

ROTCH

**REKNITTING THE URBAN FABRIC:
A NEW ALEXANDER PLATZ AS A LINK AND CONNECTOR IN THE
FORMERLY DIVIDED BERLIN**



by
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B.A. Architecture,
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Submitted to the Department of Architecture
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Degree of Master of Science in Architecture Studies

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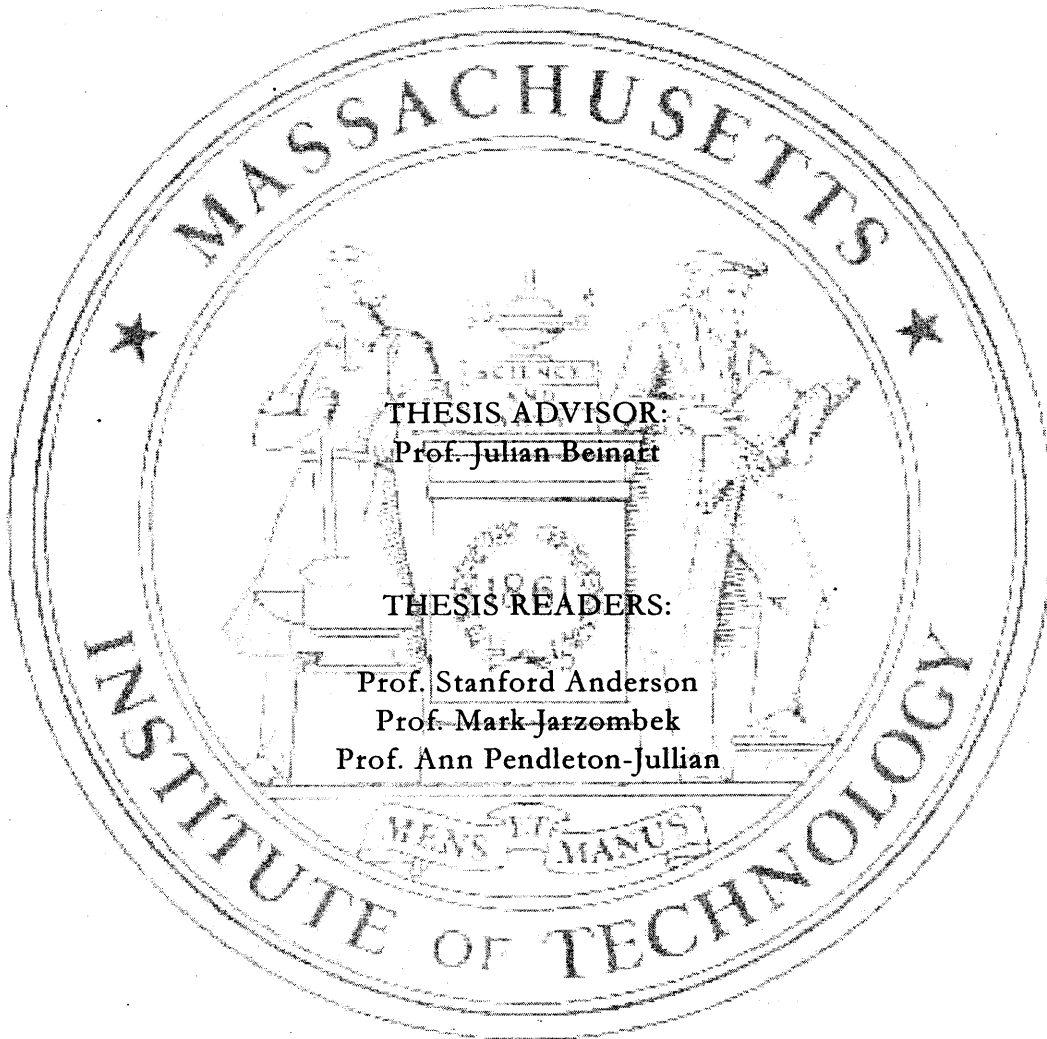
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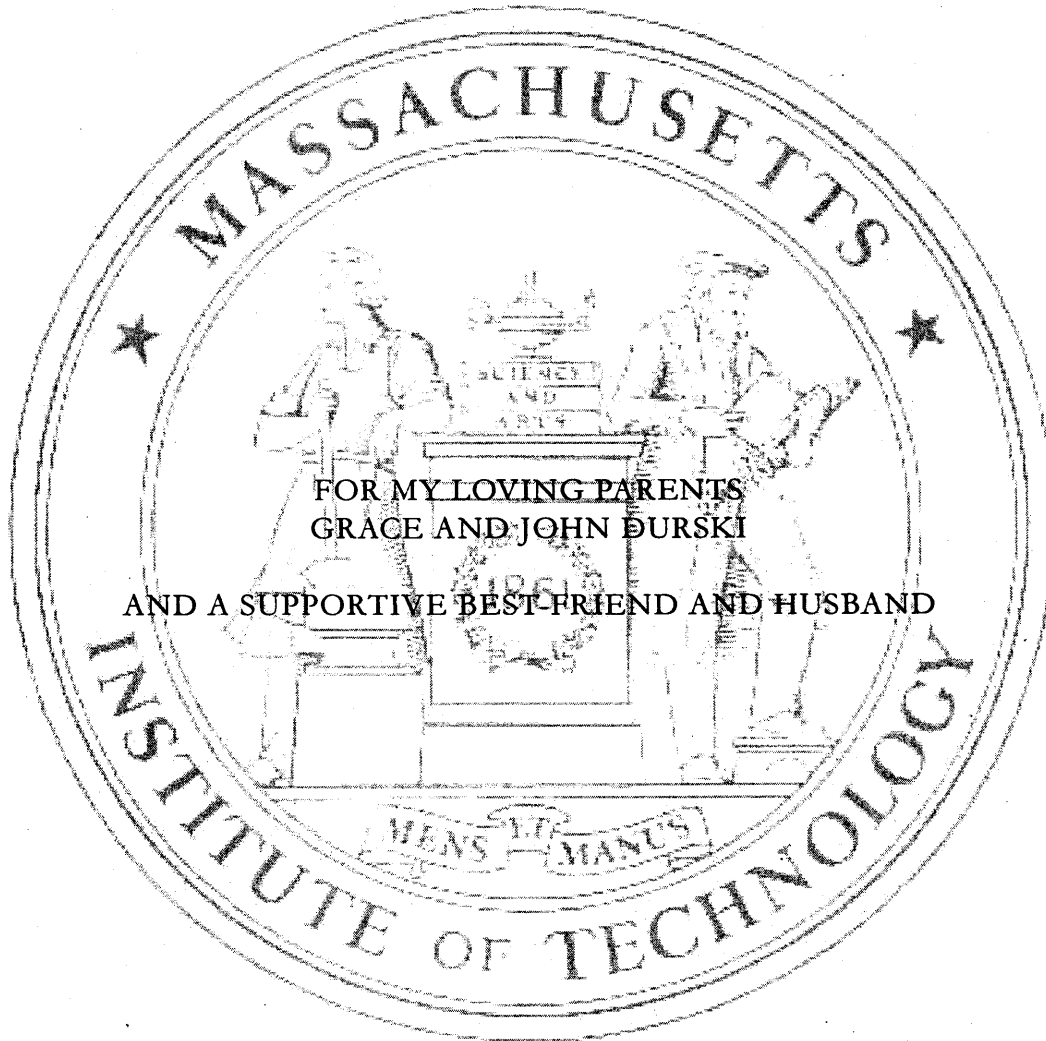
ABSTRACT

Berlin like many other European cities, is facing the dilemma of encountering the new century with a new set of growth and development ideas. This particularly applies to the fragmented urban fabric of the Germany's Capital City. The dilemma is how to rectify the urban the urban environment surrounding Alexander Platz in East Berlin while tying the formerly divided city together.

This thesis will evaluate Berlin's current and past urban nodes and linkages pushing beyond the context of the proposed site. This thesis will concentrate on several nodes and links that would allow fresh solutions to the problem of creating a continuum between the past and present at Alexander Platz. This thesis will analyze the previous models of urban spaces in Berlin, their transformations, and evaluate the existing conditions of Alexander Platz.

The final approach will combine working solutions with a new design proposal. The basic idea is that of partial urban renewal; nevertheless, the primary goal will be to provide alternatives to retrofit the open space of the Alexander Platz for contemporary Berlin. This thesis is an attempt to create a new node at the Alexander Platz by models and themes of urban design that are recognized by both sides of the formerly divided Berlin.

Thesis Supervisor: Julian Beinart
Title: Professor of Architecture



FOR MY LOVING PARENTS
GRACE AND JOHN ĐURSKI

AND A SUPPORTIVE BEST-FRIEND AND HUSBAND

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I must record hereby my gratitude to Julian Beinart who allowed me to work within my own time frame and boundaries, and the assistance given by him. I have benefited greatly from discussions with my professors, who in various ways have shaped these ideas. I must make a particular mention in revising the text to both Brent Ryan and my very patient husband who has tolerated and provided assistance during early stages of this work. This thesis and its major financial debt must go to my family who tolerated the diversion of household funds into my extensive research and travels. Finally, I must pay a tribute to the support and encouragement of my parents during the preparation of this thesis. Therefore, this dedication goes to all those who have taught and supported me over these years.



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INTRODUCTION

This is a study of the current plan for an open urban area of Berlin, and a proposal for reorganizing a smaller part of the city, the Alexander Platz. It is hoped that this might allow a look at what may be achieved by identifying ideas and techniques that might be useful when applied to other sites within the disjointed fabric of Berlin.

The practice of town planning is particularly relevant to Berlin, with the construction and expansion of the *Friedrichstadt* in 1710, its later expansions, and the current revitalization of the city. This thesis spans a wide range of subject matter related to redesign of Berlin. There are many topics described and ideas introduced that do not lend themselves easily to a synthesis and a summary in the form of a conclusion. Nevertheless, the final chapter does attempt to draw some threads together. It tries to identify common elements, important distinctions, and points of comparison that may have escaped the attention of individual chapters.

There is a general sense of international influences when it comes to the field of German planning. There is also a sense of strong self-consciousness that revolves particularly around the planning of Berlin. It seems that the past 50 years of political instability have boiled down to the question of physical vs. the economic planning becoming the most overriding issue.¹ On one hand, Berlin has a desire to replace the traditional and comfortable formal values that were lost after the war. Those values created a sense of identity for the city. On the other hand, Berlin faces a new kind of reality that demands a new architectural expression for decrepit parts of the city. Berlin is still in search of an appropriate formal expression that does not preclude looking backward nor render the past patterns obsolete.

¹ Examples will be provided later in this paper to show the current reconstruction, new developments, their techniques and successes.

Therefore, the dilemma is how to create a 'median' between the new 'formal' developments and formerly disregarded areas that would make each side of the city more understandable to the other.

The public realm creates a place for spontaneous interaction. It is a place for congregation that gives an outdoor space needed cohesion and definition. There are only two such centers in the central part of Berlin, the *Kurfürstendamm* in the west, and the *Alexander Platz* in the east. Both spaces provide Berlin with the centrality of a core. However, with a new master plan in force, those public spaces have been preempted by privately controlled spaces, such as those at the *Potsdamer Platz*. The new plan in force, adds structures to a previously empty area of the Alexander Platz creating a new form of an outdoor public space. The new agenda should be one of connecting this disjointed part of the city instead of creating a distinctive, singular, and formal district onto itself. In this thesis the new Alexander Platz provides a new framework, a new urban design in the form of a public realm with the elements provided by the city.

Many of Berlin's design and planning problems are shared with other cities. Germany, along with other countries in Europe, has experienced a high degree of urbanization during the post-war era. This urbanization went hand-in-hand with the reconstruction of European cities. Associated with the reconstruction has been an increase in personal wealth, car ownership, higher quality housing, and the movement of the population away from the core of the city. The pressures on land have been so considerable during the post-war period that most of the countries in Europe, including Germany and particularly Berlin, deemed it necessary to create effective procedures that would resolve the conflict of the competing land uses. With these pressures on the available land, we must evaluate Berlin's response in relation to the current revitalization of the divided city and the new proposal for the urban center at the Alexander Platz.

Therefore, this study is in part an understanding of the background influences which operate in Berlin. It is a prerequisite for any constructive proposal for the Alexander Platz that is acceptable and useful as a solution. The emphasis on the background of Berlin's planning and development provides the basis for a transfer of ideas to new proposals. Therefore, in this thesis I attempt to convey to the reader the incentives, styles, and the scope of urban planning in Berlin, and not simply a design for the Alexander Platz site.

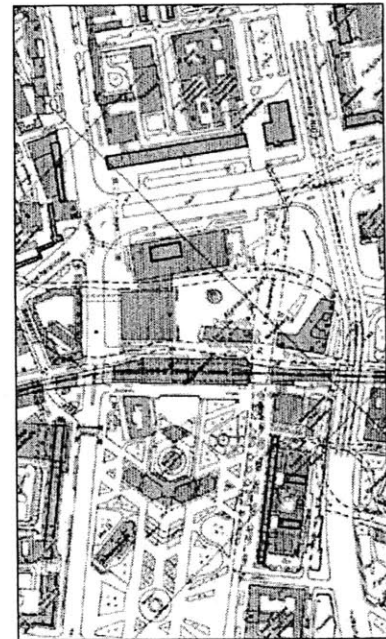
INTRODUCTION TO ALEXANDER PLATZ

The interactive public space is a major component of the public realm. Therefore, any new agenda for the Alexander Platz should be one of connecting this disjointed part of Berlin. The new proposal should be overlaid with history and interconnections to develop a model that stimulates greater interaction and a better understanding of the formerly divided city. If Berlin and its public realm are going to succeed, the city must create an urban link out of the Alexander Platz connecting it to the other larger urban projects throughout the city. The current urban problems of Berlin direct this thesis to concentrate on the totality of urban design for the Alexander Platz. Correcting what previous periods have left incomplete or neglected demands flexibility, respect for history and the ability to meaningfully adjust old patterns to the new, particularly applied in the Alexander Platz.

Cities in Europe remain distinct, just as their planning remains distinct. These qualities are what make Europe a highly unique and attractive place to live. The fall of communism at the turn of the 1990's served to increase the concern with Berlin as one that is more distinct from the rest of cities in Western or Eastern Europe. Changes have to be considered to its earlier formed townscape of socialism¹. This thesis is a search for a more flexible method of organizing and relating these forms in the Alexander Platz. The goal is not to abstract the historical identity of the Platz as a monument, but to treat it for what it always was a 'gateway' connecting the medieval part of Berlin with the rest of the city. The Alexander Platz is an isolated specific space with powerful, yet banal forms and volumes, as the government of the German Democratic Republic² remained unsympathetic to any daring concepts. Therefore, the Platz remained faithful to the realization of monumental spaces conceived in the spirit of idealism rather than to the standards of purpose and context.



Aerial view of the current Alexander Platz. From Pysall. (1998) *Das Alexander Der Haus Alexander Platz*

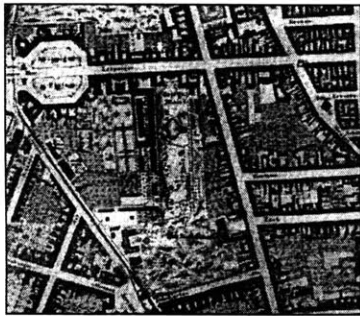


Plan of the current Alexander Platz and its surrounding area. From Karte von Berlin 1993.

¹ From Hamilton, I. And French, H. (1980) *The Socialist City*. Wiley, Chichester.

² The German Democratic Republic, or East Germany was created on October 7, 1949. The GDR abbreviation will be used in the further reading.

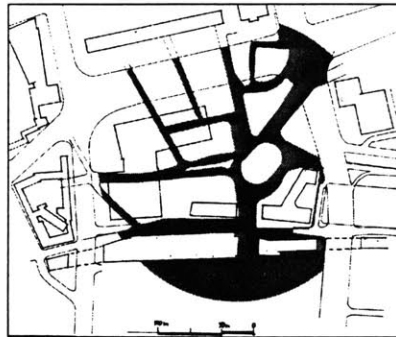
To restore order and significance to the Alexander Platz we must create a more meaningful environment for this site. Not unlike the freestanding sculptures that played an effective role in the demarcation of vistas and alignment of axes within Neo-Classical and Baroque Berlin, the Alexander Platz and its open space play totally subordinate role. Today the space plays a non-active role as it is surrounded by open space with arbitrarily placed buildings. There is no particular monument or a space, which has any principal concern for any other. This is a situation where neither the few historical buildings nor the reconstructed Bahnhof station can define the plaza.



Plan of Potsdamer/Leipziger Platz before the war from Hauptstadt Berlin.



The octagonal Leipziger Platz and the Potsdamer Platz, 1933. From *The Ghosts of Berlin*.

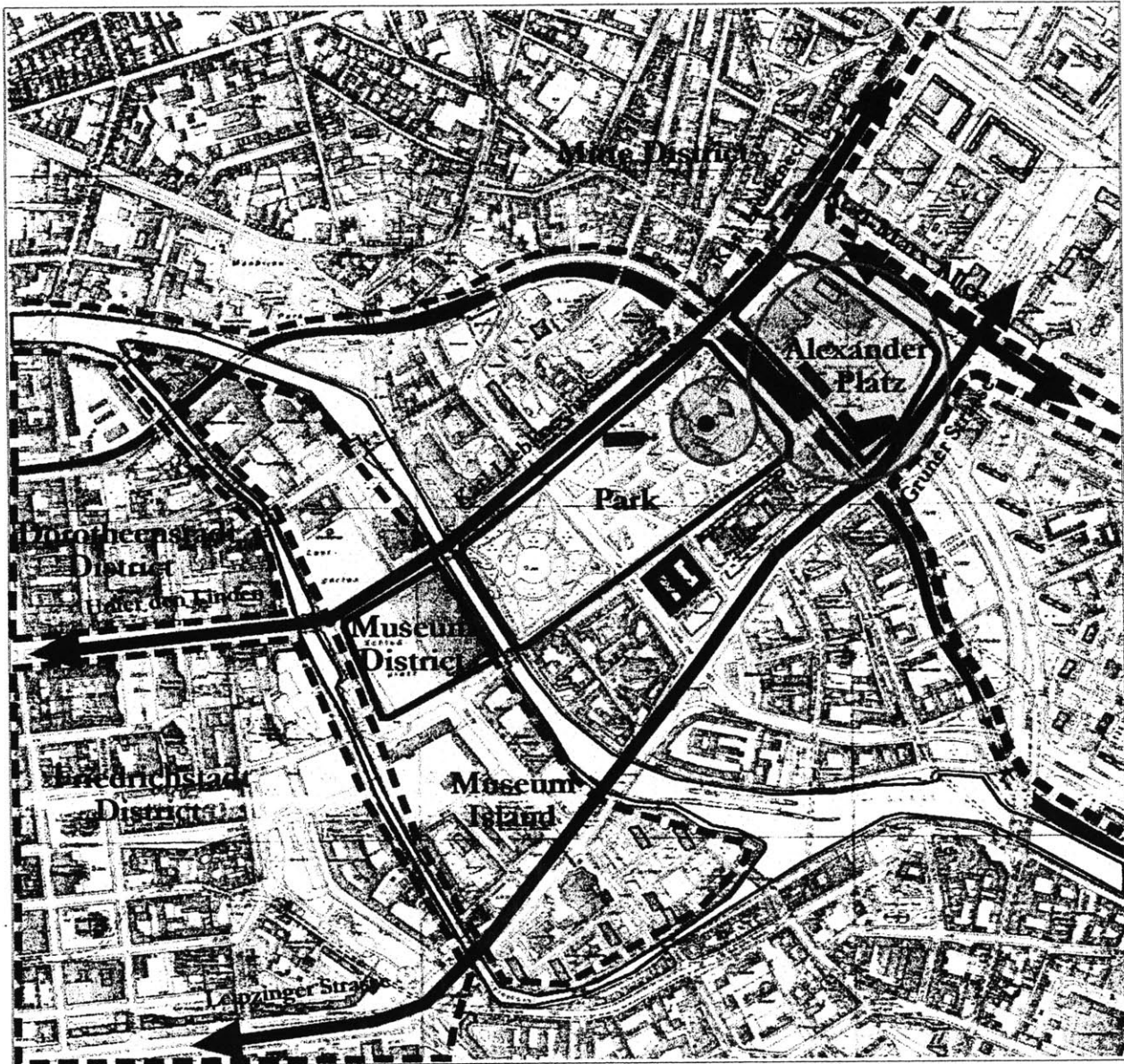


Plan of Alexander Platz and its junction.
From: LeTissier, *Berlin Then and Now*.

Comparison between the old and current Platz.

Example of a Baroque layout of the city. The three planned urban spaces of Pariser Platz, Leipziger Platz, and Mehring Platz were eventually intermixed with the urban fabric. Alexander Platz, however, was unplanned space that grew and expanded naturally until W.W. II.

SITE ANALYSIS- AREA SURROUNDING ALEXANDER PLATZ



Design Issues

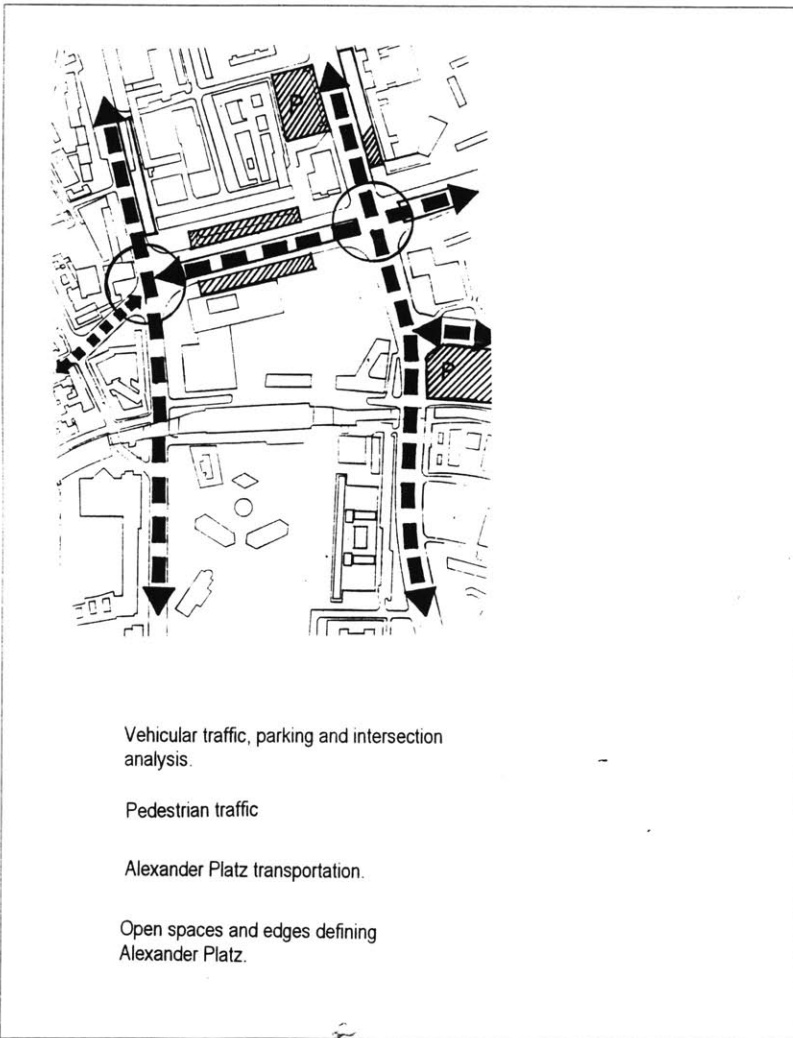
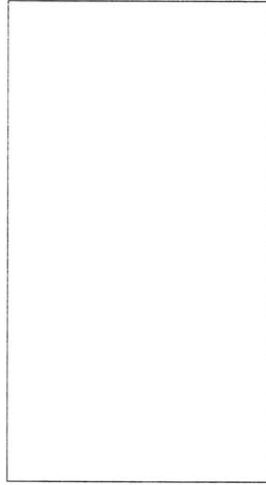
The open public space must be reorganized to give it a form of an enclosure. This enclosure must emphasize edges giving a new space more definition.

This site must be considered as a medium between the district of Mitte and building blocks that exist within a vast open spaces of the separated residential district.

*The entry to and from the Park must act as a connector between two areas of the Park and Alexander Platz.
The existing transportation interchange has to be re-emphasized at the platz.*

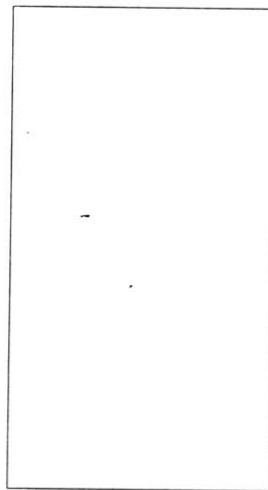
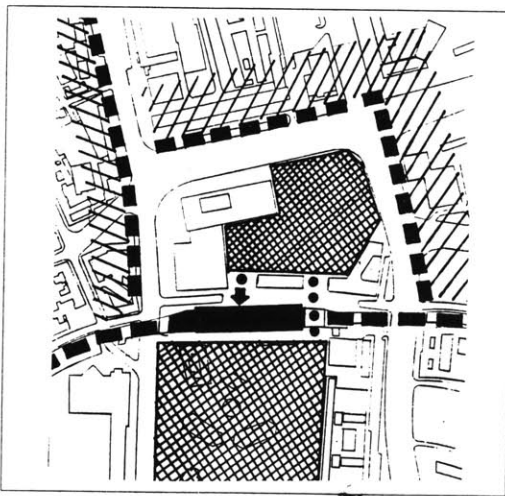
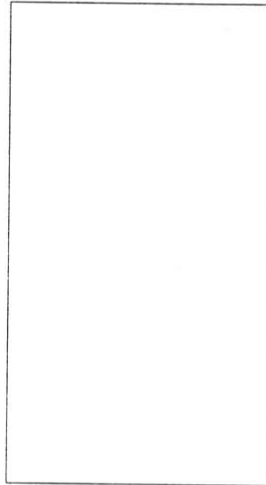
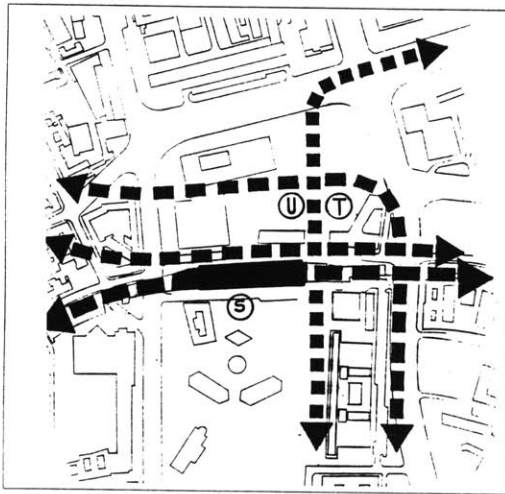
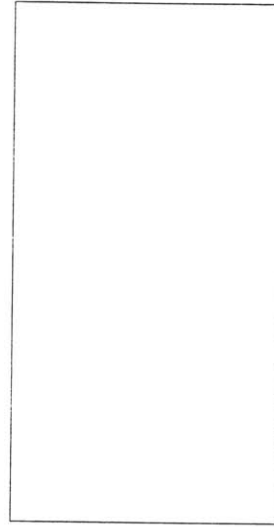
Points of traffic intersections demand a node for the Unter den Linden axis. These crossing points should allow access to Alexander Platz from various directions improving access for pedestrians.

SITE ANALYSIS - ALEXANDER PLATZ AND AREA



Site Analysis of Alexander Platz Area

SITE ANALYSIS - ALEXANDER PLATZ AND AREA

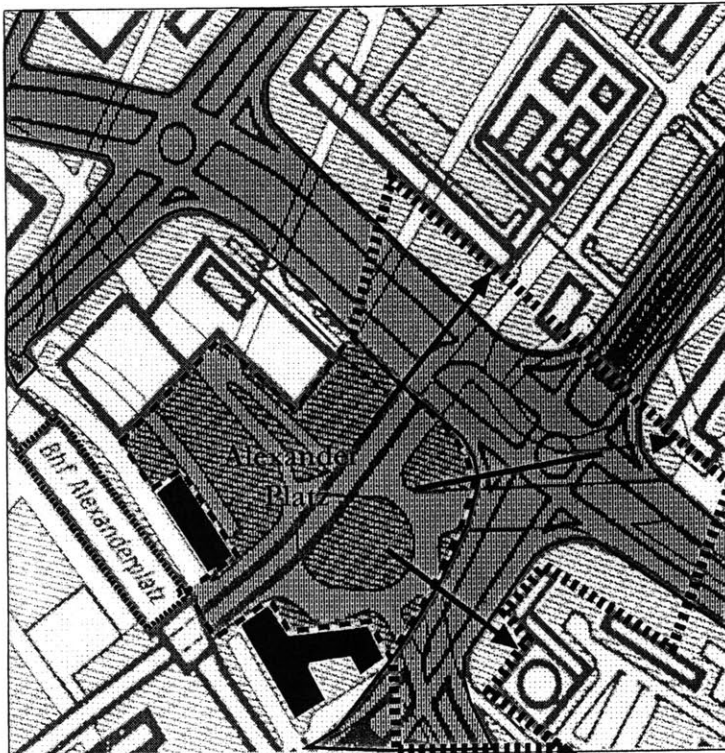


Site Analysis of Alexander Platz Area

HISTORICAL COMPARISON

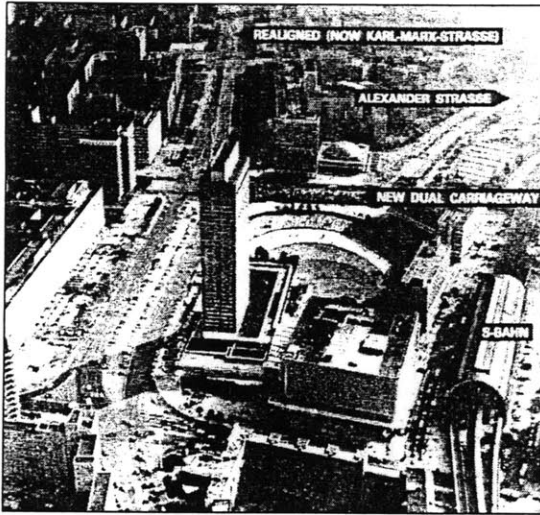


For clearer orientation the Alexander Bahnhof station and the two Behren's structures are marked.
The Platz acted as a major traffic intersection with all of the major streets leading to the 'gateway' of the Medieval City.
The diagram displays Alexander Platz at its peak in 1920's. It shows the pre-war street pattern and later post-war changes.



The current Alexander Platz acts as a vast open, empty space without any particular function. The vehicular traffic was rerouted to the traffic arteries surrounding this space.
The area of this open space is clearly defined in plan. In reality it is much larger and less significant. The Platz visually extends beyond its boundaries to the second boundary line created by nearby structures.
Lack of dense urban fabric in the Alexander Platz expands the open area to a new even larger scale.

The analysis of the pre-W.W.I.I. and the post-war Alexander Platz.



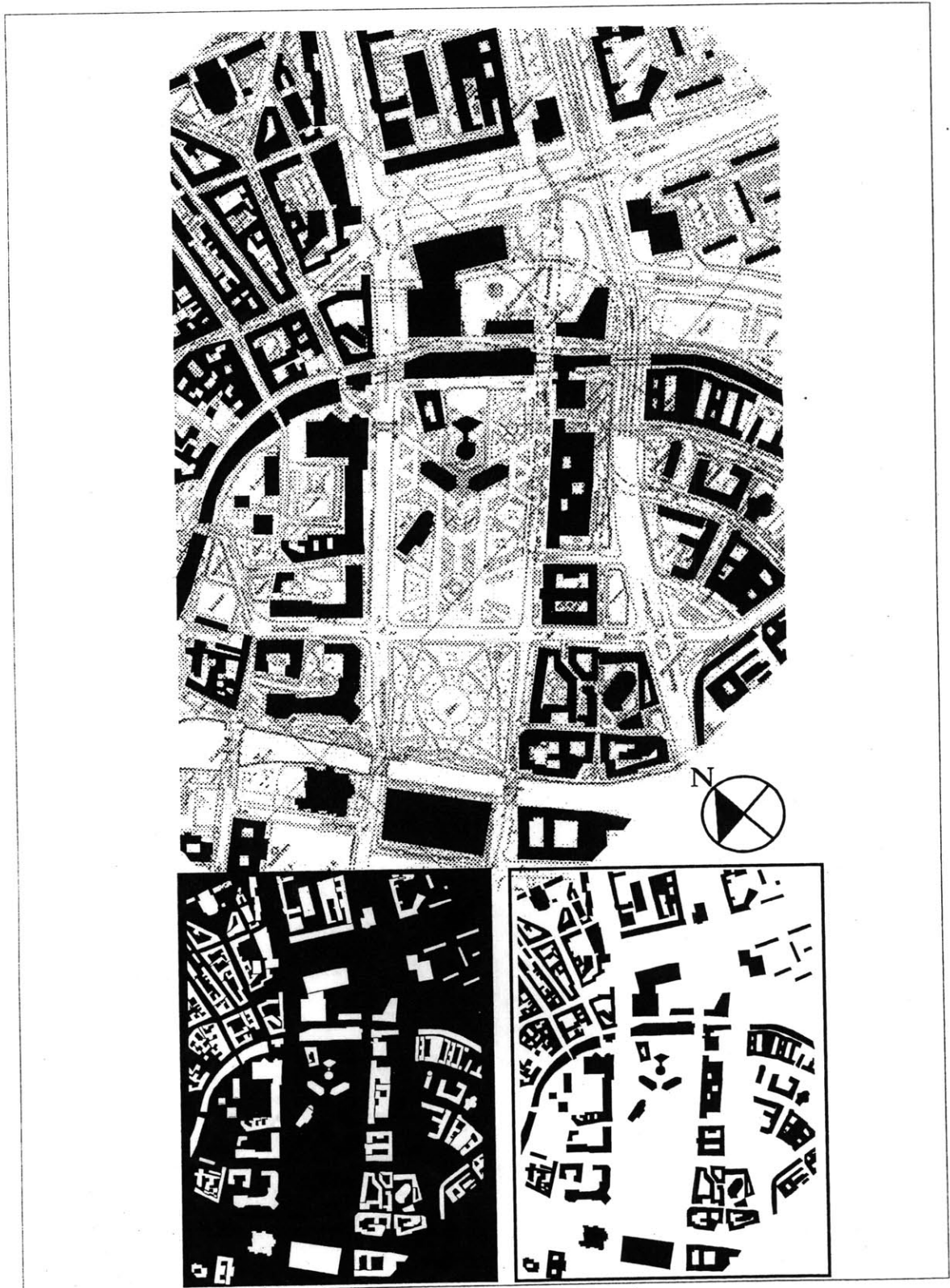
The GDR's Alexander Platz presents itself today as a more bold statement, re-aligning streets, and cutting through wider highways.

From: Le Tissier, *Berlin Then and Now*.

As an urban space the Alexander Platz suffers from vast proportions, ill-defined edges, and the visual disharmony of a bland concrete high-rise called the, *plattenbau*. The construction of new roads and motorways largely determined the course of urban development during the 1960's ignoring the original city plan. Critics regard this dispersion of functions as 'lacking urbanity', and failing to generate the bustle and the interest of a city center³. Therefore, it is important to note some of the key issues that currently exist at Alexander Platz.

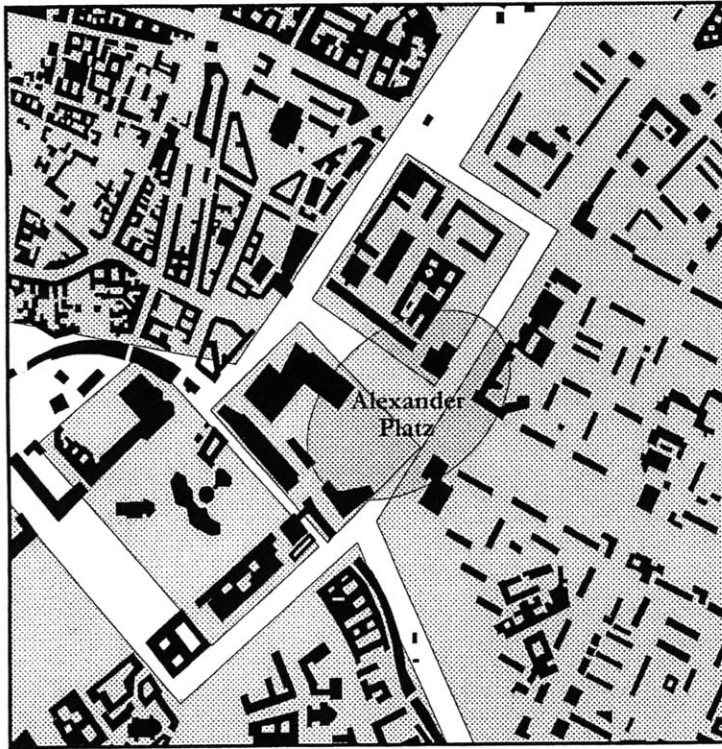
³ Pfoflich, Florian. *Bauwelt Berlin Annual. Chronology of Building Events 1996 to 2001, 1998.*

FIGURE/GROUND OF THE CURRENT CONDITIONS



Figure/Ground study of the current Alexander Platz and surrounding area.

GRAIN AND TEXTURE



Alexander Platz Grain

The large grain of the mega-structures is mostly placed within the surrounding area of the Alexander Platz.

Within the site the large office structures define edges of the Platz.
The encircled buildings are the only definitions, as well as a part of the Alexander Platz site.



Grain

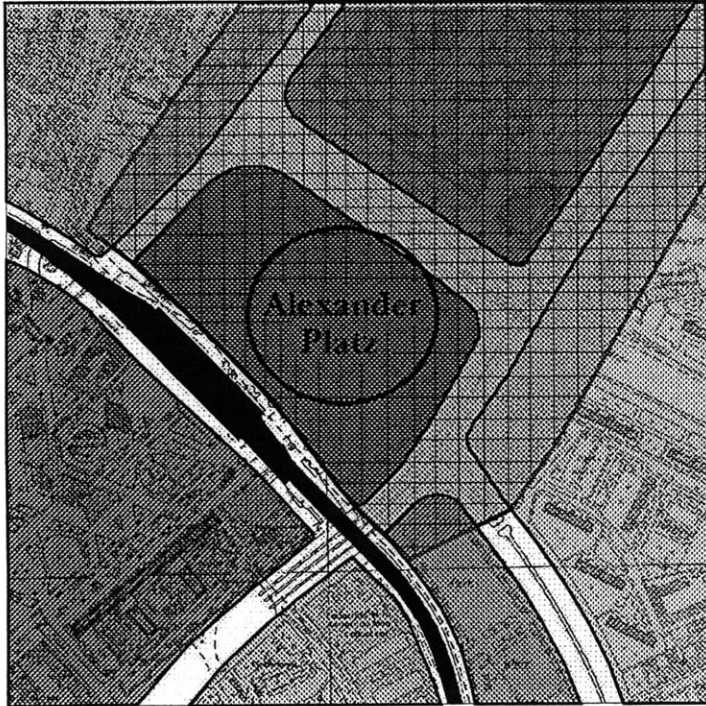
The most fine and dense grain of buildings is found at the north-west corner in the district of Mitte.

Very dispersed and much lower density grain is found on the east side of the map. The area consists of residential block-towers.

Directly to the south of the Bahnhof Station lays the park. This is the least dense area on the map. The edges of the Park are clearly defined by the two residential-commercial mega-structures.

Figure/Ground Study of the Alexander Platz area. Analysis of the grain and texture

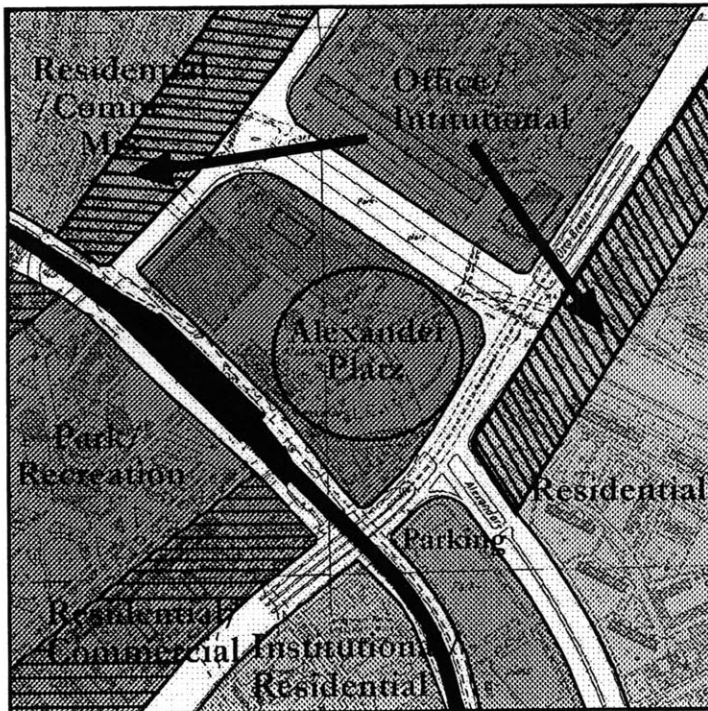
DISTRICTS



Districts at the Alexander Platz

The districts surrounding the Alexander Platz could simply be divided into four separate areas.

The overlapping functions of the Alexander Platz are clearly visible to the east and west of the platz. These are the office area extensions creating the only overlap of functions within this central area.



Districts and Their Function

With the S-Bahn line comes a clear division of the individual districts and their separate functions.

The District Analysis

Districts and their Functions

The clear division of districts and their functions

- ❑ To the northwest lies what is a remainder of the Mietkaseme and the district of Mitte. The area consists of rebuilt pre-1914 street and block pattern. The edge of the district is dedicated to office space relating directly to the office blocks east of the district.
- ❑ The Alexander Platz occupies the central part of the map. It is an area that serves the office functions minimally sharing them with one hotel tower and a shopping store. The centrally located Alexander Platz is a vast open area currently serving the function of 'passing through' for pedestrians using only the S-Bahn station and the trolley system.
- ❑ Residential block towers occupy the East Side of the map. Within the blocks located are schools and libraries as the center of each block. The northwest edge follows the Alexander Platz extension of office and recreational activities.
The same pattern of a single-zoned area continues through to the north and east throughout the rest of the district.
- ❑ To the south of the residential block towers and their district, next to the railway line is a completely empty area dedicated solely to parking and the car. The whole area acts as a giant parking lot.
- ❑ On the other side of the Bahnhof station (south of the Alexander Platz) lays an open green space, a park dedicated to recreation and tourism. This open space contains a medieval church and a TV Tower.
The north and south edges of the park are lines with residential/commercial mix of mega-blocks, which strongly define the edge of the park and its build-up areas.
These are the only two structures within the modern blocks that offer residential and commercial activity and the only zone with a mix-use activities within this modernist planning.
The south sides of the buildings share the Rathaus; the town hall is the only other historical building.
- ❑ To the south of Alexander Platz and the Park area lies an older district of partly the courtyard buildings and partly with the city municipality buildings. The city buildings are more distinguishable by the lack of the congested courtyards and a revised version of an open space within the rehabilitated structures.

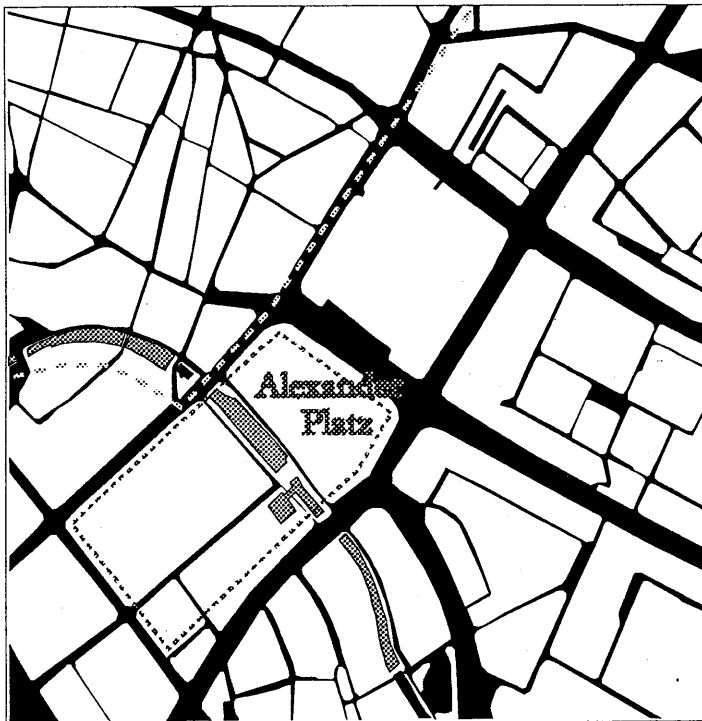
CITY BLOCKS



City Blocks

One can easily observe the drastic change in the size of the blocks to the north, the district of Mitte, and its pre-1914 dense urban fabric construction strategy.

To the east are the post-1960's mega-blocks that mostly triple in the size of the 'old' blocks.

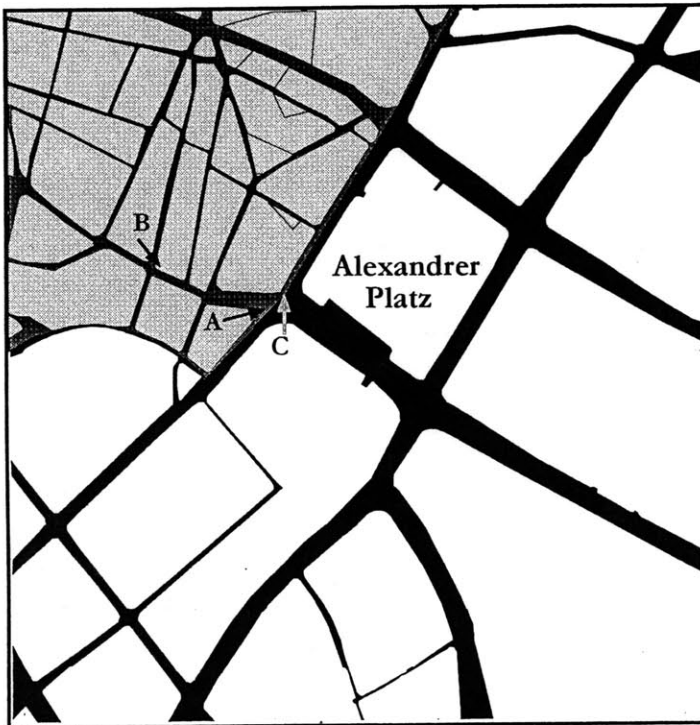


City Blocks and Streets

From the street diagram we see a particularly large area dedicated to the Alexander Platz. This area on both sides of the Bahnhof station becomes one large block without any intersecting streets or any obstacles.



City block analysis

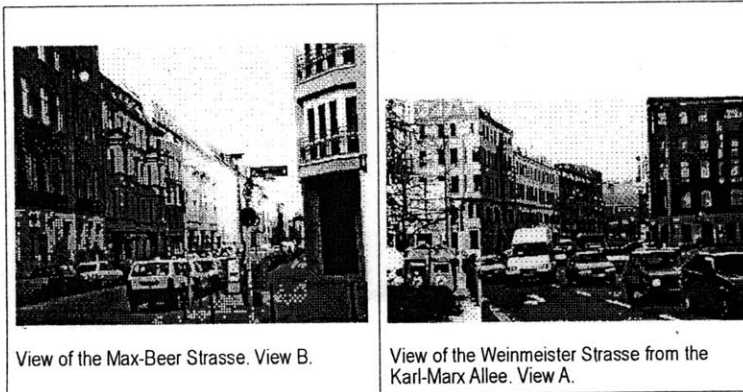
CITY STREETS



City Blocks

The district of Mitte is easily recognizable by the 19th century street grid. The development favors smaller blocks that are entirely surrounded by the street, therefore creating shorter distances between the blocks. The only interior circulation within these blocks are the open courtyards.

-  Blocks constructed before 1914
-  Blocks constructed after 1960's

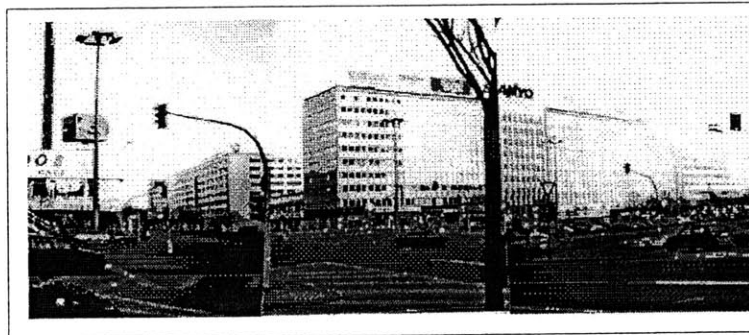


View of the Max-Beer Strasse. View B.

View of the Weinmeister Strasse from the Karl-Marx Allee. View A.

Difference between the pre-war pattern and added traffic arteries of Karl-Marx Allee is clearly visible.

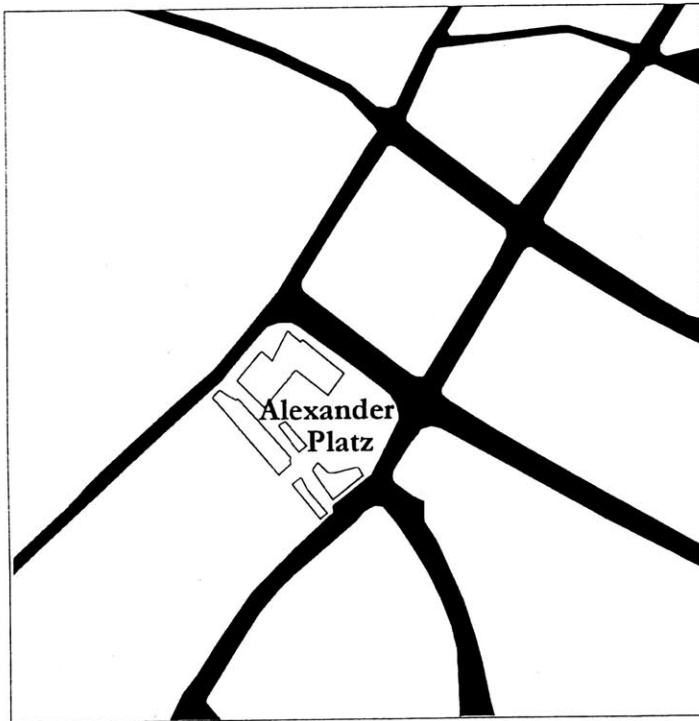
The top two photographs display a clear cut-off line between the old and new approach for the city planning. Views A and B cater to an active pedestrian traffic. The artery then becomes a traffic lane only catering to the vehicular traffic without any pedestrians.



View of the crossing at the Weinmeister Strasse and Karl-Marx Allee. View C.

The street and block analysis

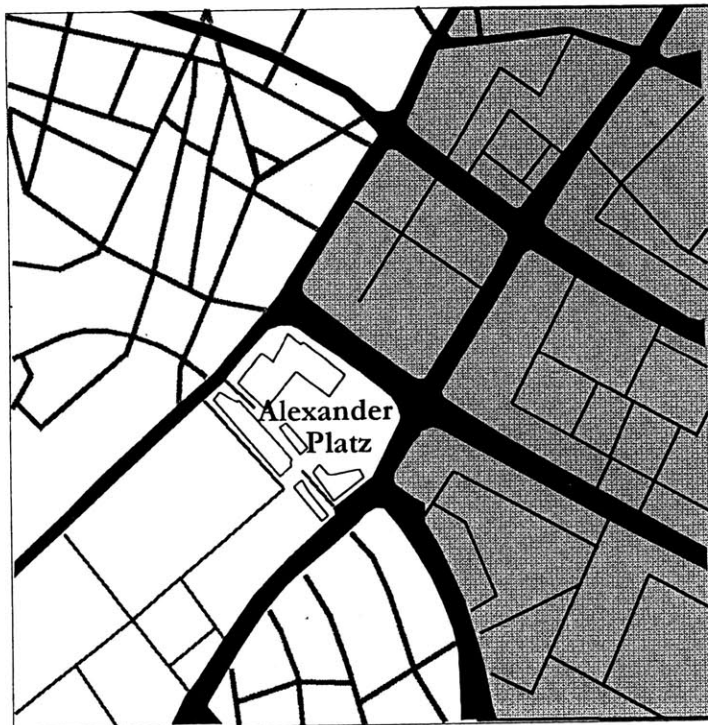
CITY STREETS



Primary Roads

The primary roads are consistently large, 6-8 lane arteries carrying the bulk of the vehicular traffic.

These roads supply the satellite settlements outside the city center located usually on the outskirts of Berlin.



Secondary Roads

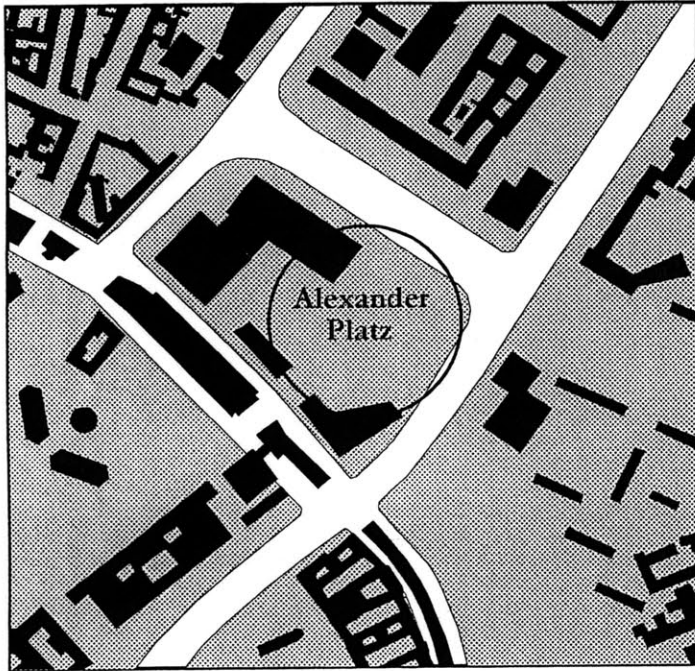
There are two major distinctions between the secondary roads. Those on the left of the map, represent closely followed reconstruction of the pre-1914 street pattern with smaller blocks.

To the right is the reconstructed Berlin according to the modernist principles. The streets are placed within large blocks only as an access to the residential structures.

There are only few roads with access to the main arteries. The interior streets act as more as the access to parking, rather than circulation through the city.

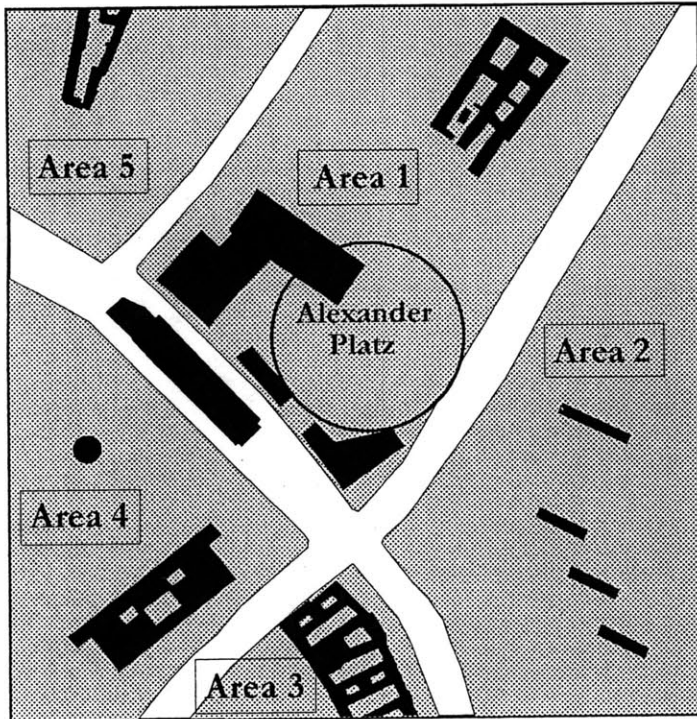
The primary and secondary street analysis

BUILDING TYPES



Building Types and Areas



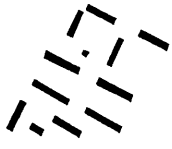

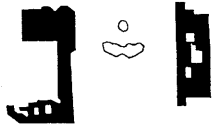



Closer look at Alexander Platz area shows some of the dominant building forms for each individual area.



Analysis of the Areas

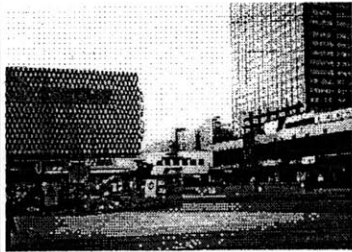
The plan is divided into more clearly identifiable areas. Each area has its own unique building type. For closer analysis of the building types see the next page.

