

## **Berlin, knowing the metropolis**

**Author:** Neus Jiménez Sagols

**Tutor:** Salvador Tarragó Cid

### **ABSTRACT**

*Berlin, knowing the metropolis* is a text which has behind an extended work of documentation about the urban history of a city: Berlin. The aim of this document is to divulge the interesting history of this city, as well as to value the present reality that is turning Berlin into the capital of Germany and a metropolis of scale in economy and trust inside Europe and all over the world.

Berlin is undoubtedly the city of the moment, and is completely demersed under a process of change, of mutation, actually, the hugest transformation process that has taken place in the last twenty-five years in Europe. The knowledge of this reality and the inquietude that the study would reveal the mysteries that the city keeps in secret were the basic reactors that made me take this interesting trip trough the pages of Berlin's history.

The reader will find the text structured in two different parts according to the main objective of this work, which is the knowledge of Berlin's urban history first, and afterwards the valuation of the reality of the last fifteen years of reunification, which have supposed the major volume of work in construction and have helped the city to obtain the status of global capital in the world.

The first part of the thesis is mainly dedicated to the history of the city, from its foundation, in the XIIIth century, until the 9<sup>th</sup> November 1989, when the wall felt down symbolizing the collapse of communism and the DDR, and a new beginning for the city was to be raised. The four chapters that conform this part have been divided after the different periods of history which are known for the change they supposed, and have been characterized for their brought to new social, cultural or warlike tendencies. In this part of the document the reader will find really very interesting chapters about Berlin's history, as are the industrialization of the city, the birth of the metropolis at the beginning of the XXth century, the golden twenties and modernism, the megalomaniac dreams of the national socialists, the postwar period or the cold war and the city. All about a urban history that shows plans that were constructed as well as those which remained just in paper and were never executed. Actually this part is a sort of pre-act that will guide to the second part of the document, the one which analyses the Berlin of our days, Berlin-2000.

At the second part it will be talked about the last fifteen years of changes in the city of Berlin. The places that were considered by the author as the most representative and significant of this transformation will be shown to the reader under a personal valuation of the projects, always trying to leave the questions as an object of debate, conscious that the items we talk about are mostly very subjective. It will be talked about the political changes that the reunification promoted and especially what this process supposed for the city of Berlin considering that it was proclaimed the capital of the new country. The restoration of the *Reichstag* building, the creation of a governmental district, the *Postdamer Platz* and the gold fever of the investors for having their piece of emblematic places in the metropolis, and of course the eternal debate that confronts the two points of view of the present urban philosophies: the traditional model versus the postmodern model.

Last but not least, the thesis contains three annexed documents which could not be included in the text but are considered to be interesting for the deeper knowledge of the city. This final chapter named *Annexes* includes the following documents:

- A chapter about urban geography, where the city is evaluated under parameters like: metropolitan area uses distribution of the territory, population, jobs and transportation.
- Brief biographies of the men who were considered to have had important roles in Berlin's urban and architectural history.
- Finally an atlas which includes the maps of the city which represent better the evolution of its growth over the centuries. This chapter itself resumes through images the content of the thesis, that's why it was named "The thesis through images".