuhand Prepares to Wind Down Operations," in  
*Chemicalweek*, 3 August 1994, p. 16.  
Brigitte Werneburg: "Rebuilding Berlin" in *Art in America*, Nov. 1995, p. 78.  
Dirk Westphal: "Potsdamer Platz: Was Sich im Untergrund Tut" in *Der  
Frankfurter Allgemeine*, 27 January 1996.  
Arnold Whittick, ed.: *Encyclopedia of Urban Planning*. McGraw-Hill, New York,  
1974.

**Appendix  
of  
Figures**

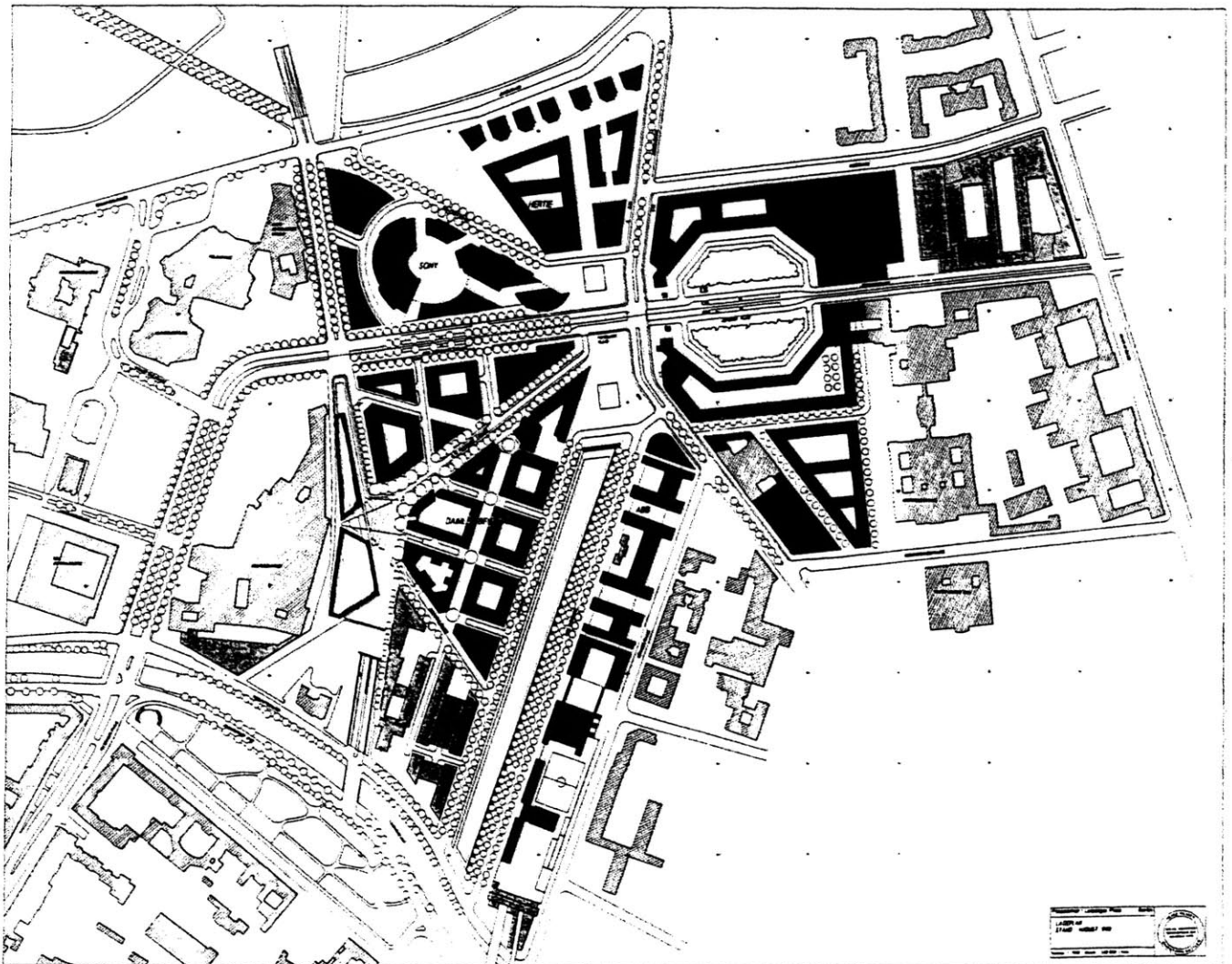
Figure 1

LEIPZIGER PLATZ, POTSDAMER PLATZ AND ENVIRONS



Source: Alan Balfour: *Berlin: The Politics of Order, 1737-1989*,  
Rizzoli, New York, 1990.