BUILDING TYPES

 <p>Alexander Platz</p>	 <p>Area 1</p>	<p>Alexander Platz The area of the Alexander Platz predominates in a variety of buildings and functions. Four structures are easily identifiable, the hotel and the Kauffhaus store, both which are large block structures. The other two buildings are also historically significant, the Berolinahaus and the Alexanderhaus.</p>
 <p>Area 2</p>	 <p>Area 3</p>	<p>Area 1 To the north of the Alexander Platz is the true office-block area. The most identifiable form is the half-block long structure usually bordering edges of its lot.</p> <p>Area 2 Although, this area is a mix of residential and office space. The predominant form is the residential tower-block set in a large open space</p> <p>Area 3 This is an institutional area. Most of the structures are renovated courtyard buildings. The rehabilitated structures have larger open courts inside.</p>
 <p>Area 4</p>	 <p>Area 4a</p>	<p>Area 4 The park consists of two structures that define its edges. These take the form of a long, unbroken super-blocks.</p> <p>Area 4a The park area has its significant structures in the form of a tourist attractions, the TV tower, church, and the Rathaus.</p> <p>Area 5 The main building type in this area is the historical residential block. This is a best example of the Mietskaserne block. The district of Mitte is mostly rehabilitated, however it is true to the pre-1914 densities and the limited open space within the courtyards.</p>
 <p>Area 5</p>	 <p>The Bahnhof</p>	<p>The Bahnhof The railway station is an important part of both the Alexander Platz and the Park on the other side. With its above ground viaducts it is one of the largest structures in this area.</p>

Analysis of the buildings and types surrounding Alexander Platz.

BUILDING TYPES



Alexander Platz



Area 1



Area 2



Area 3



Area 4



Area 4a



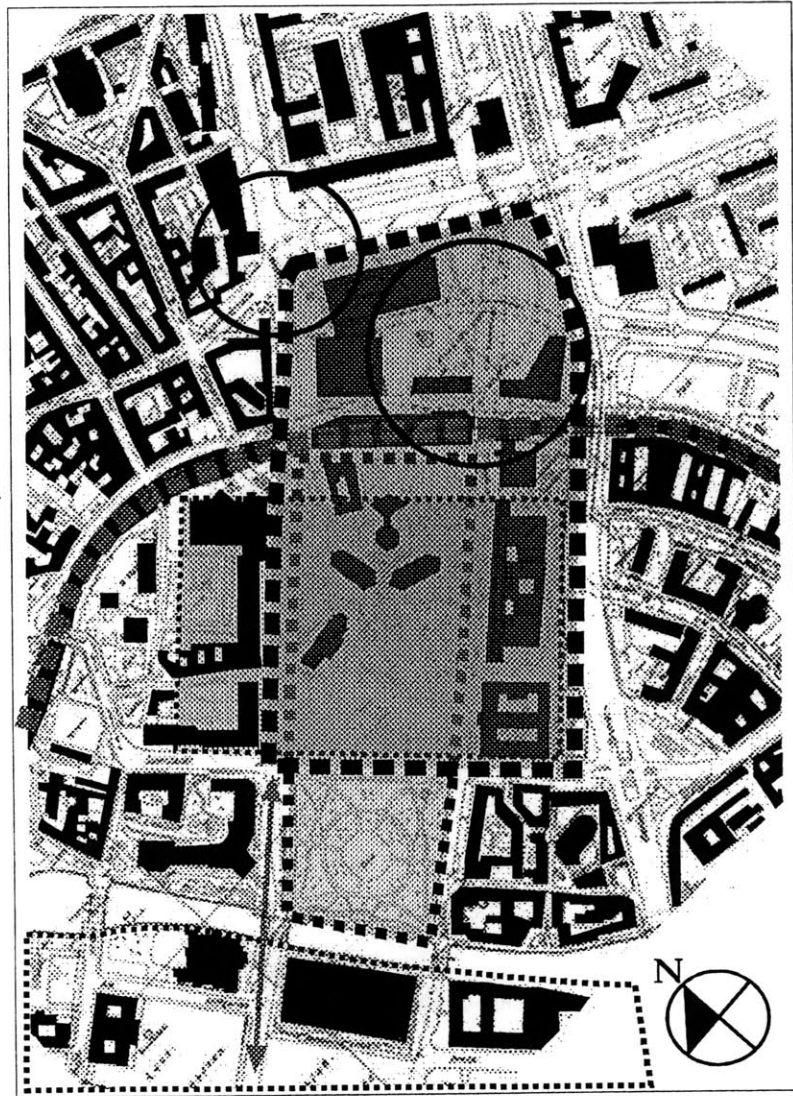
Area 5



The Bahnhof

Photographs of each area's buildings and their types.

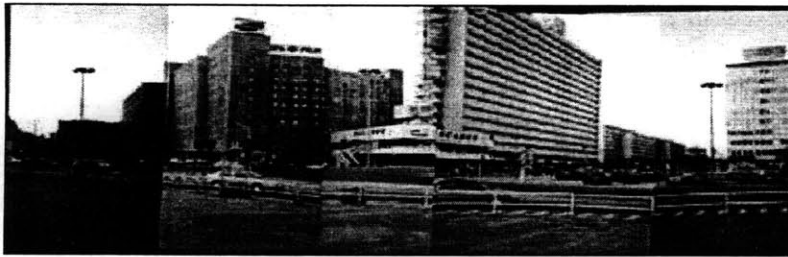
FIGURE/GROUND OF THE CURRENT CONDITIONS



Figure/Ground study of the current Alexander Platz and surrounding area.

Problems with Alexander Platz and the surrounding site:

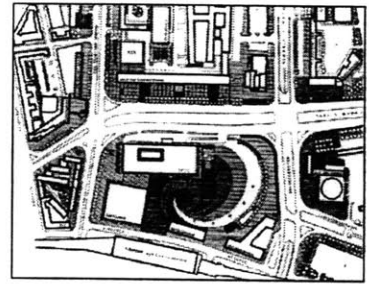
- ❑ The proportion and scale of the site is too large.
- ❑ Lack of enclosure at the Platz.
- ❑ No contrast for transition to or from the site.
- ❑ No visual sequence of buildings or activities at the main open space.
- ❑ No visible activity and lack of hierarchy of movement.
- ❑ No visible signs to indicate an open space.
- ❑ The site is one large open paved space with no sidewalks, and no pedestrian dimensions. It lacks a sense of entry.



View of crossing at the Karl Liebknecht Strasse and the Karl-Marx Allee



View of the crossing at the Karl Liebknecht Straße and the Karl-Marx Allee. The Karl Liebknecht Straße is an extension of the Unter den Linden Straße.



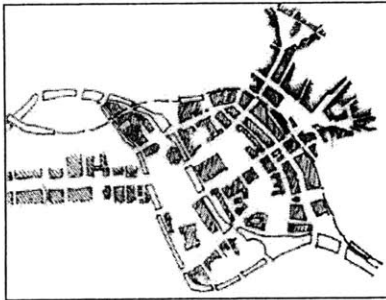
Plan of the current situation at the Alexander Platz. From Pysall. (1998) *Das Alexander Der Haus Alaxander Platz.*



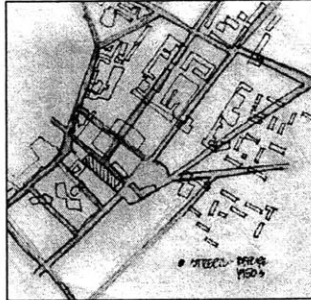
Birdseye view of the Alexander Platz Ibid.



View from the Alexander Platz into Karl-Marx Allee.



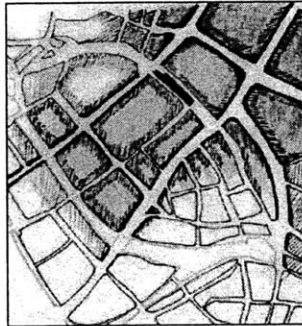
The street of the Unter den Linden leading into the Alexander Platz before the W.W.II.



The pre-war street pattern overlaid with existing buildings.



The block and street arrangement prior to 1940. Evident is the smaller grain of blocks and tightly arranged streets.

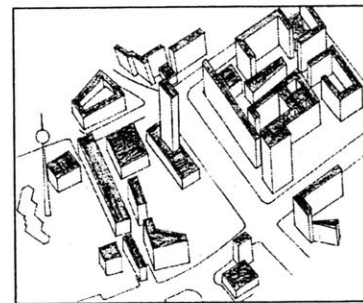
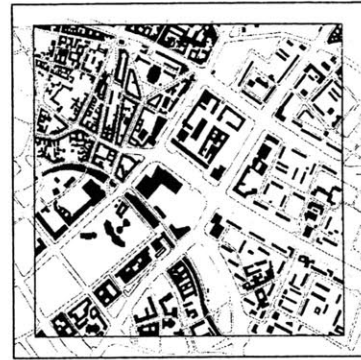


Post-war street and block pattern in Berlin. Emphasized are new traffic routes with larger blocks.

Changes in the development of Alexander Platz before and post W.W.II.

Design issues for consideration:

- ❑ Consider the site of Alexander Platz as a boundary in its own right, separating the district of Mitte to the north from the 'residential towers' district to the southeast.
- ❑ Reorganize the site of the Alexander Platz to give it shape and enclosure defining more of the open public space.
- ❑ Include the Park to have more presence and inform visitors of the Alexander Platz of yet another public open space, linking the two together.
- ❑ Emphasize the railway system that already exists as a node and interchange link for the city.
- ❑ The termination point for the *Unter den Linden* axis on the east side, continuing through the *Karl-Liebknecht Strasse* needs to emphasize the continuum for the city, as well as, the end of a journey.

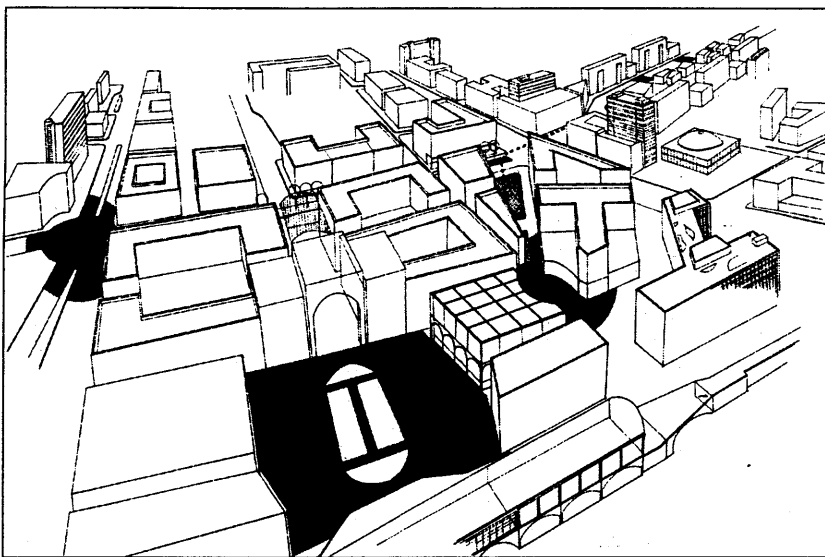


Current condition of Alexander Platz. Top: Figure/Ground study of the area. Middle: Plan of Alexander Platz. Bottom: Axonometric drawing of current Alexander Platz.

NEW PROPOSAL

With this new proposal for the Alexander Platz we must indicate the changes necessary to accommodate the new program. As it stands the Platz is not surrounded by any private property;⁴ however, specifications are necessary for the changing roads, removal of buildings, etc. The planning for this given site should include more of the surrounding environment as to affect the visual coordination between the gateway of *Unter den Linden* and the *Karl-Marx Allee* into a newly created node within this urban center. This will create a panorama of total environmental context within the rational and very strictly organized system of Berlin as a basis for a juxtaposition of shapes and forms resulting in a total new composition for the Alexander Platz. Alexander Platz would become a case of urban renewal rather than a site of political display.

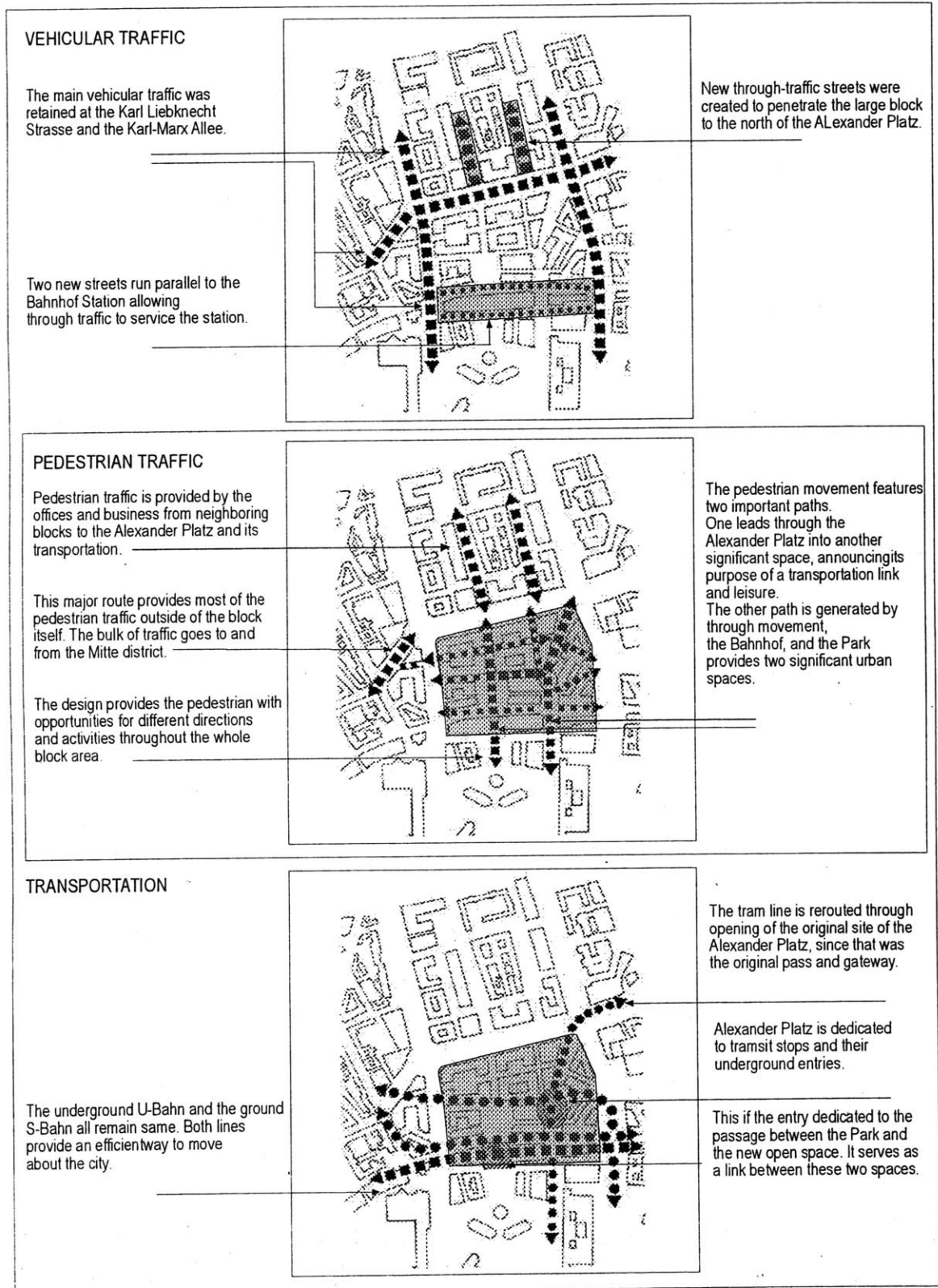
The intention of my proposal is to use the urban space of the Alexander Platz as a catalyst for improving the surrounding environment. Consequently, the Platz does not focus on itself alone but rather on its position within a larger context of the East Berlin center. The new space is divided into two smaller urban spaces. The original Alexander Platz visually gains a role of a smaller urban space that is looked upon as a gateway controlling and directing the pedestrian traffic. This space also acts as a visual unobstructed vista into the heart of the city. Historically this space was treated as a major gateway into center of the city. Within my proposal its role is retained and emphasized by pedestrian traffic.



Drawing of the new proposal for Alexander Platz and its surrounding area. The areas of importance for the overall plan are highlighted.

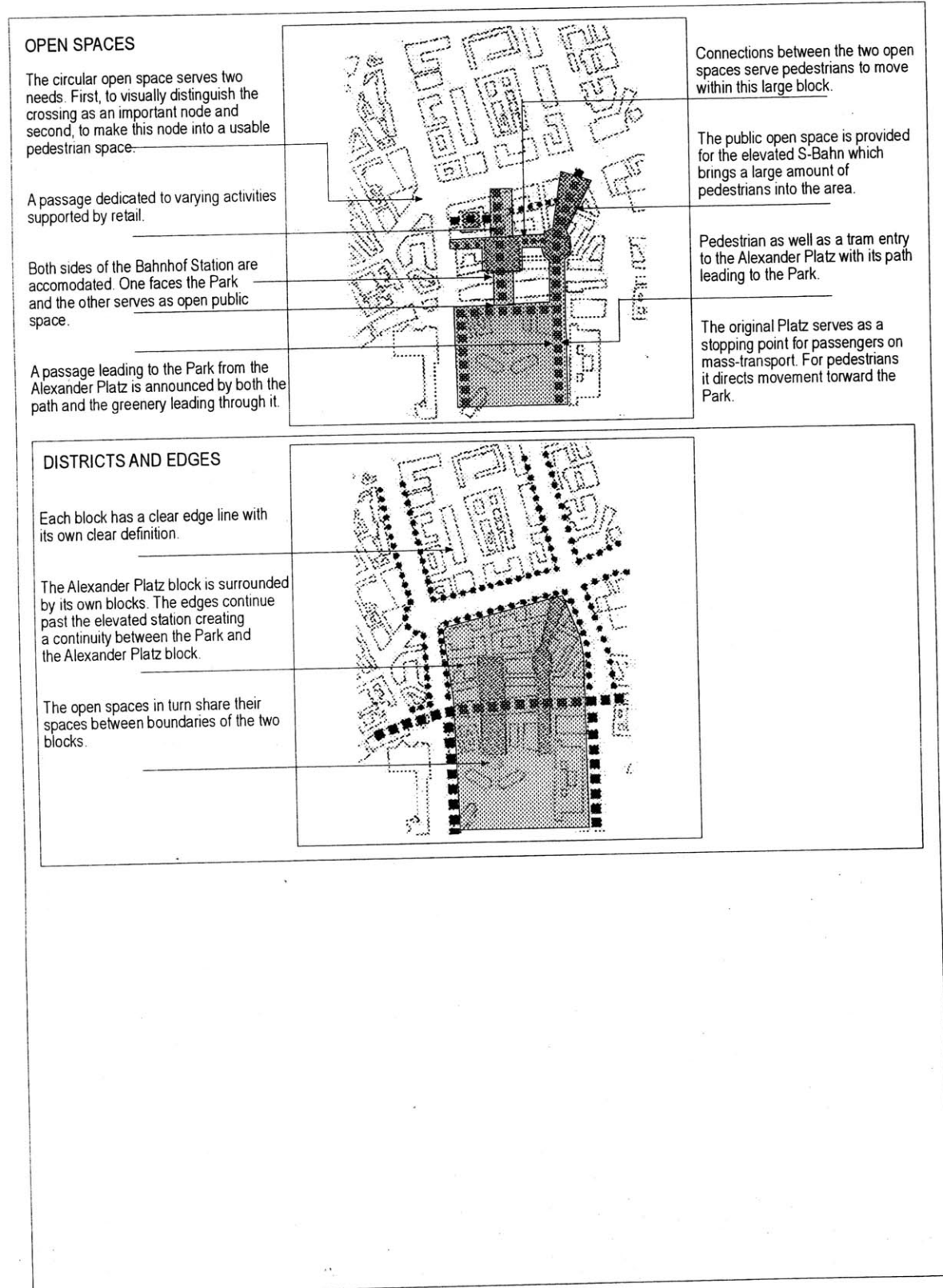
⁴ There was no private property until 1989 within the Alexander Platz and its vicinity. The previous political regime had acquired all for the state.

SITE ANALYSIS FOR NEW DESIGN



Analysis of the proposed design for Alexander Platz site.

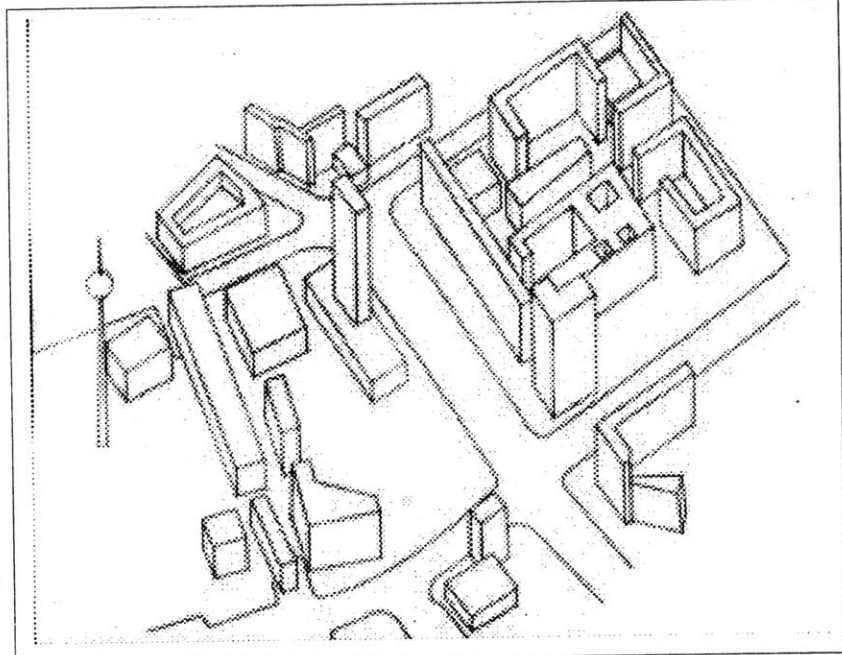
SITE ANALYSIS



Analysis of the proposed site (cont.).

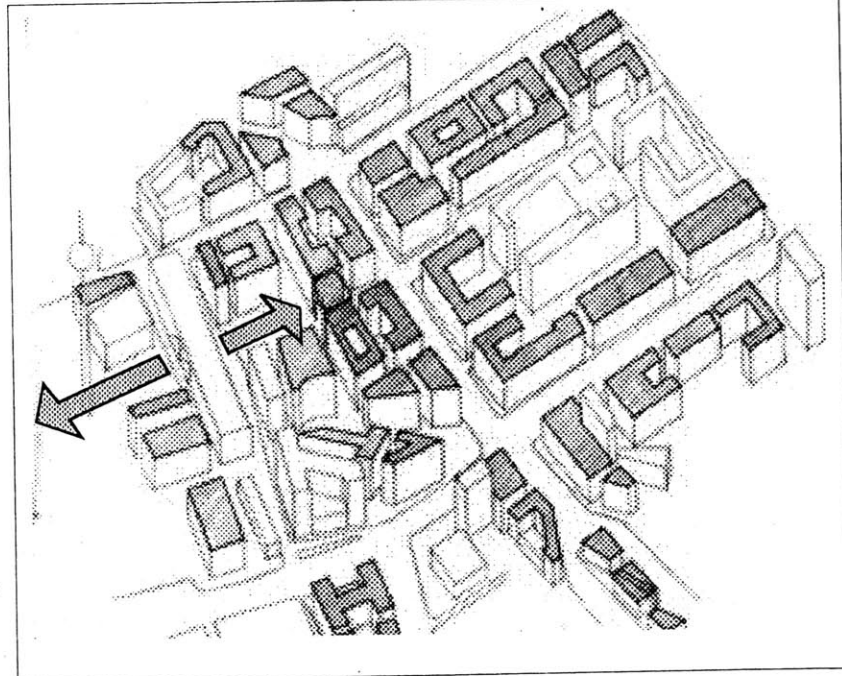
NEW PROPOSAL

CURRENT SITE



View of the current site. The platz lacks definition and is open to surrounding blocks.

PROPOSED SITE

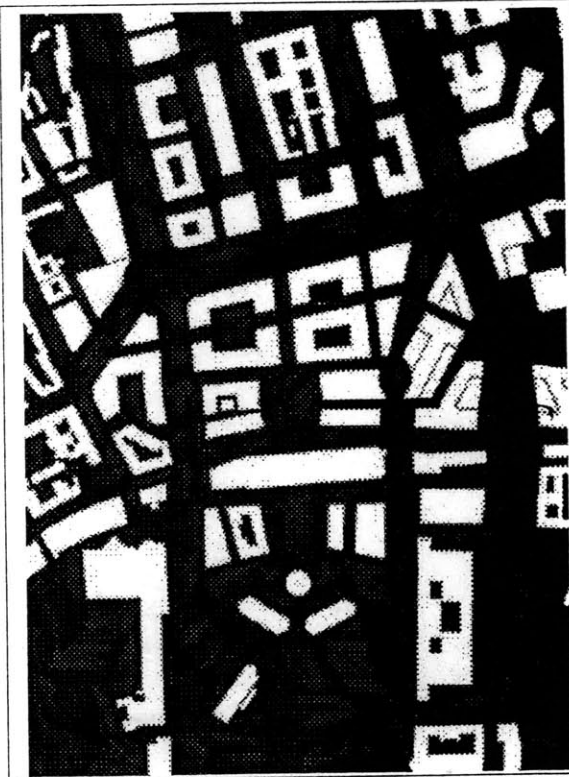


The proposed plan for the site. The new construction surrounds a variety of new public spaces and makes a connection with the Park on the other side of the Bahnhof Station.

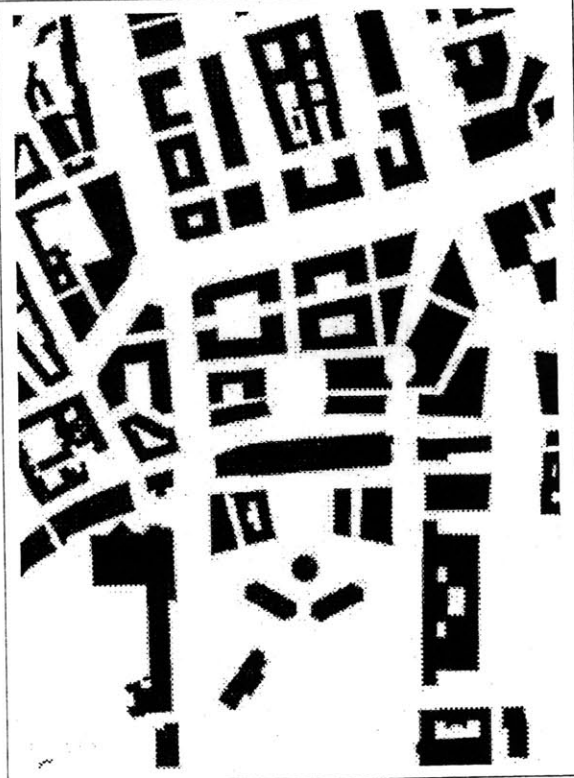
View of the existing site and the new proposal for the Alexander Platz.

BLACK/WHITE STUDY

The figure ground studies allow for a good comparison of how the new proposal fits into the overall environment

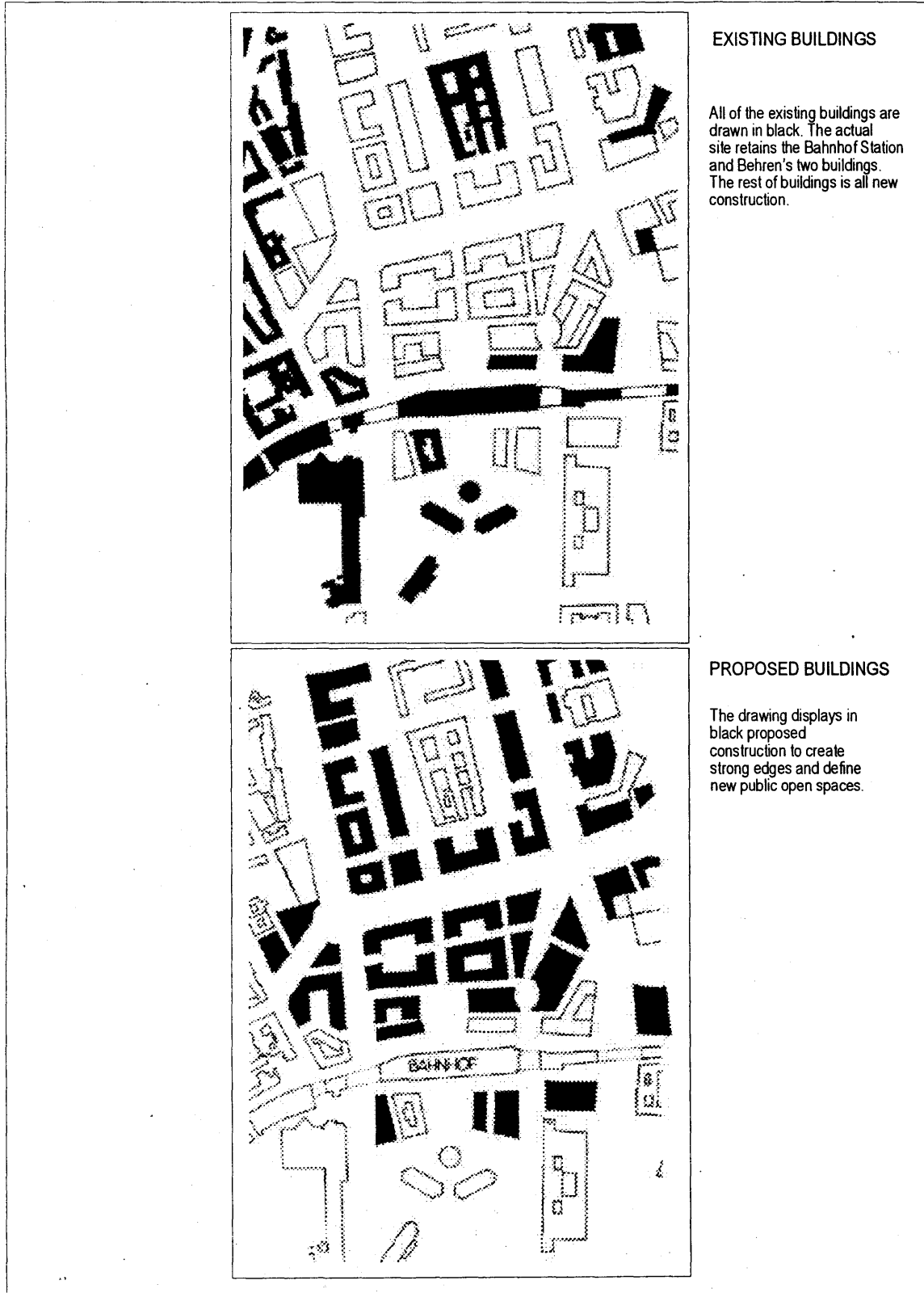


This study clearly shows the grain and texture of the area. The blocks are clearly distinguished, with the streets clearly identifiable. The smaller spaces between the buildings provide for pedestrian movement.



Figure/Ground studies of the new proposal.

CURRENT AND PROPOSED ADDITIONS



EXISTING BUILDINGS

All of the existing buildings are drawn in black. The actual site retains the Bahnhof Station and Behren's two buildings. The rest of buildings is all new construction.

PROPOSED BUILDINGS

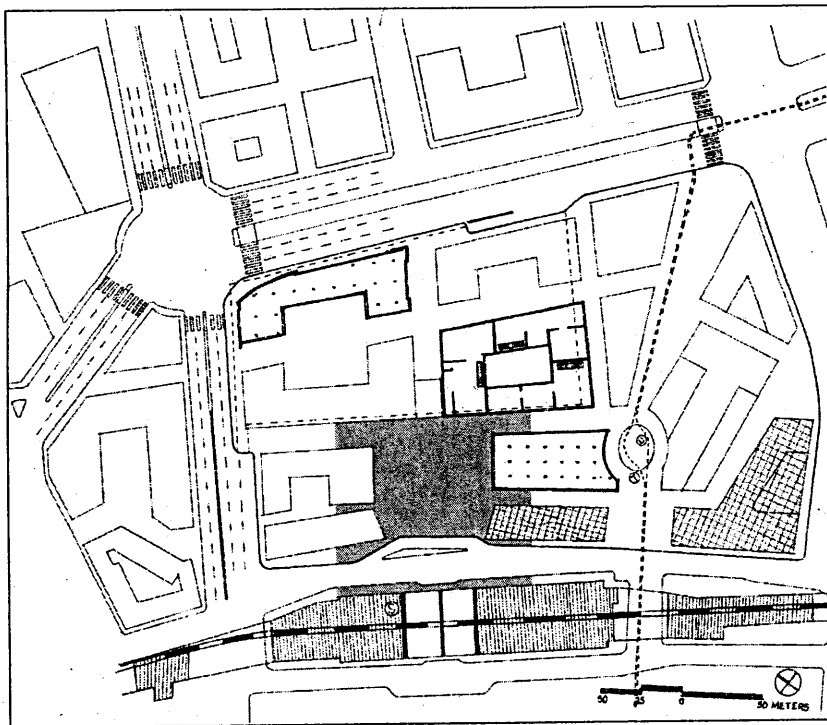
The drawing displays in black proposed construction to create strong edges and define new public open spaces.

Current site and the proposed blocks and building additions.

NEW URBAN PLAZA

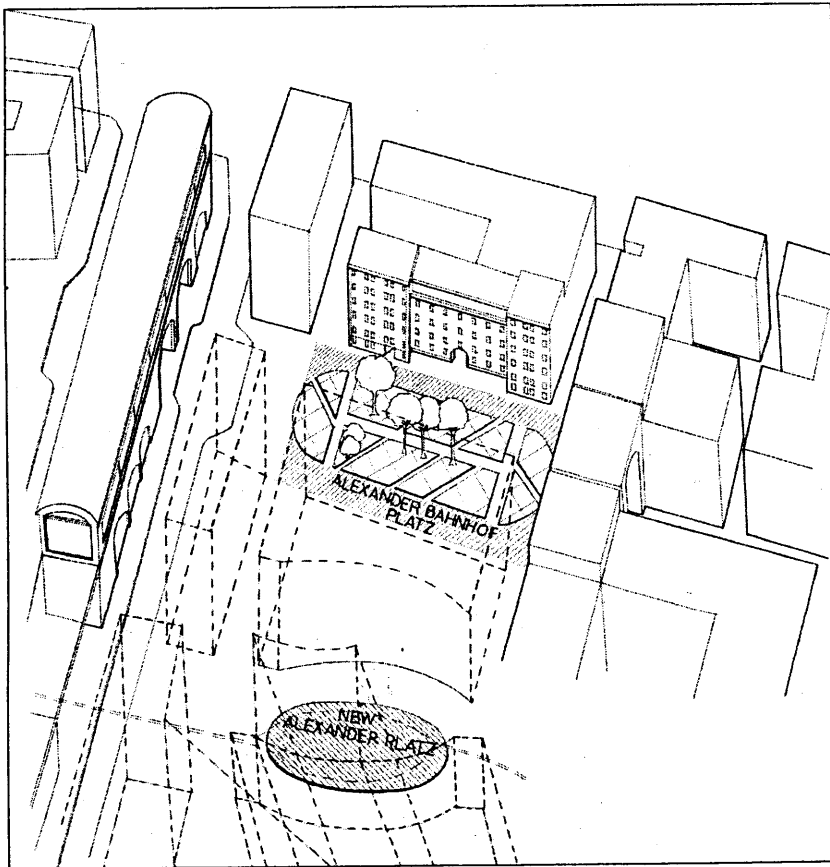
The scale of the Alexander Platz is currently a negative activity generator. Therefore, I concentrate on new volumes and on the component parts of this site. In my new proposal balance is reached between the long, narrow Bahnhof Station and the urban blocks of the site. In creating the plaza a central open space was formed from which all other elements radiate and gain significance from its central position. The masses of the plaza vary in function while they surround and define this open space. The main axis leading from the Bahnhof Station allows for the experience of succession of large and smaller enclosures, bright open courts, and other openings stimulating pedestrian traffic.

An arched entrance standing opposite the railway station marks the main axis of the large urban space leading from the Alexander Bahnhof Station. This raised feature defines the main axial path. The surrounding colonnades of buildings on the east and west sides define and stabilize this space. The passage from the station creates a path that leads into the plaza free of any obstructions. This path leads into the plaza and continues well into the city creating a pedestrian fare. The passage provides a sufficient space for a continuation of the main thoroughfare toward the east. The main axis and open space stands separate, yet is connected to the original Alexander Platz. This way preserves the original Alexander Platz as a permanent feature, a gateway free of vehicular traffic with its representational character preserved.



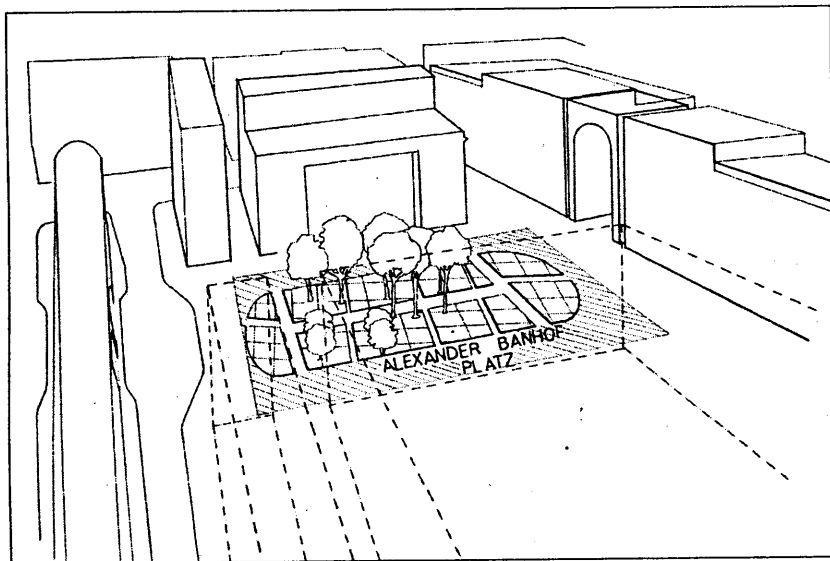
Plan for the new Alexander Platz block. The new square urban plaza is highlighted.

The functional program for the site designates each of the structures to serve a specific purpose. The building adjacent to the Alexander Platz dividing the two main open spaces is designed to function as a market hall. The market structure has been visually accented to relate directly to its function. The placement of such a utilitarian structure in the heart of East Berlin reflects the need for a permanent commercial structure in this area. Unsightly 'temporary' vendor's booths are currently everywhere in evidence, yet they fill a necessary public need. A modern market hall along the Alexander Platz is needed to replace these temporary shacks. The structures directly opposite the market hall are designed as office buildings. Their location is ideal for both the office population and those using the Alexander Bahnhof Station.

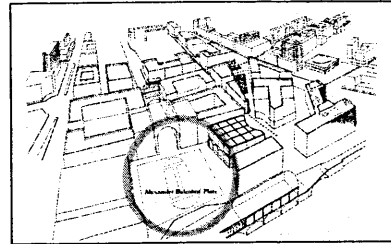


Axial drawing of the new urban plaza in relation to the new oval Alexander Platz.

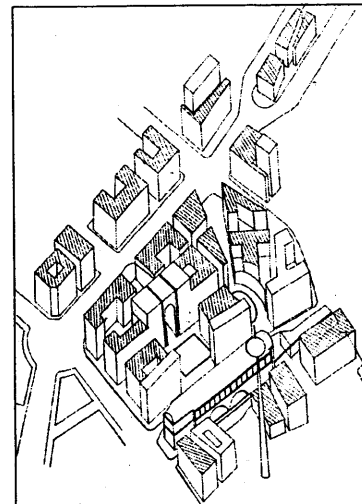
With a series of interconnecting pedestrian avenues the new square plaza provides other secondary gates to its site using the historically reminiscent courtyard block structures. The proposed system is consolidation between areas of public space, commerce, retail, and a small number of residential units. The new site is therefore suitable for a variety of activities rather than what it currently serve. The whole area and the square plaza gain completeness through the presence of surrounding masses that enclose the area on all four sides. The redesigned area with its pedestrian path closely relates to the park, promenades, and other closely located active urban areas.



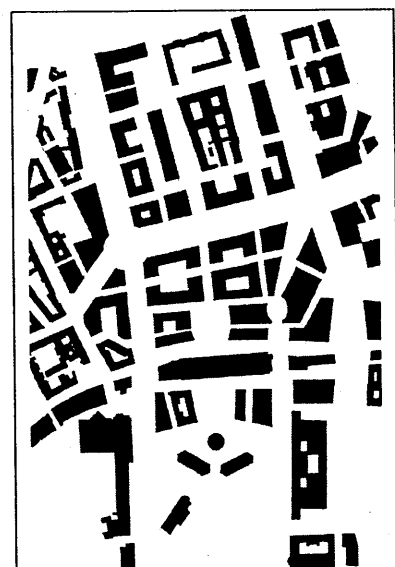
Perspective of the new urban plaza, the Alexander Bahnhof Platz.



A perspective view of the new Alexander Bahnhof Platz, a new urban plaza.

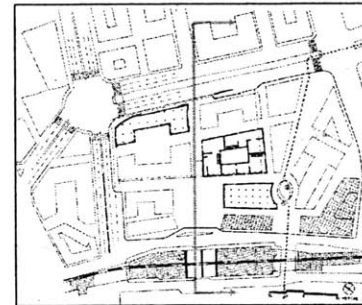
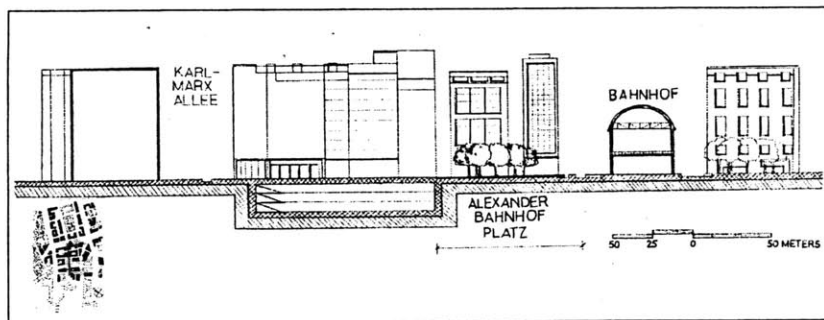
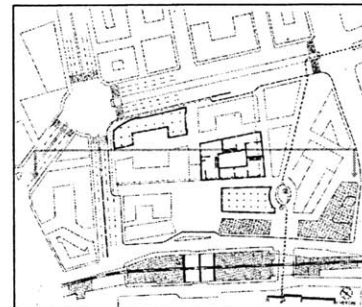
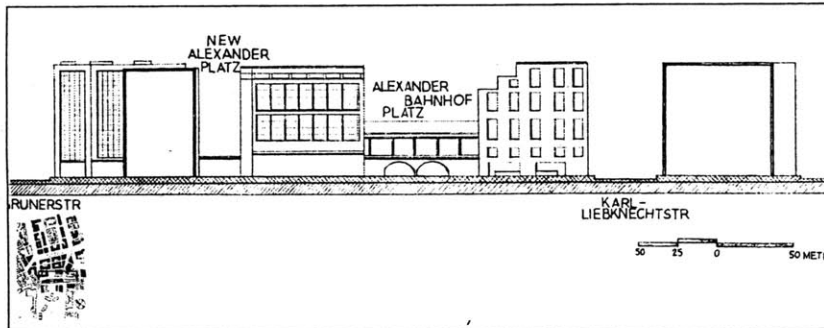
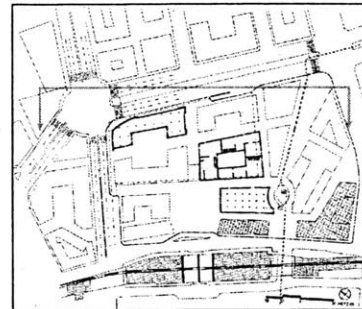
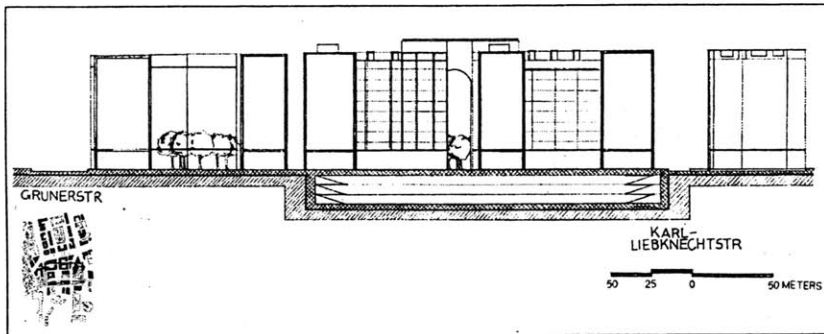


Axonometric view of the Alexander Block and its new urban space.



Figure/Ground study for the new proposal.

The vehicular streets that surround this particular block are wider than necessary, between their generous width provides for smooth flow of vehicular traffic. The main consideration is for the pedestrian access between the old and new city. For that purpose the Bahnhof Station is pierced through and used as a pedestrian passage and extension from one public open space to another. This passage leads from the park to the newly formed square, the Alexander Bahnhof plaza, with the railway station as a direct connecting link. This connection becomes an integral part of the new square with the pedestrian thoroughfare unifying these two major parts of the city.



Sections through the Alexander Platz block.

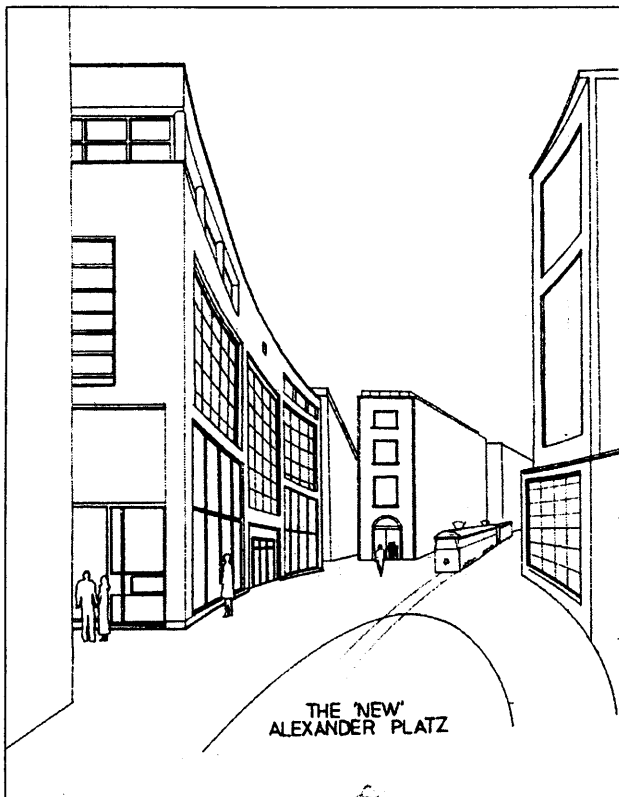
Placement of the section cuts through the new plan

A 'NEW' ALEXANDER PLATZ

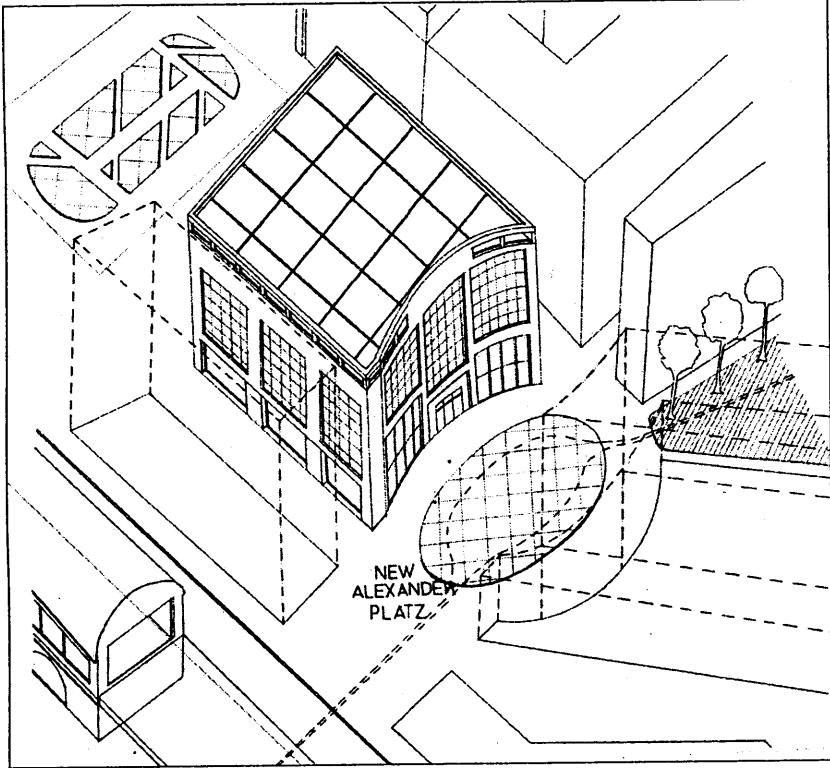
The current Alexander Platz is completely detached from the medieval part of the city. It can be seen as a separate and distinct form not relating to any civic character of surrounding public open spaces. Therefore the new proposal organizes the Platz around the two existing structures of the *Berolinahaus* and the *Alexanderhaus* for a key to the design. These structures define the original gateway to the Alexander Platz.

The site plan indicates my creating of a link with the rest of the city. A simple oval plaza of the Alexander Platz extends itself to a new site and connects to the rest of the city. The communication between the Platz and the new square plaza is enhanced by the use of primary and secondary open spaces. The site plan with the two open spaces turns the Alexander Bahnhof Station into a traditional center for Berliners just outside the original city gates.

In both the site plan and perspective the axis leading from the railway station plays a pivotal role in the organization of the square. The station draws the attention of the public space and gives definition to the Alexander Platz and its block that did not previously exist. The two intersecting pedestrian routes divide this urban space. These routes serve the Alexander Bahnhof and its edges to aid the square plaza with continuing vistas into smaller open spaces of the Alexander Platz.

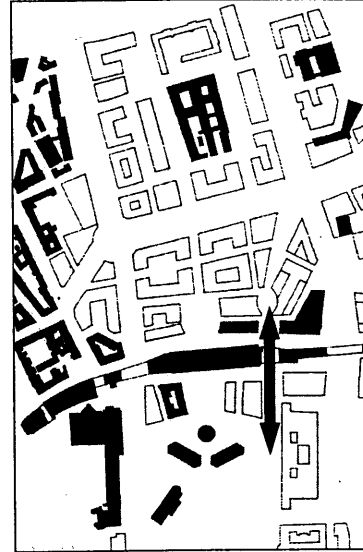


Perspective view of the new Alexander Platz:

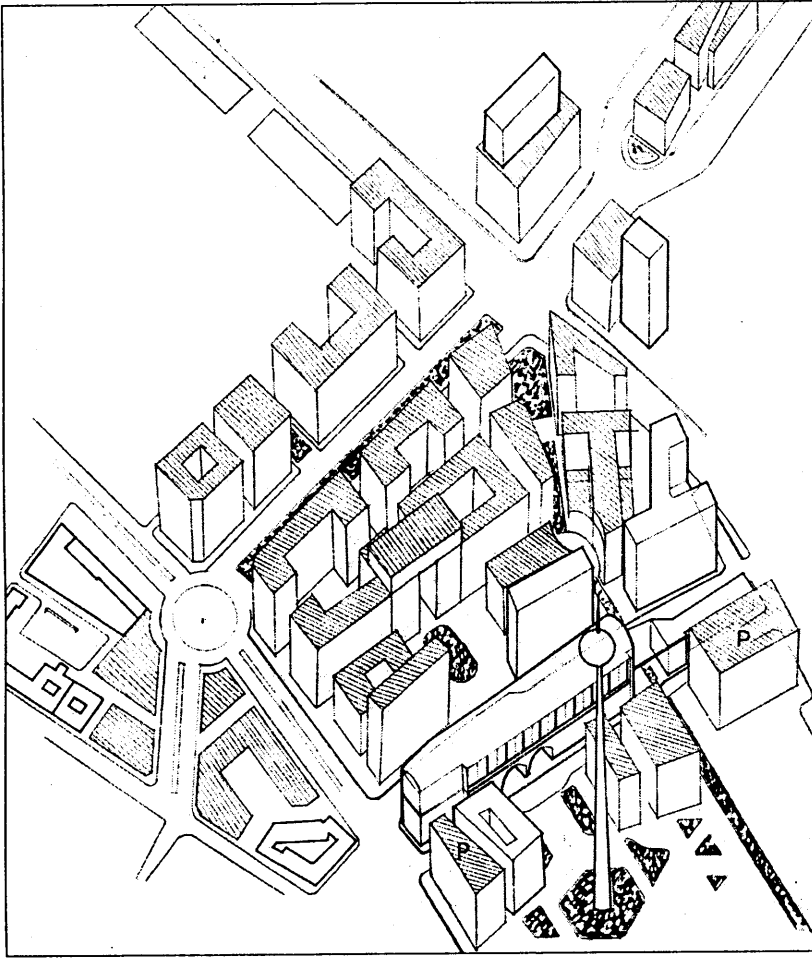


View of the new Alexander Platz.

To control the uniformity of landscape of Alexander Platz, this smaller urban space uses landscaping as a form of definition and embellishment. Deliberately spaced rows of trees outline the edges of the oval *platz*. The intersecting walkways cross this space and connect major buildings and spaces. This allows the manipulation by placement of natural elements, relieve pedestrians of awkward angles. The whole site becomes a controlled visual experience with solid structures defining the edges that surround the two open spaces. The emphasis on landscaping is to provide shade from the elements for pedestrians. The continuous rows of trees are therefore define the oval form of Alexander Platz as well as the extended perimeter of the pathway.



Plan of the new design proposal. The line indicates the pedestrian connection between the Park and new Alexander Platz.

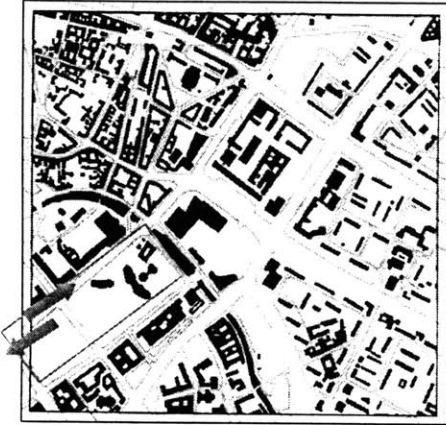


An axonometric view of the new proposal. The green spaces are shaded indicating plants, trees, and greenery.

In the summary of my proposal to improve the Alexander Platz, three principles were used for its design. Firstly, the use of a dual axis schemes, which permitted the visual and architectural coordination between various elements and provided a tightly knit unit. Secondly, integration of the components of varied characters into a whole by interplay of forms, spaces, and axes, creating a comprehensive urban design. Lastly, the design reorganized the needs of the existing site and allowed the new proposal to create a human scale. Therefore both spaces are interrelated to the major planning elements of the city; the extension of the *Unter den Linden* axis, the *Alexander Bahnhof* Station, and the original site of Alexander Platz. This then becomes a plan for urban renewal with the Alexander Platz and its surroundings becoming a place for a public interaction.

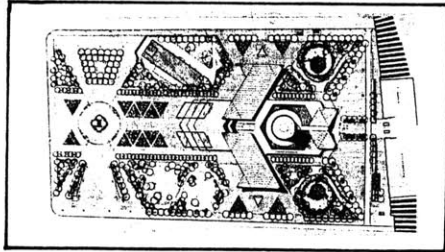
THE PARK

The growth of the office district to the north of the Alexander Platz continues to draw an increasing number of people to the commercial area along the park. The anticipated boundaries of sidewalks and streets are usually not infringed by any public uses. Since the greatest movement of people to various office complexes occurs in the early morning hours and late afternoon at the time when the vehicular traffic is heaviest, there is a fundamental need for a traffic-free pedestrian system within the Alexander Platz area.



