Re/Inventing Berlin – Architecture after 1945

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Consultation: by appointment

Tuesdays 14:00-16:00, if not on-site then: Hausvogteiplatz 5-7, Raum 0323-26
Taught in English, minimum B2 (with the Option to Write the Essay in German)

At the end of World War II Berlin, the former capital of Hitler’s Third Reich, was largely destroyed. But the area-wide destructions also held a chance: the possibility to rebuild Berlin as a totally new city – in modernists words: as a better city. And indeed Berlin changed dramatically – but not in the way modern architects and urban planners had envisioned it in the post-war period. Quite differing proposals were made in East and West Berlin. Especially for the so called Capital of the Cold War it proves to be true that architecture is not just a mirror to the society which builds it – but that architecture also shapes the lives of the people living with and within it. Using examples such as Karl-Marx-Allee, Hansaviertel, Gropiusstadt, Potsdamer Platz et al. this seminar retraces the stations and phases of reconstruction with a focus on political, cultural and social developments. The most influential concepts of 20th century urban planning will be presented. In addition the seminar aims to be an exercise in (architecture) criticism.

Course Requirements for 5 ECTS:

• **Regular Attendance**
  Attendance Policy: You may not miss more than 2 sessions. The missing of a session should be communicated in advance via email. If a third session is missed a make-up-work can be arranged. Missing four times means failing the class.

• **Obligatory Reading**
  Texts and Learning Material are provided via moodle.

• **Group Presentation**
  Each student is obliged to participate in a group presentation. The procedure, work process and documentation will be guided and organised. Students are free to choose out of a variety of topics and presentation forms (prepared discussion/panel, role play, power point presentation, etc.).

• **Architecture Critique (1-2 pages)**
  Requirements and Formalities of how to write an Architecture Critique will be discussed at the workshop „How to write a good critique?“ At the end of the seminar the critiques will also be published on the seminar's blog [www.berlinperspectivesonarchitecture.com](http://www.berlinperspectivesonarchitecture.com).

• **Essay (5-8 pages)**
  The Essay is meant to be a practice in academic research and writing. Students will be encouraged to find a topic fitting their interests and studies at their home university. Attention: There will be no excuse for Plagiarism – intended or unintended – and anyone who is found out trying to cheat (that's what it is!) won't be accounted for his or her work.

**The Final Grade**

is made up of the grade for the Critique (counts once) and for the Essay (counts twice).
Educational Aims:
At the End of the Seminar Students are going to be able to

• contextualize Berlin's landmarks in Modern Architecture and 20th century history
• recognize Post-War Modernism and Classic Modernism
• become acquainted with diverse concepts and studies of Social Urban Studies
• write an Architecture Critique

Special Focus:
This Seminar consists of three method elements: 1. the „classical“ sessions in the classroom with students' presentations, lectures, group discussions and group work, 2. the on site-meetings, designed as attentive walks with a special observation focus and 3. workshops with a focus on group work, self organisational learning and presentation.

1. Sitzung  Introduction I

Advanced Reading


Obligatory Reading

Advanced Reading

The 3 stages of development *ON-SITE! Doppelstunde!

Obligatory Reading
5. Sitzung  GDR: Nikolaiviertel – Reconstructing Medieval Age or Designing a kind of Disneyland?

Advanced Reading

6. Sitzung  Criticizing Architecture – How to write a good critique?
Workshop

Obligatory Reading

Advanced Reading

7. Sitzung  FRG: A showcase of Post-War Modernism: – Hansaviertel *ON-SITE!

Advanced Reading

8. Sitzung  FRG: The Chances and Problems of Large Estate Housing – Problemviertel Gropiusstadt

Obligatory Reading

Advanced Reading

9. Sitzung  FRG: The International Building Exhibition (IBA) 1987 – Postmodernism and the City

Obligatory Reading

The New Berlin: Potsdamer Platz – to fill a void!
Doppelstunde

*Advanced Reading*


12. Sitzung

**The New Berlin: Reichstag and Regierungsviertel – How does the reunified Germany presents itself to the world?**

*Obligatory Reading*


*Advanced Reading*


13. Sitzung

**Gentrify this! – Gentrification in Prenzlauer Berg, Mitte and Neukölln**

*Obligatory Reading*


*Advanced Reading*

- Bernt, Matthias; Grell, Britta; Holm, Andrej (ed.): The Berlin Reader. A Compendium on Urban Change and Activism. Bielefeld 2013

14. Sitzung

**Closing session**

**Discussion: To plan, to build, to grow – Experiment Berlin**

**Future Plans: Stadtschloss, Alexanderplatz, Mediaspree**

**Ausstellung Stadtmodelle *ON-SITE!***

*Obligatory Reading*


*Advanced Reading*


*On Site-Meetings: sites are located within the city, no additional costs for students!*