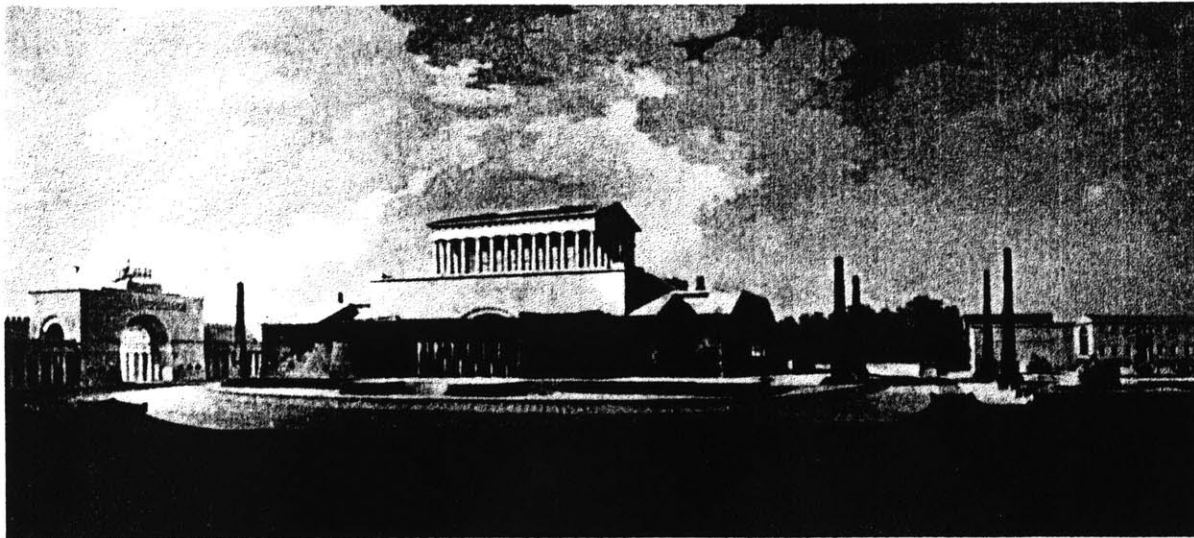
Figure 2



The blackened areas show proposed development in the Potsdamer/Leipziger Platz area. Source: Senatsverwaltung für Bau- und Wohnungswesen, Spring 93.

Figure 3

Friedrich Gilly, perspective of the  
Monument to Frederick the Great,  
1797



Source: Alan Balfour: *Berlin: The Politics of Order, 1737-1989*.  
Rizzoli, New York, 1990.

Figure 4

Fig. 11. 11. 11.



1814

1.18  
Karl Friedrich Schinkel,  
Pencil study for the Cathedral to  
be built in Berlin after the Wars of Liberation, 1814

Source: Alan Balfour: *Berlin: The Politics of Order, 1737-1989*.  
Rizzoli, New York, 1990.