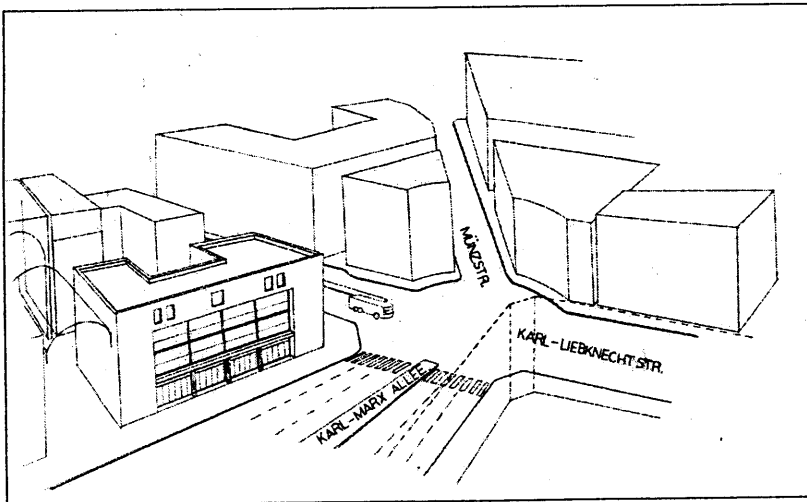
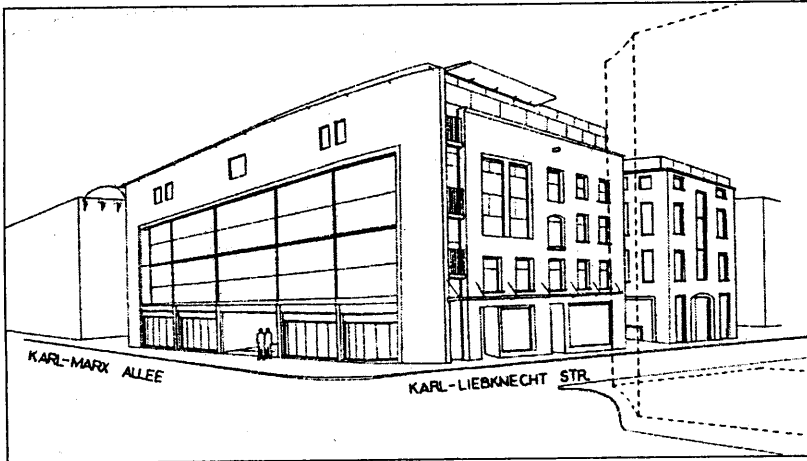
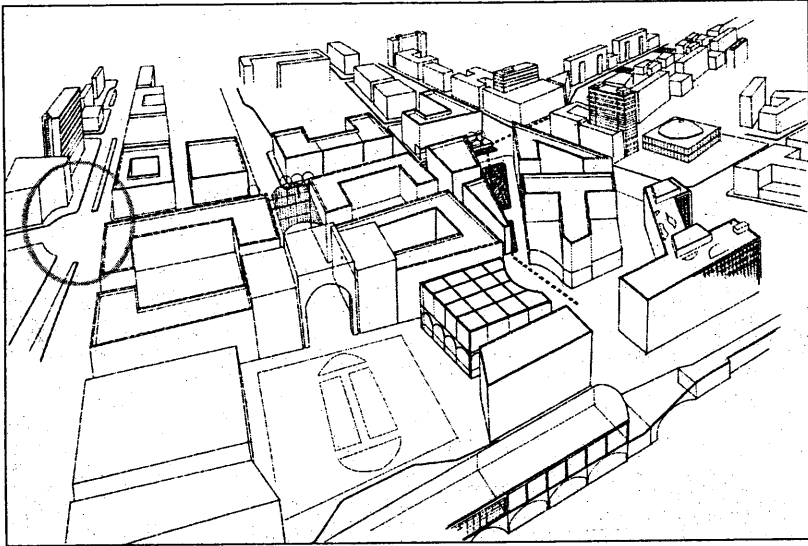
Location of the Park with the Television Tower and the surviving Marien Kirche church⁵.

Currently there appears to be no coordination between the Alexander Platz area and the Park. Since people move from one place to another, this kind of traffic is accommodated in my proposal. The boulevard of *Karl-Liebknecht Strasse* does not provide for any pedestrian traffic among its busiest vehicular arteries. The street has four lanes of traffic and creates a difficult situation for pedestrians wishing to cross the street. The distance between on side and the other is too great to allow pedestrians to cross comfortably during one traffic light sequence leaving pedestrians stranded amidst the busy traffic. During the noon hour, sidewalks are similarly flooded with pedestrian and office traffic along the street. Both groups are in search of a place to have lunch, sit, or rest. The opportunities for an effective open space with conjunction of the new proposal create a need for 'working' public open space.



Current plan of the TV Tower and the surrounding park. Until recently this was the only major open green space for East Berlin. The new proposal connects this major open with Alexander Platz and its plazas via the pedestrian links. From: Trebbi, Giorgio. *La Ricostruzione di una Città Berlino 1945-1975*. 1978.

⁵ The mid-thirteenth century Marien Kirche is best example of a German red-brick Gothic. From *Berlin and Its Culture*, p.8.



Crossing at Karl-Marx Allee and Karl Liebknecht Strasse. Perspective drawings of the indicated area at the top drawing.

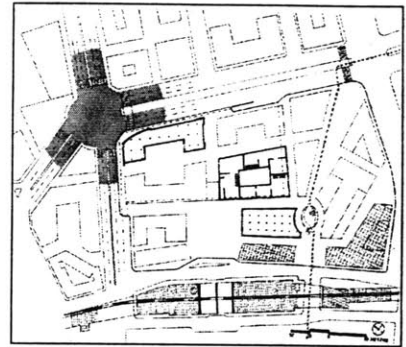


View of the street crossing at Karl-Marx Allee and Karl-Liebkecht Strasse.

Drawings showing the intersection of Karl Liebkecht Strasse and Karl-Marx Allee. This intersection is emphasized and given a circular form to connect it as an extension to Berlin's axis, Unter den Linden.

Services such as roads and expressways contribute strongly to modern urban life, but they have minimal recreational value. Therefore, the Park south of the Bahnhof Station, along with its new open space, is to serve adequately the needs of the urban dweller in the East Berlin center. Public sidewalks tie my proposal to an internal system of plazas, promenades, and courtyards. This redesigned area forms an important focal point in the dense configuration of building masses. The Park accommodates the need for civic gatherings and is currently the only space that is able to perform multiple functions. Therefore, there is a strong need to develop the area to the northeast of the Bahnhof station to connect and function together with the Park and function as a pedestrian plaza.

This space creates a role of a civic image of Berlin and becomes a focal point of activity in the city center. The passage from the Park invites the visitor to travel the same route as the historic Alexander Platz gateway. Once the pedestrian reaches the smaller oval plaza, the space leads further continuing on *Karl-Marx Allee* with the stopping point at the intersection as its termination point.



Plan of the crossing at Karl-Marx Allee, Karl Liebkecht Strasse, and Mutz Strasse.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

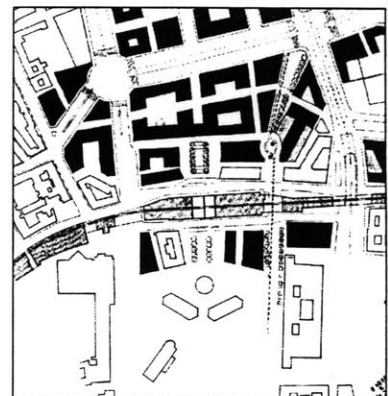
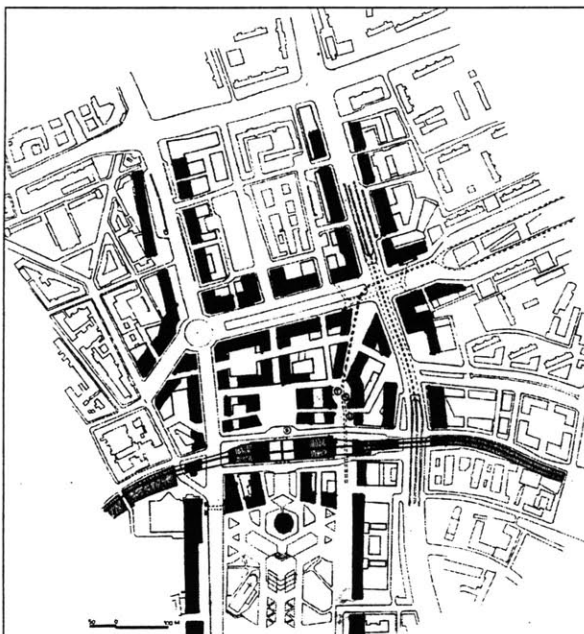
Public transportation is another key issue in redesigning Alexander Platz. With three different interchanges at one central place the Platz serves as a communication node for the city. The railway system is the primary form of transport into the area. Within close proximity lie three different transportation modes: a tramline, two underground subway lines, and the large Alexander Bahn station with the above ground line. This major link and a cross-point cannot be ignored. This site can only benefit from the increased movement and flow of the pedestrian traffic as a constant generator of activity.

This site potentially can become a major node for the city since it already has one of the better transportation connections with rest of the city.

What the Alexander Platz is missing today are the places to visit a place to create a destination point for the neighboring residential areas. This transformation could take the form of an entertainment node, business, or a commercial node. In my ideal solution the proposed site takes on a little from each category, not limiting itself in the activities provided.

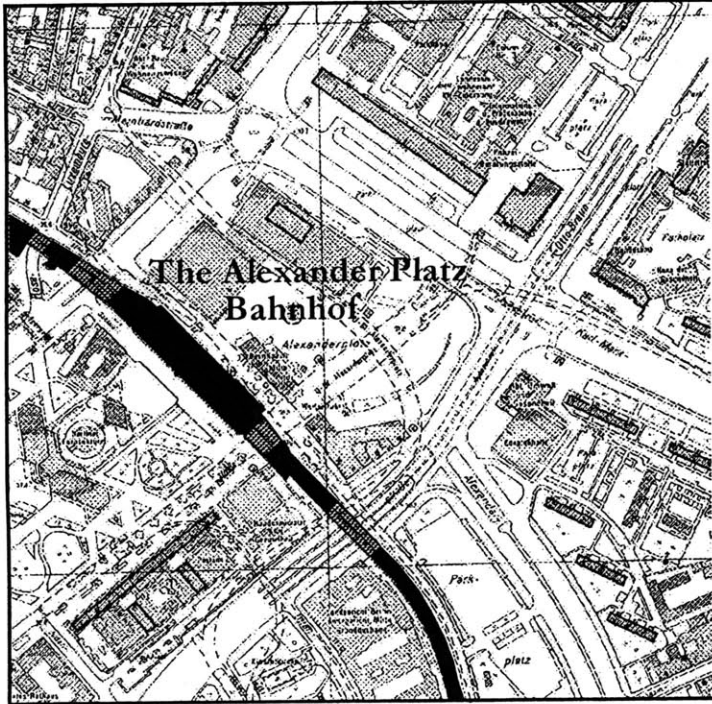
Currently Alexander Platz's commercial component consists of one hotel and a retail store. The overly open area limits pedestrian activities to just passing through. The site serves passengers as a transportation node and enables interchanges only. With my proposal this site retains its role as a transportation link and adds new elements to its already established role.

The primary consideration then is improving the human scale of the site itself, as well as the sequence of activities that play a major role in creating a vibrant open public space.



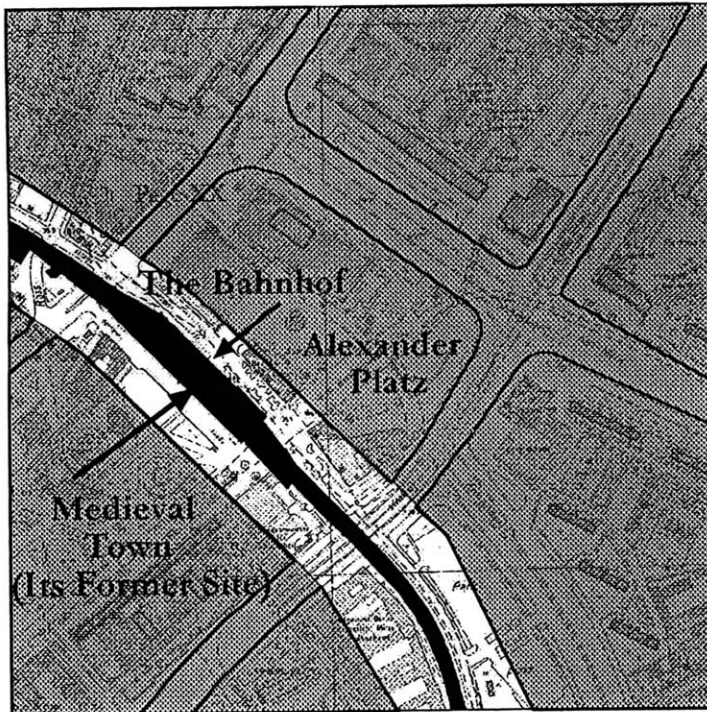
Detailed plans with the Alexander Bahnhof playing important role as a link throughout the city.

THE RAILWAY



The Alexander Platz Bahnhof and Viaducts

Although, the railway is a common feature throughout Berlin, the line and its viaducts act as a barrier and a separation for the Alexander Platz and its surroundings.



The Railway Line

The S-Bahn Line acts as an elevated separation between what used to be the 'Altstadt', the Medieval Town of Berlin-Colln.

The current elevated railway creates a 'strong' separation between the historic and the modern city. However, both sides of the city share this common structure of the Bahnhof and its viaducts.

The elevated rail line replaces almost exactly the Medieval Wall and later Customs Wall.

The Railway System Analysis.

HISTORY OF BERLIN

1237 is the date which is taken as that of the foundation of Berlin as a city. While the year 1237 is the birth date of Berlin, its twin town of Colln on the south bank was first recorded in 1144, almost 100 years earlier. Located on a river Spree, the settlement was divided into three branches and interrupted by sandbanks. This area was, from the earliest times, the crossing point on the Spree before it emptied into the wider river Havel. The Spree was an obstacle to overcome as well as a means of movement by water. Although Berlin's geographical situation had some minor advantages, its site was not particularly suitable for building purposes. (Figure 2.1) The sandy soil mixed with peat formed a particularly treacherous foundation.¹ The twin town of Berlin-Colln was neither the best situated nor "advantage ridden" site that would explain its growth to capital status. Therefore, we must look at other causes that the natural environment provided for a sufficient explanation of the rise of this city to world status.

GEOGRAPHICAL SITUATION

The city of Berlin has rarely been called 'centrally placed' with regard to the expanding German territory and Prussia. Berlin's relative isolation from other major centers of population and stable economic activity propelled it to grow by a simple lack of natural obstacles². The city started to establish external linkages without great difficulty. The site was never on any major routes yet, as it began to assume importance as a place of residence, the city rulers altered major trade routes and therefore increased Berlin's economic status.

¹ Problems with the foundation of buildings due to soil conditions continued well throughout Berlin's history.
² Similarly, the Prussian rail system and the national autobahn system of the 1900's had their origin based on the lack of natural obstacles. The lack of natural obstacles would allow Berlin's further major expansions throughout history.

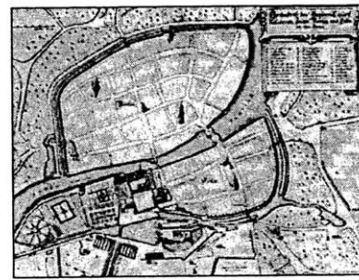


Figure 2.1- A map of the medieval twin town in 1653. Visible on the map is the Palace Grounds and formation of the axis of the Unter den Linden to the southwest.
 From: Volk. Berlin, Hauptstadt der DDR.

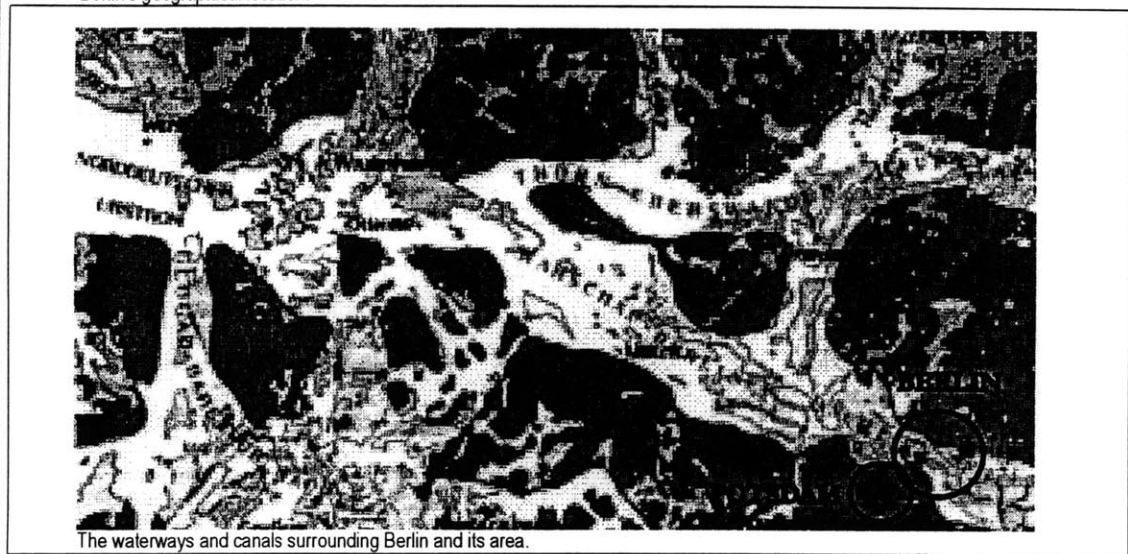


Plan of the twin town of Berlin-Colln showing the layout in 1648. From: Hauptstadt Berlin.

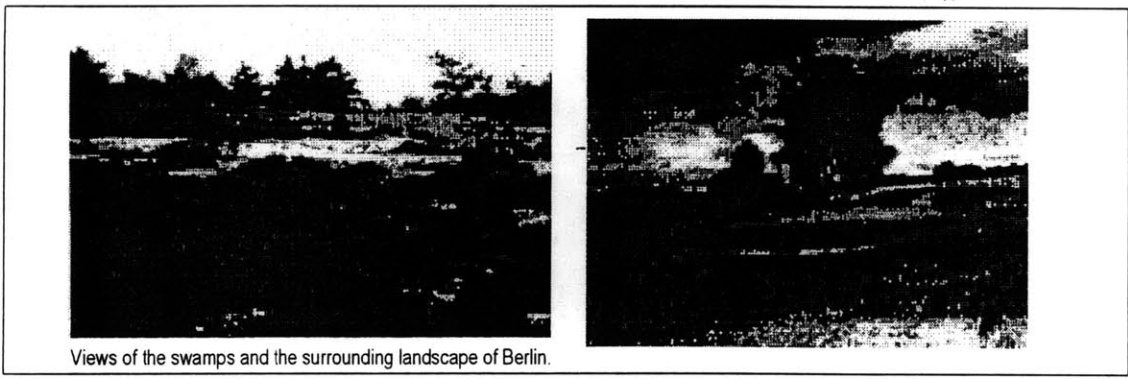
GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION OF BERLIN



Berlin's geographical location.



The waterways and canals surrounding Berlin and its area.

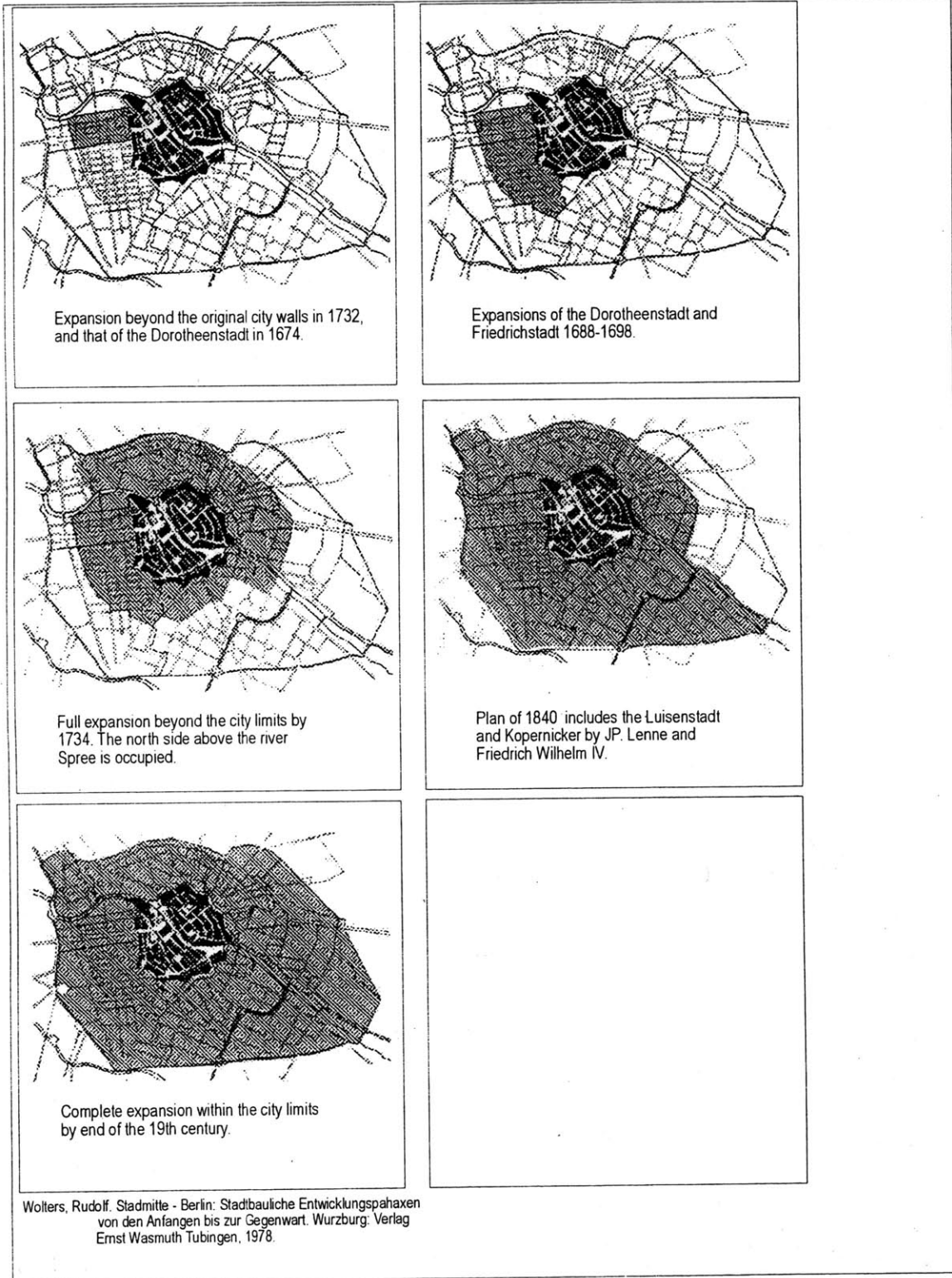


Views of the swamps and the surrounding landscape of Berlin.

From: Wolters, Rudolf. *Stadtmitt Berlin*. Würzburg: Verlag Ernst Wasmugh Tubingen, 1978.

Geographical Location of Germany and Berlin.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CITY



Historical Development of Berlin.

Over time, Berlin-Colln became essentially a planned central market settlement for both Germans and Slavs. Throughout the period of the 14th century, with the wars between the German fighting states, Berlin was able to increase its influence as a city-state and establish self-government. Berlin and Colln increased their links for defensive purposes, forming a garrison town. A massive star-shaped fortress formation was constructed in 1658 to enclose Berlin-Colln. With that an important route was established from the west gate as early as 1573. Laid out formally in 1650's, it became a major east-west route axis for orienting future expansions.³ (Figure 2.4)

RISE TO A PRINCELY CAPITAL

Entering a new career with the settlement of the Prussian electoral court, Berlin established itself as a *Residenzstadt*. That is, it was able to raise itself above all the other 'better' geographically situated cities as a result of the linkage to the House of Hohenzollern and its fortunes. The transformation of Berlin into a princely capital meant equally a transformation in the economic, social, and cultural structure of the town. The city now was dominated by officials who equaled the demands for goods and services of the court, as well as the army that stimulated the growth of manufacturing. The onset of more immediate trade within Berlin increased the number of inhabitants to 12,000 at the end of the 16th century.

By this time the Hohenzollerns had established their initial palace complex, which was of a fundamental importance for the development of Berlin in the years to come. In the period of 1658-83, Frederick-William surrounded the city by a belt of fortifications. This belt better reflected the needs of the age of artillery than the previous medieval wall. With the constant presence of the standing army, the military requirement further stimulated manufacturing growth, as well as a rapid increase of population. By 1710, Berlin had increased from 12,000 to 61,000 inhabitants. (Table 2.1)

DATE	NUMBER OF INHABITANTS
1450	6,000
16 th c.	12,000
1710	61,000
1786	150,000
1871	4.1 million
1913	6.5 million
1980	3 million

Table 2.1- Population growth for central Berlin⁴.



Figure 2.4- Map of fortified Berlin from 1733. The military fortifications sheltering the city from the fighting city-states are clearly displayed in form of a star. From: Wolters, Rudolf. *Stastmitte Berlin*.

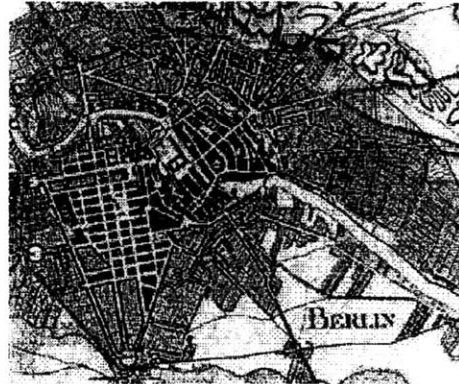
³ The axis described above became the future *Unter den Linden*.

⁴ For further information look at Elkins, *Structure of Divided City*.

CITY EXPANSIONS



Residential expansion 1737, with the original Medieval town and its fortifications.



1802. Clearly defined open spaces edge the new expansion.



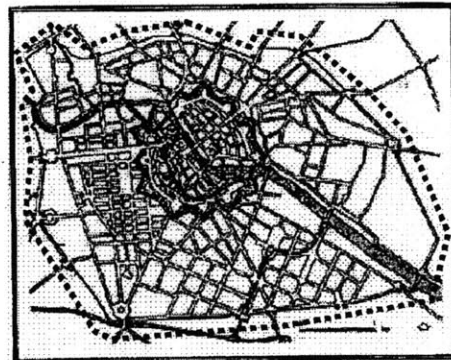
Partly developed district of Friedrichstadt with most of the area still undeveloped.



Streets of the new expansion.

Berlin's first planned urban expansions. Berlin takes form of a Baroque two-dimensional plan. The three open spaces function as gates to the city.

From:
 Demps, Laurenz. *Der Pariser Platz*, 1995.
 Pundt, Penate. *Das Café Bauer in Berlin*, 1994
 Burg, Annegret. *Neue Berlinische Architektur. Eine Debatte*, 1994.



Urban expansion from the 17th to 19th century. The new feature is the Customs Wall.

Another reason for the growth of Berlin and its population was provided by immigration. The Calvinist religious refugees, the Huguenots from France of Louis XIV added to the mostly self-governing community in Berlin. The French church, the *Französischer Dom*, was established on the *Platz der Akademie*.⁵ It stands today and reflects the cultural and economic importance of the Huguenots.

The general increase of the court officials, military and Berlin's population led to the adding of new quarters to the city. Along the axis of the *Unter den Linden* to the west, these new additions initially took the form of 'new towns' laid out according to the plans of the ruler.⁶ The succeeding elector, Frederik III assumed the royal title of king thus turning Berlin into the capital of the new Prussian monarchy.⁷

The urban extensions continued with many important buildings and churches throughout Berlin, such as the Berlin Schloss. In 1709, Berlin-Cölln and the 'new towns' on the *Unter den Linden* were administratively united to form the Capital City. Under Frederik-William I, the 'soldier-king', the palace grounds, the *Lustgarten*,⁸ were officially turned into a parade ground, and in 1735, an outer wall further surrounded the whole city.⁹ This time the function of the wall was not for defensive purposes, but rather for the customs on goods entering the city.

The construction of the new customs wall established a new boundary for the city. Nering's Friedrichstadt plan was expanded to establish three new public spaces along the boundary of the 'line': the *Quarre*, the *Rondell*, and the *Oktogon*. These were identifiable by their contrasting geometry, and the construction of monumental squares.¹⁰

⁵ The *Platz der Akademie* with both churches, the *Französischer Dom* and *Neue Kirche* later became known as the *Gendarmenmarkt*.

⁶ The 'new towns' that were laid out were the town of *Doroteenstadt* and *Friedrichstadt* in 1710. The *Doroteenstadt* was first laid out in 1674; the *Friedrichstadt* in 1688; however, both were laid out by Johann Arnold Nering.

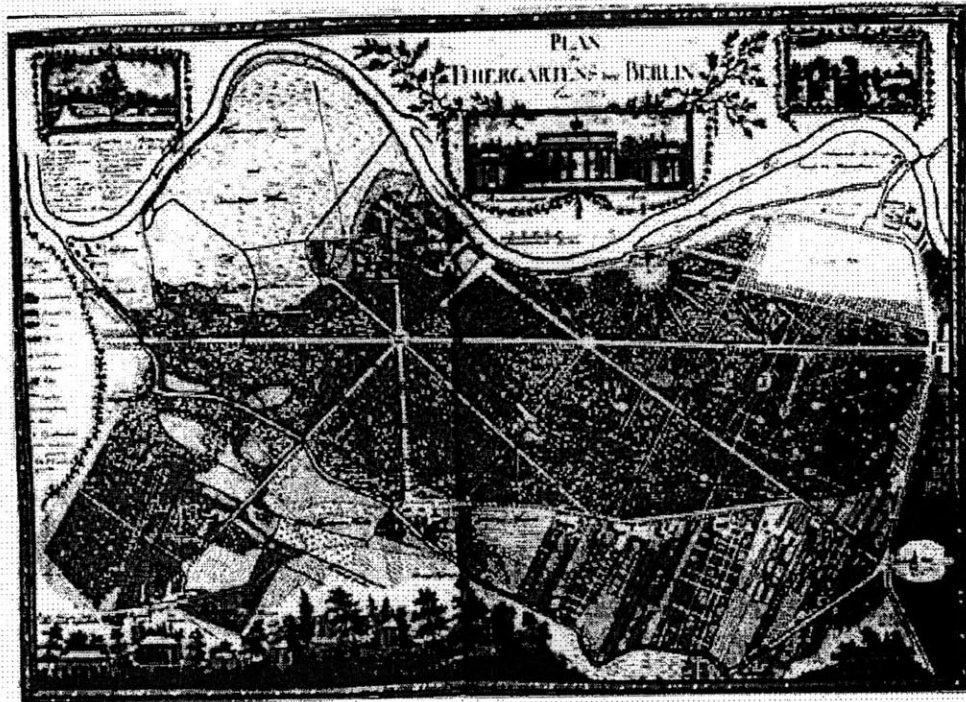
⁷ The German monarchy and Berlin's role as the German Capital was maintained well into the beginning of W.W.I.

⁸ One cannot say with certainty when the *Linden Allee* became known as the *Unter den Linden*, but the later term was commonly used by the beginning of the 19th century.

⁹ The new 'outer wall' enclosed enough open land to meet the building needs well into the 19th century.

¹⁰ The entry gates on the western side of the city were provided with formal squares or circuses. The *Rondell*, later the *Mehringplatz*, the *Oktogon* later the *Leipziger Platz* at the Postdam Gate, and the *Quarre*, later the *Pariser Platz* at the Brandenburg Gate are still the best and the most visible examples of the Baroque layout for expansions in Berlin.

TIERGARTEN DEVELOPMENT



Design plans for Tiergarten by J.P. Lenne. Marked to the right is the new customs wall with planned axes and open spaces.

From: Wolters, Rudolf. *Stadtmittel - Berlin: Stadtbauliche Entwicklungspahaxe von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart.* Würzburg: Verlag Ernst Wasmuth Tübingen, 1978.

Plan of the "Der Tiergarten bei Berlin" by J.P. Lenne, 1840.

From the *Rondell*¹¹ in the south radiated three major streets. The Friedrichstrasse formed a central north-south axis; the Wilhelmstrasse on the West Side and the Lindenstrasse on the East Side eventually became more closely related with the Baroque principles in their layout. (Hermann: 1962) The Renaissance period in Berlin resulted in the centralized autocratic powers achieving the grand scale of Baroque streets and squares as personal aggrandizement, replacing a reflection of the collective issues and needs of the city. With these effects the Baroque impact on the city had an immediate and overwhelming impression. As the Renaissance aspired to a spatial organization of its structures requiring a self-contained balance, the Baroque urbanism strived to achieve two-dimensional layout.

The reign of the 'philosopher-soldier' Frederick II (1740-1786) allowed a new freedom of religion and philosophical speculation. The advancement of Berlin was reflected in its administrative efficiency. The city was ornamented with new public buildings. This was followed by building proper barracks for the substantial garrison, which replaced the unpopular system of quartering the military in private houses. By 1786, the population of Berlin had increased to a similar level of Amsterdam, Rome, and Vienna and was exceeded only by London and Paris. (Table 2.2) Its peaceful, artistic, and intellectual life propelled Berlin into a period of enlightenment. However, Prussia's renewed entry into a war with Napoleon ended in defeat with the French residing in Berlin's Palace. With the *Quadria* a statue removed from the Brandenburg Gate, the city settled into a two-year occupation. After the defeat of Napoleon Prussia's fortune began to rise once again. From the mid-nineteenth century, an attempt was made to plan the city and its expansions. However, by the time this work was completed, Berlin had entered the railway-age and the construction of the railway stations made most of the plan redundant.

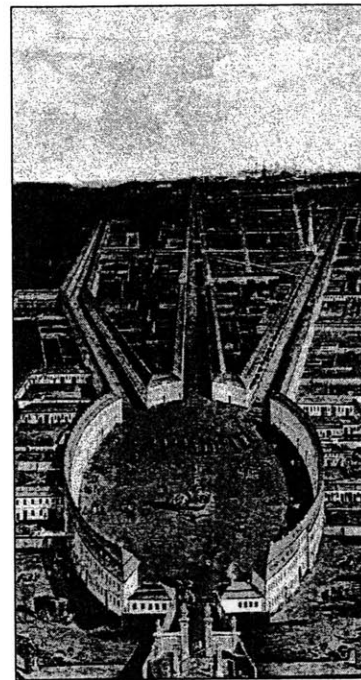
Date	Berlin	Date	Paris
1800	170,000	1801	550,000
1850	500,000	1851	1,000,000
1877	1,000,000	1861	1,700,000
1900	2,000,000	1872	1,850,000
1920	4,000,000		

Table 2.2- Population size in various cities¹².

1809 marks the beginning of the revival of Prussia, and *Humboldt's University* was founded in 1810. The university not only created the

¹¹ It is important to note that the planning and the execution of *Rondell* antedated that of Circus in Bath, through the encircling row houses were not completed. Its conception also preceded the theoretical formulation of such planning elements in the writings by Laugier and La Font de Saint-Yenne. For further information see Wolfgang Hermann. *Laugier and 18th century French Theory*. (London: 1962).

¹² From Burg, Annegret, *Neue Berlinische Architektur*.



Nering, a young military architect created many of the Rondell's later encircling facades. Since a considerable number of the military garrison was quartered in the upper floors of private residences, the uniform attic spaces within the steep pitched roofs became a familiar feature of these houses.

Painting of the Mehring Platz from 1730 surrounded by a wall of residential construction. The originally served as a gate to the city. From: Demps, *Der Gensd'armen-Markt*.



"Plan de la Ville de Berlin" from *Neue Berlinische Architektur* showing three major open spaces to the west of the original twin-town.

intellectual center for Berlin's life, but also established a reputation of intellectual and cultural life in the city. This further increased the significance of the Capital City. Although the monarchy still firmly controlled the city, this was also the period of K.F. Schinkel who gave the area of the *Unter den Linden* its final form and of P.J. Lenne who laid out the *Tiergarten*.¹³ As Prussia grew, Berlin was propelled to both political and economic dominance. The removal of the customs wall and barriers was a direct benefit to Berlin. The city was able to exploit its relatively central location¹⁴ in a state acting as a trade intermediary between the agricultural east and the economically more developed west.

¹³ P.J. Lenne (1789—1866) was the Director-General of the Royal Gardens in Berlin. He enlarged and formed the *Tiergarten* from 1833-1839, thus creating one of the first public city parks in Europe.

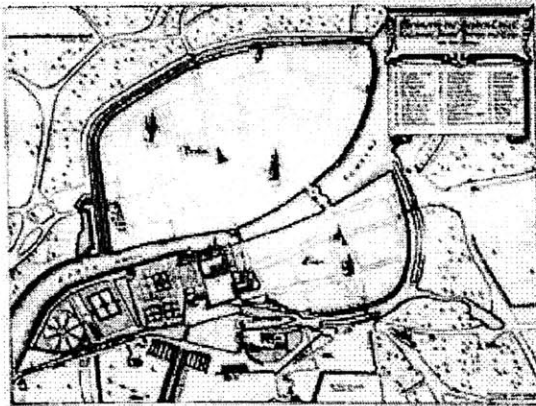
¹⁴ Berlin's relatively central location is referred to as one within the Prussian territory.

¹⁵ Most of Berlin's railway terminals fell victim during the W.W.II destruction.

¹⁶ The oversaturation of Berlin averaged about 72 people per building plot.

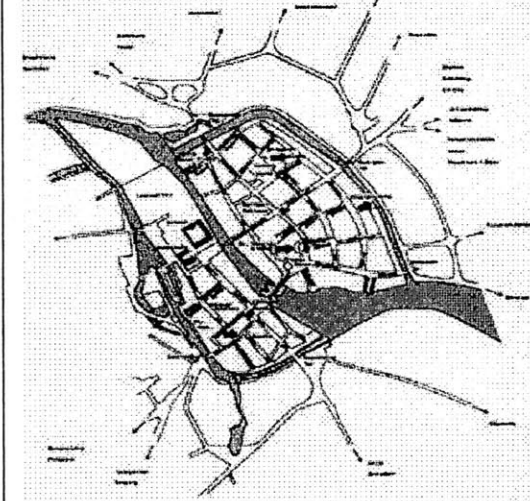
¹⁷ The *Bauakademie* and the *Gewerbeakademie* (1821) were combined in 1871 to form the modern *Technische Universität*.

HISTORICAL MAPS

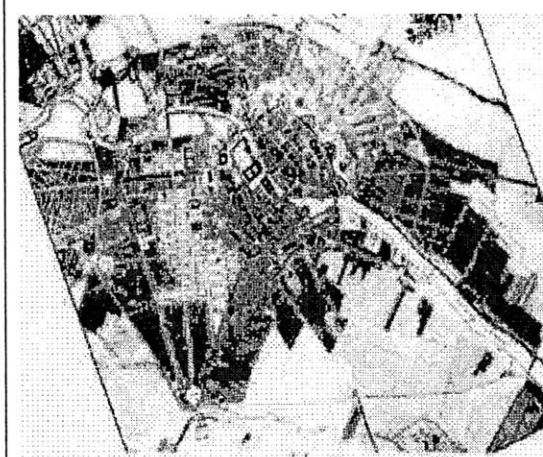


Plan of Berlin from 1650.

Left: 1652 Berlin. Plan with streets and historical places by Memhard.



1688 Berlin. Plan by Schleuen/Schultz.



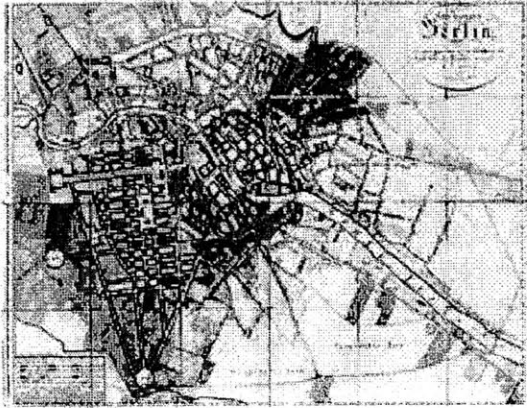
Plan of 1748 Berlin by Schmettau.

The development of the original twin-towns of Berlin-Cölln. By 1688, the Medieval town was surrounded by a military fortifications. Next plan shows the urban expansions of Berlin with the addition of Dorotheenstadt and Friedrichstadt districts.

From: Anst, Bruno, and Ulrich Stark. *Die Städtebauliche Entwicklung Berlin seit 1650 in Karten*. Berlin: Senatsverwaltung für Stadtentwicklung und Umweltschutz, 1992.

Development of Berlin.

HISTORICAL MAPS



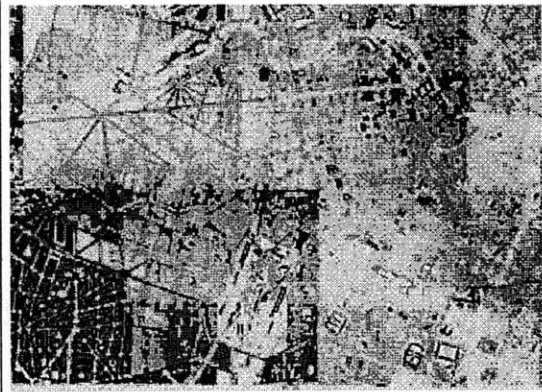
Plan of 1804 Berlin by Seller.



Plan of Berlin from 1856 by Sinek.



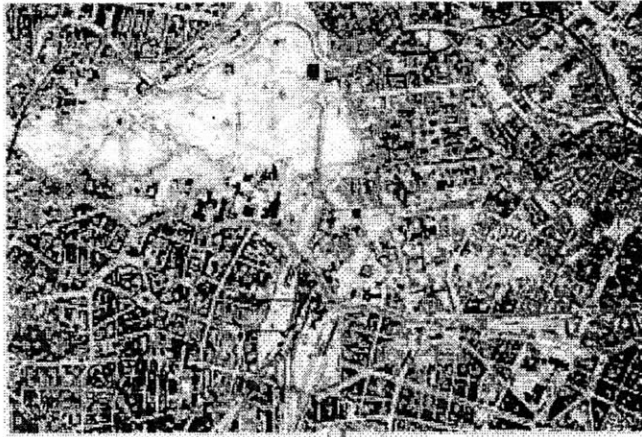
Plan of Berlin 1879 by Sinek.



Berlin Plan from 1910. Um 1910 Topographische Karten. Ibid.

The top two plans show development of the new districts and the later expansions beyond the new customs wall surrounding the Tiergarten. Bottom: Maps show the gridwork of streets expanding into Charlottenburg and development of the secondary urban center at Kurfurstendamm.

HISTORICAL MAPS



Plan of Berlin, 1990. From *Um Topographische Karten*.
Ibid.

INFLUENCE OF THE RENAISSANCE

The Renaissance was marked with the increase in the European population. Through the 15th to 18th centuries the military origins or results of an autocratic rule marked the German cities. Commercially oriented urban settlements were not in demand until the later arrival of industry as a significant generator of an urban settlement. The fortification system, creation of public spaces, and the layout of new towns can easily distinguish the German Renaissance urban planning. Within these were three main design concepts can be distinguished: the layout of the primary straight street, the gridiron based districts, and layout of public spaces in the form of squares or piazzas. Most of these components made up the disjointed elements of Berlin with their compositions. (Morris: 159)

With the classical sense of balance and regularity the emphasis was placed on the horizontal, rules of proportion governing the plans, and a detailed elevation in design of buildings that did not extend into the urban space.

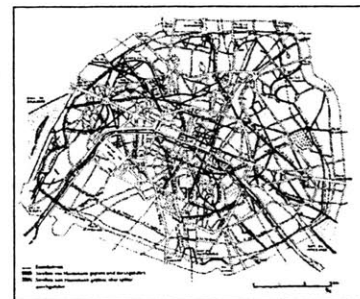
THE STRAIGHT STREET, THE GRIDIRON,
AND THE PUBLIC SPACE

The primary straight street as a determinant of growth for Berlin is the *Unter den Linden Straße*. As a generative element, *Unter den Linden* is remarkably similar to the ideas of the *Champs Elysees*¹. Both of these are clear examples of routes originating and leading west from the palaces. (Morris: 161)

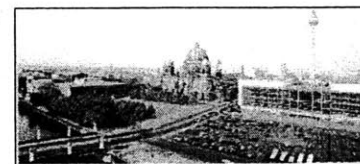
¹ In addition to Paris and Berlin, London is the third capital city whose upper class and their residential districts were located to the west of the city.



Paris streets in 1848...

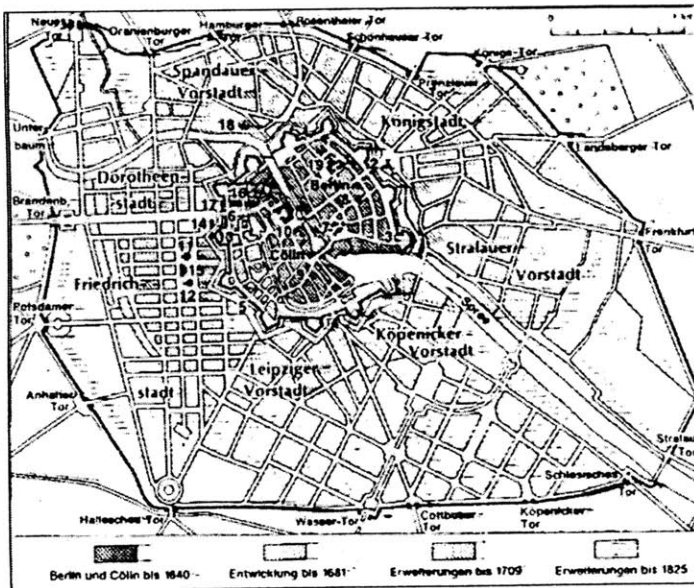


... and streets after Hausmann's reconstruction, 1870. From: Walters, *Stadtmittelpunkt Berlin*.



View of the Unter den Linden axis leading from the Brandenburg Gate to the Alexander Platz. View of the Lustgarten area with the Old Museum and Berlin Cathedral, Schlossplatz with the Palace of the Republic. From: Volk, Waltraud. *Berlin, Hauptstadt der DDR*.

The gridiron layout is probably the oldest urban form determinant for adding new residential districts onto existing urban areas. Used mainly in combination with a primary street system, the layout of the new urban areas produced a fair equality in the land subdivision and the Renaissance ideal of aesthetic uniformity.² Districts of *Dorotheenstadt* (1674) and the *Friedrichstadt* (1688) are the best examples of areas bounded by primary routes and divided into three main sections by their inclusion. (Morris: 162) However Berlin, as compared with other cities like London's Mayfair district or Edinburgh, has much less intensely planned districts even with its gridiron layout.



Map of Berlin showing evolution of the city up to 1825. West Side displays new urban forms of the open spaces throughout the new district of Friedrichstadt. From: Kirchhoff, Gerhard. *Views of Berlin*.

The Renaissance urbanism added the concept of enclosed space as a traffic space. The open square had never disappeared, even throughout the Middle Ages. However, the open space was never quite used for entirely residential purposes. In the 17th century, it reappeared with a new urban purpose of bringing together, in a full view, groups of residences.

These new formally designed urban spaces in Berlin were now located at the urban perimeter. The west side of Berlin was now occupied by the *Potsdamer/Leipziger Platz*, the *Pariser Platz*, and the *Belle Alliance Platz* (today the *Mehring Platz*) and was designed for the purpose of military parades. These open spaces were the result of the autocratic, centralized power of the *Hobenzollerns* monarchy, which transformed Berlin into an appropriate backdrop to display the grandeur of military activities. (Morris: 163)

² These Renaissance urban planning ideals produced more human conditions which only later during the Industrial Revolution lacked standards in its housing affecting the minimal health standards of air and light.

SCHINKEL'S BERLIN

With the tradition of Schinkel in Berlin we must evaluate to what extent he was able to create an urban environment for the center of the city. As a protege of a number of distinguished men in Prussia, Karl Friedrich Schinkel (1781-1841) ranks among the best-known neo-Classical architects of 19th century Prussia.⁴

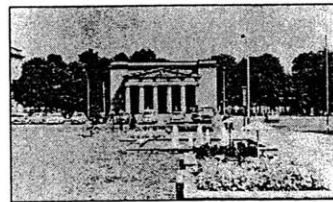
His designs were representative of most progressive ideas of the time; therefore, it is important to examine his work and ideas as they will help establish a reference for the later proposal.

Although, it was the capital of Prussia, Berlin it did not possess the "cosmopolitan air of Paris nor the size and worldliness of London." (Pundt: 4) Berlin's importance came from being a garrison town with emphasis on military activities. The substantial fortifications, such as those in Berlin, were an essential part of the European urban structures well into the end of 18th century.

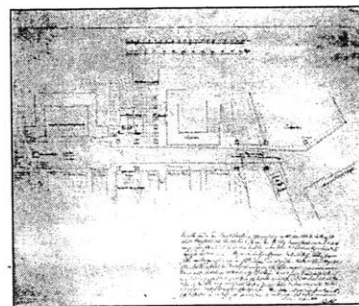
Thus, at the beginning of the 19th century, the central section of Berlin was essentially a loose collection of impressive, but unrelated buildings and spaces. The beginning of 19th century marked a new move for embellishment of Berlin and the course of Schinkel's career inserted order and harmony into the central area of the city. Where the existing components were isolated, Schinkel completed rather than originated urban settings.

"To be an architect means to be a man who ennobles all human conditions. Within his sphere of creative effort he must embrace all branches of the fine arts. He fuses sculpture, painting and architecture into a single expression of art, according to the demands of man's moral and rational life."

F.K. Schinkel³



South façade of the Neue Wache after restoration, 1816-1818.



The Neue Wache site plan with the original proposal and the new location for the guardhouse. From Mackowsky.

³ Mackowsky, Hans. *Karl Friedrich Schinkel*, 1994.

⁴ Unlike K.F. Schinkel, the royal architects and surveyors were traditionally drawn from the ranks of the military. Gilly, before Schinkel, was the first civilian architect to work for Prussia's royalty. However, Schinkel's position was more related to that of the royal architect in France with the king as a chief patron and dispenser of funds for major projects.

During the years of peace, Schinkel grew under the apprenticeship of great masters and liberal kings. Friedrich Wilhelm III (1797-1840) allowed Berlin to turn away from its militaristic roots and pursue more intellectual and artistic ambitions.

Occupied with a problem of environmental design and the emphasis on construction, Schinkel was educated on the principles of practicality, clarity, and the simplicity of form.⁵ However, as with most of his designs, a building became an organism that was meant to be seen in the total context of its surroundings. Both the written documentation and graphics of his sites communicate Schinkel's concern for the nature of the actual situation.⁶

The characteristic trait in Schinkel's attitude was the acute recognition of the existing physical conditions as a prerequisite for the implementation of his own program. Always conscious of the realistic nature of his work, he prided himself on the study of the existing conditions of the site. The strategic importance of the site would allow Schinkel to transform the design so that it became a part of the city as well as the nucleus of attention. With the requirements of his work, he worked on the improvement of a specific situation and the environmental control of a significant part of the city. Implicit in Schinkel's work is the notion that "...the city, ... can be viewed, encompassed, comprehended, and if need be modified." (Pundt: 82) Therefore, he tried to manipulate the forms of his buildings in order to create environments conducive to the events of the daily life and their formal and spatial interrelationships. Schinkel realized that as an architect organizing the physical environment he must not be restricted to a single building or space; rather, a harmony would have to influence the whole. (Pundt: 105)

NEUE WACHE (1816-1818)

To fully appreciate Schinkel's influence on Berlin, we must look in closer detail at some of his work. Three of his projects represent the relationship that best fits this project's parameters: the concern for the integration into the environment and the representational purpose for his designs.

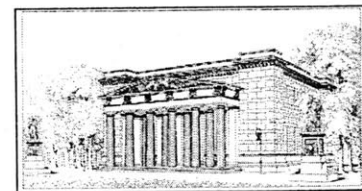
From the moment the victorious Napoleon entered Berlin in 1806, there was no building activity in the city. However, with the conclusion of the war, Schinkel's career started with the design of the *New Royal Guardhouse*. His concern went beyond the narrow limits of

⁵ Friedrich Gilly was said to be the most influential of Schinkel's mentors.

⁶ It should be noted that Schinkel was also an excellent painter, which he utilized during the War with Napoleon. The combination of a painter-architect was apparently a rare phenomenon at the time.



The Neue Wache first design. View from the south in a park-like setting. Ibid.



The Neue Wache, the Royal GuardHouse. Schinkel's design perspective. Ibid.

the individual building; therefore, started a career that encompasses the design of surrounding structures and their significant spaces. With the *Neue Wache*, Schinkel recognized the site's power on the city's most dominant axis, *Unter den Linden*. The goal was then to straighten the axis' interrupted vista. The distinguished feature of the *Neue Wache* plan is the simple form as a freestanding sculpture to accentuate and define the larger urban segment.

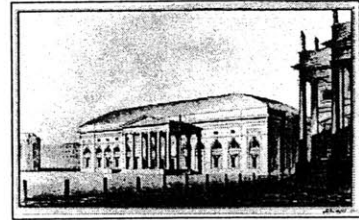
Although, Schinkel's purpose for this project was to eliminate the unrelated open spaces and structures affecting the form of the city, the King had rewritten the original plans. However, even with this simple plan for the *Guardhouse*, Schinkel presents a concern for totality of the space instead of a single, serene, and isolated monument. As an alternative, he tested the visual effects in the context of larger environment. The total vista of the newly open *Unter den Linden* street carries on as a continuum of a space rather than a separate parcel of plazas for each individual building.

SCHAUSPIELHAUS (1818-1821)

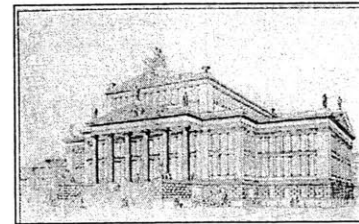
To fully appreciate Schinkel's concern with the total environment, we must look at his most sophisticated project, the *Schauspielhaus* at the *Gendarmenmarkt*. Schinkel received commission for the burned down National Theater that previously stood in the spotlight of this open space as an unimaginative effort of C.G. Langhans. The new program required utilizing the existing foundations, offices, and storage spaces for the new building.

In this urban environment, the *Schauspielhaus* formed a central setting for the plaza. Two churches on its north and south side, the *Französische Kirche* (1701-1705) for the Huguenot community, and the *Neue Kirche* (1701-1708), flanked the centrally located site of the plaza. The presence of these two centralized structures challenged Schinkel to coordinate his design between the old and the new.

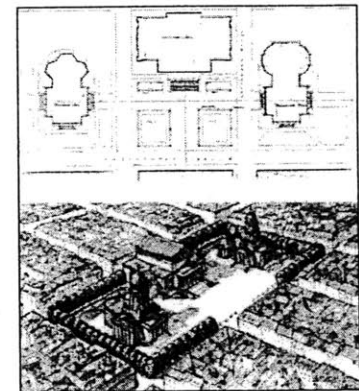
Schinkel essentially completed the new structure complementing the existing architectural framework in a classical appearance with freestanding porticos, asymmetrical masses, and an emphasis on a center and an axis. (Plundt: 130) Greek in inspiration, the theater dominated the plaza with its pyramidal composition for the main facade. The triangular portico was repeated above the clearstory, which helped balance the vertical emphasis of the two churches. The purpose of the portico went beyond mere embellishment. It repeated the motif of the already porticoed churches and drew the larger plaza together. With other more subtle relationships between the theater, churches, and facades surrounding the *Gendarmenmarkt*, Schinkel placed the New National Theater in the unified urban setting.



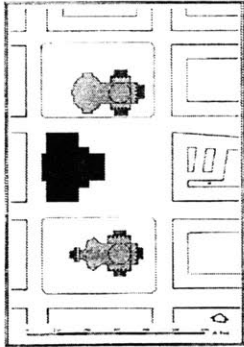
The National Theater by Carl G. Langhans before its destruction by fire, 1800-1802. Ibid.



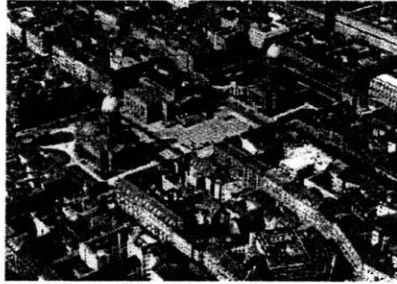
View of the new opera from the northeast, 1821. Ibid.



Plan and sketches of the area treated as an urban design problem. Ibid.



Site plan for the Gendarmenmarkt.



Aerial photo with the urban fabric surrounding it.



The Gendarmenmarkt with the churches prior to the World War II.

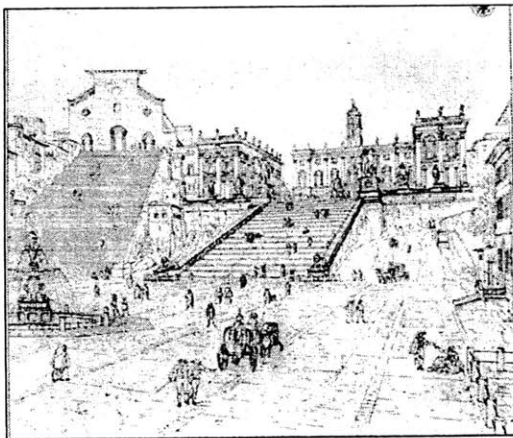
From: Mackowsky, Hans. *Karl Friedrich Schinkel: Briefe, Tagbücher, Gedanken*, 1922.

Views of the Gendarmenmarkt prior to the W.W.II and its reconstruction.

