

### Berlin-Town Planning and Architecture

The city is origin, bearer and aim of culture. According to the bearing context of society its countenance develops. Its ground plan and its buildings are a self-representation and self-realisation of contexts appertaining to the history of civilisation. Burckhardt said : "Cities - as long as they deserve this honorable name and are not merely accumulations of human beings, will always remain individuals with such distinct features, that every single one of its inhabitants will always be recognized by these features." Or reversed The city is its citizens and their aims. It is carrying their face.

The loss of culture goes hand in hand with the loss of individuality which is the form giving power. With the breaking through of the industrial age many cities suffered this fate. The causes are well known today. The efforts made to change this situation were of a technical organizational nature, they were mechanical but not organic. One tried to cover the disappearing power of form and the loss of structure by means of historical imitations. The result could only be a distorted picture. In Berlin the population rate of half a million in 1860 increased in the course of 50 years 8 times. The first decade of our century brought a yearly growth of 100,000 people. Towards the end of the twenties the population of the city had reached 4.3million.

Up to 1910 at least the "stony Berlin" inside the "Ringbahn" had a risen to a thousand people, and in certain areas up to 1,800 people living on the hectar net of building area. The hygienic conditions were less than insufficient, the appartments had neither light, nor air, nor sun. The general discomfort of these conditions led to the most bitter criticism and called for a generation of architects and artists who understood building again as a moral task and not as an aesthetic problem.

From many varied starting points one progressed toward the same same aim of a new way to find form.

Mentioned are the 2 "Jugendstil" and the "Deutsche Werkbund" whose slogans were as Hugon Hahring put his significant lecture from "neren bauen", "forward to the individual form

of the matter required, to the practical form which is an effective form and a complete form. The individual essence of an object provides the theme."

After the first World War it was also understood in the organizational branch that the city needed space. In 1920 the neighboring towns were connected with the old part of city and with this Berlin became what it is today. In this far-reaching frame-work, a housing policy conscious of its social obligations came into being for the first time, a housing policy which even today must be called progressive. The housing developments which came into being were : Geagag in Zehlendorf by the architects Bruno Taut, Salvisberg and Hahring, the Siemens city by Scharoun, Hahring Forbat, Gropius, Bartning, and Henning, the Hufeisen Siedlung in Britz by Bruno Paul and Martin Wagner, the African quartet by Mies van der Rohe, the "white city" in Mehnicken-dorf by Salvisberg and Buning and the housing development Eichkamp by MaxTaut and others. Also in the heart of the city both in the cultural and industrial sections the Major architects such as Poelzig, Mendelsohn, the brothers Taut, the brothers Luchardt, Bruno Paul, Fahrenkamp, Salvisberg, Hans Hertlein, and many others were at work. Berlin was about to become a good "residence" as Bruno Taut had required. However when Hitler took power all these endeavours came to an abrupt end. His aim was not good housing but rather self-glorification.

When the war was over 75 million cubic meters of ruins covered the city. This is more than 1/7 of all the ruins in Germany. 500,000 residences were destroyed as well as most of industry, trade and traffic. Since the rebuilding of West Berlin began in 1948, 200,000 new residences have been built, of which practically all have been financed and supported as social housing projects by the Bundesrepublik and the United States. Because the quality had to be achieved in a short time, one was at first forced to accept the fact that the quality could by no means be compared with the standards of the twenties. The many-fold technical problems stood in the foreground overshadowing other requirements. Beginning with the planning of a housing exhibit in 1957

one tried to lead the elite of the architects again to the task of social housing projects. With this exhibition the impulse was to have been given to further productivity of this kind. Let me now draw your attention to the traffic problems. It is well known how quickly traffic as a life providing source . inclines at the same time to suffocate the city which it should serve. Here the cited words by Gehring gain vital importance : "Forward to the individual form of the matter required to the practical form which is an effective and complete form." One effective artery - the city autobahn with its embracing tangents should ease and provide the different traffic systems (Main traffic, distributing and converging systems, residential streets, etc ...). Whether this will succeed is naturally not only a question of planning alone but primarily a question of the complex structure. It is time to say a few words about the context, the make-up of the city. We have spoken about traffic and about living, now remains the questions, the purpose of housing and the destination of traffic. We agreed at the beginning that our culture, a product of cities cannot be without them. Just in the last years the product of urban living emerged in many places like magic, supposed to change all sorrow in happiness. Political scientists, philosophers , sociologists are at work. This is no doubt underlines the importance of city re-planning - city building - as the decisive base of our culture. To what purpose a city ? Barth sees the city as the only possibility for the complete development of the personality. With this it seems to me when categorizing the context of the city of tomorrow and we speak only of that, the task of education always ranks first. Education and formation of the individual through voluntary contact without much freedom has no duration. Berlin is many cities in one, not only from geographical, historical growth : Berlin and Cöllnstand next to Spanndam and Reinickendorf, Lichtenberg next to Wedding, each is different, but all one singular unity . But Berlin is many cities from its many-fold tasks : German capital, city of three universities, city of banks and stages, largest

industrial city of Germany and home of the most important Museums, city of old people homes, showplace of world-wide conflicts, place of the largest cosmopolitan freedom, surrounded by a wall of barbed-wire, world City from which one can easily reach Tokyo and New York but not Potsdam or Werder.

In 1957 there was a great city planning competition in Berlin on the theme, Berlin, the capital of Germany. It was sponsored by the Senate and the West German government. The most interesting contribution was the work of Scharoun. The many attributes of Berlin, when taken singularly seem insignificant, but taken as a whole, the city is rich worthwhile to be a part of, in order to add to its characteristic expression.

A city is not stationary. It can never be planned as a final form. On the contrary city planning is an everlasting process because the city means life and is life. Planning requires respect for this life.

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