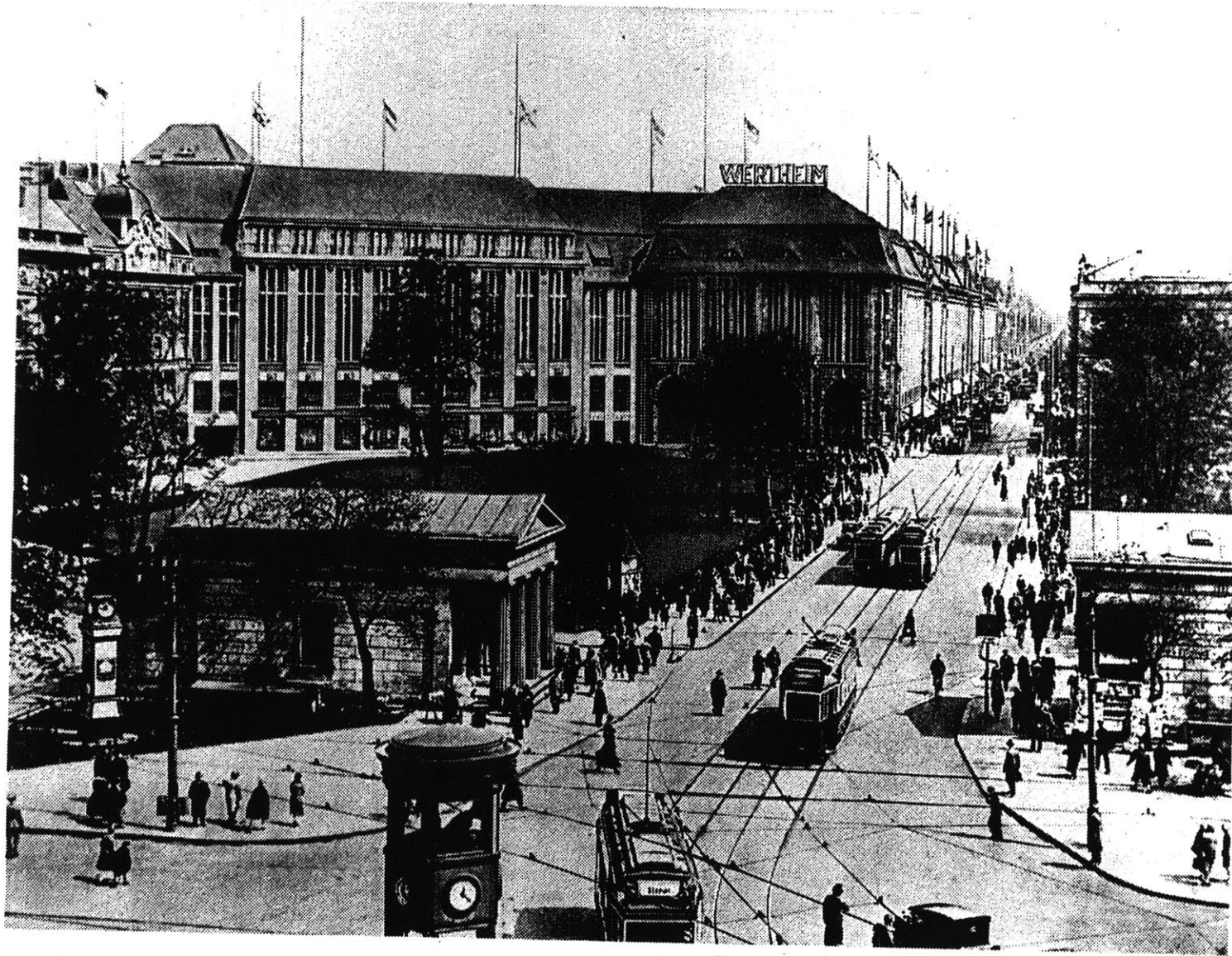
Figure 5



Source: Ulrike Plewnia, et al: *Der Potsdamer Platz, Eine Geschichte in Wort und Bild*. Nishen GmbH, Berlin, 1995.



Figure 6



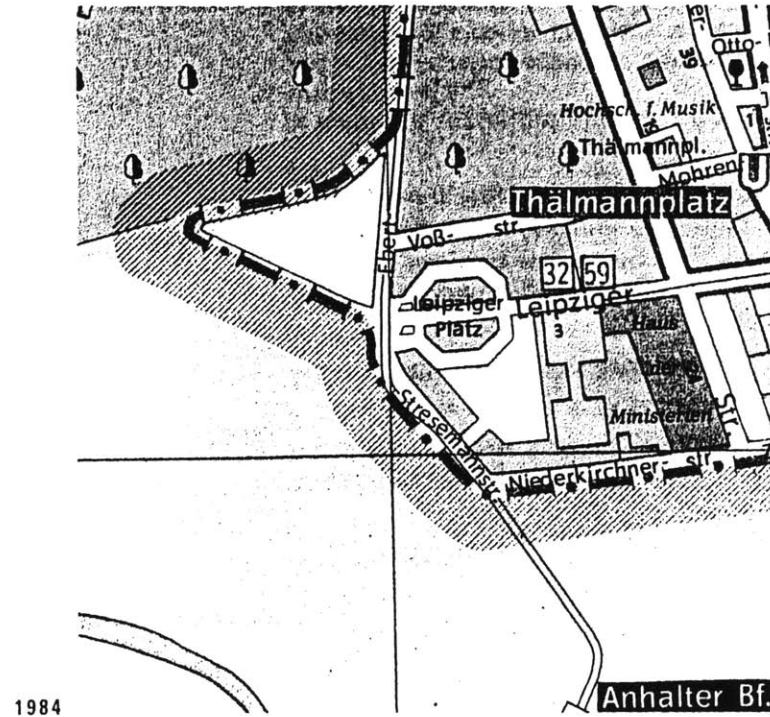
Source: Ulrike Plewnia, et al: *Der Potsdamer Platz, Eine Geschichte in Wort und Bild*. Nishen GmbH, Berlin, 1995.