ALTES MUSEUM (1841-1855)

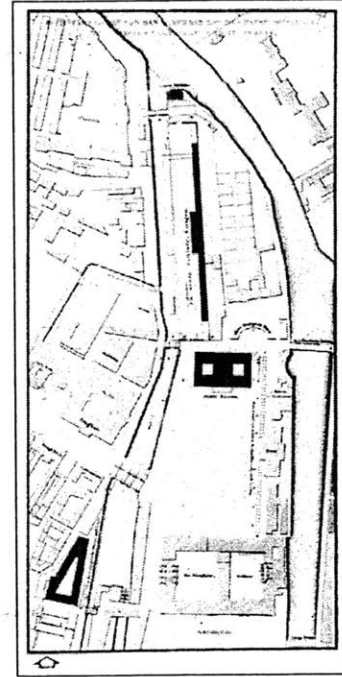
Europe's first public museum was received as a complement, to the nearby *Berlin Schloss*. The museum repeated the basic horizontal treatment of the existing structures, their cornice levels, and sensitivity to the overall composition. It created an important link in the context of the existing civic and royal structures within its proximity. The colossal ionic columns created a sense of continuity between the portico of the nearby church and facades of new buildings. The columns of the museum repeated the approximate size of the church's columns. Although he placed the structure on a high foundation, Schinkel fought monumental isolation of the structure. Throughout the elevation of the building, he succeeded in giving it an effect of total unity cautioned against viewing it as a 'monument', but rather an all-important part of the *Lustgarten*. Fully aware that the character of the museum required a city square, Schinkel sought to interrelate the plaza with the major planning elements of the city.

This total environmental design connected the *Lustgarten* with the *Schloss Palace* and the *Unter den Linden* to the west. The connector was a fountain in the front of the Palace that correlated the city's four major planning components and accented the spatial continuity of the site: the river, the island, buildings, and the street. (Pundt: 153) Due to Schinkel's experience as a painter and observations of such sites as the *Campidoglio*⁷ in Rome, the museum and the *Lustgarten* became Berlin's first organized civic space based on the 16th century Italy.



View of the Capitoline Hill and Sta. D'Aracoeli, Rome, 1803. Ibid.

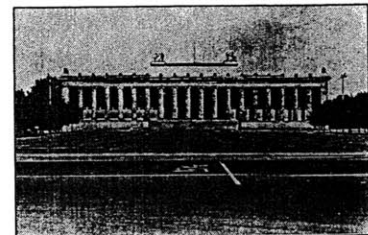
⁷ Michelangelo's piazza at the *Campidoglio* was not free from the already existing structures on the top of the *Capitoline Hill* which were the *Palazzo dei Senatori* and the *Palazzo dei Conservatori*. This is a significant pairing of Schinkel and Michelangelo as both found themselves working on partially defined space to be completed and unified by the architect.



Schinkel's master plan for the Lustgarten and its surroundings. Ibid.



Perspective of the Lustgarten by Schinkel at its prime, summer 1823. Ibid.

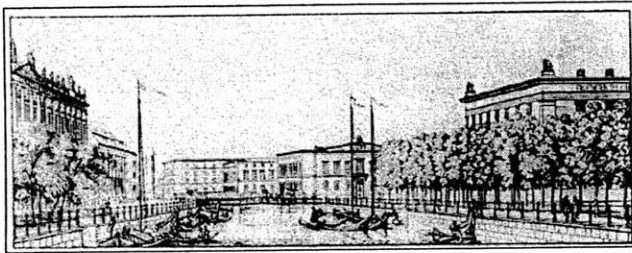


The museum at Lustgarten. View from site of the former Berlin Palace. View of the area after the modernist reconstruction. Ibid.

With the recently constructed buildings of the GDR⁸, the *Foreign Ministry* and the *Palast der Republic (1976)*, we have no idea of the original role of the *Altes Museum* in shaping of the city. Today, what once formed a scenic urban space now holds a totally isolated work of architecture. Recently restored, Schinkel's museum is a single survivor of once splendid urban idea. However, the museum irrevocably lost its communication with its spatial and physical context, which originally formed all comprehensive idea.

Evaluating Schinkel's master plan for the area, we can see a concern for a design as a coherent unit. He drew attention to the island on which the museum is located and utilized the area north of the *Lustgarten*. With practicality in mind, he proposed to combine the commercial, storage, and shipping centers into a coherent unit on the canal. With the sequence of decorated blocks, the northern edge of the island would allow an efficient handling of goods coming into the city⁹. (Plundt: 158)

Indeed in the context of the formal and spatial interrelationship Schinkel succeeded in unifying the core of Berlin. He created a comprehensive organism of buildings; spaces, streets, and waterways based on the idea of architecture of totality¹⁰. He transformed areas with the already established urban fabric rather than adding new sections to his designs. His buildings were allowed to blend into the total landscape of Berlin's most respective sections.



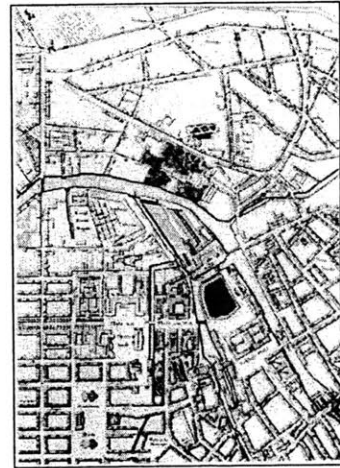
Perspective view by Schinkel of the Neue Packhof and the Museum, 1834. Ibid.

He himself did not approve of the monumental and excessive grandeur; however he found inspiration and simplicity in the Italian

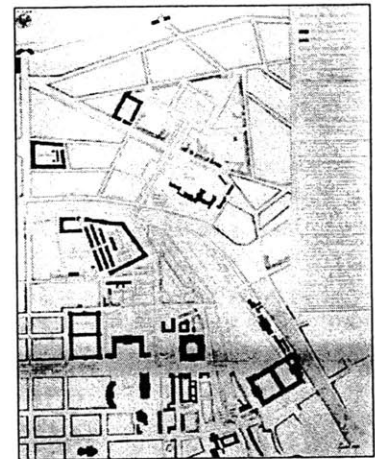
⁸ GDR, German Democratic Republic.

⁹ Recently recognized, as a significant factor is the geological condition (the ice deposits with muddy silt and peat) in the northern-half of the island limiting the architectural development of this section.

¹⁰ It must be remembered that unlike other kings, Friedrich Wilhelm III never ordered Schinkel to design monumental civic plazas, nor unify his capital, nor provide the public with strolling grounds. Consequently, Berlin does not possess urban planning examples such as the *Rue de Rivoli* in Paris, nor the approach to *Louvre* via the *Rue Dauphine*. (Garms: 102-113)

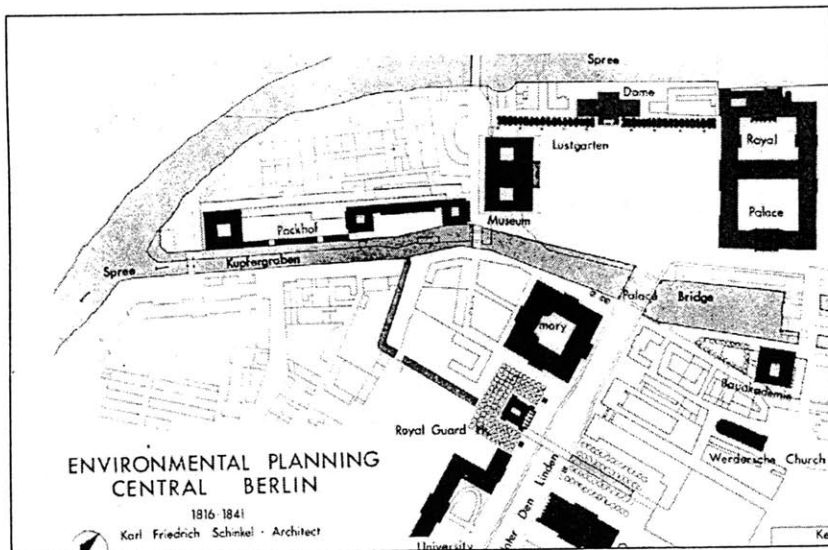


J.C. Selter. Detail from map of Berlin, 1804. View of Berlin before Schinkel's time. Ibid.

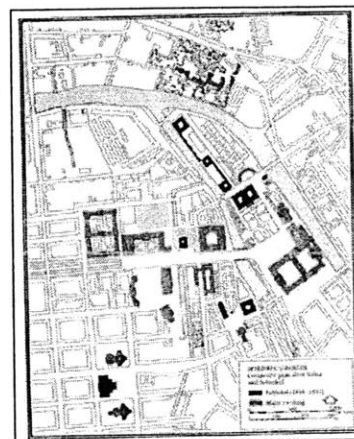


Master plan for redevelopment of Central Berlin in 1817. Ibid.

Campidoglio. He manipulated the forms and spaces according to the practical needs of the city and its integration into the overall urban environment. The most valuable lesson from Schinkel focuses on the ability to assimilate new additions into the urban fabric of existing buildings and spaces, as he valued the total context more than a praise of an isolated structure. Therefore, emulated principles rather than imitated forms and responsibly improved man's environment.



Development of Central Berlin as planned by K.F. Schinkel. Ibid.



Schinkel's Berlin in 1816-1844. Ibid.

TRANSPORTATION

THE WATERWAYS

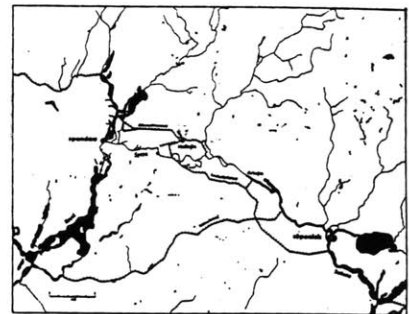
Most of the transportation serving Berlin depends on the natural conditions and began with the canal building in Berlin in the 18th century. These canals allowed the trade to be concentrated in the city and raised Berlin to capital status. The history of canal building in Berlin has been dominated by the efforts to supplement the *Spree*, a river route through the city. The movement of industry to the outer fringes of the city and the subsequent traffic on the existing canals resulted in the construction of a new route, the *Teltow Canal*. Later the canals were further extended to attract industry to Berlin's outer zones and later were specifically created to provide new areas for industrial sites. Although, Berlin does not have a single canal harbor, the city is made up of a series of smaller harbors dispersed as a system that belongs to individual firms and industries. Understandably the water transport was and still is used mainly by the industry.

THE RAILWAY

After opening its first line in 1838¹, Berlin developed into a 'spider web' of rail-lines. Unlike London and Paris, Berlin never developed a central railway station; instead it developed a series of terminal stations.



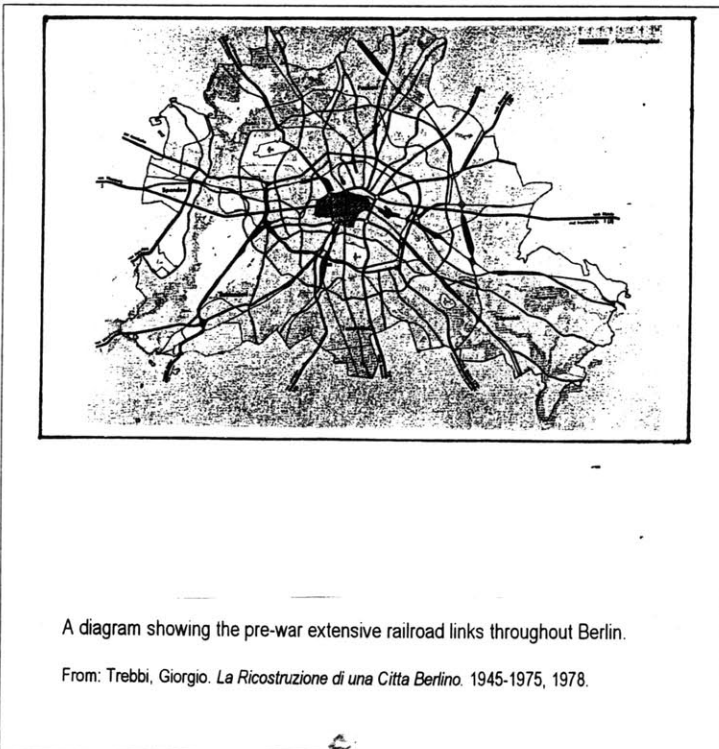
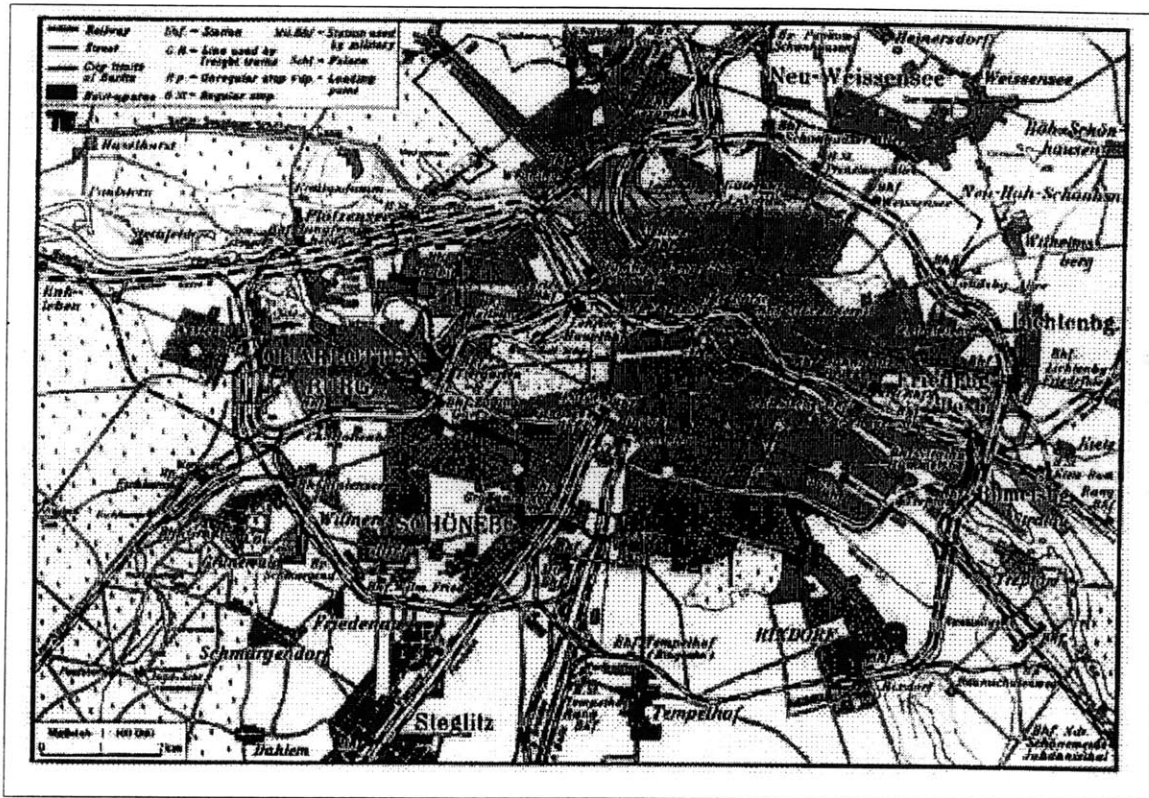
Perspective view by Schinkel of the Neue Packhof and the Museum, 1834. From Mackowsky.



A map showing the waterways and canals that became an important link and a large part of Berlin's growth and industry. From: Wolters, Rudolf. *Stadtmite Berlin*, 1978.

¹ Late development of the railway system. See earlier chapter x.

S-BAHN RING

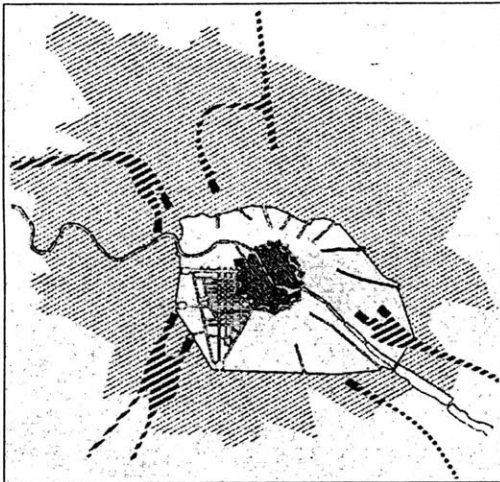


The S-Bahn Ring

The diagram above shows the current railway system and the ring surrounding central Berlin. The pattern follows the 19th century hubs formed by the major railway station.

From:
Elkins, TH, and B. Hofmeister. *Berlin, The Spatial Structure of Divided City*.
New York: Methuen & Co., 1988.

The Prussian military considerations were in part responsible for the building of the diameter *Stadt Bahn* stations and its lines across the city. Most of the rail lines across the city were situated on Berlin's fringe, the most built-up area at the mid-century. More broadly described these lines parallel to the old *Customs Wall*².

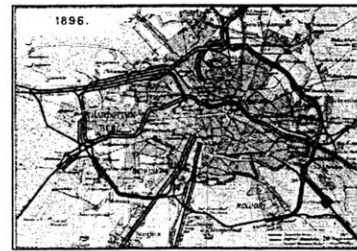


View of the original railway belt surrounding the Medieval City and the new expansions. Marked are the major railway stations, hubs leading into central Berlin. From: Leyden, Friedrich. *Gross-Berlin; Geographie der Weltstadt*, 1995.

The 1860's foresaw the construction of the S-Bahn ring with the terminal stations subsequently divided into passenger and goods delivery stations. These delivery stations created an interruption to the continuous urban fabric. In 1912 an opportunity arose to move some of the yards and their delivery stations out of the urban Berlin. This action formed separate railway lines for delivered goods on the outer ring of the city.

The 'new' railway system, the *StadtBahn* now linked important parts of the city: the *Schlesischer*, *Alexander Platz*, *Friedrichstraße*, the *Lehrter Bahnhof*, and the *Zoologischer Garten*. The radiating arms of *StadtBahn* were a good determiner for the housing projects, commuter settlements, and the suburbs of Berlin. By 1930's another link was developed between the north-south part of the city intersecting the *S-Bahn* line at *Friedrichstraße* station facilitating its developments and development of surroundings areas. This in turn solidified the importance of the station, the street, and the central banking district of the *Friedrichstadt*.

² The *Custom Wall*, 'the Line', was designed and placed for collection of duty on goods by Frederick III.



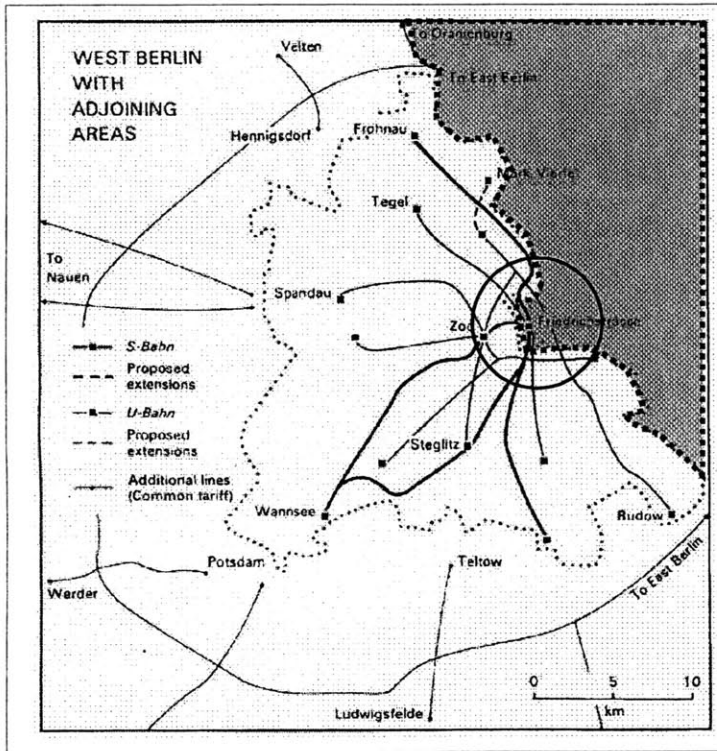
Railway development in 1871.



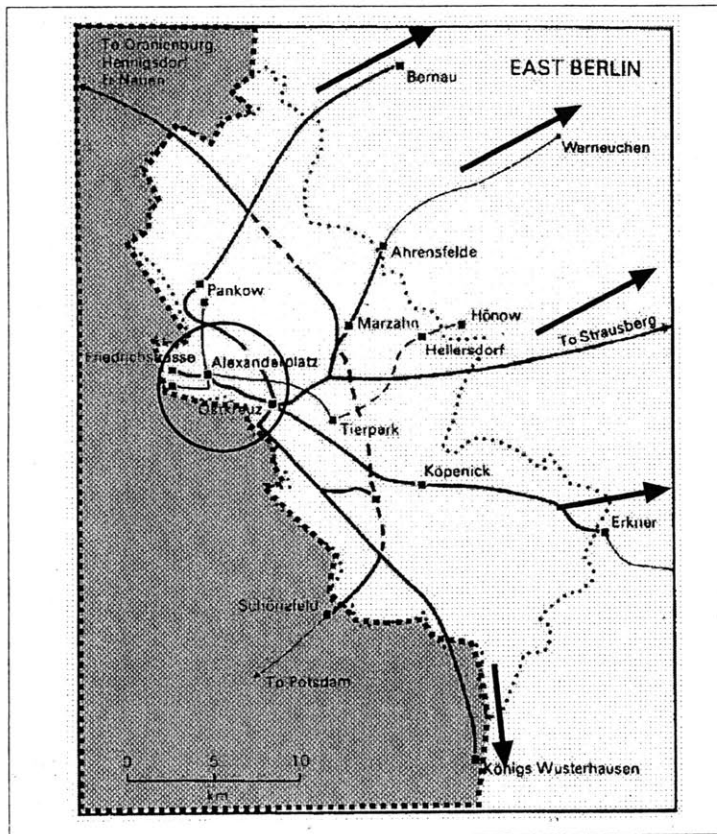
Railway development in 1896. This development started with a belt surrounding the city, only later expanding to include the major expansions. These connections took Berlin to a Capital status throughout Europe.

From: Walters, Rudolf. *Stadtmitte Berlin; Stadtbauliche Entwicklungsphasen von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart*, 1978.

THE DIVIDED RAILWAY



West Berlin had the advantage of inheriting a major portion of the railway system. However, division of the city left it with only a half circle of the system. With only one crossing at the Friedrichstrasse to and from the east, the railway system was supplemented with bus routes. These routes closely followed the railway lines underground.



East Berlin inherited the smaller portion of the railway system. However, this situation had an advantage of having a direct access to its hinterland outside of the strict city limits. The Friedrichstrasse station was still the only crossing point to and from West Berlin. Alexander Platz Station and the Alexander Platz, however received even more traffic as the new East Berlin center.

From:
Elkins, TH, and B. Hofmeister. Berlin,
The Spatial Structure of Divided City.
New York: Methuen & Co., 1988.

The S-Bahn and U-Bahn diagrams. Top: West Berlin, Bottom: East Berlin

One of the more important anomalies in Berlin was the division and the subsequent separation of the railway system between the east and west parts of the city following the war. This distinct obstacle to the West Berlin traffic was irrespective of destinations or use.

This important form of urban transportation divided the previously unified railway into two separate systems. This created two independent half-circles which allowed interconnection only at one point, the *Friedrichstraße* station. *Friedrichstraße* became once again a principal node, however this time as an only crossing point to and from East Berlin.

Although, West Berlin had the advantage of inheriting a larger portion of the railway system, the obstacles created by the division created alternative means of transport through West Berlin. The bus routes started to supplement the S-Bahn that more often exactly paralleled the railway lines.

East Berlin, on the other hand, inherited the smaller portion of the railway system with only one principal train station, the Alexander Platz. The railway lines extended to the peripheral housing, however the tramlines and buses supplemented the main transport throughout the city. Later the expanding car ownership through the East Berlin intensified the road use creating the more current problems of traffic congestion and parking.

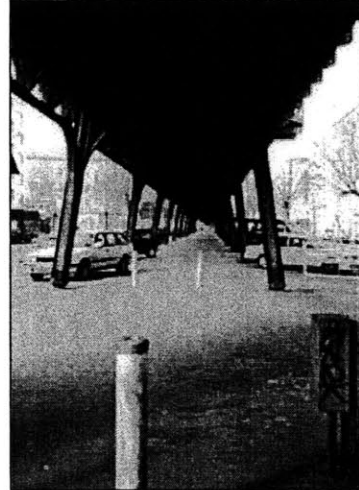
THE VIADUCTS

The direct railway lines linked Berlin to other capital cities when it became the capital of Germany. In 1847 the first railway was built to link of terminals along the city walls. Some 30 years later the *StadtBahn* was built on viaducts to encircle the city without crossing points.

The *StadtBahn* encircles Berlin running above streets, squares, and waterways. With its arches, bridges, and stations this railway system is a distinctive feature in the appearance of Berlin and the east city center. Designed as a 4-track system, the *StadtBahn* still serves as an excellent way to cope with the traffic volumes.

Together with the construction of the new north-south connection and existing upgrades it plays an integral part in the city life. No other link provides a faster connection between two city centers, the *Kurfürstendamm* and the *Alexander Platz*. As a direct link from the east to the west the railway is a part of an ideal reason for integrating the two poles of the city. Since its inauguration in 1882, only once had the *StadtBahn* undergone an extensive renovation. The new proposal for the redevelopment of the *Alexander Platz* gives it opportunity for modern upgrades and solutions.

In order to preserve Berlin's common monument, the viaduct with its facades and vaults must be preserved. This involves implementing the

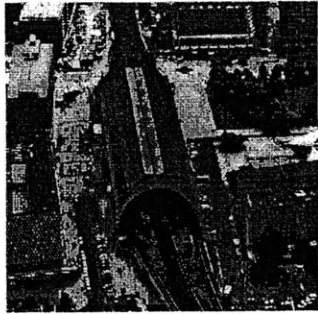


View of the elevated rail. The space underneath it is used as a parking lot today.



The elevated rail system, the Stadt Bahn, is a very common feature along many of Berlin's streets. Elevated rail along the something Strasse.

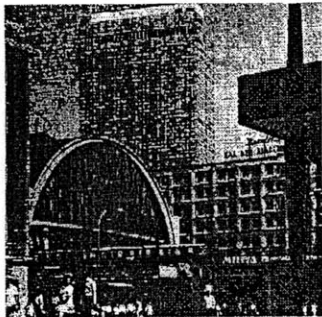
RAILWAY STATIONS



View of Alexander Bahnhof station.



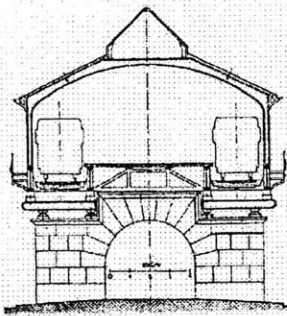
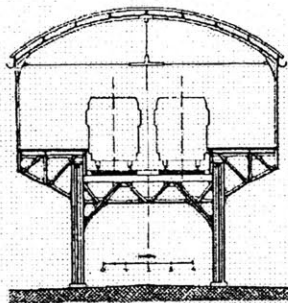
View of the post-war destruction to the station.



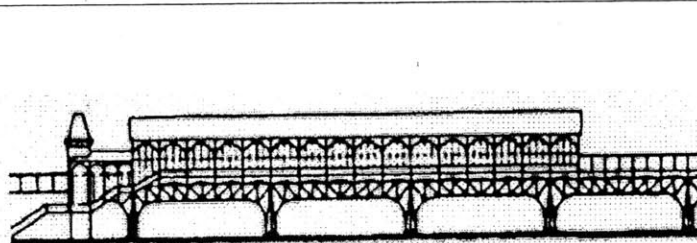
View of the current Bahnhof station...



...and the elevated S-Bahn ring.



Berlin's elevated railway system and their respective stations. The elevated railway is a prominent feature of the city. It is particularly evident around Alexander Platz. The railway ring replaced the Medieval fortification wall and today acts as a separator to the area surrounding Alexander Platz. The viaduct is an important feature for the Platz and Berlin's environment.



Sections of the elevated railway system throughout Berlin. This section represents Berlin's Nollendorf station

From:
Trebbi, Giorgio. *La Ricostruzione di una città, Berlino 1945-1975*. Milano: Gabrielerazzola editore, 1978

Volk, Wlatraud. *Berlin: Hauptstadt der DDR. Historische Strassen und Platze heute. Berlin: Ves Verlag fur Bauwesen, Berlin, 1973.*

Evaluation of Berlin railway stations and its viaducts.

StadtBahn into new planning concepts. The years of neglect have left the historic arches of the viaduct virtually unusable. The interior of the arches, rooms previously used for shops and retail have virtually closed down.

Setting up the large-scale urban site in the middle of the city with a densely built character has to utilize the existing structure as originally designed. That is the project must ensure that the 'ground floor' of the arched viaduct comes back to life again with retail once again renting those rooms.

THE AUTO LINK

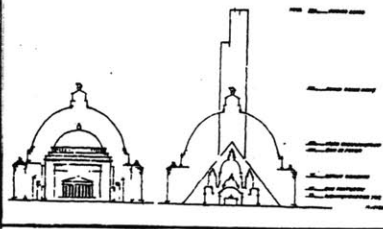
When a person thinks of German roads, one in particular comes to mind, the *autobahn*. Roads are the most popular way of bringing goods into the city³. In 1940's Berlin reflected the capital-city status and function mainly through the autobahn-ring. The 'ring' was planned as a system of radiating routes⁴.

Although, the main East Berlin links connected to the West Berlin ring autobahn the traffic routes to and from the city were restricted by a limited number of crossing points. Plans for public transport were combined with a program for new motorways for West Berlin. A plan for an urban inner-ring road is not a new concept. The urban inner-ring plans could be easily traced to *Albert Speer's* plans for urban expansion a century earlier. During that period a portion of the motorways were actually constructed on the East Side of Berlin. The ring followed the already existing *StadtBahn* ring as far as possible, as if not to further disrupt the existing communities. However, the division of the city in 1961 left West Berlin with a half-ring, a kind of horseshoe with open ends, to the totally uncooperative East Berlin. Thus, even the great axial and monumental link of the *Straße des 17 Juni/Unter den Linden* connecting east and west Berlin centers run into difficulty trying to serve the city. Even this major link was rerouted through West Berlin serviced by secondary roads south of the *Tiergarten*.

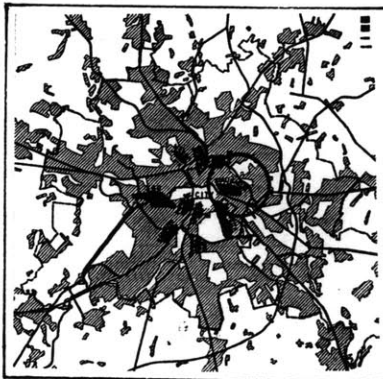


³ Roads are the most popular way of bringing goods into the city, more than any other form of transport.

⁴ The autobahn system and its radiating routes were not completed until well into 1979.

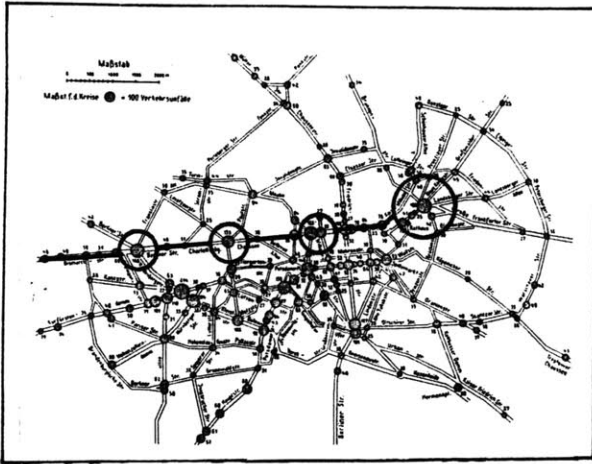


Albert Speer's plans for a north-south axis through Berlin, and a comparison study of his structure, the Meeting Hall with several major structures of the world: Sears Tower, Panteon, St. Peter's, etc.
From: Le Tissier, *Berlin Then and Now*, 1992.



Top: Map of the major traffic highways entering Central Berlin. Stalin Allee, known today as Karl-Marx Allee, is emphasized showing the connection at Alexander Platz.

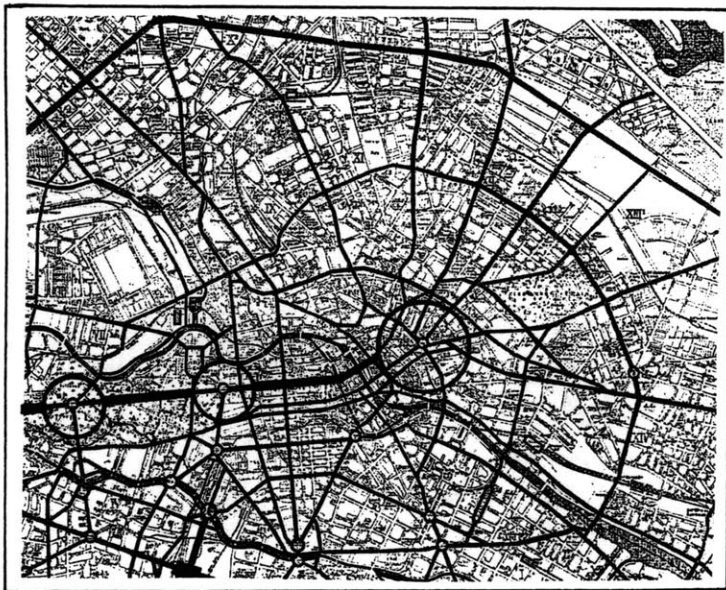
Bottom: View of GDR's major road development at Stalin Allee, today Karl-Marx Allee, as a vehicular link into Central Berlin leading toward Alexander Platz.
From: Trebbi, Giorgio. *La Ricostruzione di una Citta Berlino 1945-1975*, 1978.



View of the major open urban spaces linking Berlin prior to W.W.II. From: Blomayer, Gerald R., *Berlin Zentrum: Szenarien der Entwicklung*, 1990.

Previous Page:

The route connecting East and West Berlin was established after 1961 and is still servicing Berlin today. Popularized through necessity of Berlin's division, today the alternate route serves to emphasize and connect major parts of the city. This route starts at the *Ernst-Reuter Platz*⁵ and runs through *Kurfürstendamm*, then *Nollendorf/Wittenberg Platz*, and the *Potsdamer/Leipziger Platz* through the *Friedrichstraße*, its district and ending at *Alexander Platz*.



Map of a major vehicular throughout fares in Central Berlin. Alexander Platz played a significant role in linking central core of the city, as well as, it contributed to the emphasis of Berlin's central axis, Unter den Linden.

From: Pysall, Hans-Joachim. *Das Alexander der Haus Alexander Platz*, 1998.

⁵ Ernst-Reuter was the governing mayor of West Berlin during the construction of the Berlin Wall. Elkins p. 53.

ROUTES TO ALEXANDER PLATZ

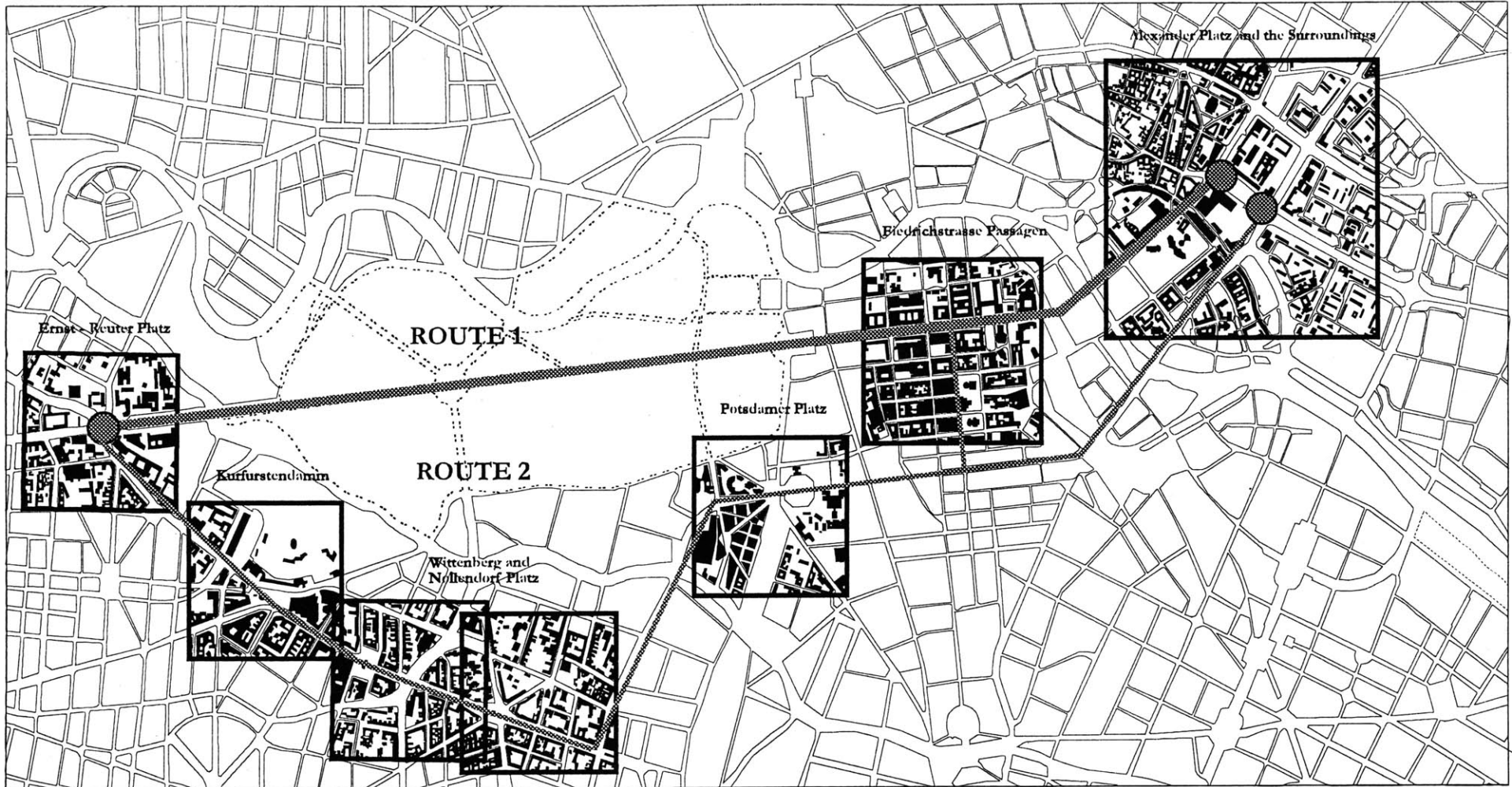
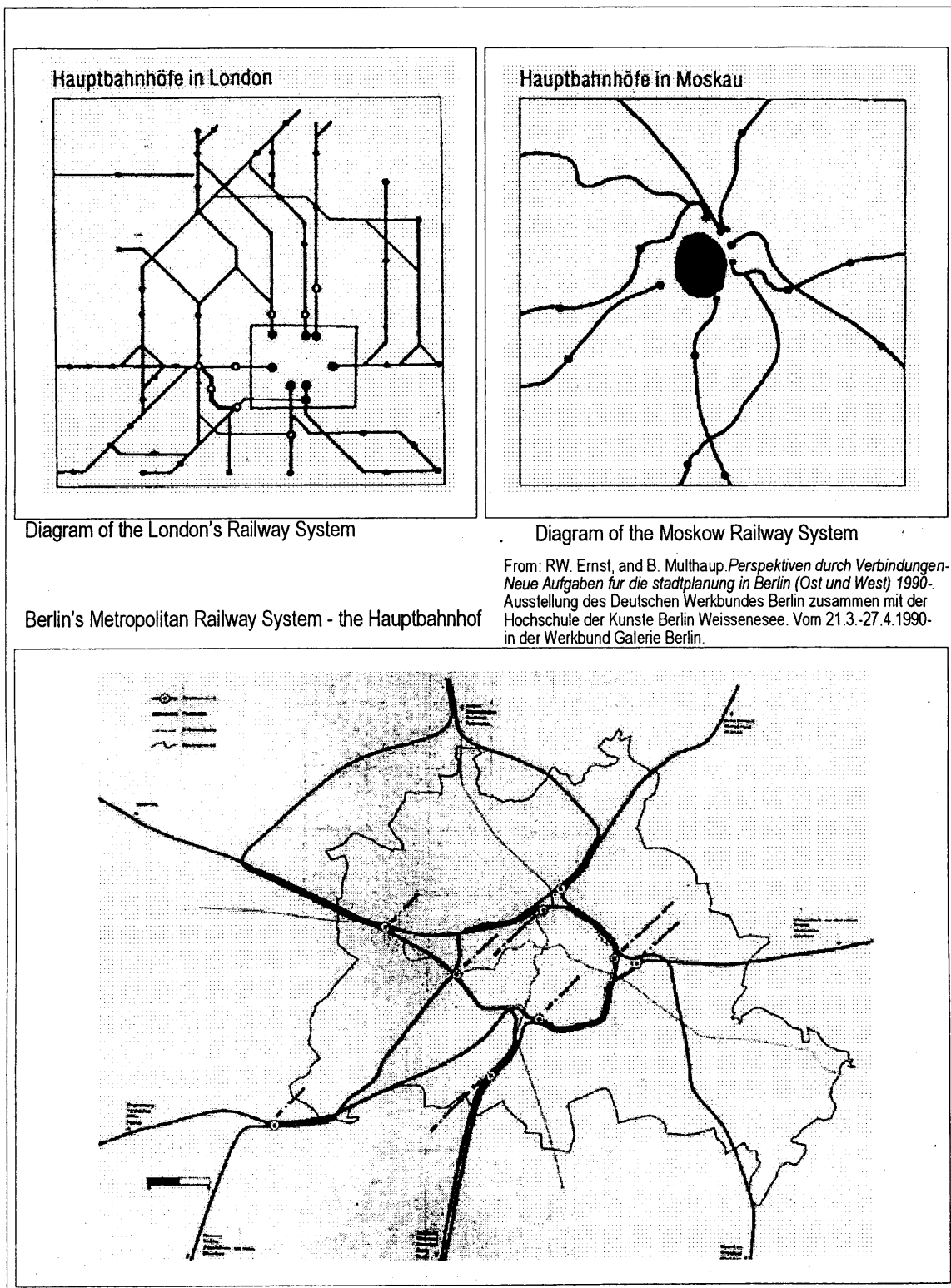


Figure X.X - Diagram of the most convenient routes between west and east centers of Berlin

Route 1 acts as the most visual axis and link between west and east side of the city. However, in reality the most convenient and used connection is the second route. This is the Route 2 that acts as a link between several central nodes throughout the city. The Potsdamer Platz, until recently, acted as a physical barrier between the two sides due to its undeveloped land and the close proximity to the Berlin Wall.

METROPOLITAN RAILWAY



Hauptbahnhöfe in London

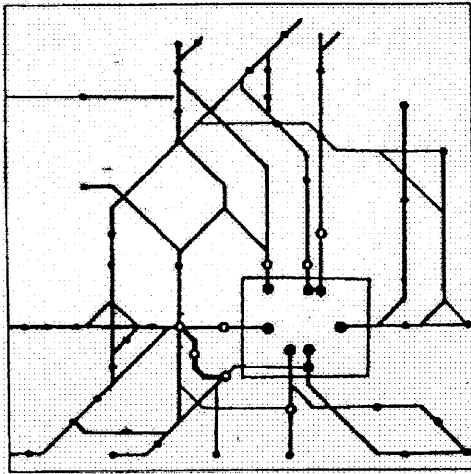


Diagram of the London's Railway System

Hauptbahnhöfe in Moskau

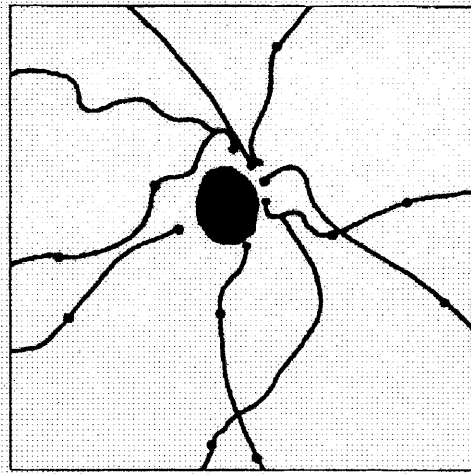
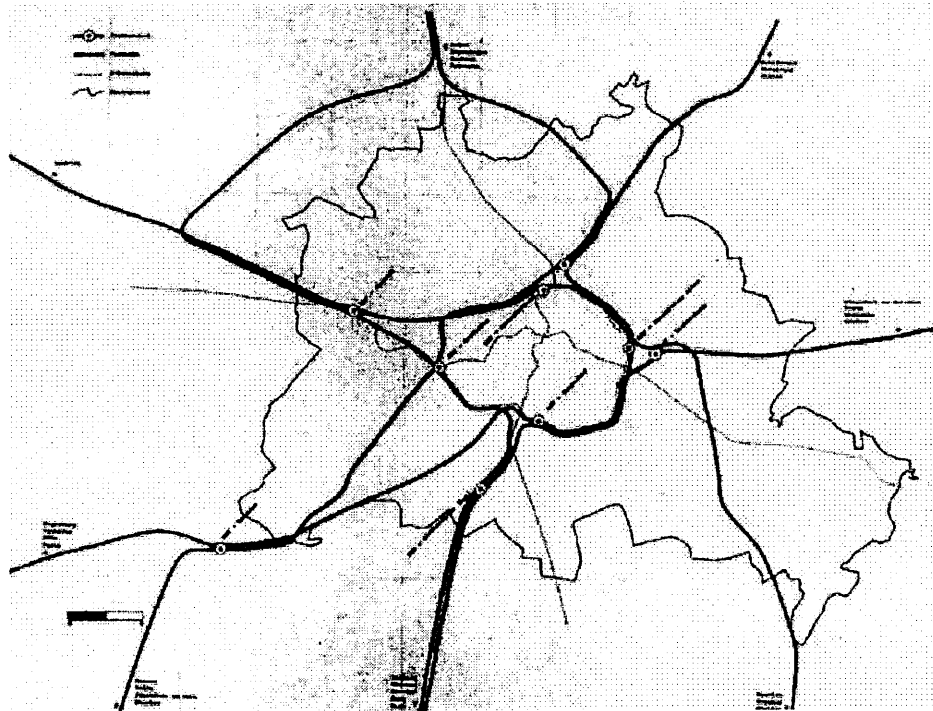


Diagram of the Moskow Railway System

From: RW Ernst, and B. Multhaup. *Perspektiven durch Verbindungen-Neue Aufgaben für die Stadtplanung in Berlin (Ost und West) 1990*. Ausstellung des Deutschen Werkbundes Berlin zusammen mit der Hochschule der Künste Berlin Weissenensee. Vom 21.3.-27.4.1990- in der Werkbund Galerie Berlin.

Berlin's Metropolitan Railway System - the Hauptbahnhof



Diagrams of various railway systems. Top: diagrams of the London and Moskow rail. Bottom diagram represents the Berlin Hauptbahnhof.

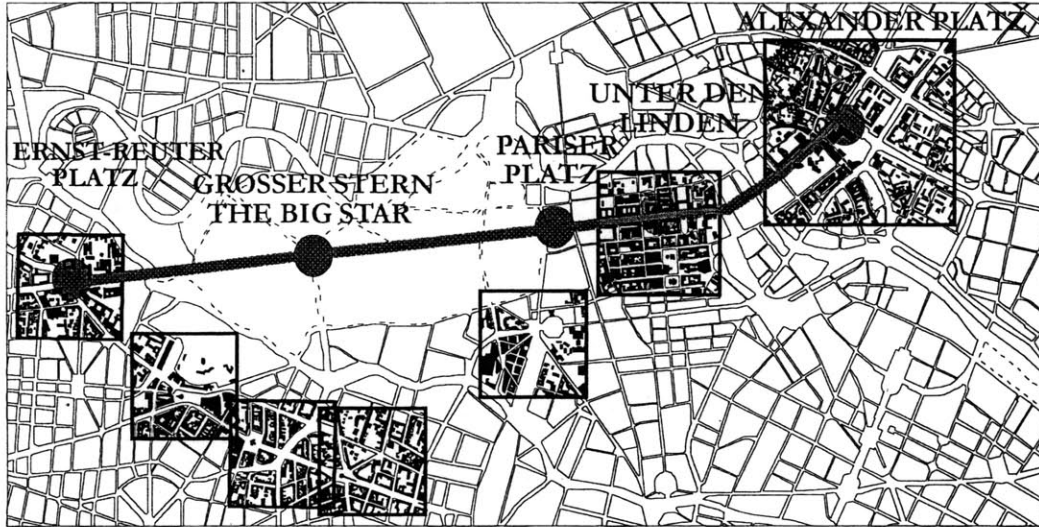
PATH OF EXAMPLES

Integration is still taking place in Berlin. Many of Berlin's links and connections are still incomplete. Moving through the city from west to east we can see still considerable differences in the quality of public urban spaces and their buildings. Therefore a path of secondary centers must be explained for the analysis of a final product, a new proposal for the Alexander Platz.

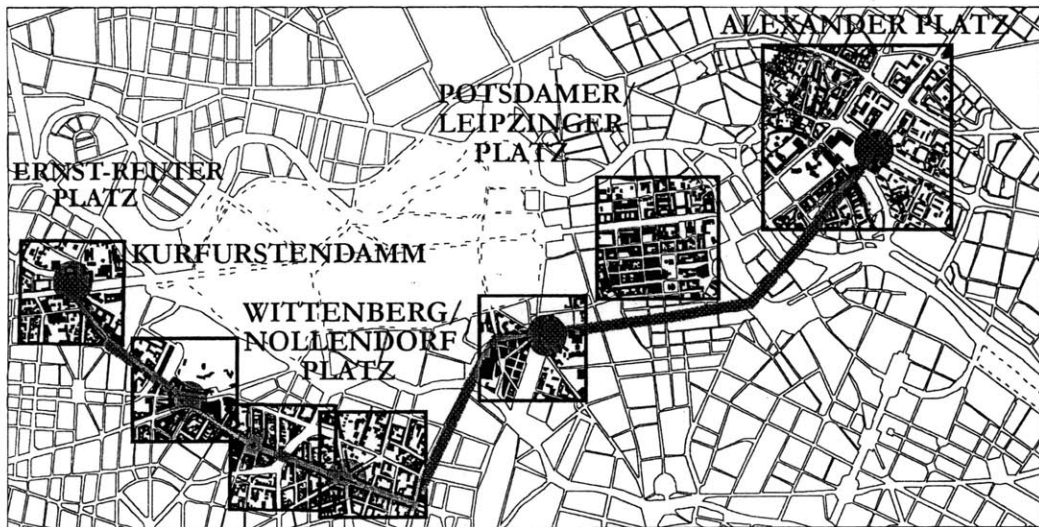
Although directly connected by the Strasse des 17 Juni/Unter den Linden terminating points that formed and emphasized this axis were separated by the division of Berlin Wall promoting an alternative route. The new and more convenient route originated at the Ernst-Reuter Platz, moved through the Kurfurstendamm area, into the Wittenberg/Nollendorf Platz to Potsdamer/Leipziger Platz, continued north up the Friedrichstrasse Passage and its U-Bahn crossing, reemerging at the east side into the Unter den Linden, and finally terminating at Alexander Platz. These secondary centers have all a major urban or economic impact that has preempted its start. From the supporting role of the existing fabric or the lack of it, this path reflects best examples of the secondary centers that exist in Berlin today. These moments in the urban fabric represent and will serve as examples. Each of the respective sites represents a crucial link in Berlin's history and its development on which proposal for the Alexander Platz is based on.

A linear axis exists between the Ernst-Reuter Platz and the Alexander Platz. However, during division of the city an alternative route was adopted for movement throughout the West Berlin. With the monumental axis closed to through traffic a new path was developed that led through Berlin unofficially connecting these disjointed parts together. Therefore to better understand the new proposal for Alexander Platz we must begin our evaluation at the Ernst-Reuter Platz, a beginning point for the monumental axis terminating at Alexander Platz area.

ROUTES TO ALEXANDER PLATZ



Route 1-serves as the planning axis for the city and displays the most direct route through Berlin.



Route 2 is the alternate route used by Berliners during division of the city.

Figure x.x- Routes leading to Alexander Platz.

ERNST-REUTER PLATZ

The path of the secondary centers throughout Berlin has to start with the Ernst-Reuter Platz. These forms mostly characterize the path of the secondary centers. Most of these centers consist of just street and a retail/commercial developments facing the street, however the Ernst-Reuter Platz was developed in a circular fashion serving mostly the vehicular traffic.



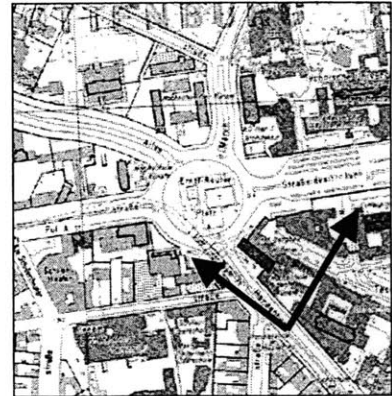
View of Ernst-Reuter Platz looking to the northeast onto Bismarck Strasse.



View of the Platz to the northeast looking onto Strasse des 17 Juni/Unter den Linden axis.

This area defines an entry to a large urban park, the Tiergarten. This platz also serves as an entry onto Berlin's most distinguished urban axis. However, the platz itself is defined clearly only by the circular street pattern. The modern high-rises of the Technical University surrounding this area are loosely placed ignoring the principle of defining the site. None of these buildings create an edge and none are placed closely to the street, in turn creating a significant empty, open space facing the street. The ground floors are dedicated to public uses, however most of these consist of institutional uses eliminating retail and shops creating a very light pedestrian traffic consisting mostly of students walking to the university.

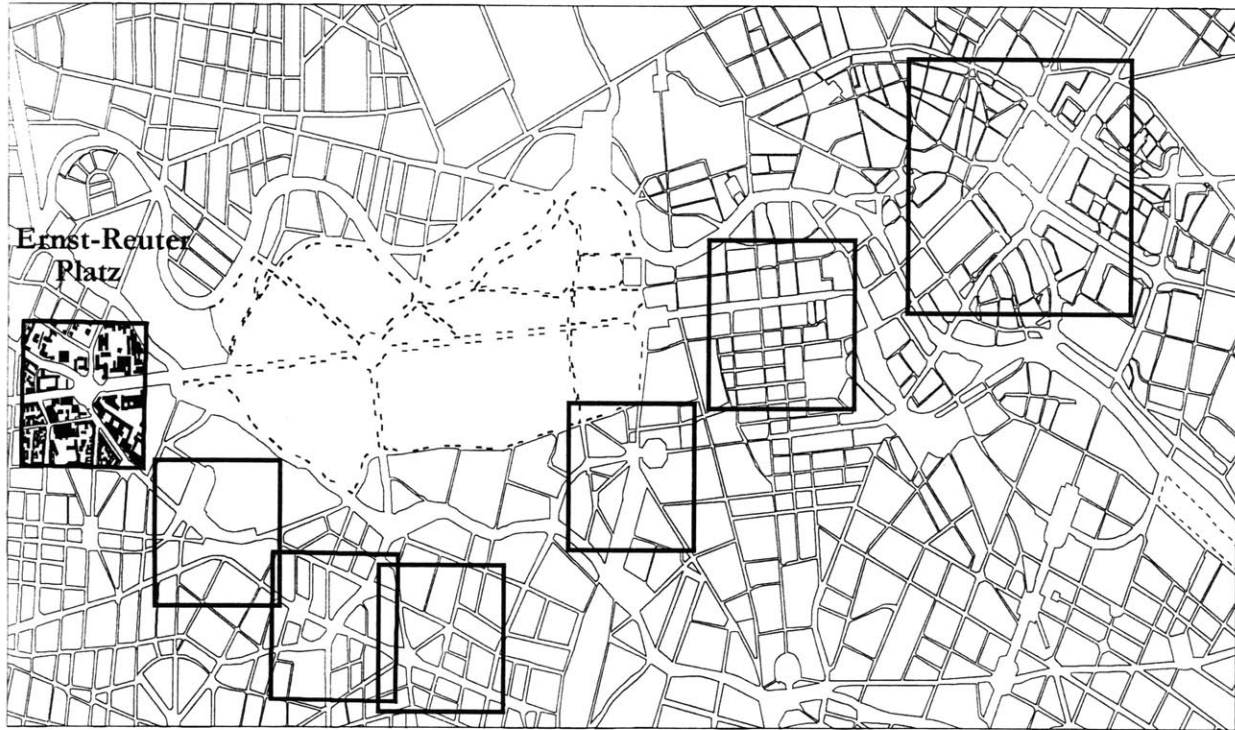
The secondary streets that lead to the Platz are at much smaller scale usually with two lanes of traffic. They are surrounded by unified blocks and resemble a typical mix-use residential area with some ground floors dedicated to retail and shops. These shops support the existing residential community.



Map of the Ernst-Reuter Platz. Arrows indicate orientation of the photos.

This area is not an urban center but rather an indicator to an important entry, a gateway to a different area of the city, the Tiergarten. The vehicular traffic dominates this area, with a loosely defined urban fabric the circular shape of the Ernst-Reuter Platz is well defined only in a two-dimensional plane, in reality however, it presents itself as an oversized area strictly dedicated to a fast moving vehicular traffic.