Figure 7



Source: Alan Balfour: *Berlin: The Politics of Order, 1737-1989*, Rizzoli, New York, 1990.

Figure 8



Source: Alan Balfour: *Berlin: The Politics of Order, 1737-1989*.  
Rizzoli, New York, 1990.

Figure 9

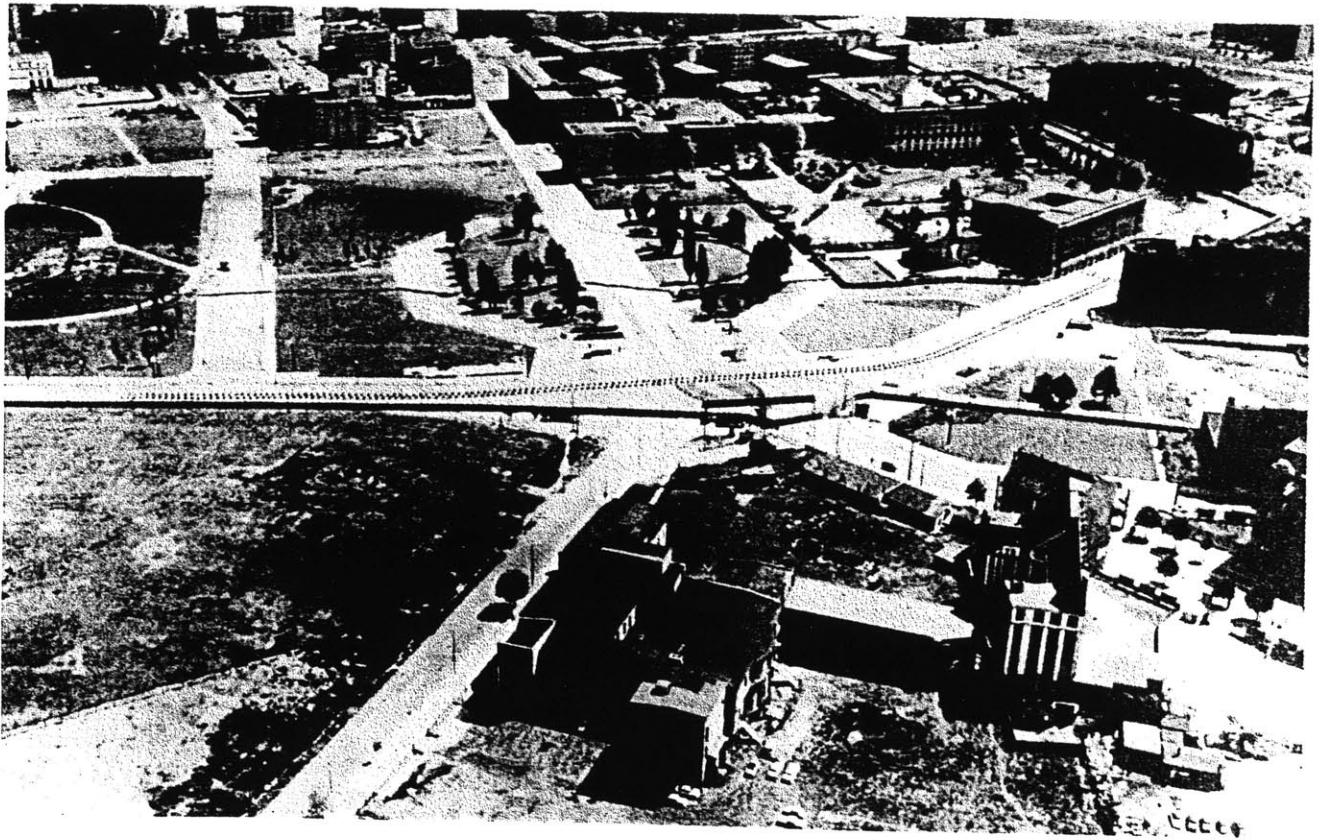
6.17  
Potsdamer Platz and Leipziger  
Platz, Spring 1967



1967

Source: Alan Balfour: *Berlin: The Politics of Order, 1737-1989*,  
Rizzoli, New York, 1990.