Ernst-Reuter Platz Area

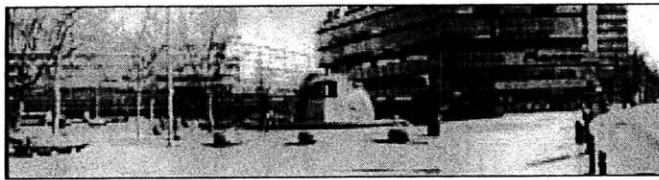


		<p>From left to right : Figure/Ground study of the Platz, View of the Technical University and Platz morphology, and aerial photograph of Ernst-Reuter Platz. From: Kirchoff, Gerhard. <i>Views of Berlin: From Boston Symposium</i>. 1989.</p> <p>Site Analysis: Vehicular and Pedestrian traffic.</p>

Ernst-Reuter Platz and Surrounding Area

KURFURSTENDAMM- BREITSCHIED PLATZ

Berlin is a two poly-center city with Kurfurstendamm on the west and Alexander Platz on the east side. As one side emphasized western ideals the other emphasized the communist state. Even with the divided Berlin, both areas displayed their distinguished qualities and ideas in a very memorable way. What is exciting about both sides are the clear differences that functioned so closely together. Each system of urbanism supported the other in a certain way. Most of this competition defined only their own political issues, but also displayed different ideologies through their urban ventures.

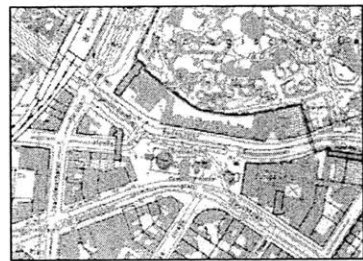


View of Ku'damm central open space, to the west side facing the Karl-Wilhelm Memorial Church, and bottom faces the Europa Center to the east.

West Berlin has responded with varying yet successful solutions for the area surrounding Ku'damm. This area became the most valuable property in Berlin and function as modern, mixed-use blocks. Most of the structures surrounding this commercial center have a ground level shops that invite customers in toward the large display windows and then into the stores themselves. At ground level, a continuous arcade, for different retail and shops, protects shoppers from the elements. Luxury apartments and office space are located above the ground floors.

The western central urban area of Kurfurstendamm¹ is clearly identifiable by its street pattern, block division, and the distinctive 'Mietkasernen' tradition in facades. This areas high-rise buildings best identify this western center with the 'Kant-Triangle' with its metallic sail, the Europa Center topped with its Mercedes star, and the Karl Wilhelm Memorial Church are points of recognition and memory associated with the West Berlin.

¹ Kurfurstendamm, also known as Ku'damm, is the western counterpart to the Alexander Platz, the east urban center.



Plan of Breitscheid Platz and its immediate surroundings.

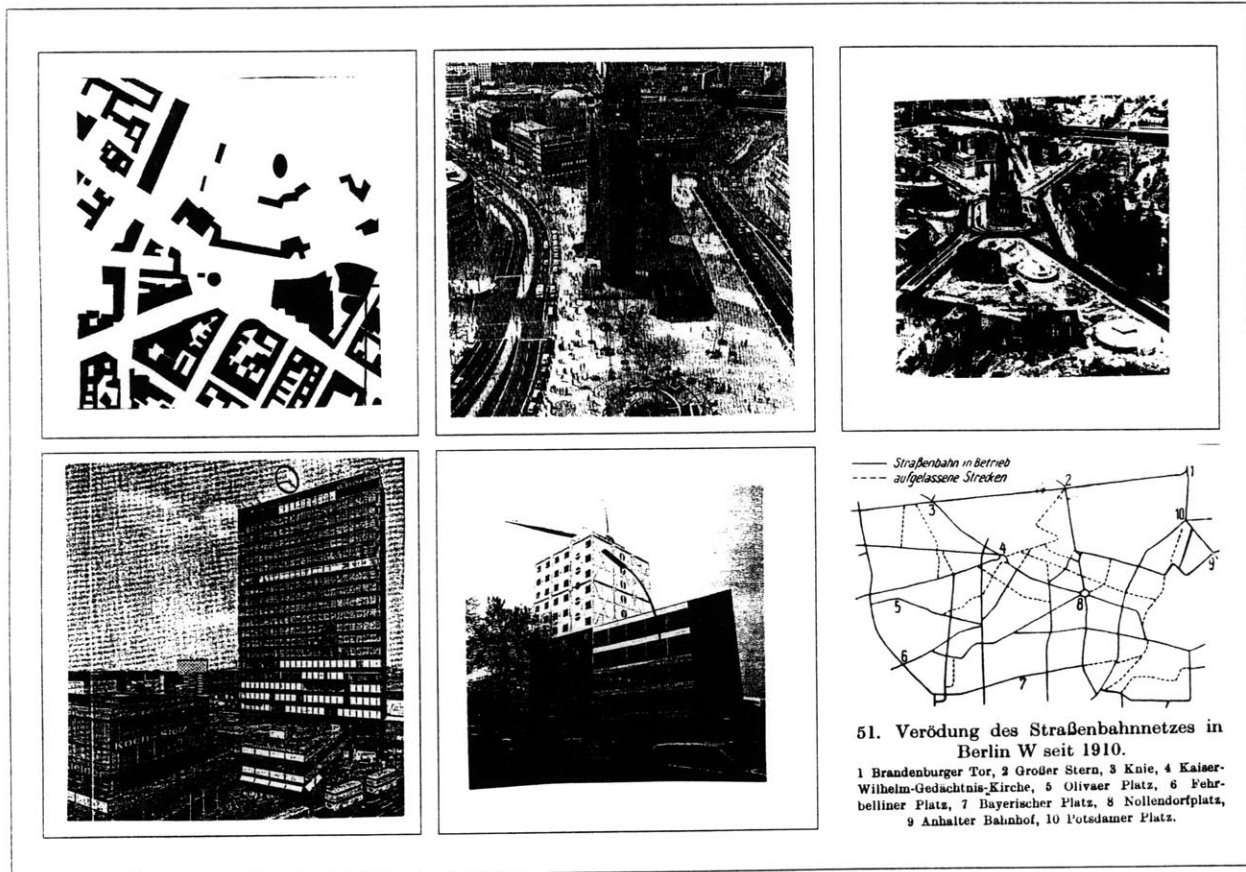
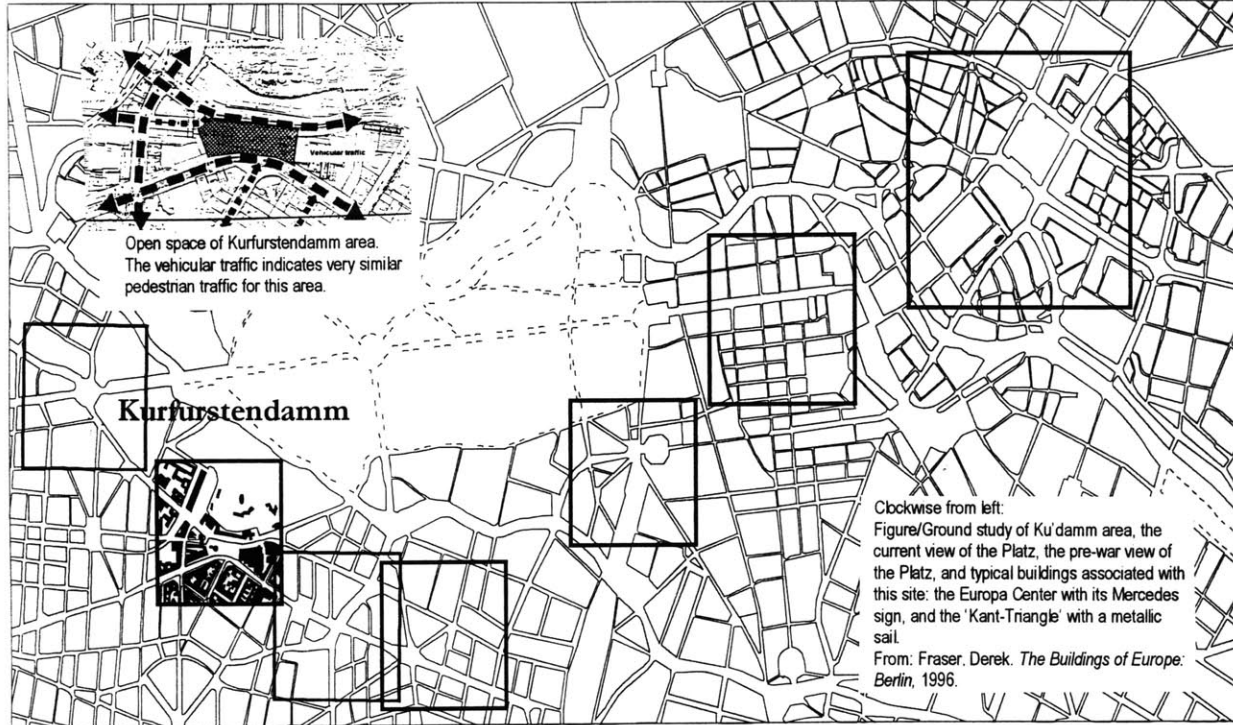


View of the Mietkasernen lining the street toward the Technical University. View of Kneesebeck Strasse.



View of a typical interior courtyard of the Mietkasernen block.

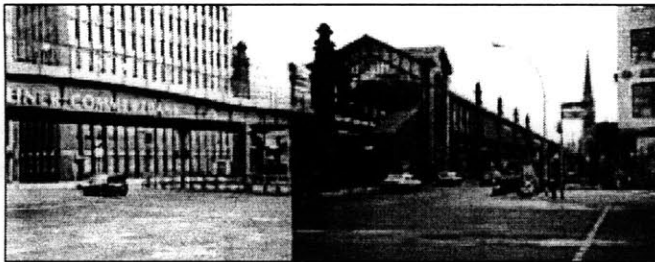
Kurfurstendamm Area



Kurfurstendamm Area

WITTENBERG/NOLLENDORF PLATZ

For the purpose of analysis the Wittenberg Platz and the Nollendorf Platz will be considered as one unit. Both of these areas display close similarities. The name 'Platz' indicates a traffic intersection. Both of these places have a main traffic throughout fare and a transportation stop in form of the elevated railway. They do not fit into the traditional form of a plaza, yet surrounded by a dense urban fabric both these spaces function as an important transportation link for the city.



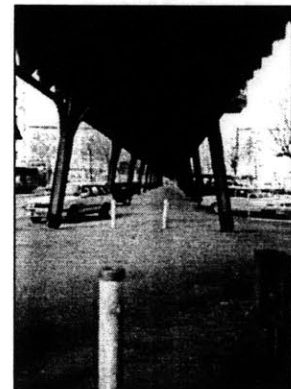
View of the Nollendorf Platz with its elevated railway system.



View of the elevated railway looking at the opposite direction.

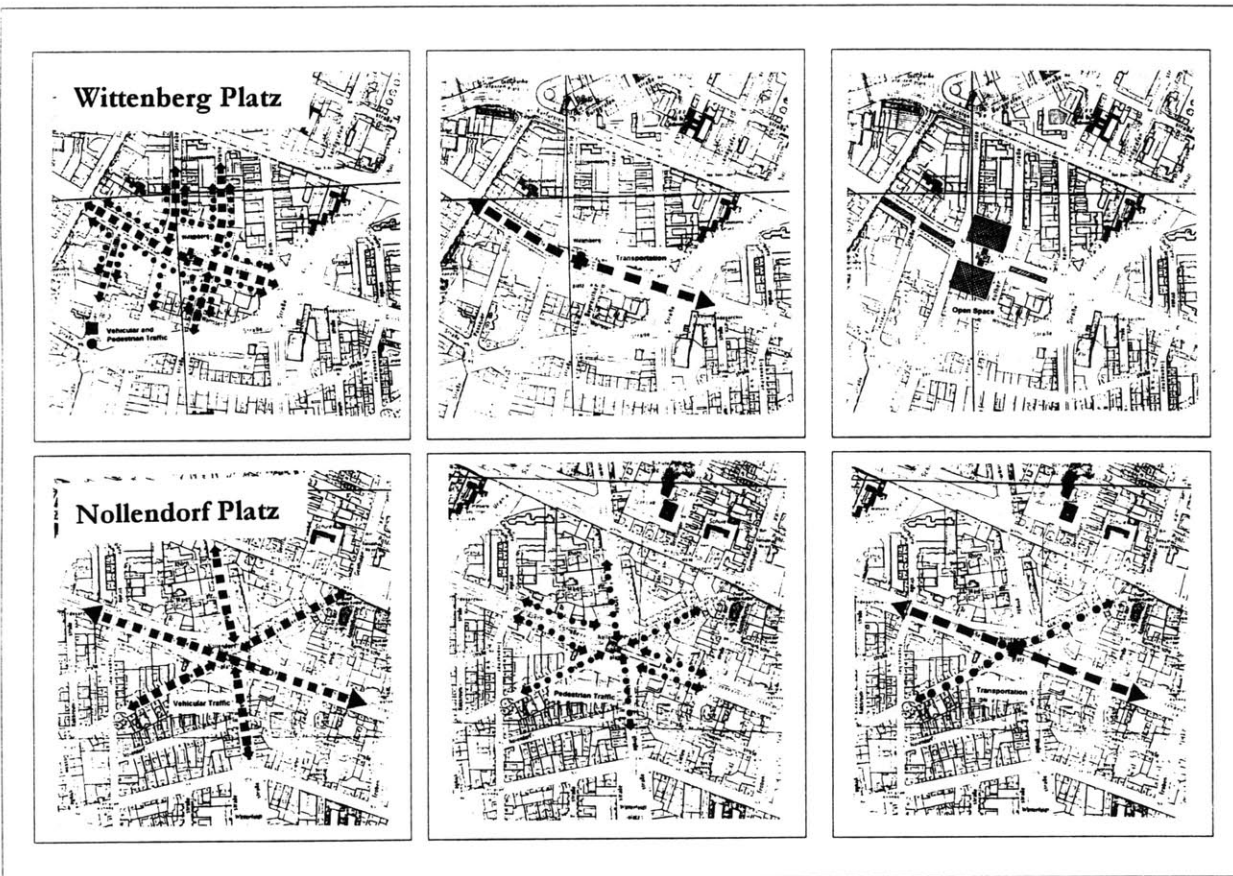
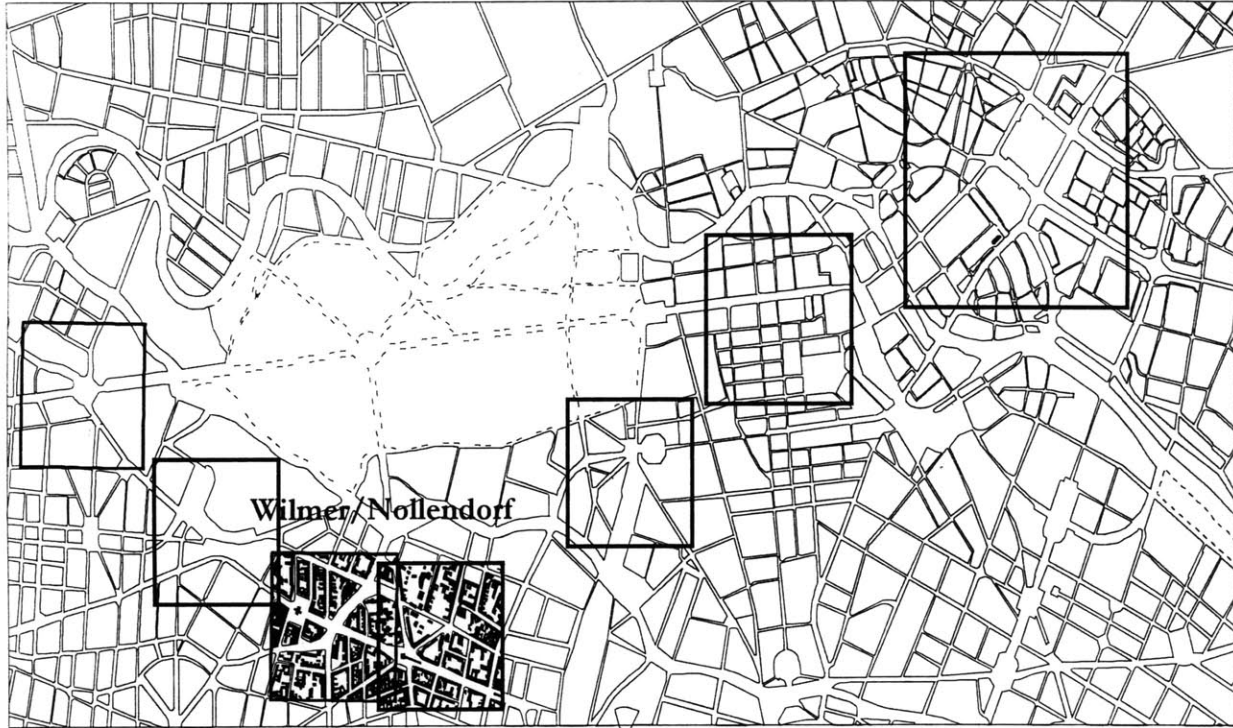


Approach to the Nollendorf Platz.



The elevated railway with the open space underneath used as a parking lot.

Wittenberg/Nollendorf Platz

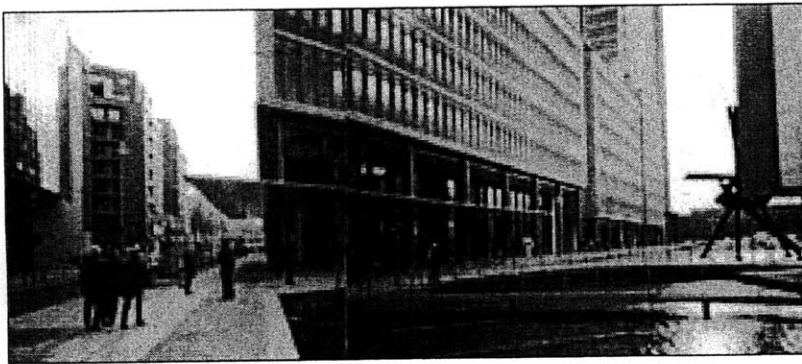


Nollendorf Area

POTSDAMER/LEIPZINGER PLATZ

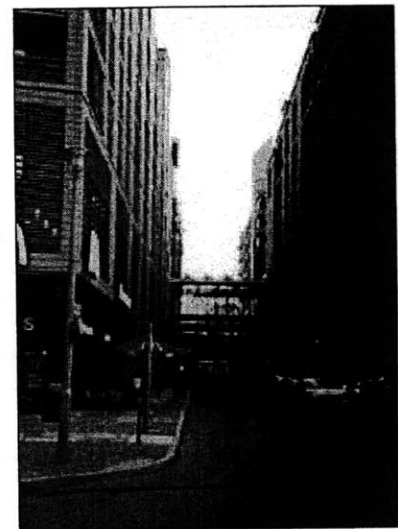
Until recently each side of the Berlin Wall presented a very negative image. Most of the land laid bare and unused reflecting Berlin's policy of eventual relinking of the city. The section of Potsdamer Platz connecting to the Leipziger Platz was once the 'Piccadilly Circus' of Berlin. It lays to the south of Friedrichstrasse and was an extraordinary spectacle of urban activity. One among many of the anomalies of Berlin, division of the city led to the dispersal of the Platz's functions to other districts of Berlin. However, Berlin unlike any other city reveals the vigor with which the city is undertaking renovation of its empty areas.

The Potsdamer Platz is a particularly evident example of a step away from the carefully guided nostalgia for the old combined with a strong emphasis on the new construction and a set of tight urban ideas. The question remains if the redeveloped Platz with its very modern expression retained any of the urban principles by just reviving the 19th century street grid? Or are those ideas also retained in the facades, scale, and proportions of buildings?



View of the Marlene Deitrich Platz at Potsdamer Complex.

The new Potsdamer Complex is a large three-block development following Berlin's traditional street and a block grid. Most of the complex is a mixture of paneled brick walls, glass walls, and steel. Since its opening the area quickly became a place to have coffee, see a movie, and more generally a place for urban activity. Its large-scale buildings are reduced in scale and have large glass street frontage that is divided further into smaller scale interruptions, overhangs, streetlights, and street furniture, in turn creating an environment for human interaction.



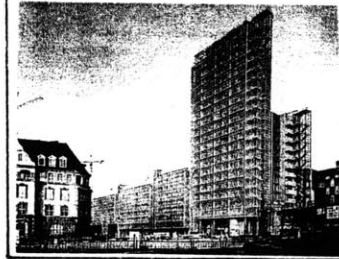
Views of streets throughout the Potsdamer Complex.



From the pedestrian street to the street crossing every form and detail at Potsdamer Complex is an attempt to create a significant urban space. The streets are designed for a mix-use district with two-lane traffic significantly slowing the vehicular traffic. The emphasis is on the pedestrian and the visual enhancements of the street and the surrounding urban area.

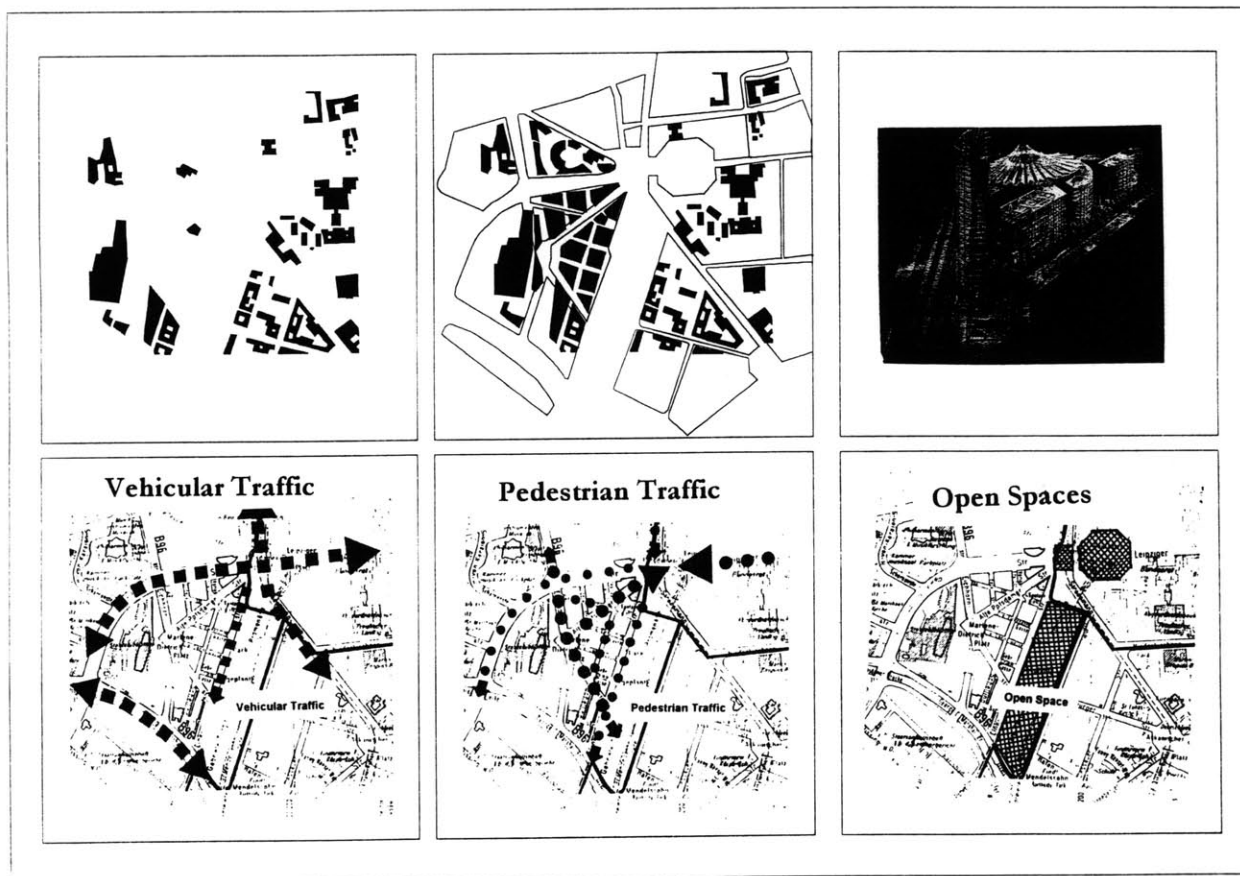
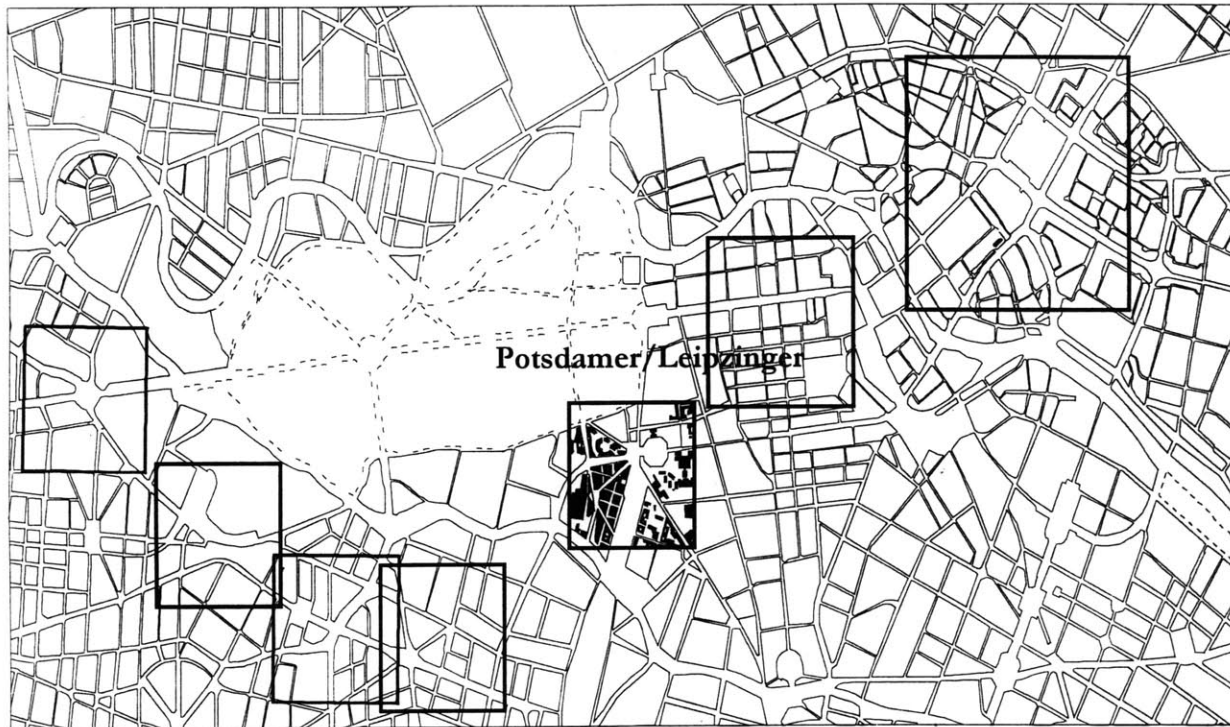
However, even the pedestrian scale of the streets cannot completely reduce the scale of the complex and its structures. The complex itself contains a large amount of office space with very few residential units. It is very hard to distinguish between buildings and their intended uses, making the buildings hardly distinguishable. The only feature that reminds us of the few permanent inhabitants at the Potsdamer Complex are few protruding balconies.

The whole Potsdamer Complex displays a project of a gigantic proportion. What the project does is it gives a hope to a mix of architectural ideas and urban theories delivering a variety of spatial forms and spaces. The buildings that shape the Platz result from Berlin's traditional block ideas. Therefore they are participating to a certain degree with Berlin's past. They do not stand disconnected as all of the structures obey the overall similar design ideas in the form of pre-existing spatial conditions, materials, and heights. However, the scale of the project suggests a turn away from the city needs and a step closer to the corporate needs within this dense city fabric.



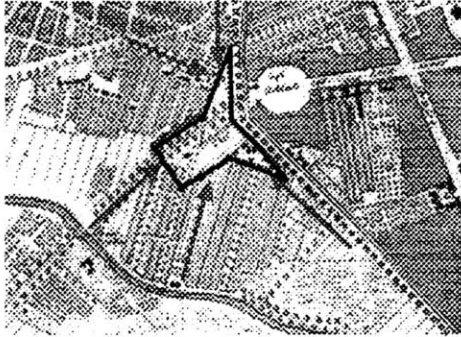
Interior and exterior view of Renzo Piano's office building at Potsdamer Complex.
From: Womer, Martin. *Architekturführer Berlin*, 1991.

Potsdamer/Leipziger Platz Area

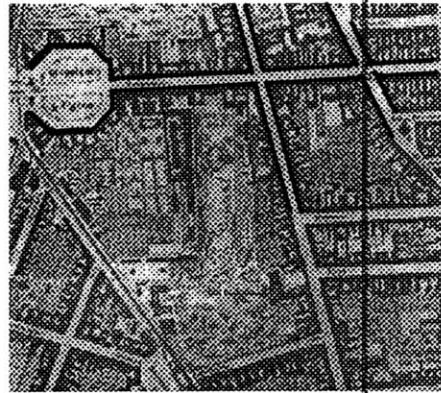


Potsdamer Platz - Leipziger Platz Area

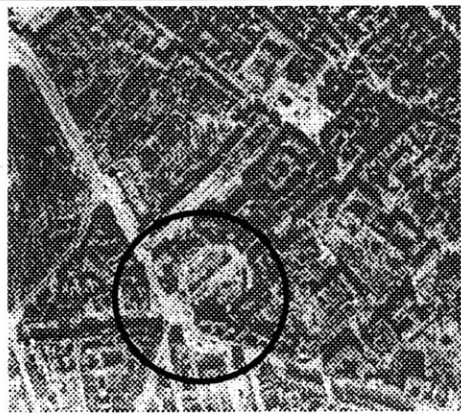
POTSDAMER/LEIPZINGER PLATZ



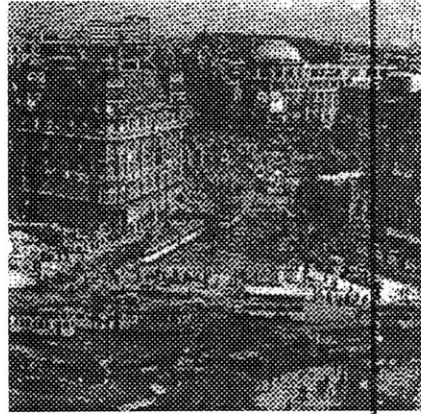
Layout of Leipziger Platz 1778. The Customs Wall is visible with undeveloped land inside the city wall. The land outside the gate would create the Potsdamer Platz.



Plan of the Leipziger Platz with the developed urban fabric, 1867.



Leipziger Platz fully developed with the wall removed and clearly defined Potsdamer Platz.



View of the Potsdamer Platz in 1930. It functioned as a major traffic intersection.



Aerial view of Leipziger/Potsdamer Platz with its defined open public spaces and the street.

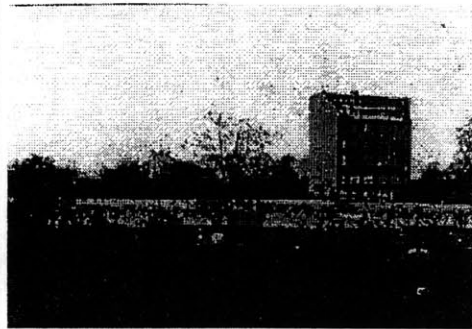
From:
Hauptstadt Berlin: Stadtebau und Architektur. 1992.
 Pabsch, Matthias, *Zweimal Weitsadt*, 1998.
 Petras, Renate. *Das Café Bauer in Berlin.* 1994.
 Schweitzer, Eva. *Grossbaustelle Berlin.* 1997.
 Zucker, Paul. *Town and Square.* 1959.

Development of Potsdamer/Leipziger Platz.

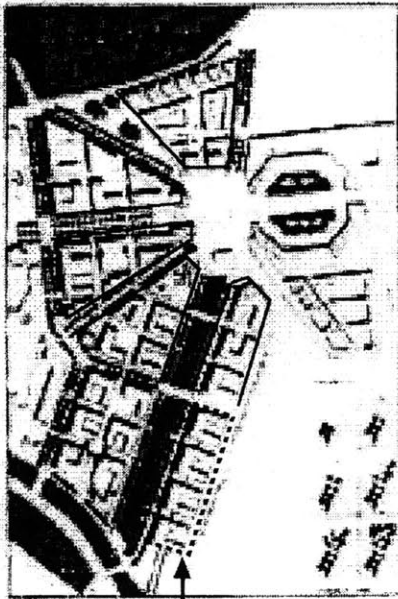
POTSDAMER/LEIPZINGER PLATZ



View of Leipziger Platz before the city reunification.



The "no man's land" of the Potsdamer Platz during the Berlin Wall.



The new development for the area.



Model of the new proposal for the Postdamer/Leipziger area.

From: _
Fraser, Derek. *The Buildings of Europe: Berlin*,
1996.

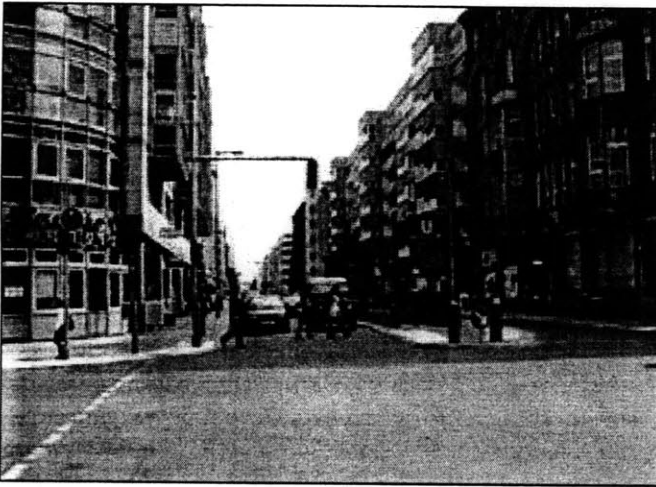
Dresdner Bank, Pariser Platz. *Architectural Record*, 1223,
January 1999, 68.

Development of Potsdamer/Leipziger Platz.

FRIEDRICHSTRASSE PASSAGE

Represented by the district of Schöneberg and Kreuzberg lays an area approximately corresponding to the Wilhelmian Ring. Since the division of the city this area has been greatly disadvantaged by having its pre-war traditional urban access erased. This district isolation contains particularly high-density housing stock, until recently a sub-standard apartment houses built prior to 1914.

Today the Friedrich Strasse is marked by attempts to return to its former function in relation to tourism, trade, and retail. Since a high-rise construction has disrupted both East and West Berlin, any future development in the Friedrich Strasse district must preserve the traditional grid block, street, and height pattern. These requirements are most strict within this area to tie seamlessly both, East and West together. The buildings are very closely related, all of them the same height with none particularly standing out because of its details or height. The pre-war street grid is maintained, Berlin's eaves height of 22 meters respected, and building height of 30 meters preserved.



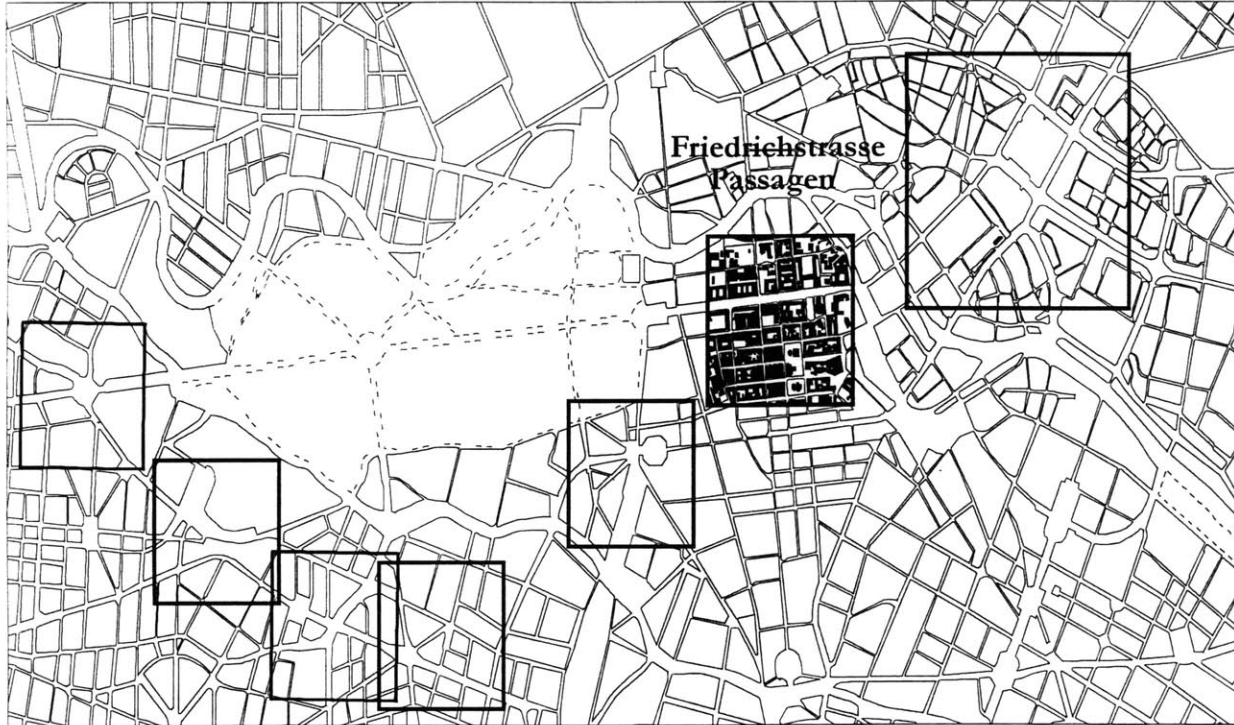
The four-lane street and a dense urban block identify Friedrichstrasse to the North.



Top: View of the Friedrich Strasse to the south of Leipziger Strasse with the reconstructed pre-war fabric.

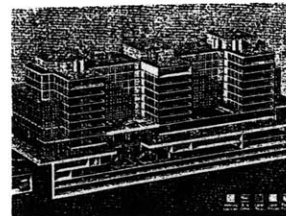
Bottom: View of Friedrich Strasse to the north of Leipziger Strasse with the Friedrichstrasse Passagen at Mohren Strasse.

Friedrichstrasse Area



Clockwise from left:
 Figure/Ground study of Friedrichstrasse
 Passage, a dense pre-war fabric of the street,
 plan of a proposed development for the
 passage, a view and elevation of the proposed
 Friedrichstrasse Passage.

From:
 Balfour, Alan. *World Cities*, 1995.
 Burg, Annegret. *Neue Berlinische Architektur:
 Eine Debatte*, 1994.

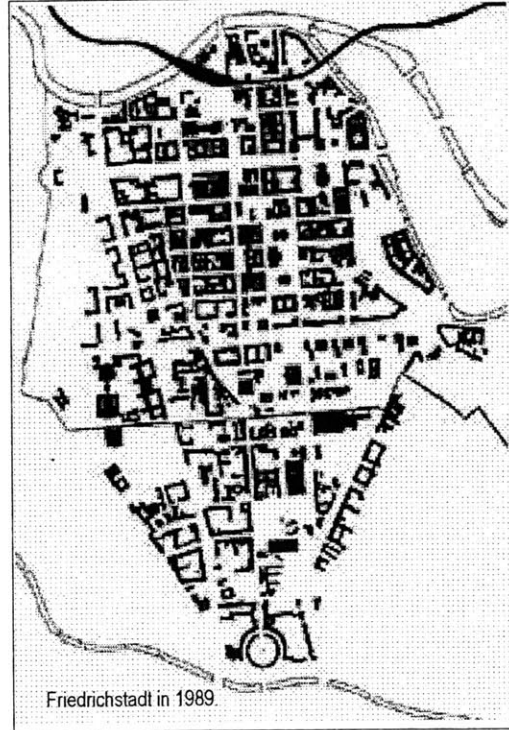


Friedrichstadt Area - Friedrichstrasse Passagen

FRIEDRICHSTADT DEVELOPMENT



Friedrichstadt before 1945.



Friedrichstadt in 1989.

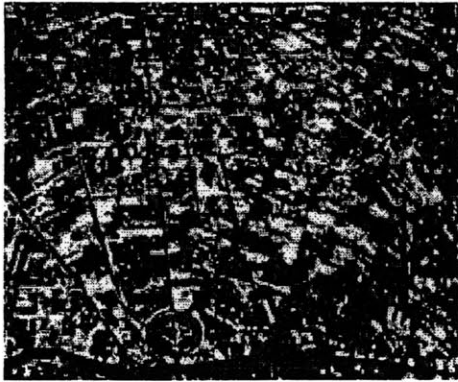


The dense urban fabric of the Friedrichstadt district was heavily damaged during the war. The fragmented fabric was untouched until 1990's. With redevelopment of the Potsdamer Platz came a renewed interest in reviving the central urban districts of Berlin.

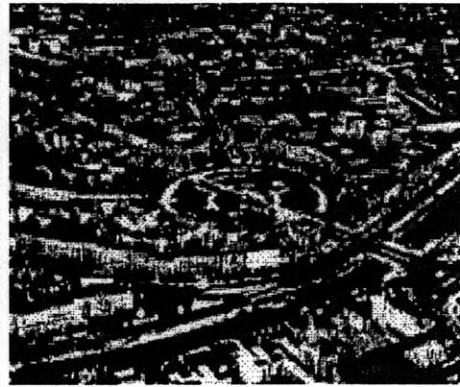
Proposed development for Berlin in 1991.

Friedrichstadt district and development.

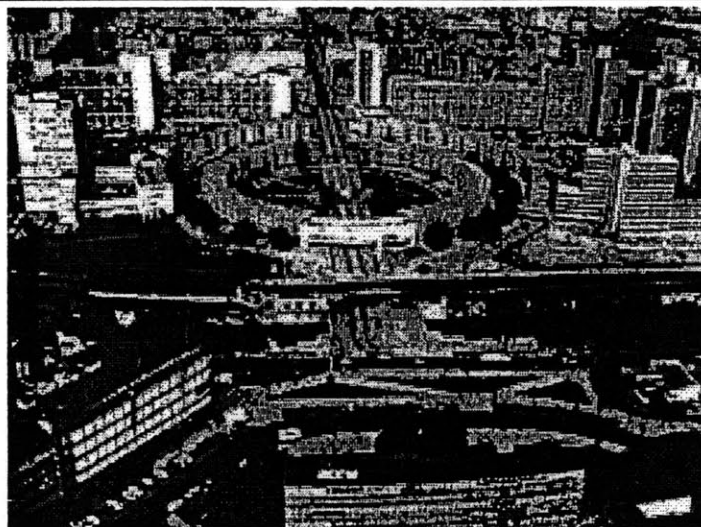
MEHRING PLATZ



Mehring Platz before the W.W.II ...



... and after the war.



The redeveloped Mehring Platz shows a single residential block surrounding the original platz. The circular form of the platz was retained, however the function of the platz has changed. It is now a residential area with little pedestrian or vehicular traffic.

From:
Berlin und Seine Bauten, Teil II. Berlin Verlag.
Wolters, Rudolf. *Stadtmittel Berlin*, 1978.

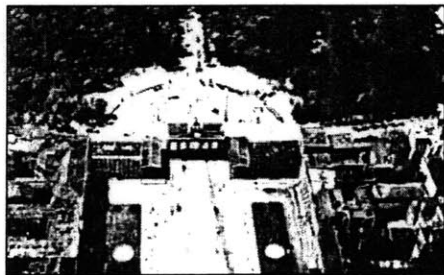
Development of Mehring Platz.

PARISER PLATZ

Originally, Pariser Platz next to the Brandenburg Gate was a proper square lined with prestigious buildings. The Pariser Platz is the introduction to the Unter den Linden axis. From 1945, the square was located in the middle of the walled-off area between east and west. Known as Berlin's Parlor it was formerly furnished with palatial buildings. Its entry, the Brandenburg Gate, the Brandenburger Tor is the landmark of the city.

A stroll along the street suggests the historical center of Berlin. The street Unter den Linden is 60 meters wide and 1.5 kilometers long. The street was constructed to connect the palace with the hunting grounds, the Tiergarten. There are many potent symbols along this street, forms of the Brandenburg Gate, and the Strasse des 17 Juni/Unter den Linden still serve as important symbols for the city inhabitants. Both of these are equally valuable and important. The first serves as a place of arrival while the other serves as an important urban axis. These symbols allow Berlin to remain its spiritual, symbolic, and historic functions.

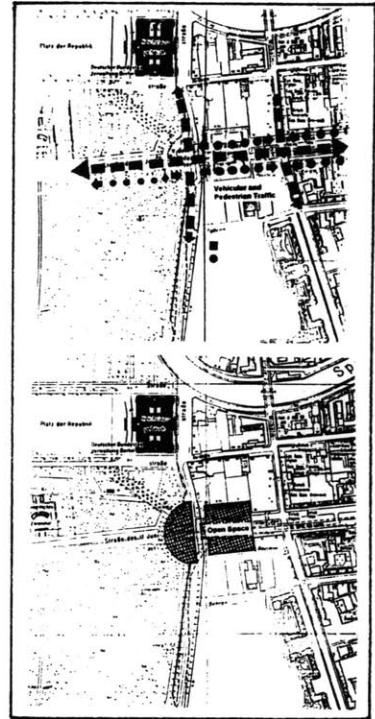
Essentially Neo-Classical city, Berlin and its parlor determined the district's character and scale of the surrounding buildings. The new construction at the platz today ranges from historical to banal, however they all complete the platz by defining its edges and giving the whole a sense of place. Critical reconstruction and its ideas are strongest here and succeed in partly re-establishing Berlin's lost sense of urbanism.



Aerial photograph of the original Pariser Platz.



View of the new proposal for Pariser Platz. The new proposal closely follows the historic platz.



Site analysis of Pariser Platz.
Top: Vehicular and Pedestrian traffic.
Bottom: Open area and its edges.



Plan of Pariser Platz as it was during Berlin's division. The building plot lines were faithfully kept during the 1990's reconstruction.

From: Karte von Berlin, 1993.

From: "Dresdner Bank", *Architectural Review*, 1223 (January 1999), 68.

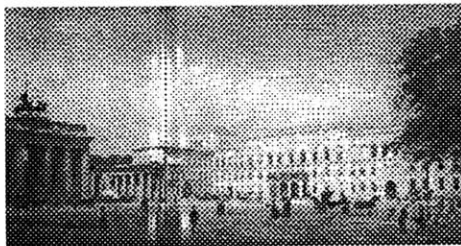
PARISER PLATZ



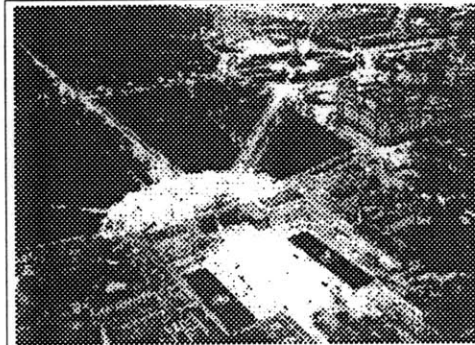
Brandenburg Gate in 1764. The original function of this gate was to serve as a Customs Gate.



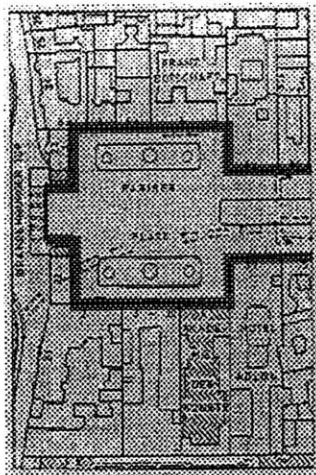
A new Brandenburg Gate served in defining a new Pariser Platz and a strolling ground, 1820.



The 1846 Pariser Platz served a new purpose as a new thoroughfare and a new public space.



View of the 1920's Platz acting as an axis and open urban space.

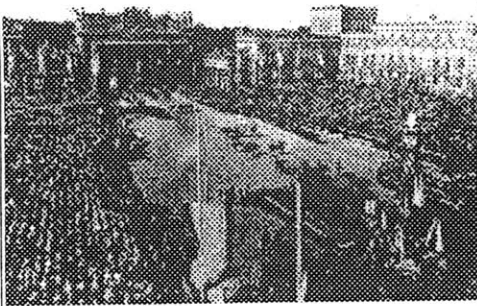


Plan of the Pariser Platz, 1939.

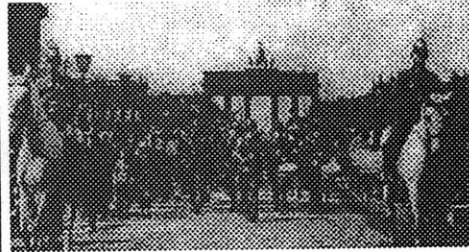
From:
Dempis, Laurenz. *Der Pariser Platz*, 1995.

Development of Pariser Platz.

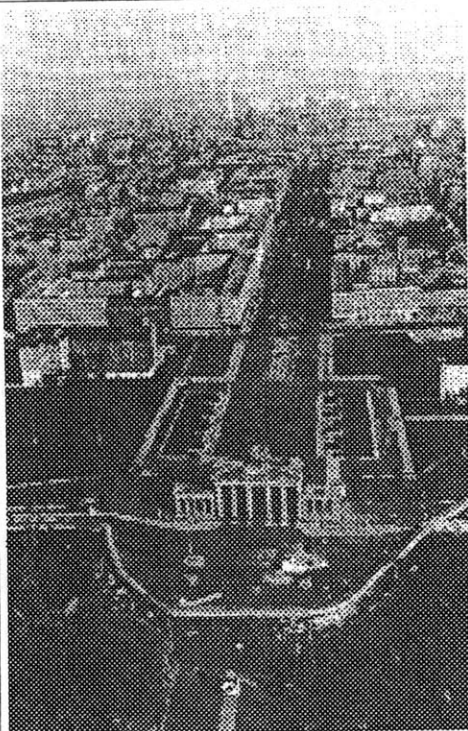
PARISER PLATZ



The Platz used during a Prussian military parade, 1866.



1935 Nazi military parade.



First as a custom gate and later as a connecting thoroughfare, the Pariser Platz acquired yet another role for the military parades. This new function began with Kaiser Wilhelm III and continued this tradition into the Nazi regime. With the Brandenburg Gate and a major axis through the city, Unter den Linden and Pariser Platz became synonymous in their role.

"Dresdner Bank," *The Architectural Review*, 1223, (January 1999): 68.

The empty Pariser Platz, October 1967.
The Wall is separating the city.



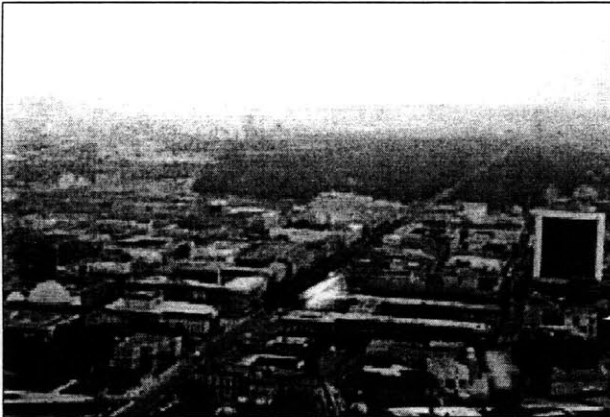
The redeveloped Pariser Platz in 1990's with the construction closely following the pre-war fabric.

Development of Pariser Platz.

UNTER DEN LINDEN

The example of the Strasse des 17 Juni/Unter den Linden is a straight, long line converging its attention onto a lofty target of the Brandenburg Gate. It is clear that the geometry of that particular passage corresponds to a monarchical period in Berlin's social structure.² The street and its urban planning represent Berlin's characteristics of authority and military power. This authority is most clearly represented through the symmetry of the axis, hierarchy, and monumentality of the surrounding structures.

The linear planning of the Unter den Linden displays a manner in which elements are rendered more accessible, linked, and supplied by the main central artery. The idea, which made this approach efficient, is only partially alive today. The application of the actual linear form through the city is too improbable. However, the terminating point at the Alexander Platz must be reevaluated at principles behind the linear connection to this street are not convincing enough. The terminating point of the Platz is too large and impersonal in size to be of any valuable urban quality to the city.



Top: View of Berlin's axis, Unter den Linden.

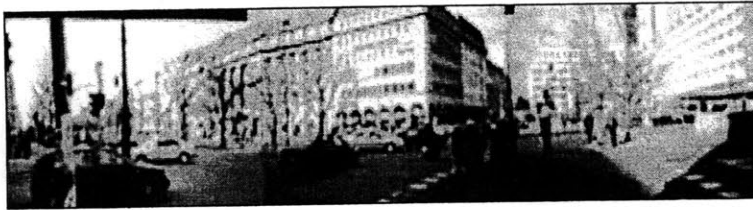
Bottom: The axis leading through Tiergarten toward Grosse Stern, a central point of the park and axis.



View of Unter den Linden axis leading through the city. Bottom: The street leading toward the Grosse Stern marking the center of Tiergarten.

² The Unter den Linden axis was strongly influenced by the reconstruction of Paris by Haussmann.

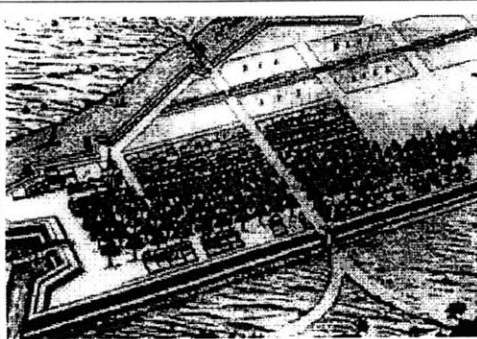
Even with strong symbols linking the city such as the Pariser Platz, Unter den Linden, and the Potsdamer/Leipziger Platz there are still areas throughout Berlin's fabric that require careful redefinition. Re-knitting of Berlin's fabric has to take into the account the large-scale fragmentation of the city during the period of separation.³ The city has grown with disillusion of discontinuous urban forms and became fragmented system of loosely connected places. Different developments were constructed based on various urban theories, even simultaneously constructed during the same period. As result what we see today are drastic changes in the scenery that directly place a distinct time and regime to a given place.



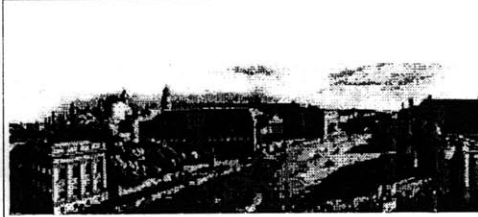
View at the crossing point of Unter den Linden and Friedrich Strasse.

³ The 'period of separation' is looked at as the period between 1949-1989 that was inspired by the rise of the Berlin Wall.

UNTER DEN LINDEN



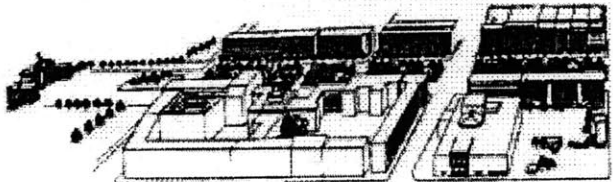
Urban expansion of Dorotheenstadt edged the axis in 1688.



Panorama of Unter den Linden in 1840 with a single wide street and sparsely located buildings.



View of Unter den Linden in 1903 and 1971. Note the change in dense urban fabric bordering the street. The width and function of the street as a pedestrian mall remained same.



View of the central portion of Unter den Linden designed for pedestrians.

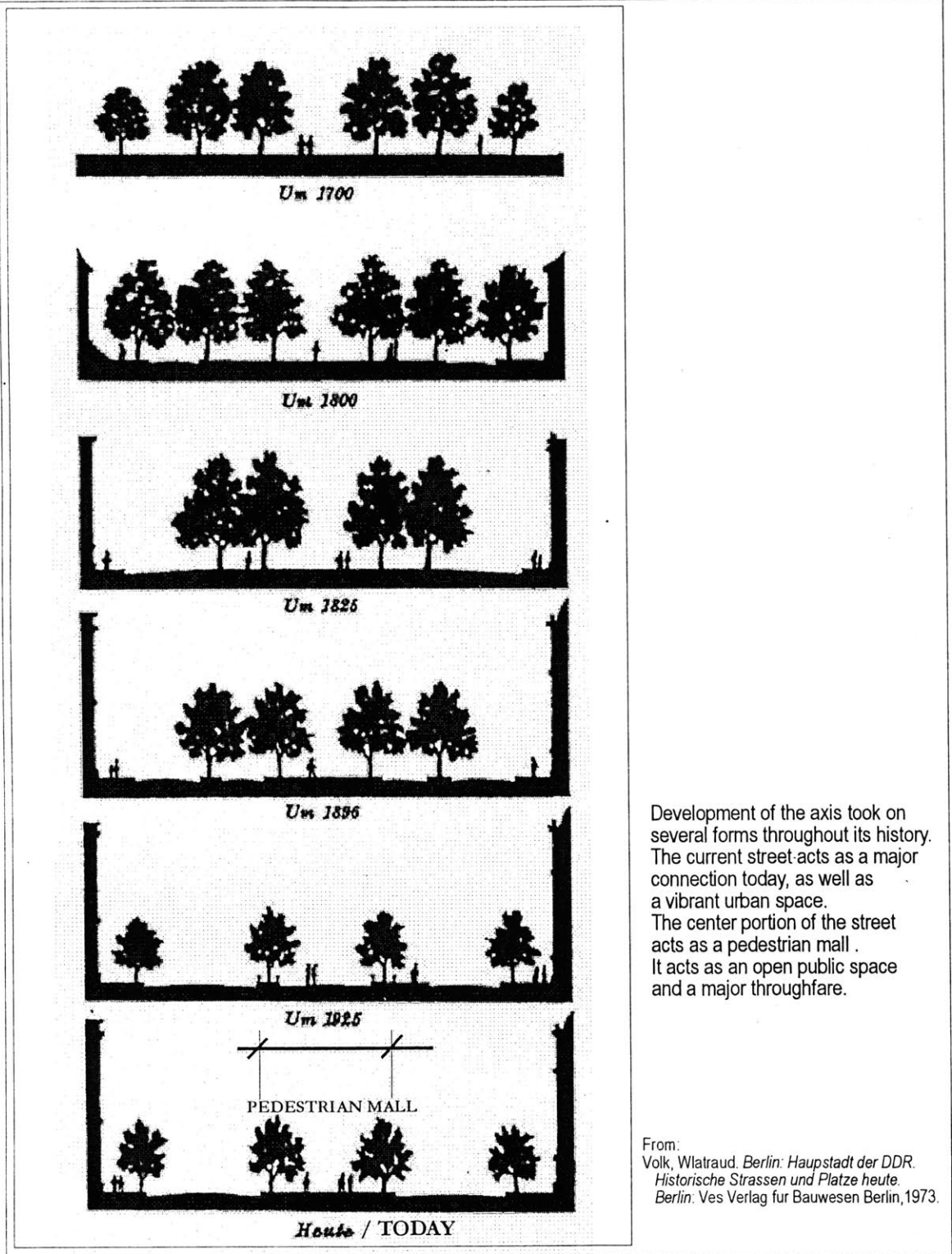


View of the street with the pedestrian mall sharing the traffic with vehicles, 1928.

From:
 Volk, Waltraud. *Berlin Hauptstadt der DDR.*
Historische Strassen und Platz Heute. 1973.

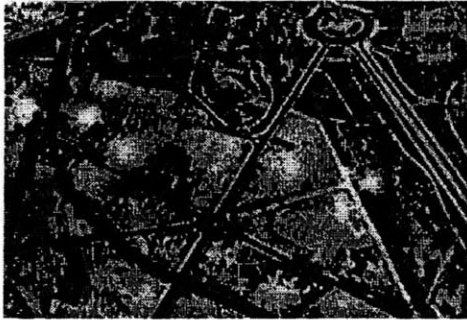
Analysis of Unter den Linden as an traffic axis and open public space.

DEVELOPMENT OF UNTER DEN LINDEN

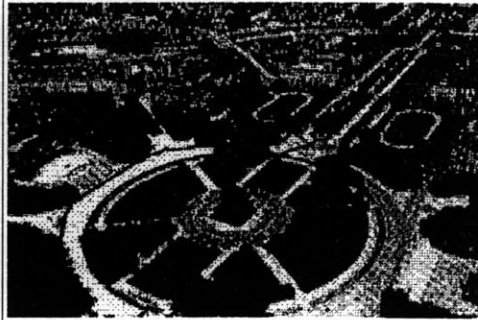


Development of Unter den Linden axis.

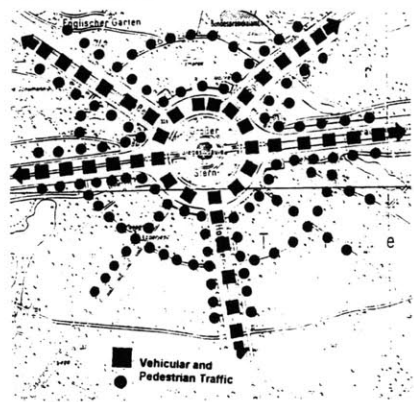
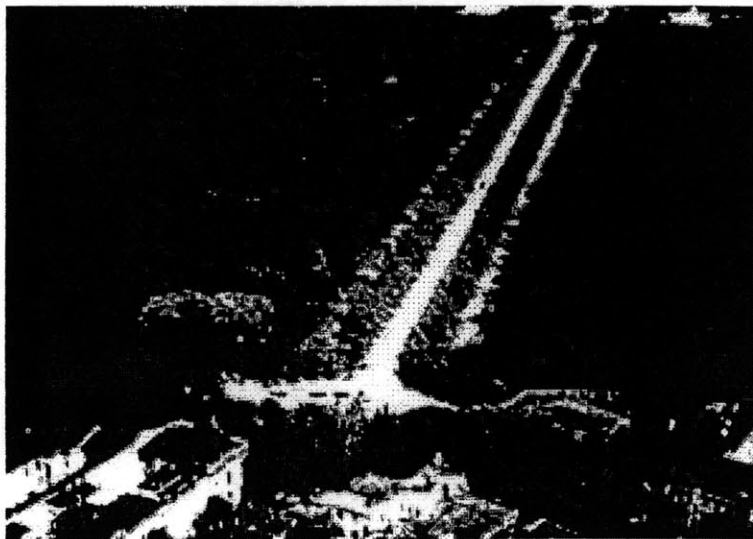
GROSSER STERN



Grosser Stern, or the Big Star, with the surrounding area of Hansaviertel, 1947.



View of the Big Star in Tiergarten, 1914.

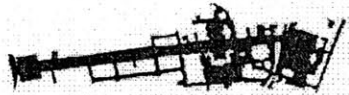


Site analysis of Grosser Stern.
Vehicular and Pedestrian traffic.

View of the central axis, Unter den Linden leading through the park, Tiergarten.
From: Jaquand, Corinne. *Berlin Portrait de Ville*, 1992.

Development of Grosser Stern.

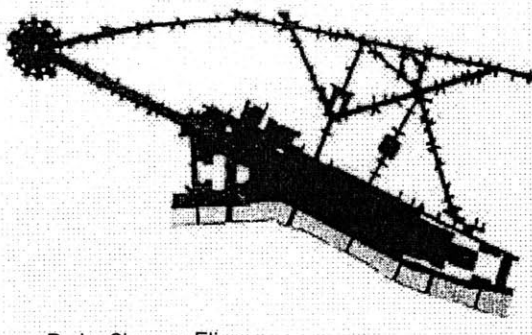
MAJOR AXES



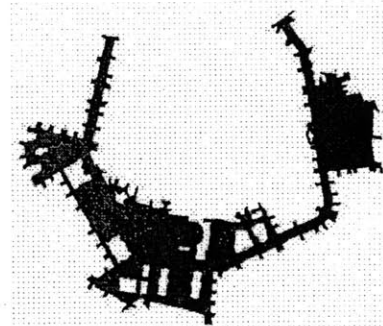
Berlin, Unter den Linden

Comparison of the major axial streets and their widths.

Unter den Linden	- 58 meters wide
Kurfurstendamm	- 53 meters wide
Champs Elisees	- 100 meters wide
Ring	- 57 meters wide
Bois de Boulogne	- 118 meters wide



Paris, Champs Elisees

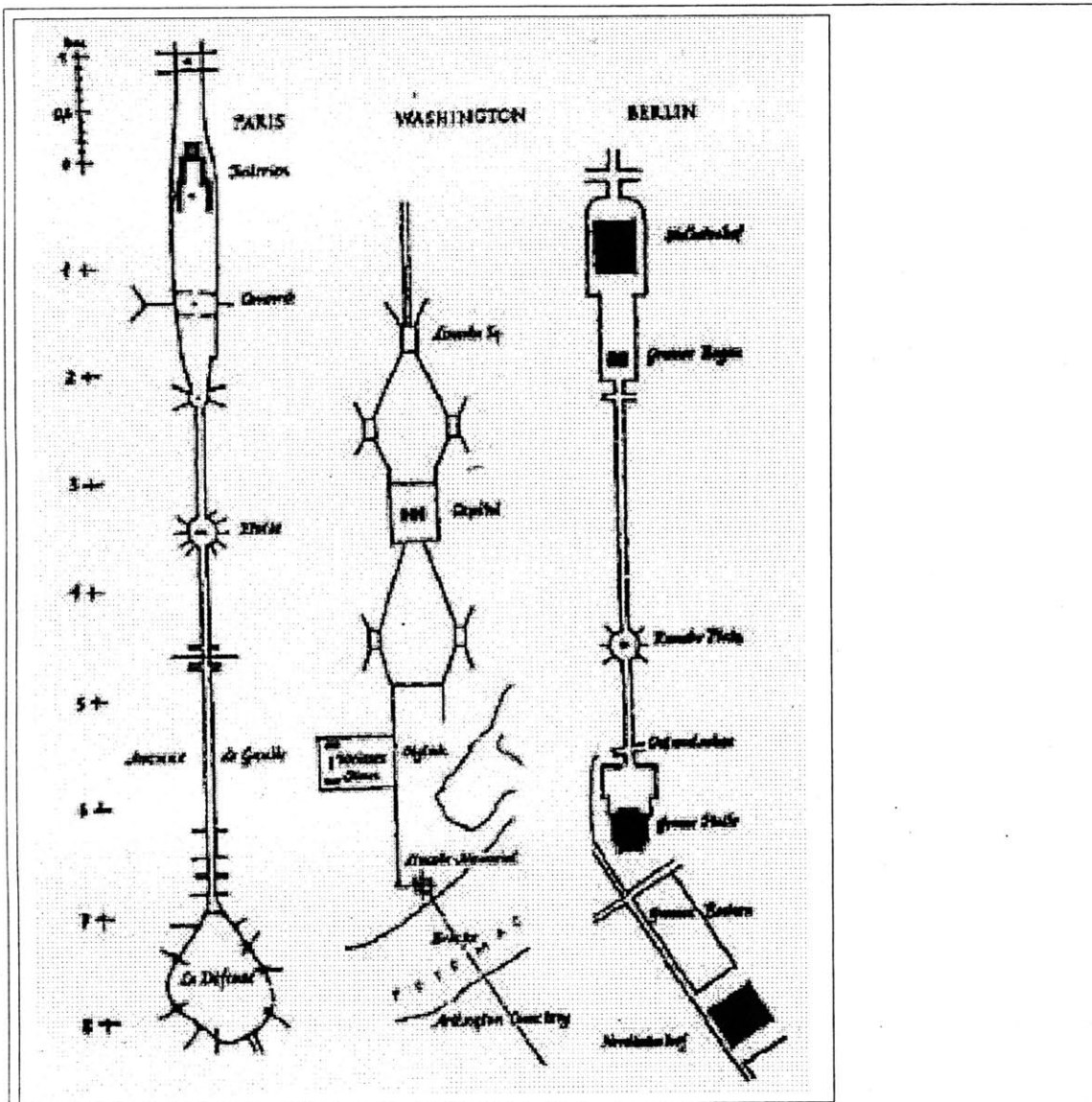


Vienna's Ring

Shown above is the Berlin's Unter der Linden axis, the Champs Elisees in Paris, and Vienna's Ring. Each street varies in the physical form, however all serve similar purpose of a monumental access. Unter den Linden is the only street laid out with the first planning attempts for Berlin. It since served as a planning device for expansions of the city.

From: Zimolo, Patrizia Montini, and others, ed., *Berlino Ovest: tra continuita e rifondazione*.
Roma: Officina Edizioni, 1987.

MAJOR AXES



Shown above is the study of three major axes: in Paris, Washington, and Berlin. The diagrams display the overall length, as well as the open spaces that form these axis.

From: Wolters, Rudolf. *Stadtmitte Berlin*. Würzburg: Verlag Ernst Wasmuth Tübingen, 1978.

Comparison of major city axes.

ALEXANDER PLATZ

The question of the Alexander Platz is one of interference. How to make this place more memorable as a former center of vibrant urban activity? With close connections of the district of Mitte, Alexander Platz is the most blunt expression of the modernist simplicity and vehicular traffic. The idea then becomes one of resolving urban problems that exist in other parts of the city. By resolving the dilemma of Alexander Platz we can create a solution, a prototype for Berlin's empty, non-functioning parts of the city making them applicable to larger number of cases.

Alexander Platz can be called 'the gateway to the east' as it served as a center and a pivotal point for the 'Capital City'. The one time center of East Berlin received overpowering competition after German reunification in form of the already developed and viable Kurfurstendamm. The one time first class area now strands suddenly abandoned. The colossal high-rises stand around like boulders making suddenly everything a little too big and too crude.

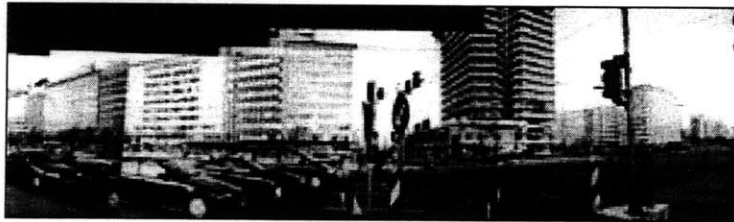
The Alexander Platz was always the prototypical square for Berlin's drive toward modernization. Previously in the 1920's Martin Wagner sought to realize his vision of a dynamic metropolitan square. Later, Peter Behrens' buildings of the Alexanderhaus and the Berolinahaus confirmed the architectural dynamic in materials and construction of his buildings. Therefore, we can observe the ongoing battle to modernize Alexander Platz to represent the latest fashions.



View of Alexander Platz facing the Behren's buildings. Bottom: View opposite of Behren's buildings, facing Karl-Marx Allee.

The Alexander Platz the one time center of the high-rises is looked upon today as a mis-planned and mis-shaped square. A square? A sort of an area, with a large portion of modern buildings that are not exactly 'great' architecturally speaking. While it is clearly a pedestrian area, the mega-scale of the surrounding buildings discourages any attention to the open space as a focal point. However, what this area of the Alexander Platz does offer is a very high proportion of dwellings in the immediate surrounding areas of about 70%. That is one of the main factors that strongly support redevelopment of this area along with the attitude that the city needs to manifest the old as well as a new political, economic, and topographical conditions.

Alexander Platz consists of a substantial open area dedicated to leisure activity and strolling. However, the size of the plaza itself prescribes that we divide the whole are and its vicinities into three parts.



Two views of the street, Karl-Marx Allee and acting as a major traffic artery.

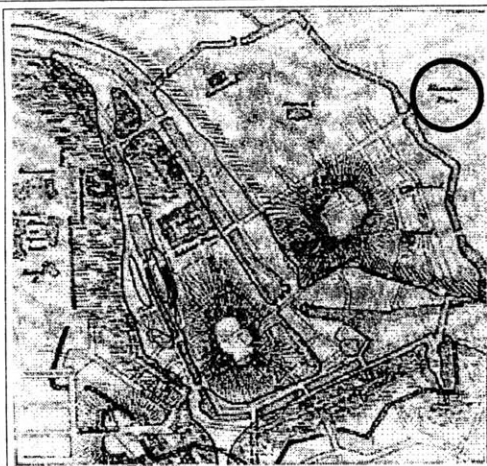


View past the Alexander Platz onto Karl-Marx Alle.



Wall of a typical office complex acting as a border and a barrier for Alexander Platz.

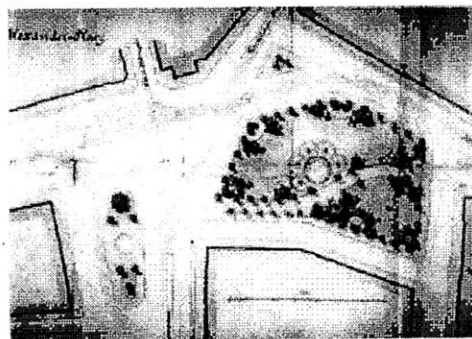
ALEXANDER PLATZ DEVELOPMENT



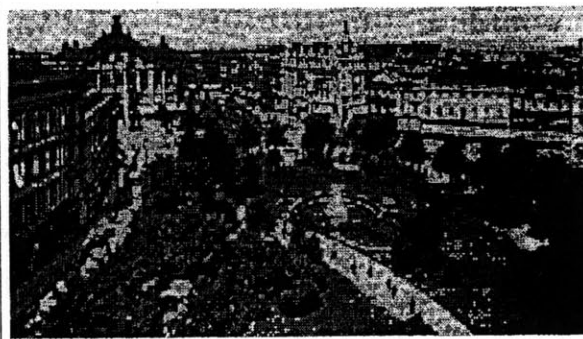
The original plan of Berlin-Colln. Alexander Platz is marked.



The Alexander Platz is located to the north just outside the city walls. From Sellerschen Plan, 1804. From: Volk, Walter.



Plan of the Alexander Platz in 1906. Below: The Alexander Platz with the Grand Hotel structure in 1900's.



View of the Alexander Platz to the south. Plan to the left of the photo lays out Alexander Platz in 1906.

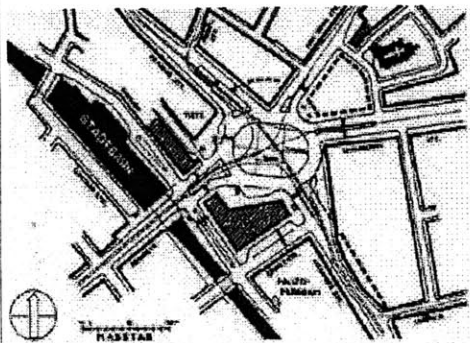


These photographs display the natural development of Alexander Platz. This growth period filled the existing urban area with the urban fabric without any major development plans.

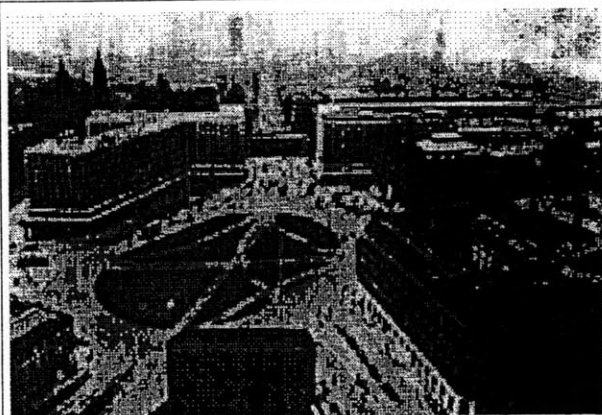
The entry to the Medieval City, the 'Altstadt', the Platz continued to serve the original function as the gateway and traffic interchange for the city.

Behrens, Peter. *Berlin Alexander Platz. Pläne, Zeichnungen und Photographien zum Wettbewerb und der Bebauung 1929-1932*. Berlin: 14. März bis 25. April, 1993.

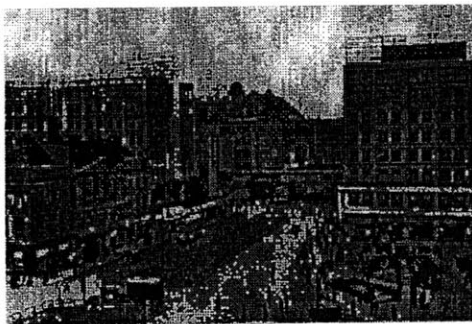
ALEXANDER PLATZ



Plan of the Alexander Platz 1927-1932.
From: Volk, Waltraud. *Berlin: Historische Strassen und Plätze heute*. Hauptstadt der DDR. Berlin: VEB Verlag für Bauwesen, 1973.



Aerial view of Behren's new additions to the Platz the Alexanderhaus and the Berolinahaus, 1935.

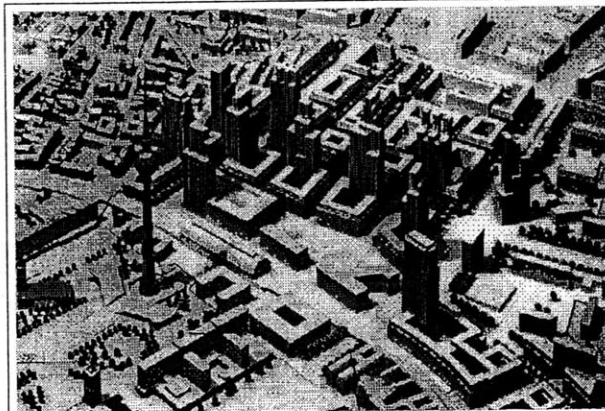


View of the entry between the Behren's buildings into the Alexander Platz from the Altstadt.



View opposite of the Behren's buildings. View to the north, 1937.

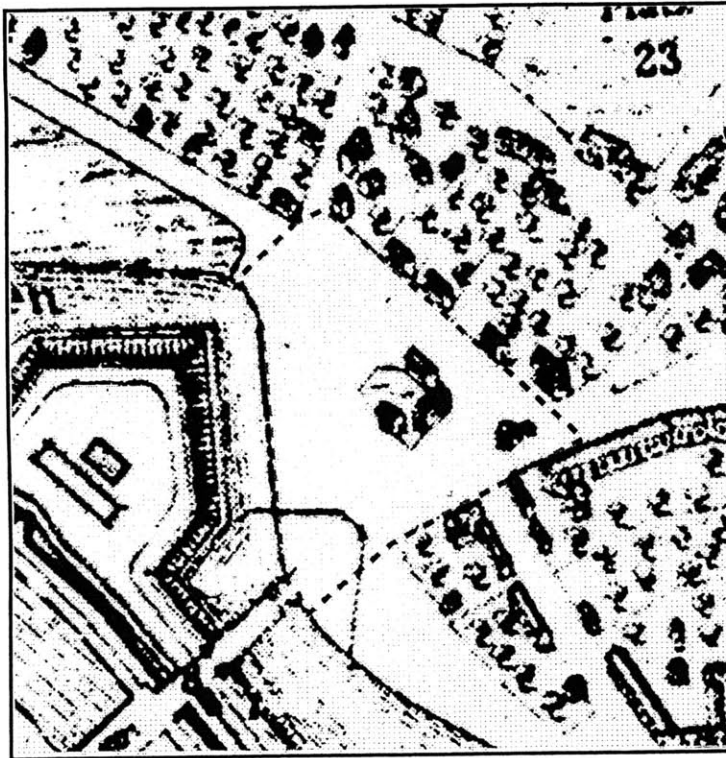
The first planned development took form of the Peter Behren's buildings creating a gateway for Alexander Platz. These buildings formed an oval open space. This was the first time a plan catered to the vehicular traffic and railway interchange.
As a transit link the open space was densely surrounded by the urban fabric with a close link between the traffic and the pedestrian.



Model of the newly proposed Alexander Platz.
From: Pysall, Hans-Joachim. *Das Alexander der Haus Alexander Platz*.

Growth and Development of the Alexander Platz.

HISTORY -ALEXANDER PLATZ

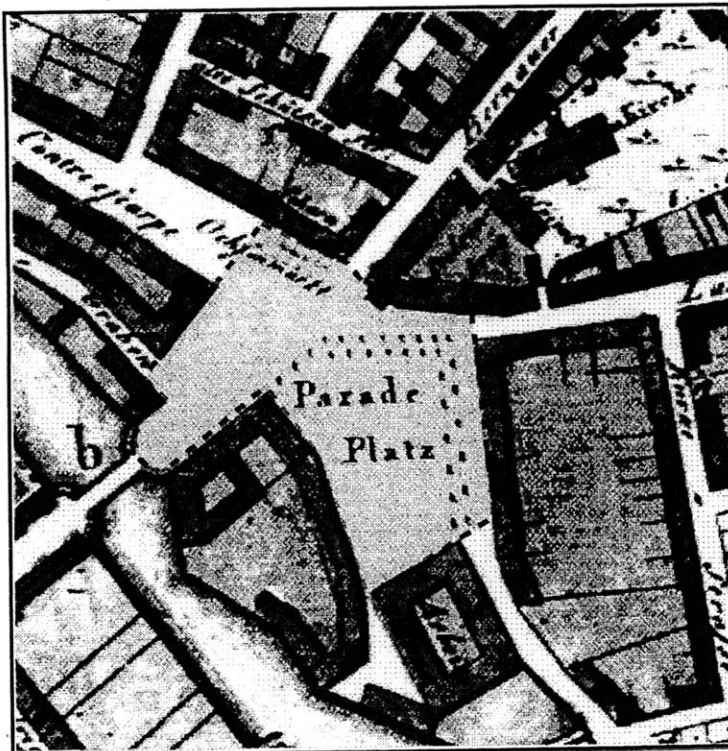


Plan von Lavigne, 1685

The original plan of the Berlin-Cölln twin town with the entry gate visible in the fortification.
The plan displays the area outside the wall that would later develop into Alexander Platz. The main feature that was kept throughout the Platz's development was the passage initiated by the gate in the fortification and remained as the main access to the medieval part of the city, the 'Altstadt.'

From the Plan von Lavigne, 1685.

From:
Prysall, Hans-Joachim and others, eds.,
Das Alexander Haus Alexander Platz.
(Berlin: Jovis Verlags- und Projektbüro,
1998), 44.



Plan von Selter, 1804

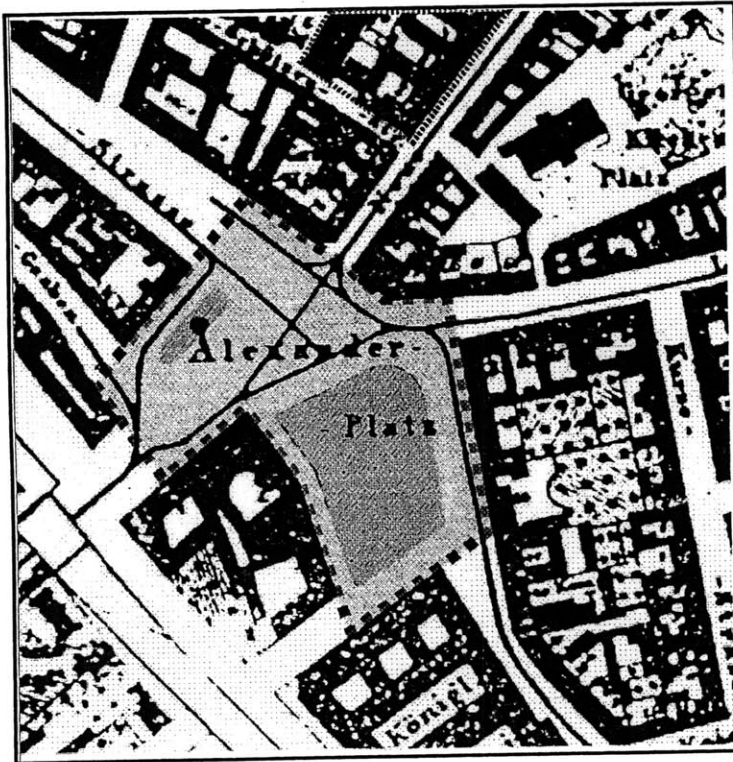
The Parade Platz (later the Alexander Platz), displays larger context of the development outside the original fortification system.
The Platz now is surrounded by a dense urban fabric, however, the fortifications surrounding the city are still clearly visible.

From the Plan von Selter, 1804.

ibid.

Plan of the Alexander Platz a. from 1865, b. 1804.

HISTORY -(cont.)

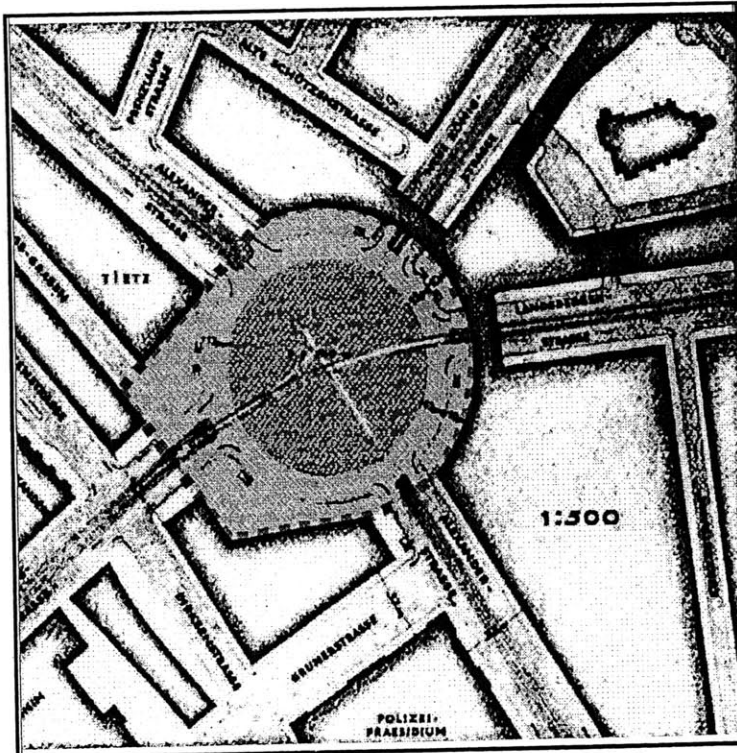


Plan von Liebenow, 1888

With the name changed to Alexander Platz the plan shows space at the end the 19th century. The customs gate is removed and the city wall replaced by a railway system and the Alexander Bahnhof. The Platz is the key entrance and exit system into the 'old' medieval part of the city, the 'Altstadt'. The plan displays existing buildings. One of the still remaining structures to the north is the *Polizeiprasidium* 1886, the Police Station.

From the Plan von Liebenow, 1888.

ibid., 45.



Plan von Martin Wagner, 1930

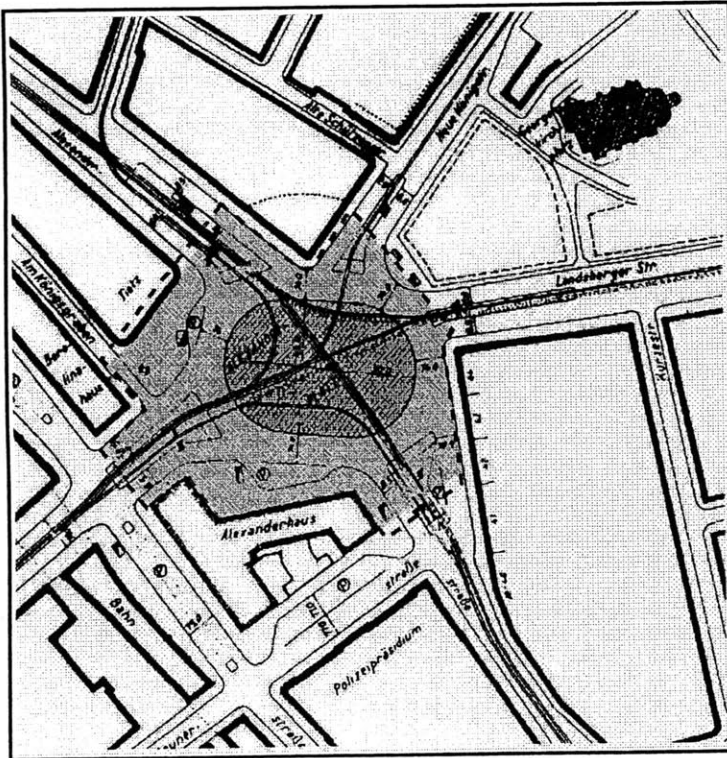
An urban design planned by Martin Wagner displays the Alexander Platz as a circular and important new node. The node is entered by radially extended transportation routes based on the new vehicular traffic system. This plan displays the new Modern dynamic nature of a motorized city. This plan was never realized in favour of Peter Behren's design of the *Alexanderhaus* and *Berolinahaus*.

From Plan von Martin Wagner, 1930.

ibid., 45.

Plan of the Alexander Platz a. from 1888, b. 1930.

HISTORY -(cont.)

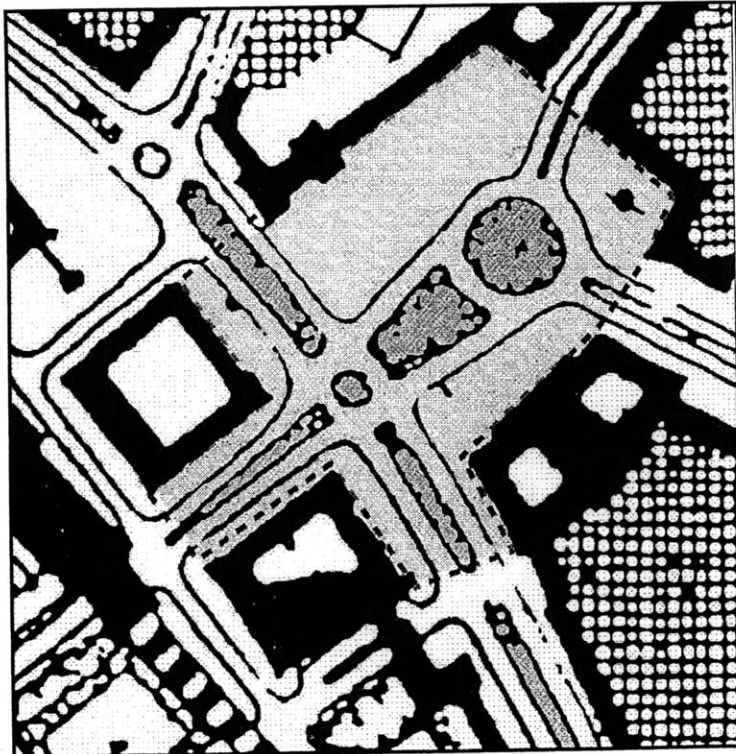


Karte von Berlin, 1940

This plan displays the new construction of Alexander Platz, the *Berolinahaus* and the *Alexanderhaus* by Peter Behrens. These structures by Peter Behrens are still very important part of the current day Alexander Platz. The Platz is now the transportation crossing. This form became the ideal form that persisted from the 1930's.

From the Karte von Berlin, 1940.

ibid., 46.



Generalbebauungs- plan des Berliner Zentrums, 1951

The post-war Alexander Platz is displayed with most of its urban fabric destroyed by World War II. The area is distinctly blocked by a thin wall of structures; however, the Platz is still a central node for the city. The new addition to the plan is the wider Karl-Marx Allee to the east side of the Alexander Platz.

From the Generalbebauungsplan for Central Berlin, 1951.

ibid.

Plan of the Alexander Platz a. from 1940, b. 1951.

HISTORY -(cont.)

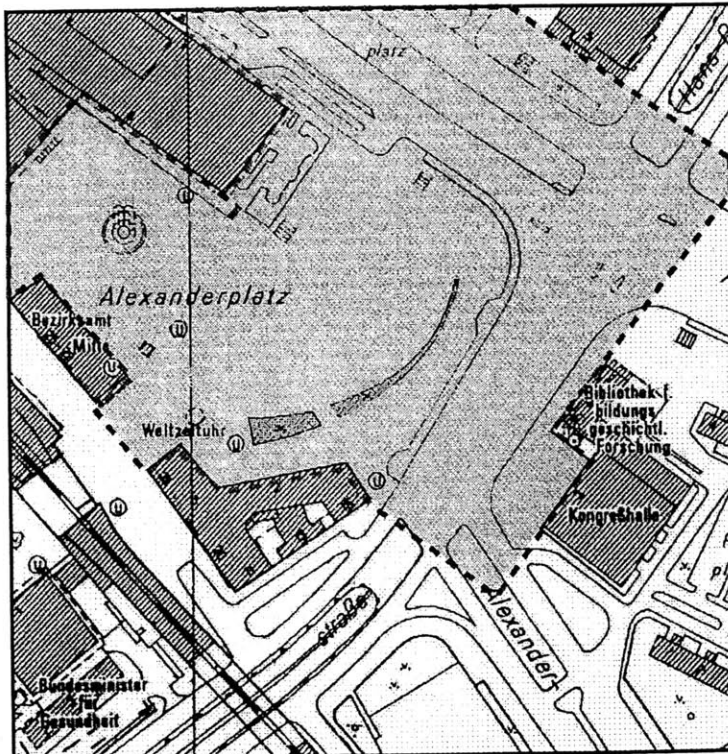


Strassenverkehrsplan, 1964

This is the reorganized street plan for the Alexander Platz and its surrounding areas. The plan displays the traditional street pattern of Berlin before the W.W.II and the proposed new Alexander Platz, streets, and dimensions. The original connection from the Rathaus and the Altstadt is now rerouted catering to the fast vehicular traffic.

From the Strassenverkehrsplan, 1964.

Ibid., 47.



Karte von Berlin, 1993

The plan shows the realized proposal for the Alexander Platz completed by 1964. It displays a space dedicated to an open public space. The new composition diffused the dense street pattern and added a new larger scale to the Platz. The space is fronted by the Karl-Marx Allee and becomes actively part of the wide street due to lack of any definition from its own buildings. The Platz's transformation takes it from the 18,000 sq. m., to its new dimensions of 80,000 sq.m.

From the Karte von Berlin, 1993.

Ibid., 47.

Plan of the Alexander Platz a. from 1964, b. 1993.

HISTORY -(cont.)

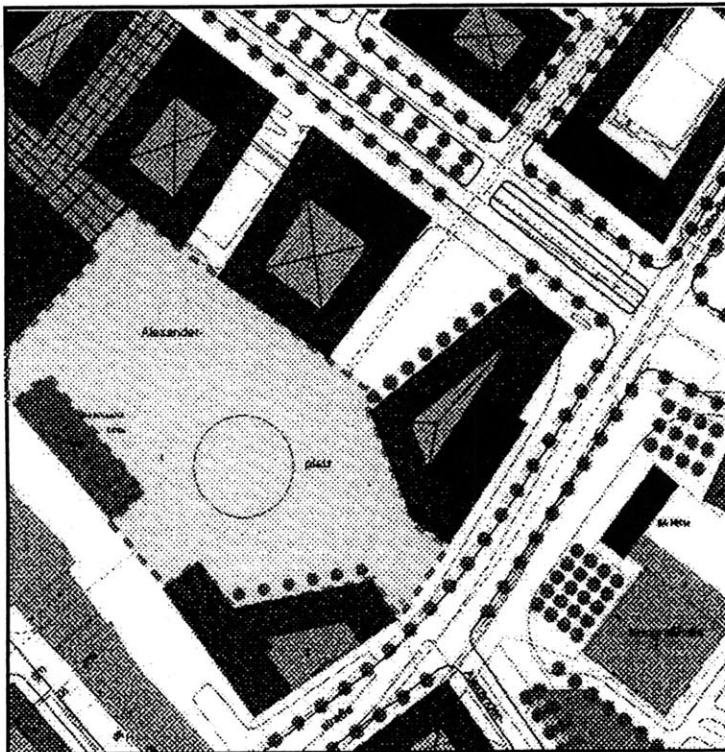


Figure 1.X - Plan of the Alexander Platz for the year 2000.

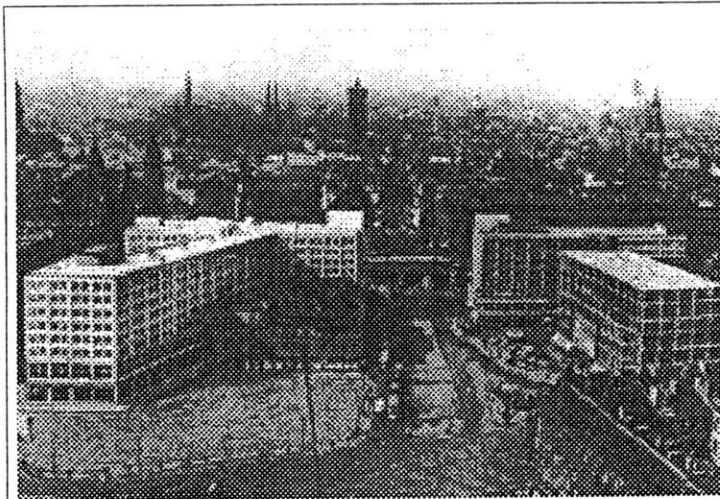
Planwerk Innenstadt, 1997

The new redevelopment plan for the Alexander Platz by Hans Killhoff. The new plan applies the traditional setting for the Platz this time basing it on the pedestrian traffic.

The new proposal applies the traditional Berlin courtyard block structures and retains the historical structures of the Berolinahaus and the Alexanderhaus dominating the plan. The new plan also retains DDR's philosophy on the traffic and retains the Karl-Marx Allee. The street retains its width, however now it has greenery strips between the traffic lanes diffusing and slowing down the vehicular traffic.

From the plan of Planwerk Innenstadt, 1997.

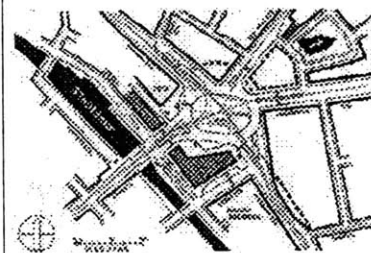
ibid., 47.



View of the Alexanderhaus of the left and the Berolinahaus on the right by Peter Behrens.

From:
Behrens, Peter. *Berlin Alexanderplatz. Plane, Zeichnungen und Photographien zum Wettbewerb und der Bebauung.* 1929-1932.

This summary illustrates development of the Alexander Platz from its earliest existence, and explains the two structures that still play a significant role in the current Platz today.



Plan of the two structures the Berolinahaus at the top and the Alexanderhaus at the bottom, by Peter Behrens. 1927-1932.

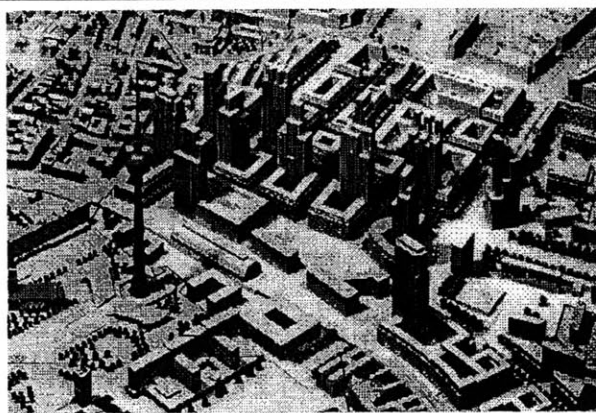
From:
Volk, Waltraud. *Berlin: Historische Strassen und Platze heute.* Hauptstadt der DDR. Berlin: VEB Verlag für Bauwesen, 1973.

Development of the Berolinahaus and the Alexanderhaus.

BERLIN'S PROPOSAL

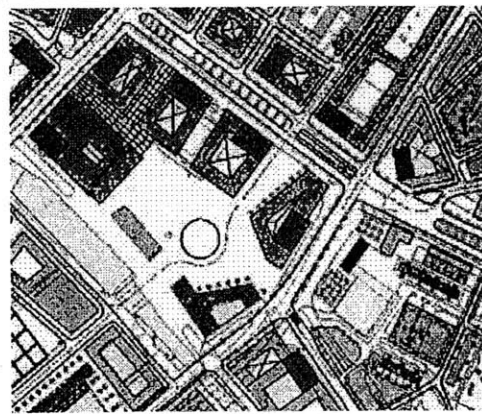


Plan from Karte von Berlin, 1993.



Model of the newly proposed Alexander Platz.
From: Pysall, Hans-Joachim. *Das Alexander der Haus Alexander Platz*.

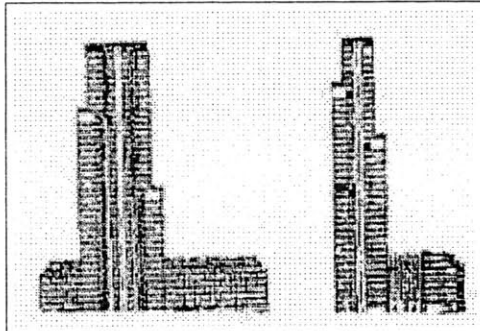
These photographs show next planning stages for Alexander Platz. Above, the 1960's development cleared any obstacles and retained only two Behren's structures. The open space is the current condition of the Platz. Next, are views of the desired development for Berlin. The plan retains some historic principles with the courtyard structures. However, the Platz retains the general shape of the open space from the 1960's plan. It retains the paved open space with similar large proportions.



Plan for the current proposal for the Alexander Platz, 1997.

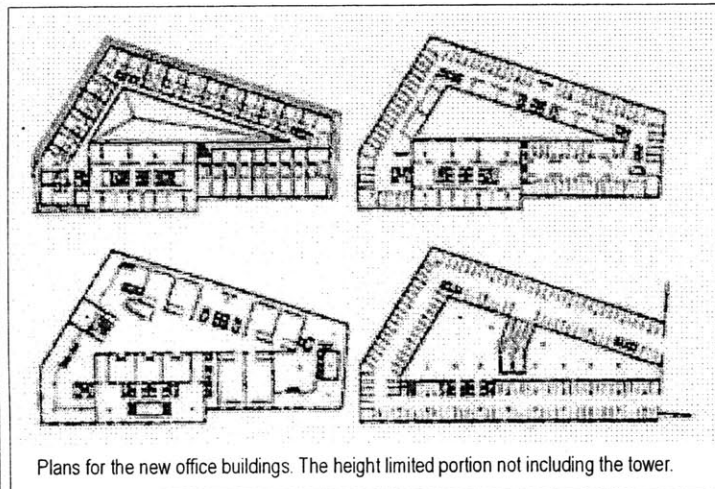
Berlin's proposal for development of Alexander Platz.

BERLIN'S PROPOSAL



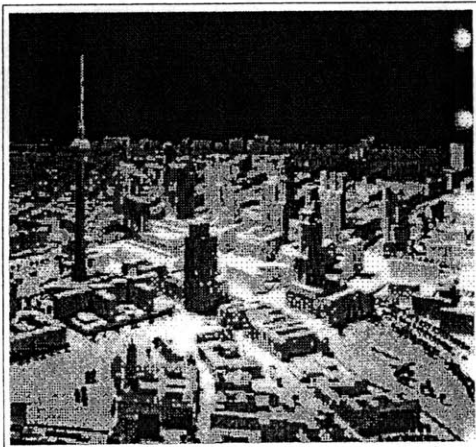
Elevation for the new office buildings at Alexander Platz.
From: Balfour, Alan. *World Cities: Berlin*. NY: StMartin Press, 1995.

Right: Plan for the new development at the Alexander Platz.

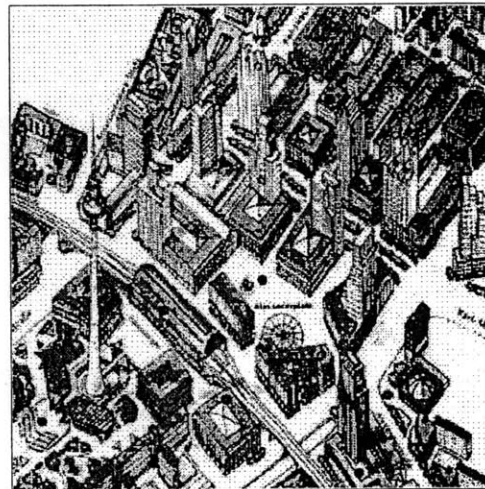


Plans for the new office buildings. The height limited portion not including the tower.

The Platz is marked by new office development. Above the standard height courtyard office buildings retain the 22-meter height limitation and consider Berlin's historic block pattern. However, the office towers sore well above the mandatory height regulation. The crown of 12 skyscrapers edge the redesigned Alexander Platz. The new design proposes more than a million square meters of office and retail space with only a small number of residential apartments.



View of the new proposal model. To the right a perspective view for the proposal.



Current Plans for the development of Alexander Platz.

Part-1

The Alexander Platz crossing at Karl-Liebknecht Strasse and the Karl-Marx Allee is an important point of intersection. It is a point at which the main axis of Berlin, the Strasse des 17 Juni/Unter den Linden turns into Karl-Liebknecht Strasse directing the main traffic through the city then sharply turning right into the Karl-Marx Allee. This in turn creates another axis toward southeast that leads the vehicular traffic into suburbs. This crossing became the eastern expression of the 1960's. It is an area that deserves consideration due to its amorphous nature. Lined completely with the façade of the Forum hotel on one side it faces a housing complex that is a display of paneled concrete construction. Along the Karl-Marx Allee the hotel faces a long line of blocks that do not display any particular identity. It looks like a very long single building lacking any division along its way. The proportion of this wall of building is even made larger due to the straight and wide nature of the street. The street itself is over 100 feet wide accommodating three lanes of traffic in each direction with two lanes for parking in the middle. Even the generous proportion of the sidewalks makes this passage distant and blunt. The area lacks distinction in the surrounding facades with no visible entries the naked street and its large blocks stretch for eternity.



View of the intersection of Karl Liebknecht Strasse and Karl-Marx Allee (North).



View of the same intersection to the northeast.

The intersection of Karl Liebknecht Strasse and Karl-Marx Allee indicates a break in the urban fabric from a set of tall 'modernist' structures to a district of Mitte with its typical dense urban fabric and the pre-war construction.



View looking past the intersection onto Mutz Strasse.



The Mitte district and its distinctive buildings.



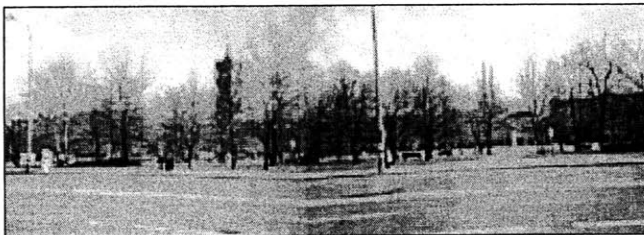
Side street of the Mitte district.

Part-3 A Townscape of Socialism

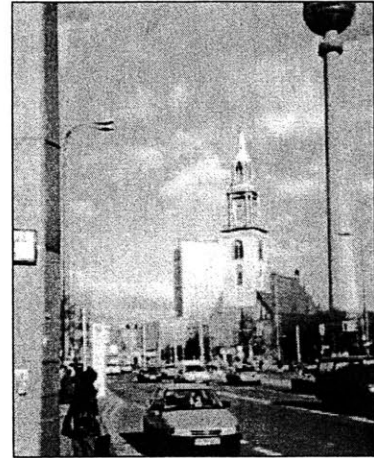
The stroll toward Alexander Platz from west leads through the open park of the historic 'Red Town Hall' and the modern Television Tower (1969). The red brick of the Town Hall identifies the style of the Brandenburg March and along with the Berlin Cathedral (1894) are placed in the Park. Both of these structures stand out in the sea of modernism and concrete as the Park is nested between two walls of single long mega-structures. Along the ground level is the arcade filled with shops, retail and restaurants. The very wide sidewalks combined with the delicate 'face-lift' of the existing structures make the area prominently display the GDR's history, its style, and politics. This becomes than the most successful urban area that clearly displays the ideological perspectives of the former East Germany and its tribute to Modernism.



View of the pedestrian passage along the Karl Liebknecht Strasse facing the park.



View of the Park with the City Hall in the background.



View to the right of Karl-Liebknecht Strasse with Marien Kirche, the TV Tower, and the park.

The composition of the Alexander Platz with its pedestrian area, the high-rise hotel, and Behrens's two structures form a desperate and empty space. The goal is to create an image of Berlin and the Alexander Platz that is more than a sum of individual parts. With the 'critical reconstruction' presiding in Berlin the new proposal of this fragmented area must be brought closer to the square again with structures at the immediate edges oriented to a new smaller scale. The redesigned Alexander Platz presents an opportunity to achieve a rank of Metropolitan Square once again. It presents opportunity to achieve a new urban statement from a new composition and articulation of building masses and open spaces.



Figure/Ground study of Alexander Platz area. The intersection between Karl Liebknecht Strasse and Karl-Marx Allee is highlighted indicating a boundary line and a change in the urban fabric.

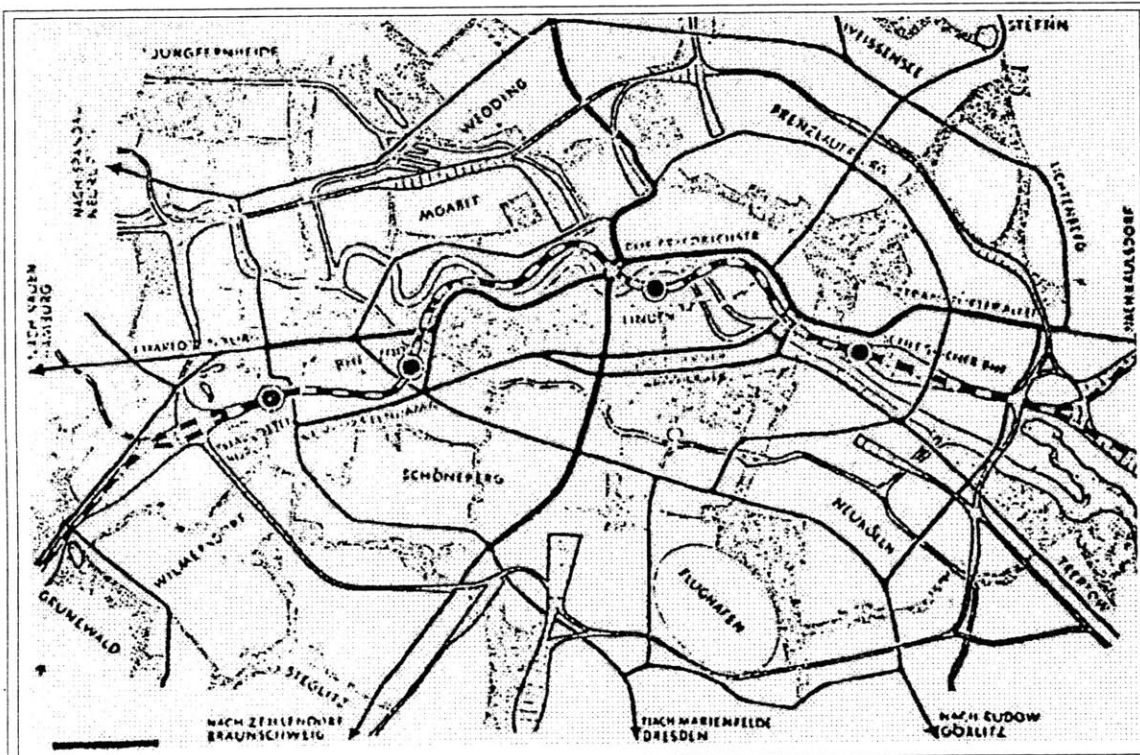
THE ZEHLENDORFER PLAN

Following the end of the war reconstruction plans were produced that followed the modernist principles of urban development. There was never a plan to rebuild, upgrade, or preserve the old tenement housing surrounding the Alexander Platz. In accordance with new views these had carried a negative associations with the past. Instead of reconstruction, East Berlin looked at works of Gropius, Tauts, and LeCorbusier for inspiration. The reconstruction program was further crippled by shortage of materials, which further implemented transportation and communication factors instead quality urban environment. (Scharoun: 1946) The new focus was on the non-aesthetic factors of urban development: communication, sanitary controls, and land-use differentiation, therefore functional and technical factors.

POLY-CENTERS

Each half of Berlin in the past fifty years tried to establish independent city centers. In the west the area surrounding the Kurfurstendamm form the city center. The east has the Alexander Platz and the cultural forum that form means for restoring a continuous metropolitan band resulting in a poly-center structure. Each sub-center is linked to the center, however the densest areas form centers in themselves. Therefore, the future development must acknowledge the poly-center structure of Berlin. The city along the railway ring shows the most need for development. The Alexander area especially shows the need for shops, restaurants, and new integrated cultural and social institutions.

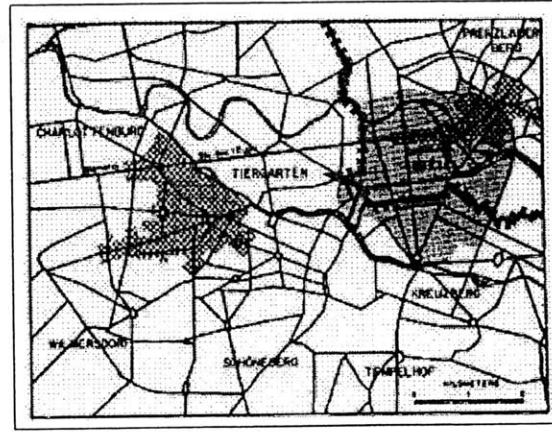
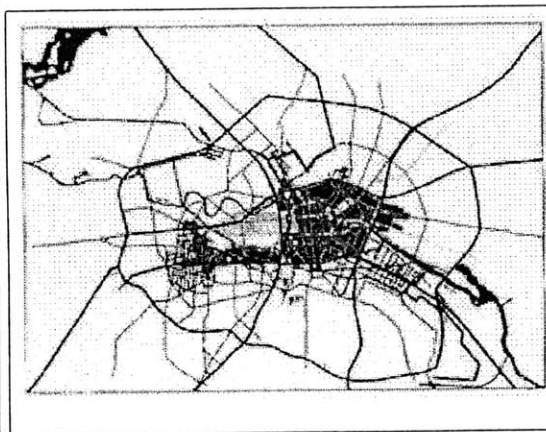
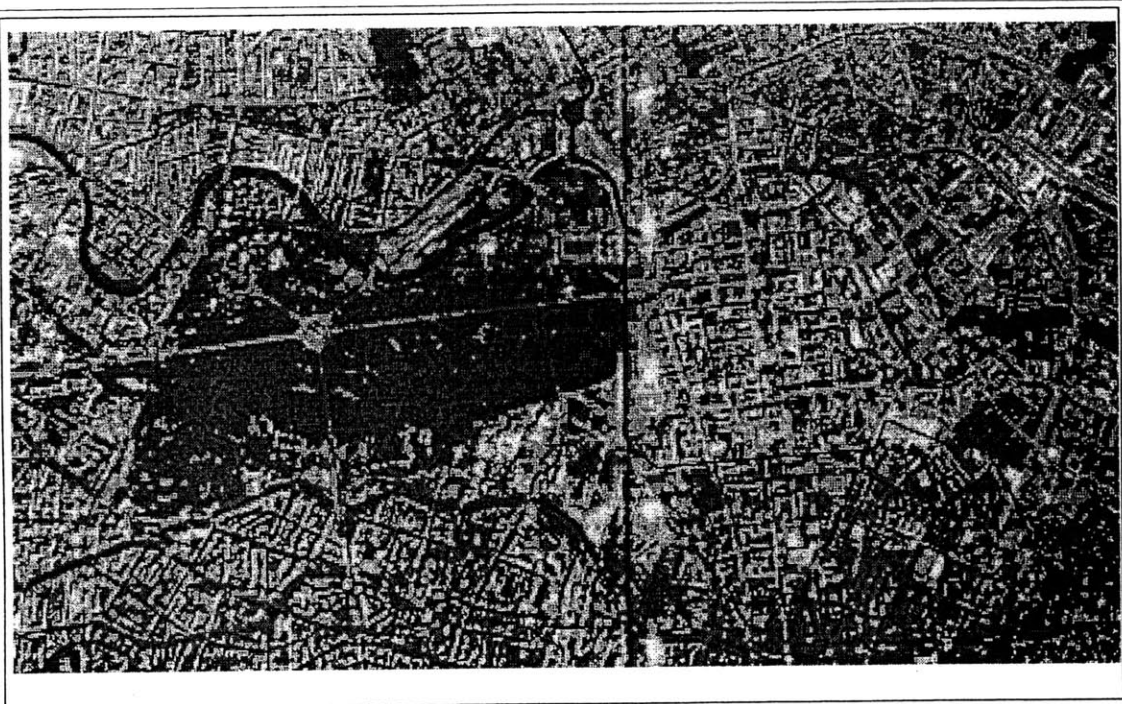
DEVELOPMENT PLANS



Trebbi, Gioio. *La Ricostruzione di una città, Berlino 1945-1975*.
Gabrielerazzotta editore: Milano, 1978.