Figure 10



Source: Helmut Knieper, Hildebrand Machleidt, and Wolfgang Schäche:  
*Dokumentation*, Senatsverwaltung für Stadtentwicklung und  
Umweltschutz, Berlin, 1990.

Figure 11

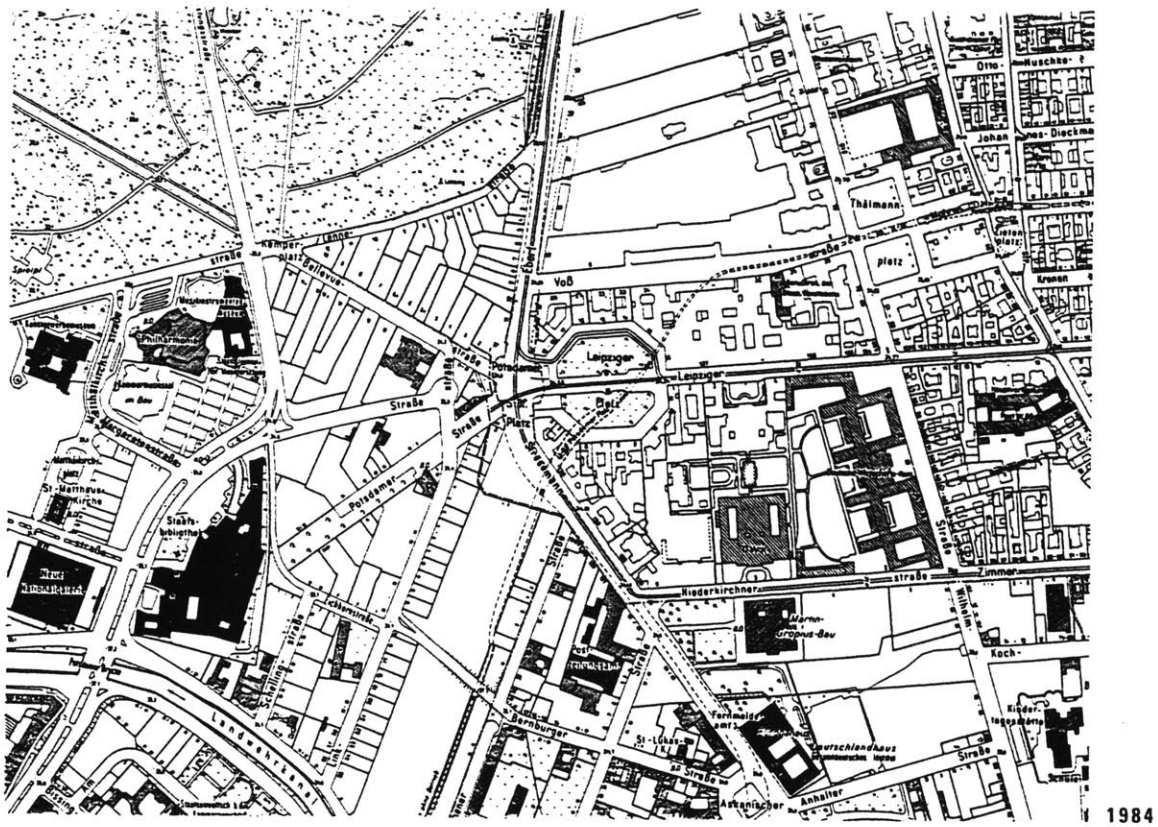


*Potsdamer/Leipziger Platz.  
Detlev Kommerth, 17. 2. 1990*

Source: Ulrike Plewnia, et al: *Der Potsdamer Platz, Eine Geschichte in Wort und Bild*. Nishen GmbH, Berlin, 1995.

Figure 12

The official Senate map of  
West Berlin from 1984



Source: Alan Balfour: *Berlin: The Politics of Order, 1737-1989*,  
Rizzoli, New York, 1990.