View of Berlin's Zehlendorfer Plan, 1946.

BERLIN'S DIVISION

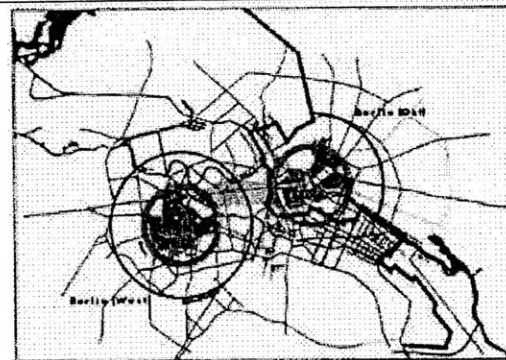


Top: The division line of the Berlin Wall is shown in black dividing the city into the East Berlin and the West Berlin.

Middle: The shift of Berlin's central business district, 1945-1989, and original central district with its extension into the Kurfürstendamm.

Bottom: The post-war division of the Berlin's centers in the west at the Kurfürstendamm and in the east surrounding the Alexander Platz.

From: Giersch, Ulrich, *Begleitheft zur Edition Panorama*. Berlin: Projektagentur, GmbH, 1998.
 Zimolo, Patrizia Montini, and others, ed., *Berlino Ovest. tra continuità e rifondazione*. Roma: Officina Edizioni, 1987.
 Kirchhoff, Gerhard, ed., *Views of Berlin. From a Boston Symposium*. Boston: Birkhauser, 1989.



The division of Berlin and its two urban centers.

Today Berlin is once again 'one city'. The transitional problems of reunification of the road links and transportation are mostly solved today. However, given the planning aims of the past 50 years the city needs some alternative proposals for the future of a multi-center capital.

Since the end of 19th century, Berlin's central area has been criticized for being too closely built up. Thus planners considered the heavy war damage as a blessing so that they could re-zone the city, reduce density, and increase traffic circulation within the inner city. This suggests a general desire to consider reconstruction and creation of a better environment in which to rebuild the city. This conceptual planning however, preceded a long way since the W.W.II. One particular aspect was a shift away from the perception of planning as a purely architectural and politically neutral activity. The 1950's aimed at erasing all traces of the city's historical identity. This applied to both, rebuilding the heavily damaged areas as well as, the large-scale demolition for example the Alexander Platz and its surroundings. These created new satellite towns to house the displaced population. Therefore, the new redesigned Alexander Platz presents an opportunity to achieve a rank of a Metropolitan Square once again. From this study we must conclude that Berlin must develop first within its city limits giving preference to projects that intensify the existing built up areas and establish a new set of developments that closely coexist with public transport facilities. This presents opportunity to achieve a new urban statement from this new proposal and its composition of the building masses and open spaces at the new Alexander Platz.

CHAPTER 6

URBAN EXPANSIONS AND DEVELOPMENT

1920'S BERLIN

Berlin from the foundation of the Reich in 1914 was an anomaly. The city was dominated by capitalist bourgeoisie, and governed ultimately by an authoritarian and militaristic imperial power. However, on the urban level it was ultimately the city police that controlled the urban development. The 'Building Police', the 'Baupolizei' exercised control over the building lines, materials, and construction methods. It was the police authority in 1862 that determined the nature of the urban expansion of the Wilhelminian Ring.¹

It was during the turn of the century that Berlin also experienced various attempts at improving the social needs of its population. During this time hospitals were established, the sanitary conditions improved, and schools were built in this period. In the 19th century Berlin began to expand once more. Almost 4 million inhabitants, Berlin consisted only of 1,343 hectares. In the 1860 Berlin and its city limits were extended by adding more quarters. These were taken substantially by the city's working-class population such as the Wedding and the Moabit district. This resulted in increase of the Berlin's area to 5,923 hectares in the 1878. The 1890's created the Zweckverband, an association between the city of Berlin and the surrounding suburbs for specific administrative purposes. The Zweckverband was intended for co-ordinating services particularly in urban planning, and separate transport enterprises. However little progress was made due to the outbreak of the First World War.

¹ The new plans for the *Wilhelminian Ring* (1862) were hardly useful. Because of the compensation claims from the war, Hobrecht as the Berlin's planner provided as few streets as possible, which resulted in congested streets and very large blocks. In conjunction with the large blocks the Building Code allowed for the congested housing conditions of the *Mietkasernen*.

Although, the Weimar Republic settled into normality despite the First W.W., the 1920's in Berlin were particularly looked upon as the 'golden age'. Despite the world economic crisis Berlin made social and economic progress. The number of inhabitants doubled by 1920's from 1.9 million to 3.8million. (Elkins 1988: 25)

For the Weimar Republic the modern architecture became a new focal point. With the Bauhaus (1919) relocated to Dessau (1925), the overriding concerns became new and more acceptable standards for worker's housing. Industrial revolution and the expanding urban development could be seen clearly with the expanded railway system. The New Berlin started to be administered as a unified city enclosing the heart of the city and the districts surrounding it: Spandau, Charlottenburg, Neukolln, Schoneberg, and Wilmersdorf. (Elkins 1988: 26)

The new urban explosion of the 1920's created a dense packet Berlin. A new situation of decentralization of industry led away from the central core. However, Berlin continued to progress as a major economic center as witnessed by the entertainment activities surrounding the Kaiser-Wilhelm Memorial Church. The emergence of this second urban core was to be a crucial point in the reorganization of the West Berlin after the W.W.II.

PRE-W.W.II LOCATIONS OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

1871 propelled a new series of economic activity surrounding the central core of Berlin. Very specialized areas developed that paralleled the Industrial Revolution throughout the rest of Europe. The Friedrichstadt district gained its Stock Exchange (Borse) which became the forerunner of the 'banking district' within its boundaries. The southern Friedrichstadt also fostered strong newspaper and film district near the Leipziger Straße and the Ritterstraße. Due to the increased popularity of the Friedrichstraße the S-Bahn station, within close proximity to the Potsdamer Platz, quickly filled with activities such as restaurants, shops, and entertainment. The start of modern industry could also be found on the fringes of the central core. Clothing and retail workshops could be found along the Leipziger Straße all the way to Spittlemarkt.

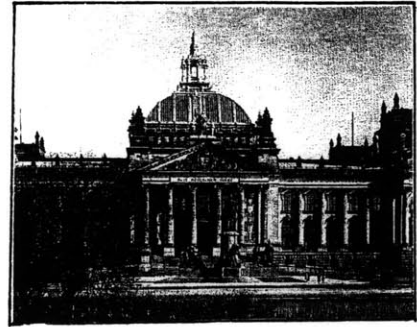
The end of the 19th century also brought the large machine building industries into Berlin. Most of these required larger areas and were located on the fringes of Berlin. Berlin's outer ring of railway and water transportation increased its importance as the large industries moved away creating far satellite settlements. This was to become a significant point by which the process of decentralization was initially started. (Elkins 1988: 128)

On the northern side of the city the Alexander Platz marked the break in the old Berlin fabric starting the first ring in the outer fringe. The western fringe of the city was the important area for the further development of Berlin especially while bringing the city to its capital status. The Kurfurstendamm originally received its start as the elector's embankment road and today is the best known road and open space in West Berlin.

The westward shift took place in developing new urban districts for the middle and upper bourgeois class. The admiration of Paris and implementation of the Hobrecht plan led to creating the palatial Apartment block and new avenues with the Kurfurstendamm reflecting a new urban elegance, one possessed by the Champs Elysees in Paris. This produced a large-scale ornate architecture such as the Reichstag (1884-95) and the Victoria Insurance Headquarters (1906-13).

Although the east section of the central Berlin had more formal urban structure in comparison to the western counterparts, the west developed into wealthy residential area of aristocracy and capitalists. While the eastern part of Berlin had six palaces of its own and a more rigid structure of the Unter den Linden the perception of the west and the southwest was that of better situated residential developments. West of the Berlin's Palace, the Dorotheenstadt (1674) was cut by the monumental axis of the Unter den Linden leading through the Brandenburg Gate. Originally, the new district of Friedrichstadt was laid out south of the Dorotheenstadt and separated by the customs wall. In contrast to the medieval street layout the new district was placed in regular rectangles with its own major east-west axis in the form of Leipziger Strasse². Between 1732-1737 the Friedrichstadt and its major open areas were laid out. Those also became the city's open public areas: the octagonal at Leipziger Platz, the round Belle-Alliance Platz, and the square at the Pariser Platz. The Friedrichstadt with its strict gridiron plan created only one true open public space in the Gendarmenmarkt. The other open spaces were originally dedicated to the entry gates, passages, and military training only later did they fulfill the function of open public spaces.

The approximate center of the new district was the Gendarmenmarkt with its French and German churches. Improved by Schinkel in 1821, the height and appearance of buildings conformed to the general plan for the district. The land of new developments was owned by the electors allowing full control over the new developments. (Elkins: 162) Although, the development of Friedrichstadt was strictly controlled, the Gendarmenmarkt echoed a centralized scheme while it



The Reichstag (1884-1895) displayed the ornate architecture of the Weimar Republic. From: Taylor, Ronald. *Berlin and Its Culture*.

² The major street of the *Friedrichstadt* is the *Friedrichstrasse* as the north-south axis terminating at the Rondell (today the *Mehring Platz*) that originated as a custom gate.

also accentuated its elements in contrast to the block-like character of the surrounding buildings.

CHANGING FUNCTIONS OF THE CITY

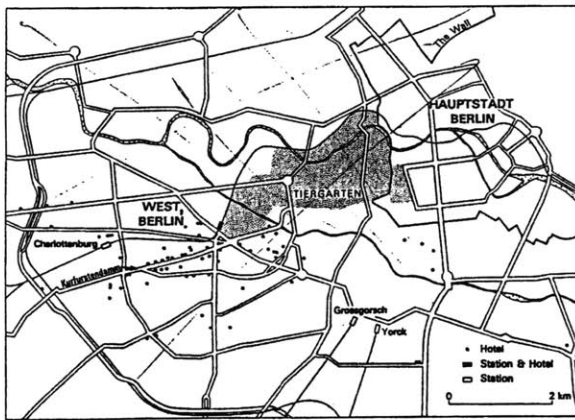
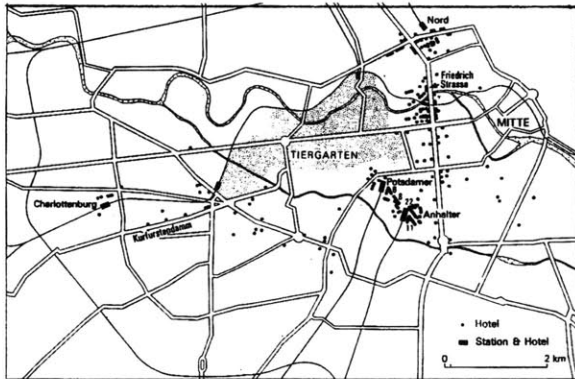
The original development of the Friedrichstadt district (1688) dictated the construction of the 2 to 3 story stone houses. The exemption was the Wilhelmstrasse, which was reserved for construction of palaces and residential areas for nobility. The change started in the 1850's when the more elaborate residences of the Berlin's nobility were absorbed by the asymmetrical, by then a crowded and hectic central urban core of the 'Altstadt'. Slowly the administrative buildings with wider streets and stricter layout of the Friedrichstadt replaced the original houses.

The eastern area of the Dorotheenstadt had also changed its functions and was now more related to the educational and cultural facilities. Most of the Dorotheenstadt, north to the Unter den Linden, was closely related to the nearby museums. The western side of the Friedrichstadt, mostly residential and light industrial area, experienced many different transformations of functions. Many of the functional changes came later with the Third Reich. It became a center of the national government marked by the Reichstag, the Wilhelmstrasse, the Foreign Office, and the Goebbel's Propaganda Ministry. Even the palaces and elaborate residences acquired a new government supportive functions along the Wilhelmstrasse. (Elkins: 163)

The Wilhelmstrasse ironically created the clearest fringe boundary of the Neoclassical Berlin. With the transformation from the residential to the governmental functions making the street the boundary of the build up area.

THE WILHELMIAN RING

The Wilhelmian Ring, also known as the Wilhelminische Ring, is probably most interesting of districts containing the best examples of the changing morphology of Berlin. The explosion of Berlin's population about 1870's corresponds to the extremely high urban development of the residential quarters. This high-density area offered the previously described residential development with the intermixed light industry. The original planning done by James Hobrecht in 1862³ followed many of Hausmann's and Paris principles. (Elkins: 165) Unlike Hausmann's Paris, the new plan for Berlin did not require extensive demolition. Only few plans after Paris succeeded in equaling the amount of demolition done to a city, even though both Hobrecht and Hausmann had common roots in town planning still exemplified by Dorotheenstadt and Friedrichstadt districts.



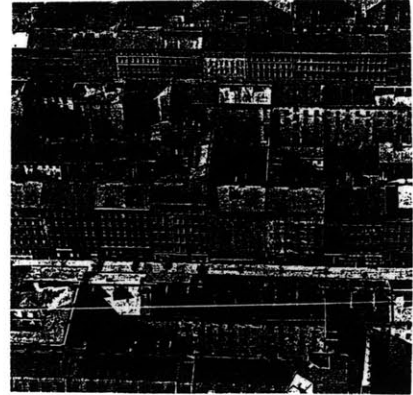
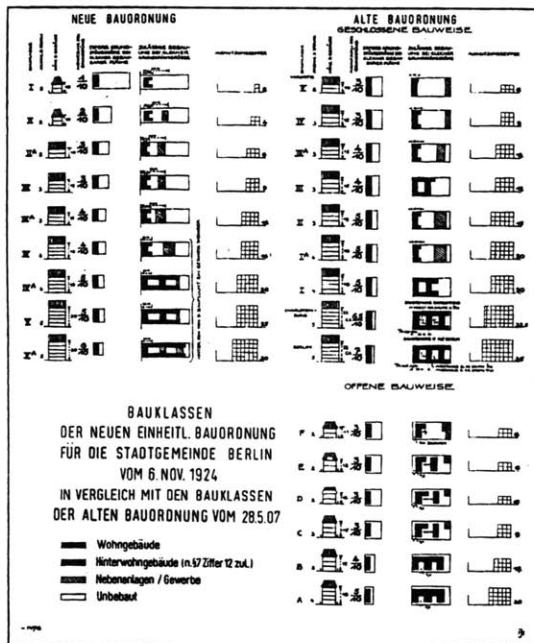
(b)
Changing hotel locations in Berlin 1943-76: (a) hotels (1943) in Greater Berlin; (b) hotels (1976) in West Berlin

Diagrams of changing locations of the economic activities marked by the changed locations of hotels and entertainment activities. From: Ladd, Brian. *The Ghosts of Berlin*. 1997.

³ The scarcity of public open spaces and public parks was the most criticized feature of the Hobrecht's plan.

MIETSKASERNEN – THE RENTAL BARRACKS

The working-class district mostly clad in redbrick was laid-out in a very regular grid of streets. The blocks ranged from 100 to 250 meters deep.⁴ The development took form of 5-story high apartment buildings. These were characteristic apartment buildings aligned to form unifying linear facades. The distinguished arched entry to the individual building led to large courtyards surrounded by residences and light industry. Most of the interior space was divided into a series of interior courts with up to 2/3 of each plot built-up disregarding any minimum standard or distance between buildings. The lack of large avenues and open spaces throughout the Friedrichstadt district was largely due to the organization of Berlin's municipal government, which allowed the chief of the Staatspolizei to overrule the Magistrate and the King, in matters of the urban expansion. The establishment of new streets, city squares, and the layout of the apartment houses formed the characteristic feature of the Mietskasernen throughout Berlin. Due to the large working-class

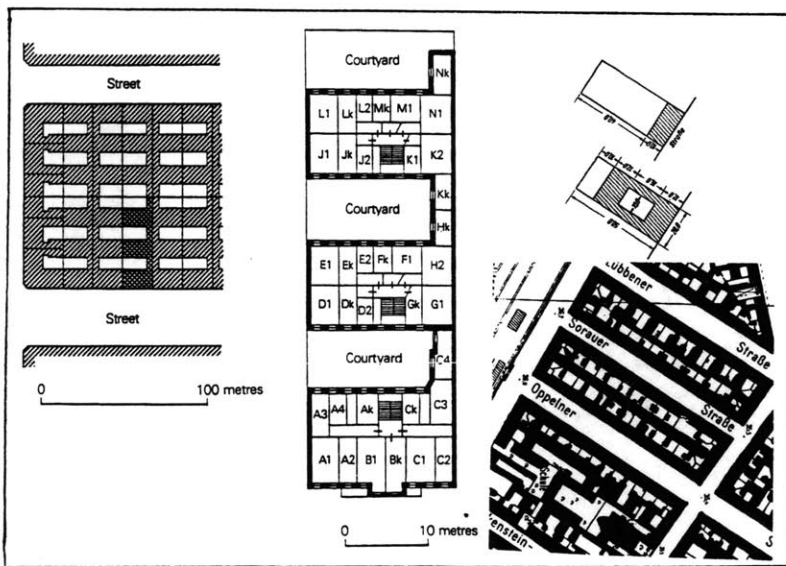


View of a typical Mietskasernen block throughout Berlin.
From: Balfour, Alan. *World Cities*, 1996.

A set of detailed building requirements for Mietskasernen construction upheld until the breakout of W.W.II.
From: Sweitzer, Eva. *Grossbaustelle Berlin*, 1997.

⁴ The 100-250 meter depth of a block is still considered very large even by the today's standards in Berlin. Most of the *Friedrichstadt* blocks were laid out at quarter (1/4) the size.

population most of the apartments were even further subdivided into much smaller units.⁵ The Berlin tenement housing continued to be occupied by different population and classes. The wealthier resided on the ground floors and the poorest in attics and basements. The social and political benefits of this system were preferred to the 'English' model of herding the rich and poor into their separate areas of the city. With this system a new kind of space was formed, an open space surrounded solely by dwelling houses without shops or public buildings, the interior courtyard. The first building regulation required obligatory fire protection by a way of a large entry for a firetruck, these regulations still permitted extremely high density and over-development of the courtyards behind the street facade. (Elkins: 165)



Diagrams of a typical block and apartment layout.
From: Berlin: Von der Residenzstadt zur Industriemetropole. Band I, 1981.

OTHER FORMS OF SETTLEMENTS

Not until the inclusion into the Greater Berlin did the district surrounding the Kurfurstendamm reach its superior status in the apartment buildings. These were especially dedicated to the middle and upper class of Berlin. The higher status of the housing was easily evidenced not only by the elaborately ornate facades, but also the all-important interior amenities such as interior bathrooms and lifts.

The development of the Kurfurstendamm started to gain the momentum when the high-income groups assumed their position. The whole area started to assume the central function of Berlin's overcrowded urban core. With the development of the S-Bahn train the area immediately around the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church increased its importance with the easy access and the S-Bahn train stop. This sub-center grew rapidly adding more institutions, museums,

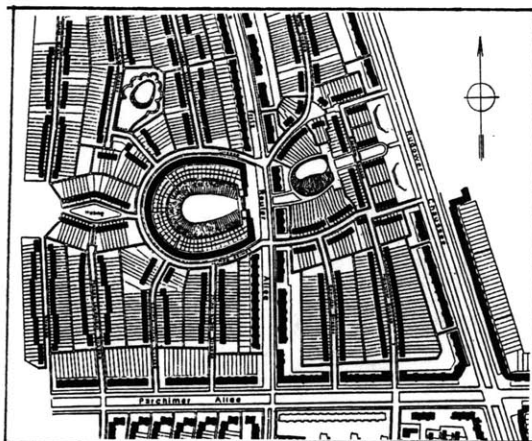
⁵ The cellar and basement spaces were usually fully occupied in Mietskarenen. This was a common practice during the industrial revolution not only in Berlin, but also throughout Europe.

and the culturally important Technical University. The high-income groups developed a center for luxury goods and cultural entertainment. The sub-center at Kurfurstendamm and its development later played a crucial role in the divided Berlin and the two-center city.

Although the widely discussed Mietskasernen is the most prevalent form of residence for Berliners, other morphologies are present within Berlin that require a brief description. These are the concentrations of much lower density developments and villages outside the densely populated central core of Berlin. The Marzahn and Kopenick to the east, and the Spandau to the west are developments that strongly contrast the Wilhelmian Ring. Many of these developed as distinct cells surrounding industry and were separated from the central core of Berlin by agricultural land. On the routes radiating from the central core low-density urban settlements were particularly associated with villa housing. These included mostly a single-family house in a garden setting.

The Parisian model of housing mostly influenced the Wilhelmian Ring. The outer settlements differed and were strongly influenced by the English 'garden city' style housing where the rail formed the principal axes to these settlements stimulating the low-density residential developments.

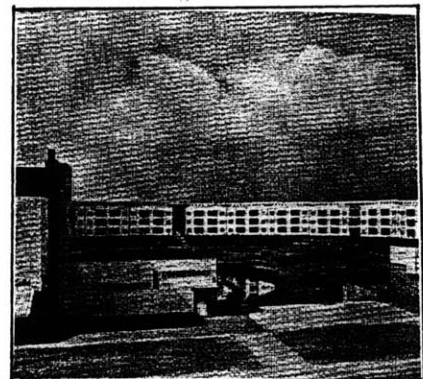
With the decentralization of Berlin's industry in the 1890's came another characteristic settlement expansion in the garden-suburb spirit. Most of this expansion acquired the architectural style of the 'Modern Movement' where the function led the form of these buildings, as well as the modern industrial methods of construction. With the garden-suburbs came the more efficient 3-4 story apartment buildings. These buildings allowed very liberal amount of open space, light, and ventilation.



Plan of Britz or 'Horseshoe' development by Professor Bruno Taut serving as an 'ideal' solution for a mass housing. This became one of the first examples of a new more socially conscious form of housing.
From: Wolters, Rudolf. *Stastmitte Berlin*, 1978.



Different forms of residential developments that took a new form in Berlin at the beginning of 20th century: garden city style housing, One large buikdig composition, and single house villas. Ibid.



View of Britz development in Neukölln by Bruno Taut. Ibid.

THE THIRD REICH

The time from 1894 to W.W.I was occupied with unfulfilled urban plans for Berlin. Between 1908-1910 a competition for a master plan was held and by 1912 it brought a communal union of Berlin. However, even with the Master Plan Berlin grew haphazardly. As the 'golden' 1920's gave way to the depression of the 1930's the National Socialist Party led by Hitler grew in strength. The authorities closed the Bauhaus and the Modern Architecture was dismissed as cosmopolitan and degenerate. The 'Heimatstil', a romantic vernacular, was favored instead of the 'Neue Sachlichkeit', a new objectivity except in case of large buildings. These larger structures preferred the 'Spartan Classicism' lacking however in Schinkel's proportion and delicacy in design of buildings and the public open spaces.

In 1936 the Nazis tried to plan Berlin as a whole. The following year Albert Speer was charged with reshaping Berlin. The building priorities changed to regulated planning for government and military structures for the Nazi Party. Speer formed a new plan for the new capital of Germany, the Germania with large intimidating buildings to be completed by 1950.

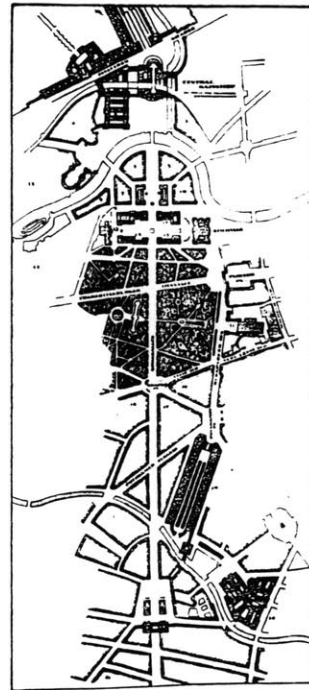
As the leading architect, Speer wanted to design, built, and work for the new order. It's often asserted that the Neo-Classicism style for public buildings was a characteristic style of the 'Nazi architecture' and other totalitarian states. However, when looked at more closely it was a characteristic of the era that left its impression upon Paris, London, and Berlin. (Speer: 81) The Champs Elysees with its Arc De Triomphe, 160 feet high placed by Napoleon in 1805 inspired the new plan for Berlin. This was a model for Speer's 'greatest architectural task'. Speer's unrealized master plan consisted of a five-kilometer long avenue forming a new North-South axis fronted on both sides by 'enormous scale' government buildings. This triumphal route included a domed assembly hall also of vast proportions. It was to become a new 'Pantheon' modeled on Hitler's personal sketches and requiring demolition of entire districts.

Today's memoirs reveal how Schinkel's sensible philosophy of sensitive planning integration had given way to gross representational grandeur when Hitler projected the North-South axis in the mid-1930's.



Model based on Albert Speer's vision of Berlin as a new metropolis

A proposed north-south axis by Albert Speer. This proposal aimed at unifying Berlin's airport with central core of the city and giving it a new status. The axis itself was based on Hausmann's plans for Paris, however these plans changed the scale of the city to new megalithic proportions. From: *Hauptstadt Berlin: Stadtebau und Architektur*, 1992.



Albert Speer's design for the north-south axis in Berlin (1943) and the surrounding open spaces. From: *Wollers, Rudolf. Stadtmittte Berlin*, 1978.

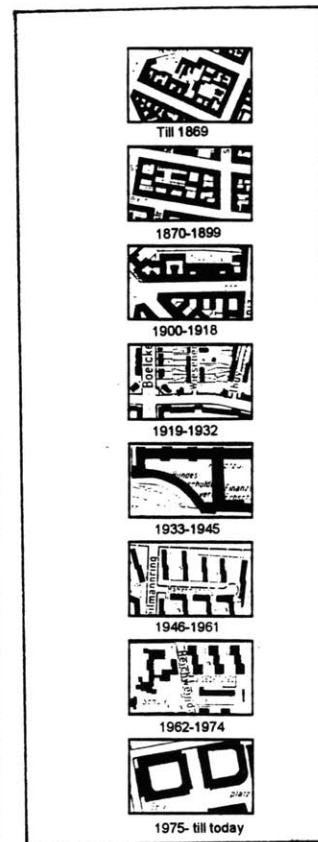
POST-1945 BERLIN

The occupation of Berlin resulted in the city dividing into several zones. The Yalta Conference of 1945 created four zones for the French, British, Soviet, and US troops. This political setup would involve dismembering Berlin and ultimately the unified German State. However, nobody anticipated that the zones would become Berlin's permanent structure for the next 50 years. (Windsor 1963)

West Berlin's reconstruction pattern generally recreated the pre-war land patterns. Mainly adopted in the western part of the city these patterns dated back to medieval times. Most of these were established with only few new roads even though most of the urban areas in question were totally destroyed. Planning in the 1950's was perceived as interfering with the political issues of the time. Therefore, the economic policies and planning issues meant creation of special incentives of investments for the region close to the 'Iron Curtain'.

The West Berlin that emerged from W.W.II, the blockade, and the Berlin Wall was an economically crippled city. Its industry was cut-off from its suppliers and markets in the immediate vicinity. The city survival depended on the economic assistance from the Federal Republic. The nature of the assistance varied over the years however; the most important were the tax preferences and the federal help that related to the transport reducing the impact of the city's isolation.

At the end of W.W.II more than two-thirds of city dwellings were destroyed. The damage was most severe in the central part of Berlin. Districts of the Mitte, Friedrichshain,⁶ and Dorotheenstadt were almost completely destroyed. The rebuilding of Greater Berlin was ultimately dropped. The frustration came mainly from the East Berlin authorities that had their own ideas on the development of the city. With the Berlin Wall running through the 'heart of the city' both east and west subsequently turned their backs on unified urban development for Berlin. With separate ideas for the two poles of the city it is important to point out the significant points about both methods of development.



Berlin's building types and dates.

⁶ The district of *Friedrichshain* can be looked at as the original line of the 'Wilhelman Ring'. It closely follows the lines of *Friedrichstadt*, a portion of the *Friedrichshain District*.

POST-WAR LOCATIONS OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

Friedrichstadt district lay in the maximum devastation area. All of the manufacturing, clothing, and banking industries had disappeared. The once active 'Wilhelman Ring' (1860-1914) of working-class apartments with closely related workshops within the courtyards had fallen victim to the wartime destruction. The big loss came from destruction of the close proximity of working quarters to residences. More than 60% of the population living in the 'Wilhelman Ring' worked close enough to walk to work. The extremely high intermix of the daily activities within the area allowed for personal and economic advantages. (Elkins: 126)

Another loss was the decentralization of Berlin's heavy industry before the war. However, the major impact was felt when the isolated city of West Berlin lost most of the free mobility and access to its hinterland. The industrial losses came when most of the headquarter offices moved and reestablished their offices in the more politically stable Federal Republic. (p. 131)

Only within the past few years with the fall of the Berlin Wall have some of the leading industrial firms relocated once again to Berlin. The biggest advantage comes from the Technical University as the research leader combining the research and the industry in the field of high technology.

THE NEW WEST CENTER

The creation of Berlin Wall through the 'heart' of the city necessitated relocation of the central functions of the city. For the western part of the city the 'new center' became the Kurfurstendamm with less damaged housing stock and a strong history of retail.⁷ Having the advantage of the already developed secondary urban center prior to the W.W.II, the Ku-damm (short for Kurfurstendamm) reestablished itself as a major West Berlin urban center. The high ranking services offered had a dual advantage based on the history of the area as an urban center, and the new display for the capitalist free economy; the cultural role of the Ku-damm has been established. (Elkins: 180)

The Technical University and the Tiergarten prevented any significant expansions or extensions of the city; therefore, the pre-existing pattern of streets was retained. However, unlike the traditional city centers, the Kurfurstendamm contains no city hall, Rathaus, nor the related governmental and administrative buildings and functions. Most of the government buildings were originally located in the East Berlin. Assuming a non-permanent division of the city West Berlin and its governmental offices were never located in the new 'western urban center'.

⁷ Most of the 'Wilhelman Ring' clothing and retailing industry relocated to the *Kurfurstendamm* area.

URBAN DEVELOPMENT – WEST SIDE

1957 initiated the creation of a new zone strictly for residential use. The Hansavietel took form of a high-rise apartment block. With the support of the IBA⁸ the buildings were designed by the internationally renowned architects such as Alvar Aalto and Walter Gropius. The project adopted the anti-street strategy of the CIAM (Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne of 1928) in creating dispersed arrangement of individual buildings integrated into a green open space. The ruling ideals of the time were based on single-use zoning, as purely residential area emerged in West Berlin.

Another major development of the Gropiusstadt, named for its creator, took similar form. The only advantage to this remotely located; single function development was the connection to the U-Bahn. The 1950's also saw refurbishing the older Berlin city fabric. With its building fabric outworn, the unsatisfactory condition of Mietskasernen was looked at as a potential housing solution therefore, be spared and renovated. The IBA was the strongest supporter of this action.

The mid-1970's planning concepts changed and the qualities of the old building stock were rediscovered. The IBA (1984-87) spared, renovated, and moved the emphasis of the official policies toward the rehabilitation of the 19th century mixed-use urban block. Particular attention was drawn in the 1980's to the disastrous housing situation in the city. Shortages have been forecasted long before, however at that time the political situation did not allow for a timely response. The traditional nature of the residential and industrial land uses was prevented and preempted by a lack of any legal planning in relation to Berlin. A renewal process that was strongly supported by the IBA based its theory on a modest 'step-by-step' improvements by first stabilizing the residential areas and their supportive activities. The IBA's buildings can today be generally described as low-rises usually following the block and street lines surrounded by an internal court. As a result the city adopted a policy of rebuilding under the Urban Renewal program the older housing stock to supplement the small provisions of the open space within the inner parts of West Berlin. The Mietskasernen interior courts previously used by small industry and private workshops now were transferred into children's playgrounds and open green areas. The 1980's more emphasis was placed on the reconstruction of historic places and buildings than the previous century combined.⁹

⁸ The IBA, stands for the International Building Exhibition.

⁹ The rehabilitated new buildings are easily identifiable by the new facade placed in some form of a 'neo-style'.

EAST BERLIN

POST-WAR DEVELOPMENT IN EAST BERLIN

In Berlin the military and ideological objectives were always mixed with the social and economic goals. Particularly in the East, a comprehensive planning and reconstruction for the whole city deemed no longer necessary, creating some of more ambitious goals for the urban east. Therefore, planning of East Berlin was fostered to prepare the ground for new ideology and its urban development.

It is important to note that the position of East Berlin strengthened through the DDR. East Berlin was always an integral part of the East German territory and its capital. The highly centralized nature of East Berlin became an advantage for the DDR. The city grew as a 'planned showcase' for socialism. The GDR became perhaps the most tightly planned and controlled of all the soviet-style cities in Europe. In addition to a strict administrative division of east and west Berlin, virtually all-institutional links were broken between the two cities. All of the artistic, cultural, and entertainment facilities were disconnected and reorganized into the separate cells duplicating virtually all institutions.

The best example of disparity in East Berlin is the 'Wilhelmian Ring'. The ring built before 1914 had the highest residential density of Berlin. The largest of the open space, the Tiergarten, was cut-off from the rest of the city. Berlin's formal axis Straße des 17 Juni run through this precious informal open space, yet it was cut-off from residents of Friedrichshain, as well as, Kreuzberg south of the East Berlin center. The concept of a communal responsibility in the 19th century led to creation of a few and small parks in the congested areas of the east

Berlin. However, the division of the city left East Berlin without any major central urban space on a scale of the Kurfurstendamm or the Tiergarten.

Although the new East Berlin center had an extremely spacious layout, the Alexander Platz and its surroundings with paved pedestrian areas lacked the activities of the active urban life.

Unlike the West Berlin center, the east side was never crowded. Not confined to the city, East Berliners could seek out the neighboring lakes and forests well beyond the city boundary. By contrast East Berlin has a more normal relationship with its hinterland.

REDEVELOPMENT OF EAST BERLIN

With separate reconstruction plans for both sides of Berlin, there was effectively no construction of housing in the GDR before 1950. (Lammert: 1969)

1950 in a way was a turning point. The ownership and price of land ceased to be a consideration in the newly found communist state. Among the fundamental principles incorporated was the close awareness of the relationship between the urban planning and the needs of industrial development. These were supportive of the most current planning principles in the single-use residential zones with the commercial use strictly excluded. Unlike its west partner and their high-rise construction, buildings of a high social significance were encouraged. These buildings usually were comprised of youth centers, schools, and theaters among a high-rise residential construction. Those structures became the urban dominants and replaced in East Berlin its western counterparts consisting of banks and department stores.

Another necessary feature in the eastern developments was the very wide street converging onto a central square or an open area designed for mass demonstrations. This became known as the concept of urban and regional planning for the East Berlin. It soon became apparent that the future construction and redevelopment programs were to cater to rapid car ownership. During this intensive planning period more buildings of a historic significance were destroyed during this period than the air raids and the war itself combined.

As a consequence of the war and the lack of any real planning in the short period immediately following the war, most German states adopted the Construction Legislation of 1949¹, which was based on the pre-war ideas simply adapted for the post-war needs. When the rebuilding resumed with sound modern principles of traffic use, traffic corridors, and clear open space, the first reconstructed buildings took the form of simple 3 to 5 story walk-up apartments. The new construction became similar to the prevailing fabric of the Friedrichshain district. However, this redevelopment method changed with the construction of the Stalinallee, later the Karl-Marx Allee, which took a distinctly different turn.

The first 'social street' of Berlin, the Stalinallee became a 'display case' for the new socialist state. The street itself was 75-80 meters wide and resembled more the Haussmann approach for Paris than the previous Berlin fabric². It is important to note that the objective of the new Stalinallee was to demonstrate the new GDR's philosophy toward city planning and housing construction. The housing of highest standards was to be allocated on the basis of social equality and need, and not personal wealth. The street itself had a purpose; it was to provide a new triumphal axis for East Berlin and to the east of the Unter den Linden, linking the residential parts of the city with the new center at the Alexander Platz³. The majority of the German urban centers were originally designed to become the growth poles for regional developments. These were usually based on one central place, in this case Berlin. Most of these urban areas were to be connected through a system of traffic axes, a concept aiming at concentrating the linear infrastructure around the traffic corridors. The best example of such development and its theories is presented by the Stalinallee development.

Stalinallee as the 'showcase' for socialism was lined on each side with a continuous curtain of 7 to 10 story apartment buildings. Built by conventional techniques, they were clad with classical motifs and decorative tiles. Elaborate towers marked the major intersections and the street level was reserved for retail and entertainment. At this point the East Berlin center at the Alexander Platz was not completed placing Stalinallee at greater functional significance. The street level activities provided most of the retailing and shopping services in that part of Berlin.

¹ For further information consult the *European Planning*. Most of this legislation is true for the GDR and the whole East Germany, particularly outside Berlin where the preservation and the conservation of townscapes and residential densities were the focal point of each settlement. This particular theory throughout the GDR was designed to demonstrate particular local plans for each city as derived not from the federal planning, but based on the local conditions and resources of the population concerned. However, the protection and conservation legislation applied only to small regional conditions and neither to Berlin nor its city center.

² This is a light-hearted comparison between the *Stalinallee* and the *Champs-Élysées* in Paris.

³ The new construction of housing along the *Stalinallee* in GDR also facilitated the restoration of the historic buildings along the *Unter den Linden*. It was to become a part of the 'showcase' for the connection between the *Unter den Linden* and the *Stalinallee*.

With increasing costs and slow construction methods attention was turned to the prefabricated techniques. The new construction technique was made of concrete wall slabs, removing any distinction between the shell of the building and its interior. However, in contrast to the adjoining Mietskasernen the new apartment blocks lacked any interior courts, were light, sunny, and most important were equipped with all of the modern 20th century amenities. However, the results were rather monotonous units. The long straight slabs of buildings run usually in one direction and was based on the direction of cranes mounted on rails that lifted slabs more efficiently rather than more imaginative combinations of housing would allow.

In 1958-59 work begun on corridors leading inward to the Alexander Platz through the constructed edges of Stalinallee. The new prefabricated units made a giant leap from the 5-story buildings to 10-story apartment blocks. With the 1960's came a new innovation in planning of dispersing the individual blocks further apart. These developments set the settlements within a large open/green space. Unlike the West Berlin center that developed with pre-1914 urban block and busy street activities and a dense population, the East authorities pushed the population away from the new center, Alexander Platz and Unter den Linden. These were usually reserved for offices, cultural and administrative purposes.

Even more changes came with the 1970's. Larger housing developments made their appearance along the Leninallee, the Ho-Chi-Minh Straße, and the Marzahn development. These new modern developments were intended for about 100,000-160,000 inhabitants each and were usually placed even further outside the city center. A characteristic of these settlements was the provision for social prerequisites. These were not only related to the technical infrastructure of roads and sewers, but also provided the inhabitants with kindergartens, schools, shopping centers, and the neighborhood health facilities. Some of these major settlements had large activity centers that could be ranked as major secondary centers in comparison with the rest of the city.



A comparison study between Berlin's old fabric, what existed around Alexander Platz prior to W.W.II, and the reconstructed post-war fabric surrounding the Platz showing the current conditions.

DEVELOPMENT OF EAST BERLIN CENTER - ALEXANDER PLATZ

Heavily damaged during the war the Berlin's center moved to the periphery. With main projects of the Stalinallee and the Palast der Republic the city center followed the socialist soviet pattern. The communist state chose this area as a symbol for the new state and the new society. A new symbol for the nearby park was chosen as a freestanding TV Tower for the advanced socialist society. The east built a series of high-rise apartment buildings along the park, Unter den Linden, and Leipziger Straße. Those buildings destroyed the scale and the historic city fabric, as well as an additional wall toward the West Berlin.

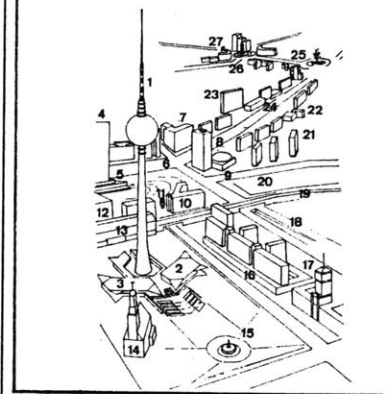
In the 1970's buildings with prefabricated concrete panels dominated the city. The planning of the 60's looked at East Berlin as an autonomous unit, the capital of the GDR. In 1969 the first 'general construction plan', the Generalbebauungsplan⁴ was announced, propagating a compact mixed-use urban center. The new plan was to be accessible by radial roads, however the population of Berlin grew so rapidly that by the 1970's three more radial corridors were added along the city railway links ignoring the planning principles for the dense urban center. The 1980's continued to follow principles of extensive urban developments on the fringes of the city resulting in increased densities on the perimeter of the city and increased commuter traffic that led to a decrease of the population in the city center.

The development of the Alexander Platz, the East Berlin center, started in the 1960's. It started much later than its unplanned counterpart on the West Side. The plan involved creating a traffic-free area taking down of what once was Berlin's historic center, the Altstadt.

A park dominates the large area to the northeast of the Bahnhof station. The park itself consists of a TV Tower, Marienkirche⁵, and the redbrick Rathaus (a town hall). The square is enclosed on two sides by high-rise buildings with shops and retail at the street level and residential apartments above. The elevated railway line, the S-Bahn, marks the former wall of the Altstadt. Alexander Platz, located on the northwest side of the Bahnhof, is a large open space dominated by a department store and a hotel tower. The whole area of the platz is surrounded by concrete high-rise structures from the neighboring blocks. The East Berlin center is characterized by strict planning and representation functions for the capital city.

⁴ From *European Planning*.

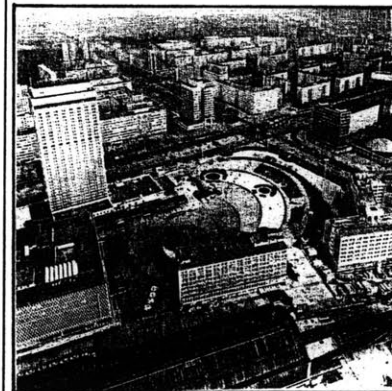
⁵ The *Marienkirche* is the oldest surviving church in Berlin dating back to the medieval times.



Aerial photograph looking southwest at the TV Tower and its park.

Bottom: A diagram of the existing layout and structures surrounding Alexander Platz. The Platz is located behind TV Tower showing the close relationship between this open green space and Alexander Platz.

From: Trebbi, Giorgio. *La Ricostruzione di una Città Berlino 1945-1975, 1978.*



Aerial view of the existing Alexander Platz and its vast paved open space. Alexander Bahnhof is located at the bottom of this photograph.

From: Pysal, Hans-Joachim. *Das Alexander der Haus Alexander Platz, 1998.*

In contrast to the West Berlin center there is an evident attempt at to bring residential area not only to the fringe of the central area, but the actual city center.

The important factor is the late start of the east center development. More economical in terms of prefabrication with the vast peripheral settlements the existing pre-1914 buildings surrounding the East Berlin stood largely neglected. This meant that Berliners relied more on the secondary, satellite urban centers rather than on the actual city center. The best example of the retail activity is the Leninallee ground-floor shops, which still function in a similar way today largely due to the representational function of Alexander Platz and its surroundings. The theoretical hierarchy of the secondary urban centers is still strong in the further settlement areas where the residential district centers supply the inhabitants with their daily needs.

Because East Berlin includes the historic core of the city there is no 'shortage' of tourist sites. Even with the 1960's architecture of the new center the visit alone is a considerable attraction. Within the context of the GDR, the capital, and whole range of headquarters for national organizations, East Berliners have direct access to formal recreation and cultural activities. This 'unsympathetic neighbor' to West Berlin exercised functions of the capital of the GDR and is perceived as a 'place to be' by its inhabitants.⁶



View of the current urban axis, Unter den Linden leading toward Alexander Platz. Ibid.



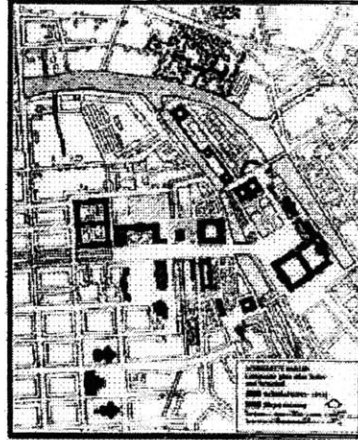
View of the urban axis, Unter den Linden with BerlinSchloss and the pre-war urban fabric surrounding this urban axis.
From: Layden, Friedrich. *Gross-Berlin: Geographie der Weltstadt*, 1995.

⁶ Although, the GDR government was criticized for demolishing the remains of the Berlin's Palace, *Berlin Schloss*, and the historic city core, the area is considered by its inhabitants as culturally active due to its intermixing functions of government and cultural activities within close proximity.

BERLIN'S PLANNED DEVELOPMENTS



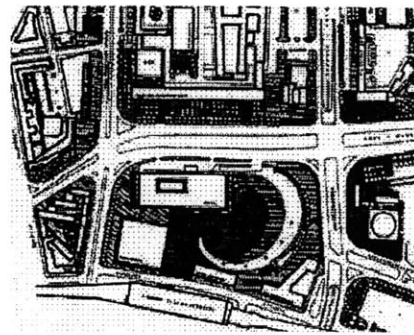
The first expansion of Berlin (1732),
Friedrichstadt Development.



Schnikel's development plans (1816-1841)



Albert Speer's proposal for a new axis
development (1937).



Plan of Alexander Platz 1971.

Modernist development of Alexander Platz
(1971).



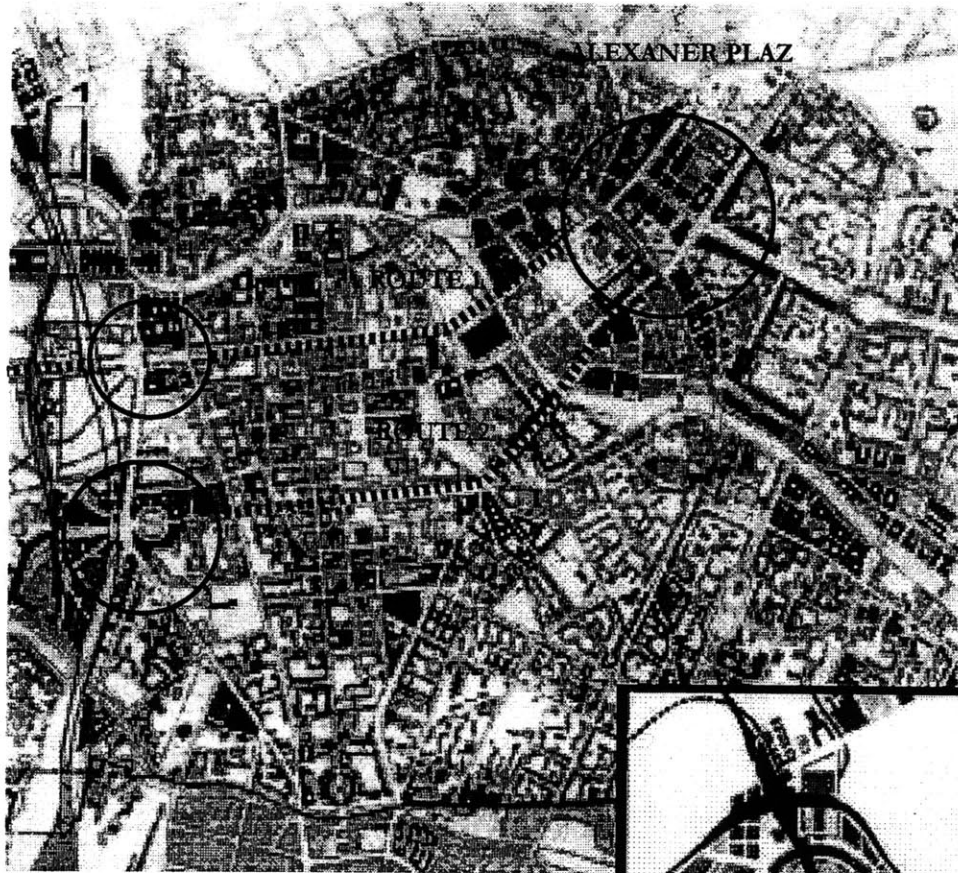
Berlin's plan for the redevelopment of Alexander Platz.

Planned developments started in Berlin with the Friedrichstadt expansion, Schinkel's designs, Speer, and the GDR's total reconstruction for Alexander Platz.

A new proposal for Alexander Platz restoring Berlin's historic fabric.

From:
Demps, Laurenz. *Der Gensd'armen-Markt: Gesicht und Geschichte eines Berliner Platzes*, 1987.
Mackowsky, Hans. *Karl Friedrich Schinkel, 1922*.
Pysall-Hans-Joachim. *Das Alexander der Haus Alexander Platz*, 1998.
Hauptstadt Berlin. Städtebau und Architektur, August Bericht 12, 1992.

CURRENT DEVELOPMENT



Plan of the current redevelopment projects taking place in Berlin.

Above are the redevelopment projects for Berlin. Alexander Platz is next on the agenda and it is shown as a major urban node for the eastern Berlin.

Development plan for the north-south railway system.

From:
 Berlinheft Zur Edition Panorama.
 Herausgegeben von Ulrich Giersch, 1998.



Current development plans for Central Berlin.

PUBLIC SPACE

The piazza, its outdoor living and meeting space is still a significant city space. Virtually every momentous moment throughout the European history took place on the street or a main square of a capital. Some might argue that the contemporary privatization of life made functions of the central public space obsolete. Particularly in Berlin, what remains of public space is scattered, unconnected and predominantly abandoned. The urban open spaces that do exist are mainly used by one segment of the population – the office workers.

In Berlin, and particularly the open space of Alexander Platz less attention has been paid to the historic precedents of urban functions and the interplay between the form and function than any other public open space.

The public life of Alexander Platz has not so much disappeared as it has been relocated. The Platz's functions became very user-specialized, almost fragmented. The phenomenon of Alexander Platz is not a loss of the public life, but rather a transformation of different forms and environments that occurred in the 1960's. This sparsely used public open space has been modeled with little understanding of Berlin's history of public spaces and the history of the Platz itself. Within the design is the obvious lack of the understanding of the surroundings, activity generating land uses, and the significant historic symbolism.

With a new semi-public space emerging consisting of cafes, boutiques, and specialty shops criticism arises that such places are only accessible to those with money to spend, however, such places are used by many participants that come to window-shop, sit and watch the crowd. There is no doubt that such places enlivened whole sections of city. Berlin's new proposal, Alexander Platz is designed to essentially become an office district which is not a good provider of open urban spaces. This not unlike the development at Potsdamer Platz is promoted largely by bonuses to allow increased height of structures.

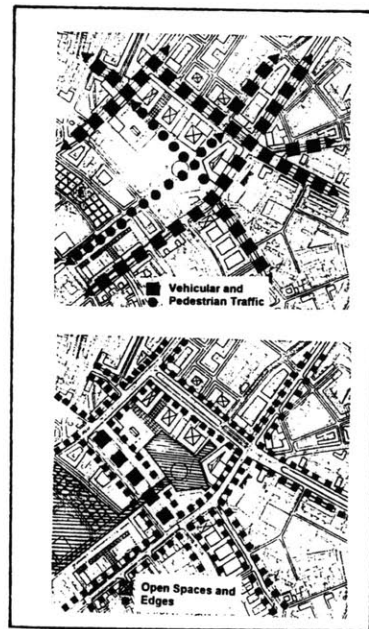
Clearly the issue of what is a public space and who owns the privately owned, publicly accessible space is important. Problems arise when such place, for example Potsdamer Platz, becomes so popular that one group becomes the dominant user. Thus, a range of social and economic activities are taking place in Berlin's outdoor open areas and are more limited than those provided in the Medieval times. The range of activities was considerably greater than those provided by the current Alexander Platz.

Alexander Platz is technically a public open space, yet all factors that contribute to a sense of public life, allowing one to meet, view, and converse are excluded. The use and popularity of a space like Alexander Platz depends on the location design and links between its location and the immediate surrounding environment and the city. Therefore, a historical consideration of the 'evolving' public space must be considered with a basic premise that a public space must be responsible – that is it must be designed to serve the needs of its users¹.



View of Alexander Platz. This public open space requires an upgrade to retrofit it with a set of new needs for Berlin's population.

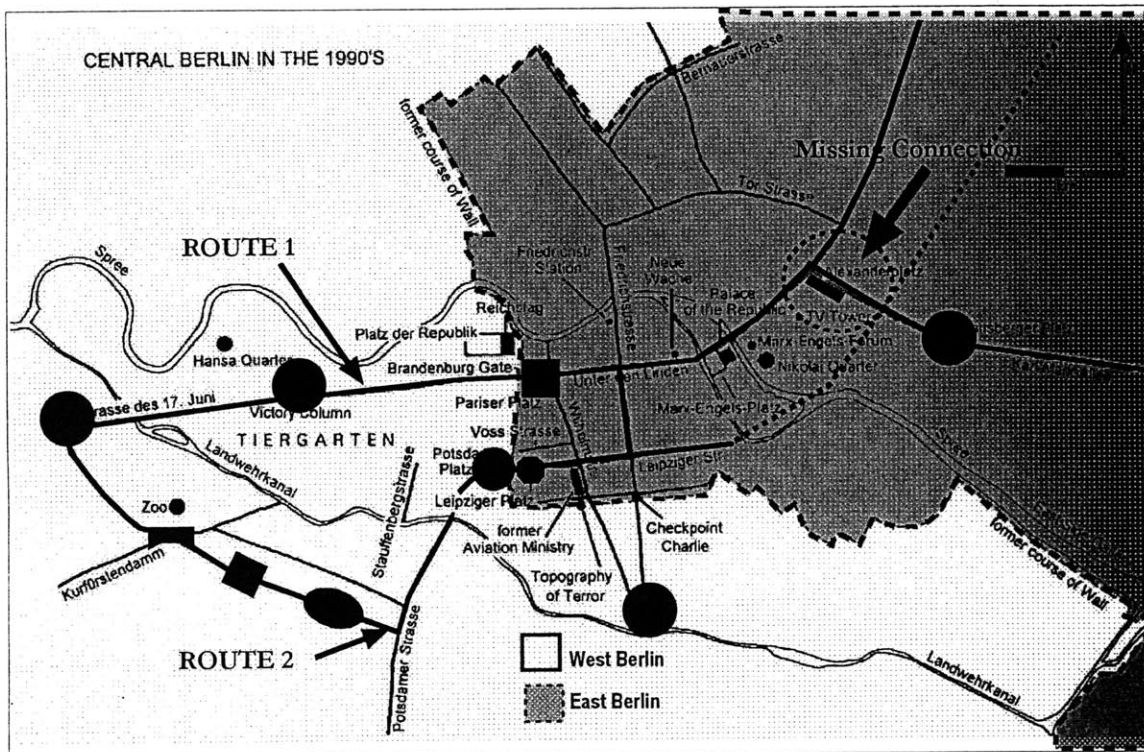
From: Pysall, Hans-Joachim. *Das Alexander Der Haus Alexander Platz*, 1998.



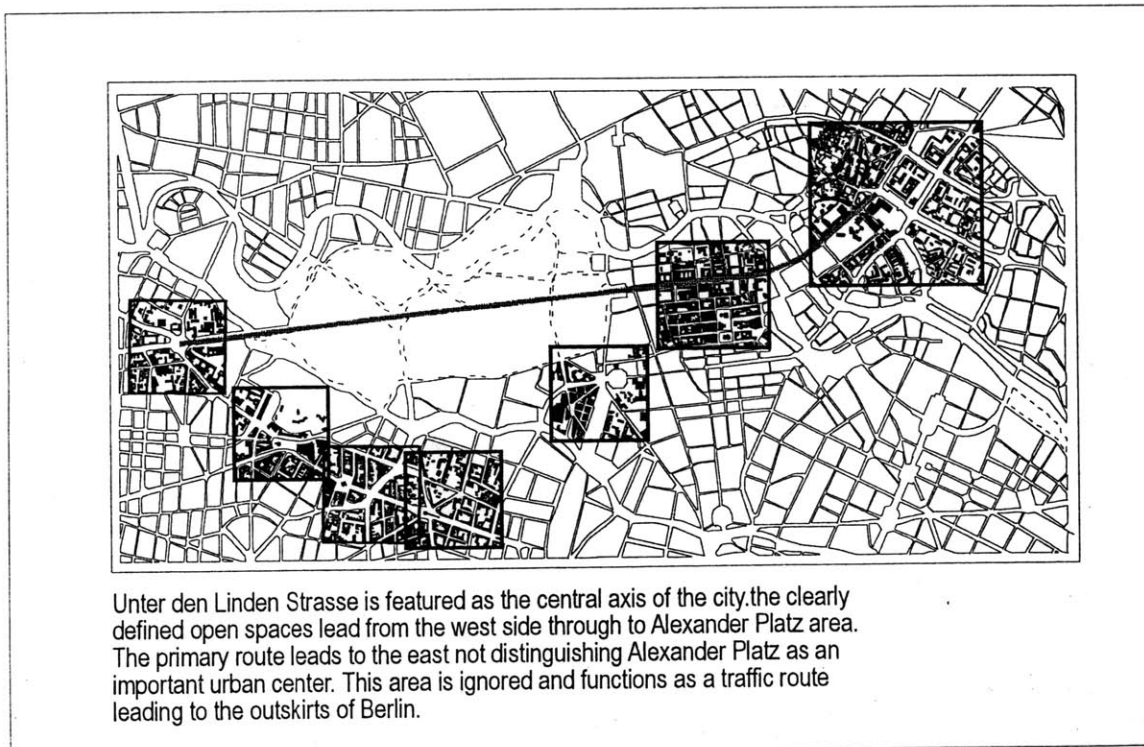
Site analysis of the Berlin's proposal for Alexander Platz. Top: Analysis of the vehicular and pedestrian traffic. Bottom: Analysis of the open spaces and edges surrounding the Platz. Ibid.

¹ For further information see Carr, Stephen on the *Public Space*, 1992.

BERLIN'S OPEN SPACES



Central Berlin Axis - Form: Brian Ladd, *The Ghosts of Berlin: confronting German history in the urban landscape*. University of Chicago Press: Chicago, 1997.



Unter den Linden Strasse is featured as the central axis of the city, the clearly defined open spaces lead from the west side through to Alexander Platz area. The primary route leads to the east not distinguishing Alexander Platz as an important urban center. This area is ignored and functions as a traffic route leading to the outskirts of Berlin.

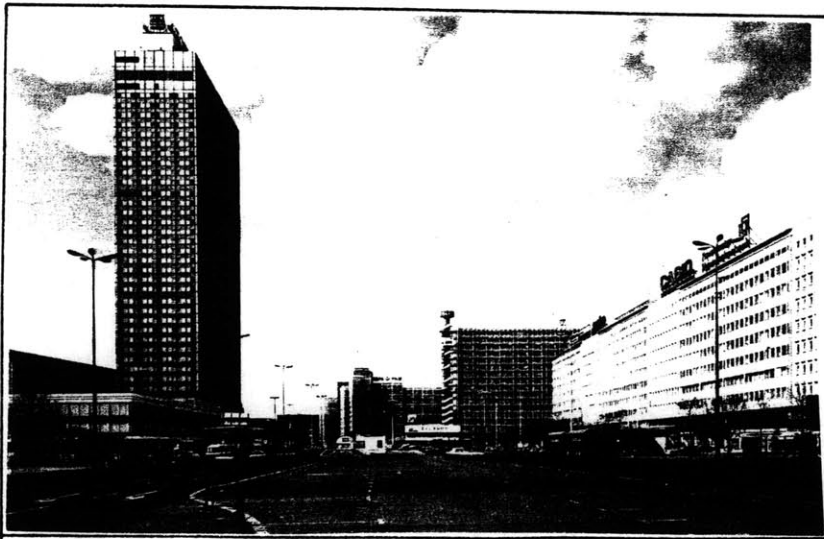
Berlin's open spaces.

The morphological difference of the successive times is irrelevant at this time. The differences would shape the surrounding buildings rather than shape the plaza. Yet, the historical analysis clarifies the connections between the heterogeneous solutions in the pattern of a city, which would be ignored by a mere aesthetic design analysis. The Medieval times pronounce itself in the lack of the overall planning system. The Renaissance urban planning was influenced by theoretical and aesthetic considerations, further influenced by the individual parts of the town. This general approach created planned organization and regular shapes that extended to streets and squares. The clearest visual articulation of space demanded presentation of volumes as clearly as possible. The square itself was perceived as a defined space, where the surrounding buildings were subordinated to a spatial unity by continuous facades. (Zucker: 1959)

In Berlin, the dramatization of movement can be clearly observed as a characteristic of the Baroque style. This term can be more clearly applied to the chronology of the Friedrichstadt district since during its construction both the Renaissance and Baroque styles run parallel and fused in their application.

The game of space was particularly played in Italy and France, their instruments mainly axes and squares⁵. Therefore, it could be easily said that the French style monopolized Berlin. Consequently the strict regularity and rigid formalism of the French space concept was generally accepted among the royal palaces and the city architecture. These were usually copied only with small variations. The powerful German Kaiser dictated the house, street, and the square proportions always with an eye on the grandiose French pattern.

The blocks of houses were no longer individual structures, but rather unified rows with one homogenous pattern. The space was also regularized in the style of the bourgeois monumentality with broader streets representing a boundary.



View of Karl-Marx Allee bordering Alexander Platz. The street accommodates six lanes of traffic and a parking lot in the median space of the street. The street acts as a separator for Alexander Platz denying any access to the Platz.

⁵ The best example of the Renaissance is the Michelangelo's Camdigolio. Best representation for Baroque's are Hausmann's boulevards in Paris.

The classic symmetry system easily identified in Gendarmenmarkt with two domed churches had its predecessor in the Plaza del Popolo in Rome, which stimulated the emphasis on directions. The axis of Unter den Linden, although a monumental avenue never quite organized the city into a multi-axial town. Therefore, the meaning of the square was integrated into an axial organization and became the extension of the longitudinal axis where squares represented the final stops and not the spatial entities in themselves. (Zucker 1959: 217)

For a long time squares were spaces enclosed by continuous surroundings and only in the 19th century does the term change meaning into an opening bleeding with an open space. The Modern Movement lacked interest in the theme of the square. This break in the traditional continuity of facades and the 'heart' of a city core remained mainly a cultural reference.

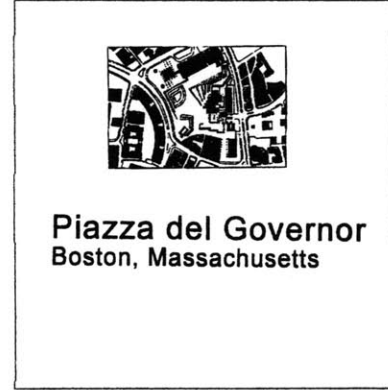
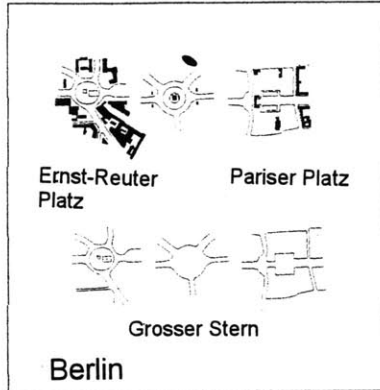
The objective of Alexander Platz is then to enhance the quality of its location and replace the concept of space as a void with one as a space with content. This contemporary square does not have a specific function, nor does it depend on a building or a monument. The purpose is still to constitute a place of meeting, but the subject of this project is the square in its own right. The place where people gathered for collective functions was replaced by a single individual use.



View of a small part of Alexander Platz, its retail store and a tower hotel.
From: Pysall, Hans-Joachim. *Das Alexander der Haus Alexander Platz*. 1998.

Alexander Platz has no historical stratification since it was built in a short period of 1960's. The absence of historical time and purpose has eliminated public participation. The opportunity to build a square from scratch rarely presents itself, and it happened then too only in the process of reconstruction of Berlin. The spatial surroundings of Alexander Platz are completely independent. It is contained in a high continuous profile of the neighboring buildings as though other dimensions typical in historical development of a square have been lost.

Spatial Comparison



The modern plaza is not one of the Medieval and Renaissance functions, yet it does have contextual and functional parallels. In all cases, the plaza existed as a primary people generator with all uses vested in the appearance of the space and how it was used. Part of the attraction was that part of the city was dedicated to pedestrian movement. In the *Streets and People*² suggested that we should look back at the time when people were willing to share the street with trains so that "...future generations will marvel at the obtuseness of people who thought nothing of the street with motor cars." Kevin Lynch³ suggests that a "plaza is intended as an activity focus, at the heart of some intensive urban area," and Camillo Sitte⁴ voices some real concerns about the use of public squares by the city dwellers that are still relevant today. A review of several books on urban design such as Koetter's *Collage City*, Rossi's *The Architecture of the City* reveal formalistic expressions, historical references, and philosophical explorations, but reveal no discussions of people needs and desires in a public setting and its use, a specific requirements of a manmade environments.

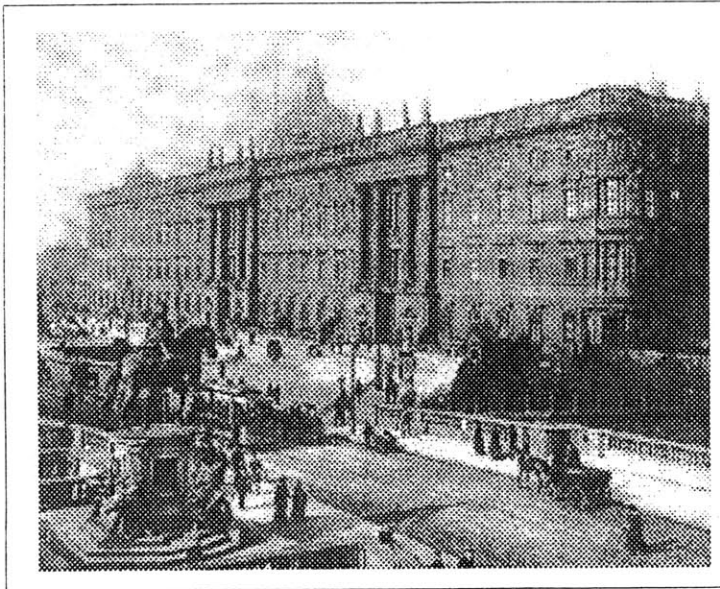
Particularly significant is that every attempt is made to connect the new and existing plazas via the pedestrian links so that the end result will be a pedestrian system rather than an isolated oasis. Therefore, this partially ignores the relationship of public spaces to the buildings to which they are associated rather than the urbanistic objectives such as coherence, and continuity. The links between districts whereby the open space might become a pedestrian-oriented organizing system for a new proposal for Alexander Platz. A provision for a mix of retail, entertainment, and dining is necessary to attract a steady stream of users to the space. With those issues in place, a mix of commercial and retail uses must also address the issue of activity after the working hours. One of the most important physical/design characteristics affecting the success of a plaza today is the avoidance of a 'dead space', sudden gaping expanses of empty lots or blank facades of buildings not integrated with the street. That is the problem of Alexander Platz.

² Rudofsky, 1969: 341.

³ 1981: 443.

⁴ His study of the Medieval and Baroque squares and streets prompted the creation of new open public spaces and streets not only in his native Vienna, but also worldwide.

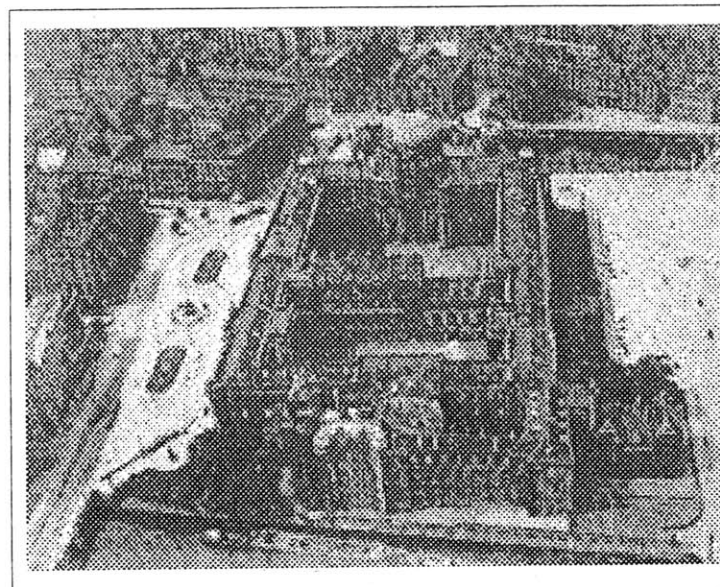
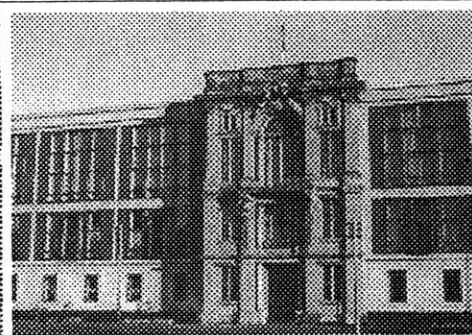
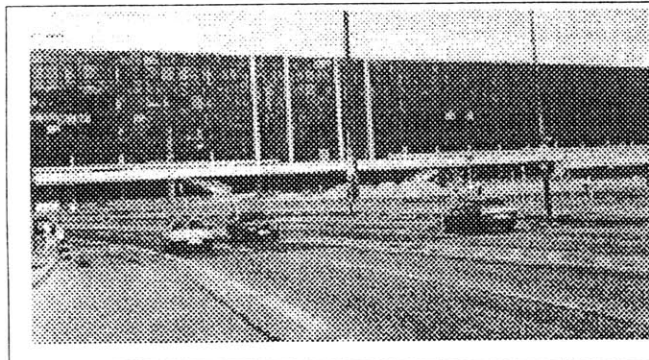
OPEN SPACES



The open space Berlin Schloss created a vibrant urban space. With the demolition of the Palace came a new form of public space. Platz der Republic became the modernist version of the Palace. The transformation tried to recreate the previous formality with the Marx-Engels Forum.

Berlin Palace at the Schloss Platz, 1905.

From: *Hauptstadt Berlin: Zur Geschichte der Regierungsstandorte* Städtebau und Architektur Bencht12, 1992.



Top Left: The street next to the Marx-Engels Platz with the Palace of the Republic in the background.

Top Right: The renovated entry to the Palace of the Republic. The entry is the only remaining and renovated part of the Berlin's Palace, the Berliner Schloss.

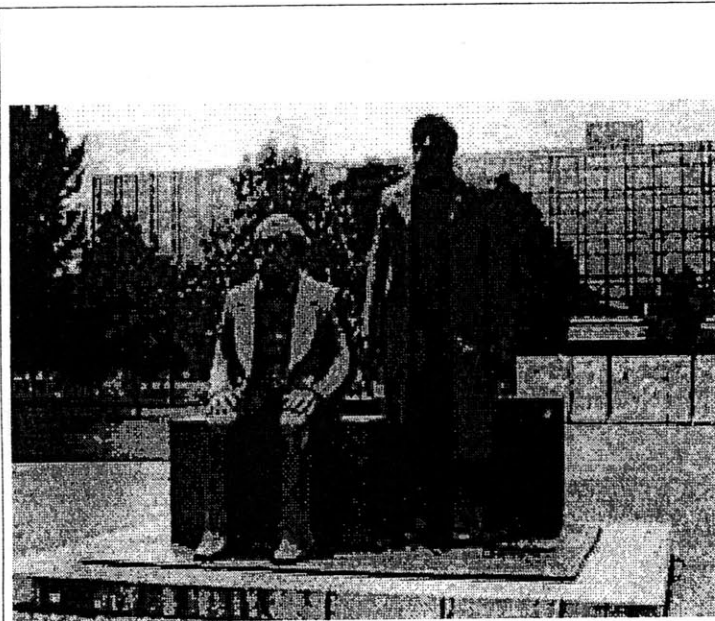
From: Ladd, Brian. *The Ghosts of Berlin*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1997.

Left Bottom: The arial view of the Berlin Palace and its surroundings, 1925.

From: *Hauptstadt Berlin*.

The open space surrounding the Schloss on Unter den Linden axis.

CURRENT OPEN SPACES

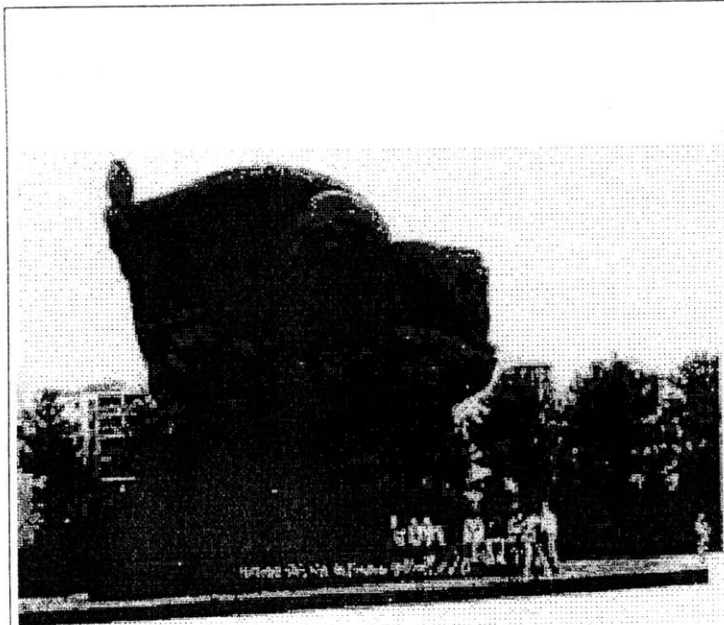


The Marx-Engels Forum and platz. In the background is the Palace of the Republic.

OPEN SPACES IN THE GDR BERLIN

The GDR's memorials contributed to the Cold War propaganda. Few of the best example are: the 63 foot Lenin statue, which serves as a focal point of a large apartment complex, the statue to honor Thalmann which is a center piece in the northern part of Prezlaue Berg district. It stands 43 feet high on a paved square framed by trees and grass in a vast open space. Finally the Marx-Engels statue stands on the former royal palace site, Berlin Schloss. This statue is twice life size, once again surrounded by vast open space of the Palace of the Republic. These monuments and their open spaces represent the communist attitude toward the public open space. These formed formal and extremely monumental spaces.

Ladd, Brian. *The Ghosts of Berlin*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1997.



Ernst Thalmann monument, 1991.



The Lenin monument.

Current open spaces in the former GDR Berlin.

 SUMMARY

The idea for Alexander Platz is a comprehensive approach to the revitalization of Berlin. It forms a kind of necessary heart for East Berlin, which it lacked, and which is needed if the city is to prosper. This achieved in revising the physical terms, and the divided independent zones. Alexander Platz always had two partly conflicting characters, first as a defined zone and identifiable parcel of land within the city and secondarily to its main function as an open space that served in a kind of muted monumentality.

The Platz outline can be traced in early maps. The wall of the medieval city with its custom gate shaped it. The medieval gate established the area as a residential district with an assembly of fragments, which became completely logical and comprehensible once the background of the area was completely developed. Finally, in Behren's grand plan it linked the medieval city and the outskirts into a continuous thoroughfare. With Behren's impact relatively light – offices, warehouses, and residence settled into a dense urban fabric surrounding the area. Later that heritage was completely destroyed by the modern planning. Often in-filled and built over, the close dimensions, edges, and clear hierarchy became the empty sites and gaps offering an opportunity for redevelopment today. The radical ideas of a functional city, an open city, and a rational approach to transport inspired most town-planners and architects during the fifties. The need for a massive effort to provide new housing led to rational industrialization of the means and methods of construction. The economics and quantity were the paramount objectives of both the public and private sectors. This led to an extensive use of the so-called building 'block' – a single function structure simple to design and build, which led to the fragmentation of Berlin. The size of these single long, large, tall and distant containers erupted within historic Berlin providing a startling contrast in scale with whatever was left of the existing urban structure.



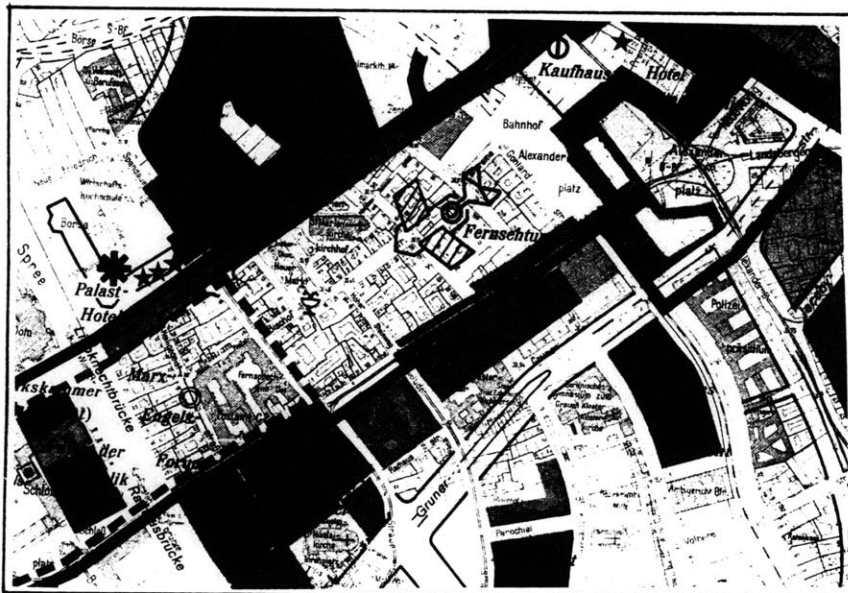
Plan of current conditions at Alexander Platz.



A new proposed urban plan for Alexander Platz and its surrounding area.

The layout of Alexander Platz is autonomous. The surroundings are intentionally formed by structures of different forms, shapes, and facades. The temptation to relate and reiterate the singular building on the perimeter is totally absent. The present Alexander Platz is created on a crossing-sing and a chaotic traffic circulation.

The paved Alexander Platz is intersected by pedestrian paths cutting across it diagonally in various directions, attempting to connect streets leading into it. The paths emphasize the platz's dynamic role, a moment which is contrary to the current structure of the space. This dynamic role however, is a historically significant point for Alexander Platz always played the role of a 'pass-through' square. Set in contrast to the contemporary urban planning methods, so far Alexander Platz represents autonomous space where the surroundings are merely modular reference with historical and architectural relevance removed. Therefore, the primary requirement for Alexander Platz is to transmit individuality not only to the square but also to its location. This site, however, highlights the powerful change and motivations that compensate for the lack of certainty on the part of the users. Its approach perhaps in the style certainly amplify the 'concrete' urgency in reconstructing Berlin, therefore constructed without the advantage of evolution in use as seen in squares of the previous centuries.



A study of Alexander Platz, its changes and its lost continuum in the urban fabric due to the post-war development. From: *Topographischer Atlas Berlin*, 1987.

The term 'square' no longer applies just to a widening of a street, but now includes more ambiguous space surrounding Alexander Platz. With no specific purpose to the area, the new proposal must:

- transform this space by creating specific topography and promoting certain uses.

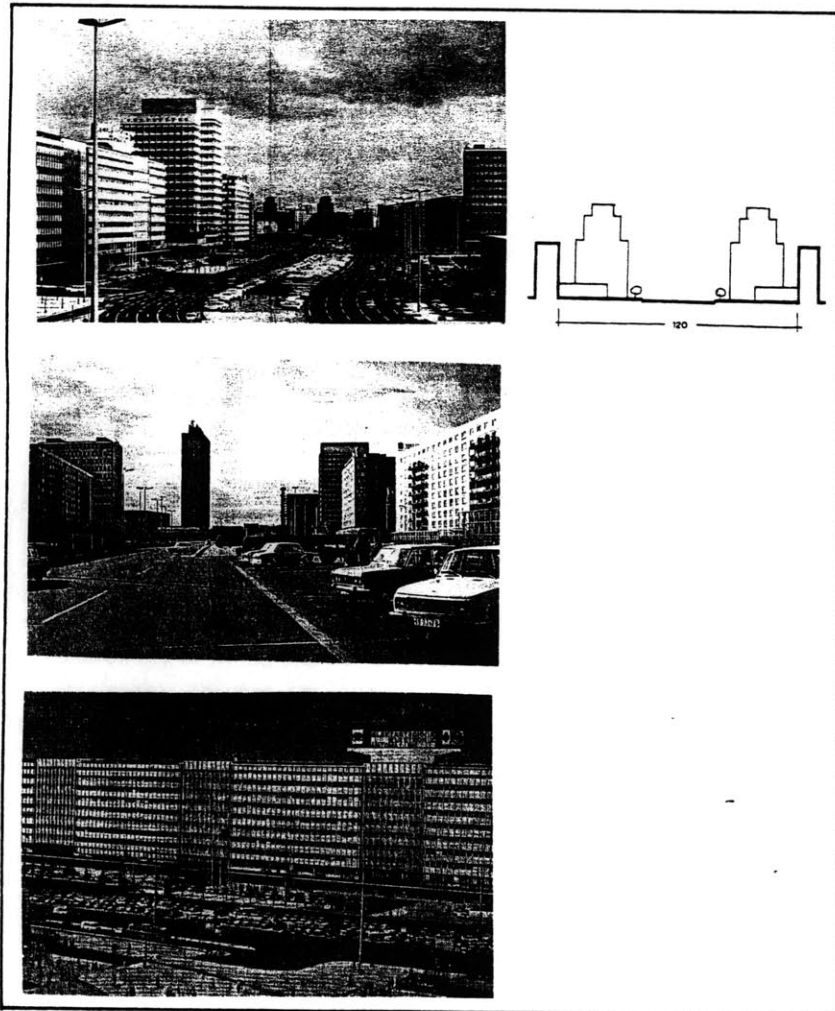
The surrounding buildings do not constitute a reference point for Alexander Platz, therefore the new proposal must:

- devote itself from the problems arising from the location
- and do it in a meaningful manner. This should be considered more than simply defining perimeter of a space.

These goals have one element in common, the desire for a proposal where people can congregate. As one of the largest open public spaces in the city the proposal must strive for significant changes. The space of Alexander Platz must be clarified, organized giving it a new look. The new facade must recognize the new space and highlight the existing structures. Currently the space is severely underused and undervalued therefore, this central idea is to create a 'square' that could become the nucleus of this particular area of Berlin. The resulting space must provide the freedom of movement necessary for more complete use, as well as, unobstructed line of sight for those using it allowing appreciation of the space and its surroundings. This creates the necessity for a hierarchical division of space with the main purpose to clearly define the center space of Alexander Platz.

Excluding the vehicular traffic from the square allows for a distinctive use of pavements to signal entry into a characteristic area. The scarcity of benches indicates further the character of Alexander Platz making it a place to pass-through and not a place to stay.

The lack of any reference point makes this critical to provide a central orientation mark. Therefore, the focus of the Alexander Platz should be the expressiveness of architecture and its urban form. On one side designed for entertainment/amusement, the square should be reserved in part to more traditional functions of open space. Within the debate on redesigning and the critical reconstruction of Berlin the theme of the Alexander Platz has certainly been an important point, in as much as the will to clearly emerging traditional Berlin framework of urban architecture, the courtyard structure. Comprised by a system of roadways, squares, and blocks the problem of Alexander Platz has largely remained unsolved.



Karl-Marx Allee and its width form a continuous edge and an obstacle for pedestrians. It forms a barrier separating Alexander Platz from rest of the city.
From: Zimolo, Patrizia Montini. *Berlino Ovest tra Continuita e Rifondazione*, 1987.

TOOLS

The visual record of buildings and streets is used to assess the compatibility of proposed new buildings with the existing setting. It is used to generate guidelines on building heights, as well as providing a means of evaluating the visual impact of the new buildings. Historic plot widths are used to establish guidelines for the planning and articulation of the new development.

For a maximum performance of the new proposal some traditional elements of urban planning were reinforced: streets, squares, gardens, and architectural facades. These elements have always maintained clear spaces. Therefore a fundamental objective in creating new urban structures was to combine traditional elements with new architectural models for Alexander Platz.

In the new proposal new small-scale buildings are used to articulate a sequence of movement via public spaces across the area. The interior of blocks have been taken on and opened up.

To understand the context in which this new proposal has come about we must evaluate how does this proposal represent urban redevelopment and how it is to succeed in representing the public space.

TYPE

A pattern had been established in Berlin linking the fronts of important buildings with the urban infill. This started to develop the notion of public space for the city. In the 18th and 19th century the essential component of the public buildings was not necessarily a classical concern, but rather the Baroque sense of theatricality. Each building played a role in a kind of urban theater. In the same way, the residential units adopted a public, decorative face effectively disguising their true nature. Therefore, Berlin society was mostly represented by the bourgeoisie planning through the act of building.

FAÇADE

The new proposal for Alexander Platz uses a deliberate composition of the Baroque. Baroque's playful kind of expression takes advantage in the possibilities of modern construction. The new buildings make clear separation of skin and structure, with brick veneer contained in steel-framed panels. Glazing takes on a horizontal emphasis and although the facades of these buildings are exhibitionist, they do not attempt to hide their structural nature. The 1920's and 1930's Bauhaus designs providing a striking gateway for the new infill.

OLD AND NEW

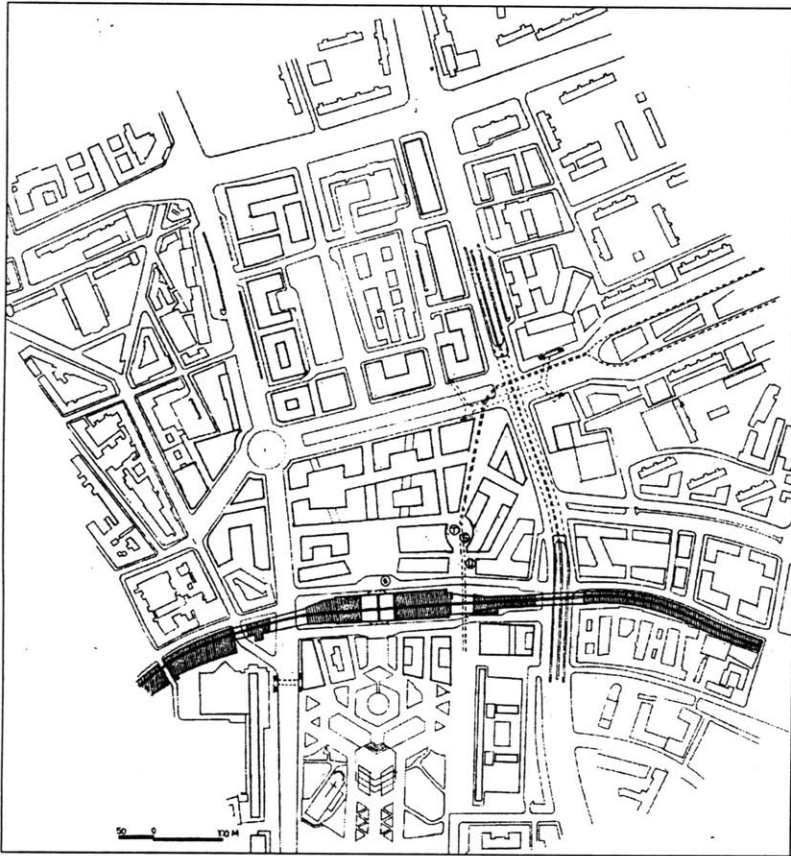
Rather than wasting resources, the new proposal favors buildings that can exist with those of years earlier. This means respect for context, scale use, and street layout that exist within Alexander Platz immediate area. Therefore, the space is taken by a new visual language, in turn, creating new urban landscapes. This process creates a space for embellishment of a new identity. The new proposal demands appropriately scaled buildings and spaces for a coherent urban plan for a twentieth century Modern City. The development of courtyard spaces, the balance of density, maintenance of a minimum number of stories, and development of residential and commercial uses, with the concept of proposing new buildings that at the same time define public open spaces. We must look at the previous broad ideas about the continuity of the city form.

An important feature of the framework plan is the accommodation to the scale and texture of the existing city fabric. This means more than observing frontages and height limitations. It involves paying attention to the way buildings address and clarify spaces and mold the spaces behind them where the back has a potential to open up to new pedestrian ways.

The new spaces fit appropriately into the new quarter. A new pedestrian street transforms the empty site to create new squares. In case of the new proposal the new mixed-use residential development looks north defining the main north-south route. The new Market Hall building defines the edges of the two main open spaces. This amounts to a new city 'square', the 'Alexander Bahnhof Platz', as opposed to the ritual open space incorporated into a single building. The elevations show combinations of openings of different sizes, rather than being made up of uniform and differentiated by the use of different materials. Along the Karl-Liebknecht Strasse the scale and plot divisions have been partially restored so that the two quarters, the district of Mitte and the new Alexander Platz area, meet together and create a smooth transition. The principal component is the embellishment of a strong north-south pedestrian route through the center of the quarter and linking Alexander Platz into the rest of the city on the east-west axis. The plan avoids any large scale building proposals, instead it is based on restoring Berlin's dense urban fabric. Two ingredients for the integration were the emphasis, creation of public spaces as a contribution to the public realm, and the importance of residential development in the regeneration of the living city. The sketches show the south side of the new square bounded by five-story structures. The form of the buildings edging the square can be understood as less of a singular piece and more as part of the continuity of the scale of the surrounding street fabric creating commercial and residential mix-use occupancy as clearly legible forms in the composition of facades.

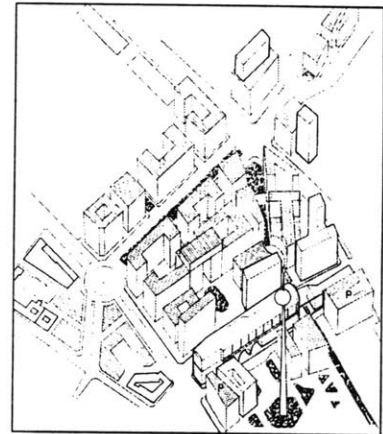
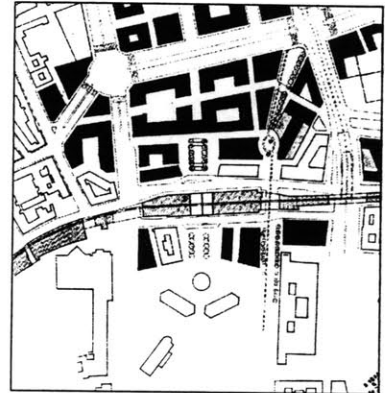
LIVING OVER THE SHOP

There is nothing novel about the idea of living over the shop. It used to be the norm in cities all over Europe. That was before railways, train lines, and ultimately cars encouraged a mass migration from the city to the suburbs however. It took a long time before there was any recognition that this wasted space representing a major potential asset particularly for reversion to residential use. This would help bring life back to town center, as a result the street would never die always having enough people to sustain the surrounding shops and retail.



Plan of the new proposal for Alexander Platz area. The major connection of this proposal is highlighted as a new pedestrian link with rest of the city.

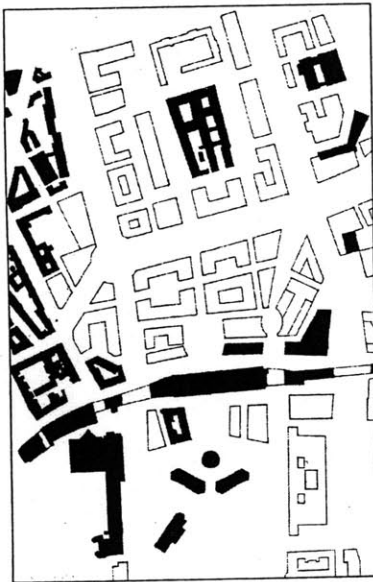
A 'New' proposal for Alexander Platz and its surrounding area.



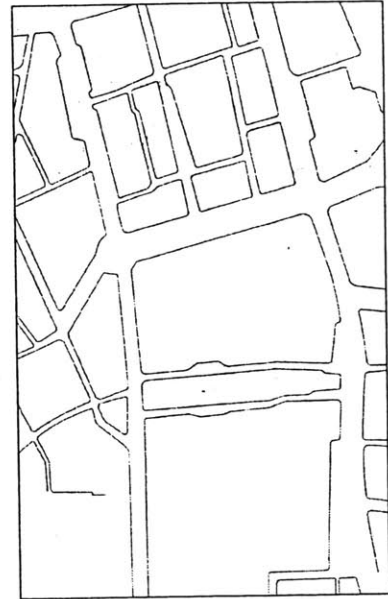
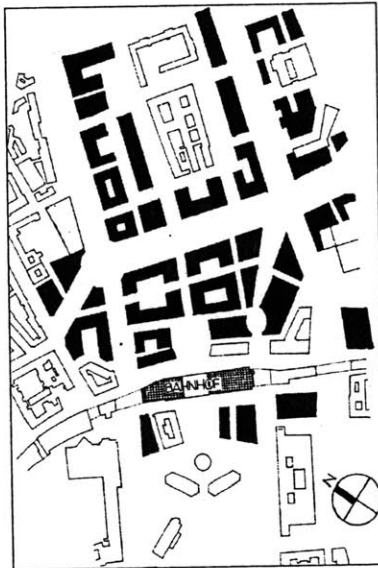
Top: Plan of the new proposal. Bottom: Axonometric view of the new proposal.



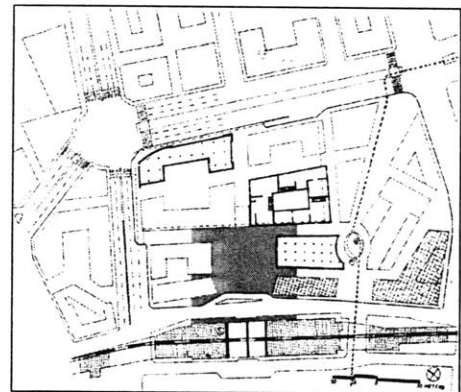
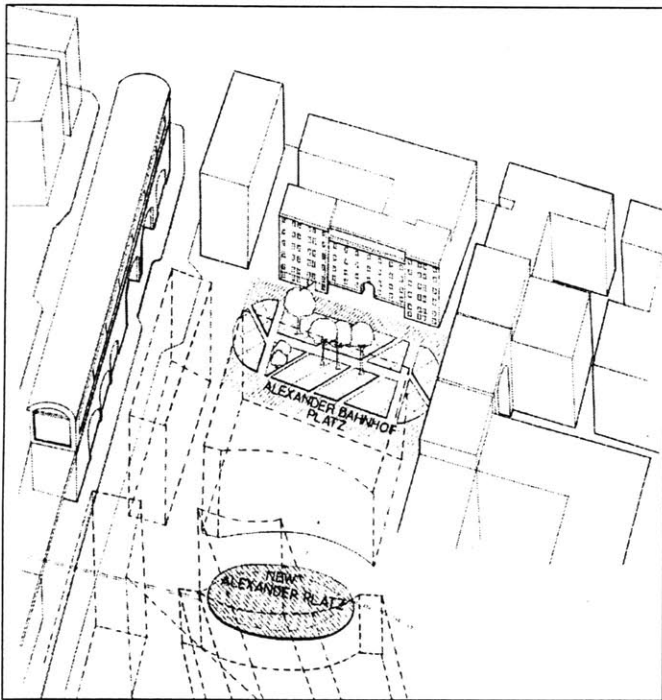
Figure/Ground study of the new proposal.



Retained and proposed construction for Alexander Platz.

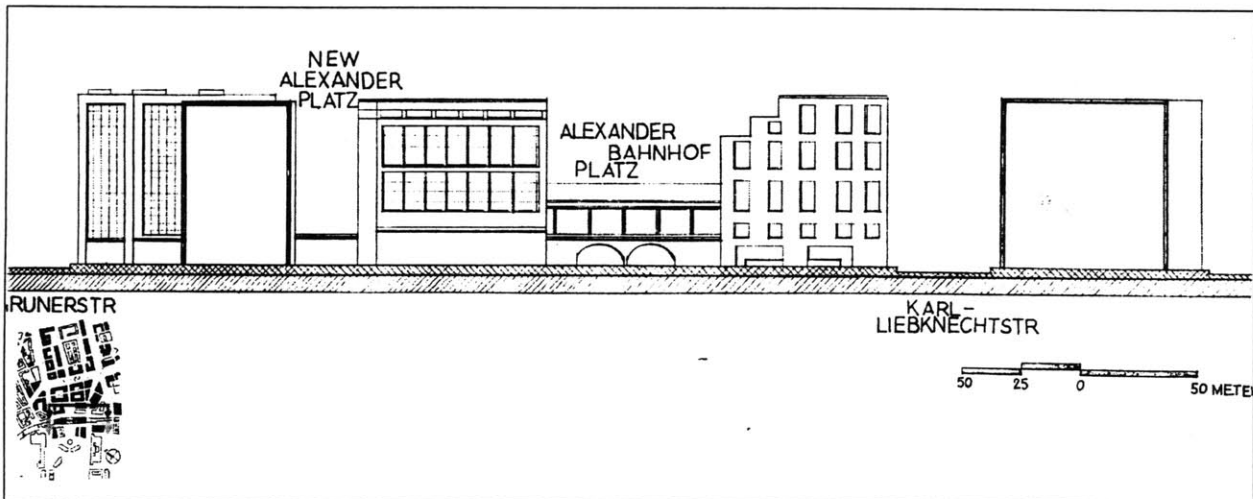
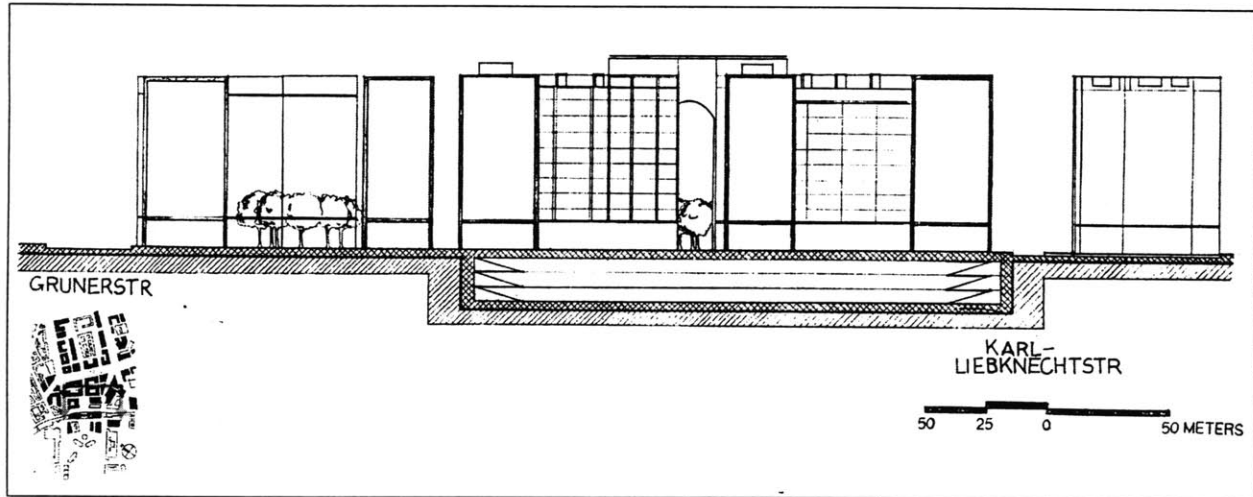
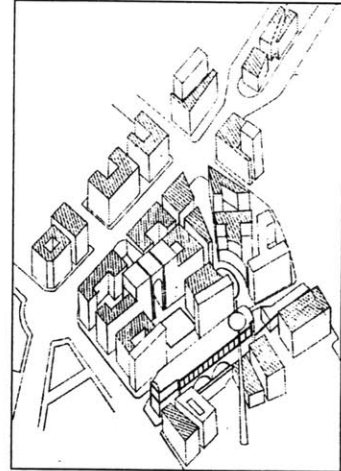
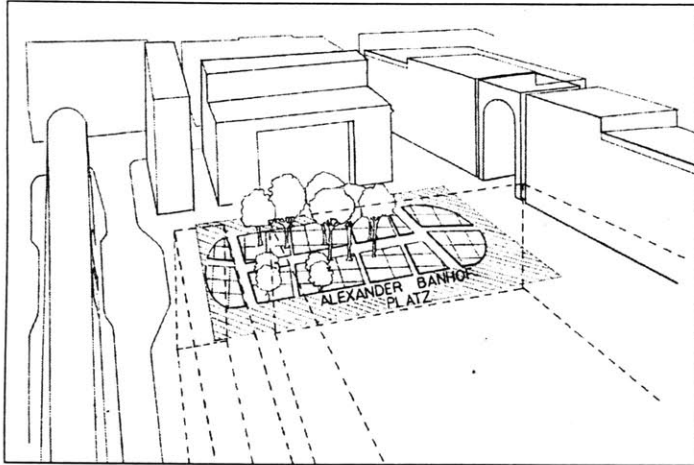


Block study for Alexander Platz.



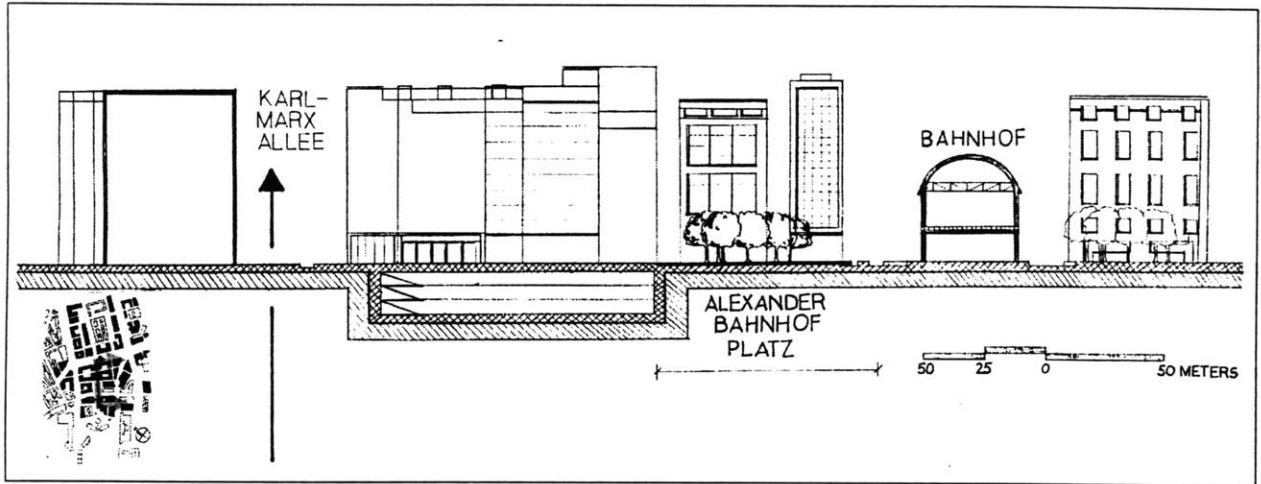
Perspective view of the new 'square', the alexander Bahnhof Platz.

A 'New' proposal for Alexander Platz and its surrounding area.

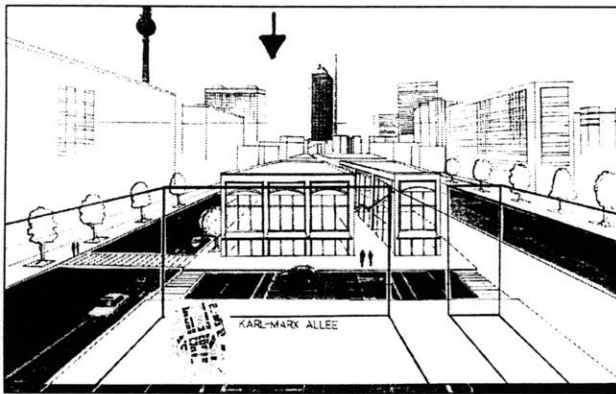


Top: Perspective views for a 'new' Alexander Bahnhof Platz.
 Bottom: Sections through the Alexander Bahnhof Platz.

A 'New' proposal for Alexander Platz and its surrounding area.

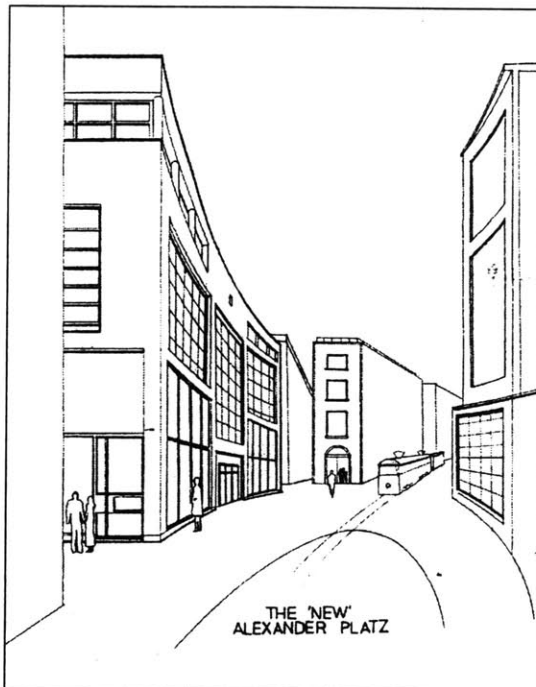
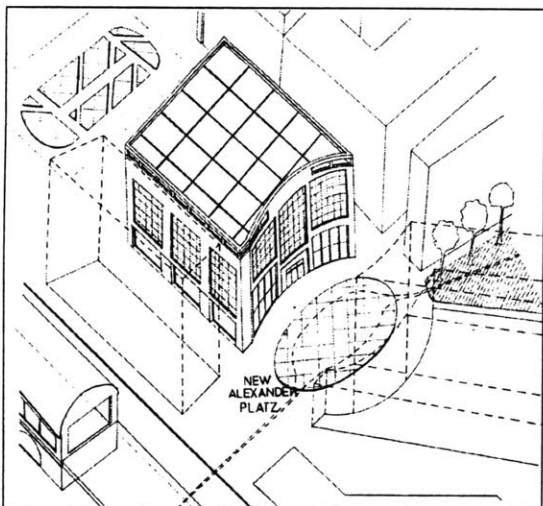
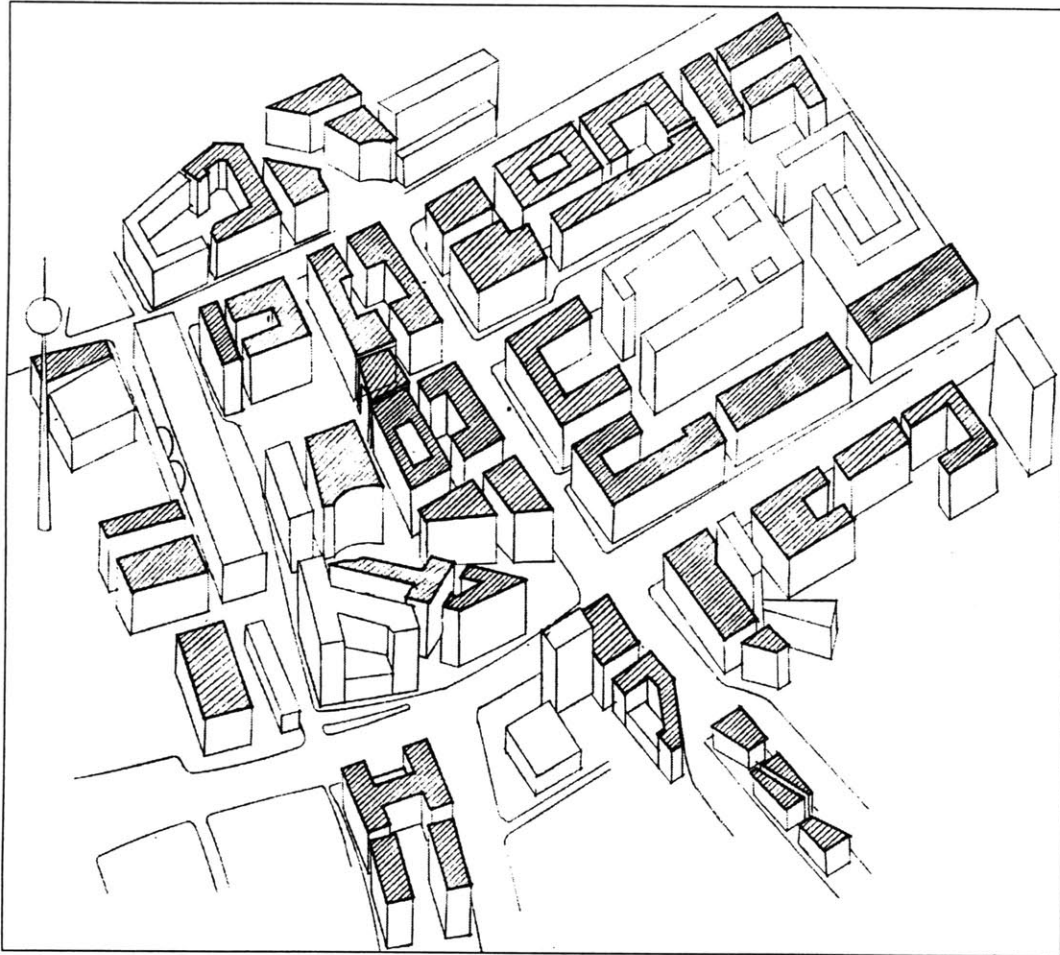


Section through the Alexander Platz area.



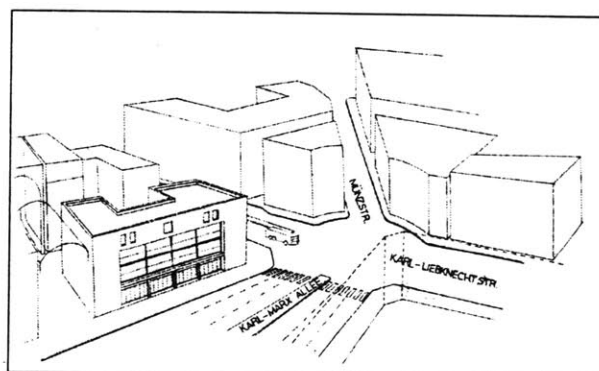
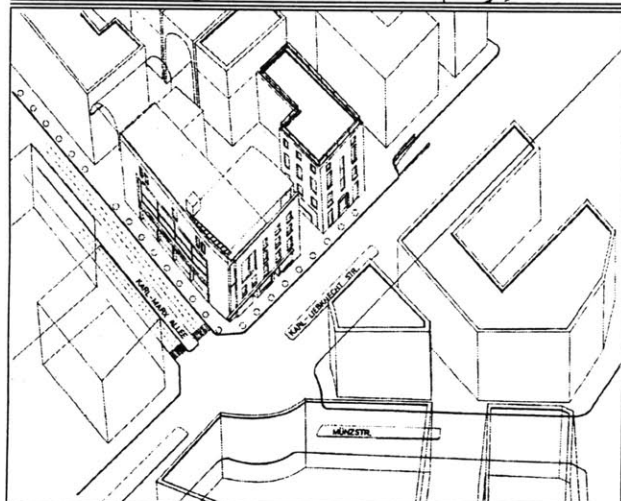
Perspective of Karl-Marx Allee to the northwest.

A 'New' proposal for Alexander Platz and its surrounding area.



Views of the 'new' oval Alexander Platz and axonometric drawings of this area.

A 'New' proposal for Alexander Platz and its surrounding area.



Perspective of the crossing at Karl Liebknecht Strasse, Karl-Marx Allee, and Munz Strasse.

A 'New' proposal for Alexander Platz and its surrounding area.

CONCLUSION

In the case of the new Alexander Platz the main actors in design are the square, the street, and the buildings that make up the public face of Berlin. The transportation and infrastructure networks surrounding the Platz create efficient functionality for the fast moving traffic, therefore those have been left mainly untouched. These streets successfully accommodate large amounts of daily traffic to and from central Berlin.

However, the proposal for Alexander Platz follows Berlin's historical precedents to establish ground rules for the overall composition. It is argued that if we can analyze the properties that made city squares and streets work in the past it may be possible to reintroduce those qualities in the future development of Berlin.

Alexander Platz as one of the followers of the Modern Movement advocated mass housing, vast engineering roadwork, and a comprehensive city development. The general criticism inspired architects like Rob and Leon Krier to turn to a city for topological components. Types of buildings, spaces, and construction forms their return to bourgeoisie concept of architectural history. The experience of the Alexander Platz recent past is littered with well-intentioned but totally unsuitable development for a city center. Alexander Platz ranges from the faceless mass housing to large-scale office blocks that surround the Platz and destroy any intimate feeling to the area.

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