

Architectural History Thesis

**The Expression of Political Ideology in the
Public Architecture of Hans Scharoun and
Hermann Henselmann in post-war Berlin**

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Prologue

After four years of education at the TU Delft faculty of architecture, I was interested to experience architectural education somewhere else. This was my reason to apply for an exchange semester at TU Berlin. Considering its fascinating history, learning more about Berlin's past felt essential, to do justice to this city that got to endure so much. Writing my history thesis about the city seemed like the perfect opportunity. Especially the impact of the city's division on the architectural discourse got my interest.

During the process of writing this thesis, I have come to know that my application at TU Berlin has been accepted and I will therefore exchange Delft for Berlin in September 2022.

Abstract

The close relationship of architecture with power caused it to play an important role in the Cold War conflict between the capitalist West and socialist East side of Berlin after World War Two. This research investigates how architecture was used as an expression of political ideology in the public architecture of Hermann Henselmann and Hans Scharoun in East and West Berlin. The research is conducted through a literature study and compares four case studies: the Philharmonie and State Library in the West, Haus des Lehrers and the Fernsehturm in the East. An exploration into the architectural context of Berlin, the theory of architecture as a political tool and the biographies of the architects result in an analysis of the case studies on three themes: monumentality, community and reference to the past. The research concludes that common goals which the GDR and FGR both aimed to achieve through architecture were to: gain the trust of their population, propagate themselves as the better side and to create a sense of identity among their population. Whereas the West mainly concerned itself with expression to the United States, the East primarily wanted to demonstrate its competence to the other side. Scharoun's designs clearly fitted the FGR's ideology whereas Henselmann's designs were not always the result of his agreement with the political leadership or vision, but rather based on a deeper incentive to design architecture that suited the new socialist society.

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Introduction

After the Second World War, new buildings in Berlin were by no means neutral objects in this period of political tension in the divided city. Architecture played a symbolic role and was used as an expression of political ideology in both East and West Berlin.

In comparing the role of architecture as a political tool between East and West Berlin, the focus is usually on residential projects, particularly the Stalinallee and the Hansaviertel. This paper instead investigates how architecture was used as an expression of political ideology in public buildings on both sides of the wall. The focus is on the works of Hans Scharoun and Hermann Henselmann, who are commonly described in the literature as the ‘star-architects’ of East and West Berlin during the reconstruction period. As City Architect, Hans Scharoun was responsible for the *Planungs-Kollektiv*, which largely influenced the (urban) planning of the reconstruction of Berlin after the war. Hermann Henselmann is known for his positioning as a modernist and socialist, which resulted in an interesting political situation. The research is centred around four projects, namely the Philharmonie and the State Library by Scharoun and the Haus des Lehrers with its congress hall and the Fernsehturm by Henselmann. These projects were chosen due to their significant roles in the architectural development on both sides of the wall and the interesting perspectives they offer. To describe a context or a trend sometimes other projects are covered as well.

The research question posed in this thesis is: *How was architecture used as an expression of political ideology in the public architecture of Hermann Henselmann and Hans Scharoun in East and West Berlin?* This research is conducted through an extensive English, German and Dutch literature study that ties together previous studies and architectural newspaper and magazine publications from the post-war period. Topics discussed include the context of the architectural situation in East and West Berlin, the theory behind architecture as a political tool and an exploration into Scharoun and Henselmann. Finally, the main research question is covered through the lens of three themes: monumentality, community and reference to the past, which result in a conclusion.

Chapter one: The context

The Second World War left Berlin in a severe state of devastation in 1945. Years of air raids and bombings had resulted in a cityscape of ruins. Germany was divided among its four occupying powers: the Soviet Union, the United States, Great Britain and France. Due to its strategic importance, it was decided that Berlin should be divided amongst the four as well. The western allies (United States, Great Britain and France) founded the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) and the Soviet Union founded the German Democratic Republic (GDR) in 1949. West Berlin became a democratic capitalist state, whereas the Soviet Union installed a rigidly controlled communist state in the East. Due to support from the United States government the West rapidly economically recovered which resulted in a quick and large-scale reconstruction. The people living in the East were dissatisfied with the communist regime and fled to the West. This ultimately led to the construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961 by the East; a physical intervention that made the division of the city definitive (Scheer, Kleihues, & Kahlfeldt, 2000). This chapter plots the context of the post-war reconstruction period in East and West Berlin and their approach to architecture.

Despite unclarity about the political situation and the divided state of the city, the planning of the reconstruction of Berlin started immediately after the war ended. Besides its practical necessity, the reconstruction was also seen as a symbol of the renewal of the 'damaged' psyche of the German people. It was a way for the capitalist and communist states to express their commitment to the city and allowed them to articulate a national identity that distanced itself from the Nazi regime. This made architecture and urban planning a particularly effective weapon during the Cold War (Pugh, 2014). It is often said that Berlin was a 'Schaufenster' (show window) in which architecture was an important means of representation. Architecture was explicitly referred to as a tool of propaganda. In the West, the Interbau exhibition and the residential Hansaviertel development are typical examples of this, and in the East the Stalinallee (which was later renamed Karl-Marx-Allee).

How propaganda was employed by the authorities in the East and the West differed. In press releases or media coverage in the West, labels like 'democratic' and 'capitalist' were seldomly used. Instead, these ideologies were referred to indirectly with notions like 'freedom' and 'humanism'. The West primarily turned its back to the GDR and instead focused westward, particularly on the United States, whereas in the East the leader of the SED (Social Unity Party of Germany) Walter Ulbricht actively denounced the West.

The role of architectural styles associated with Neues Bauen played a particularly important role in the architectural relationship between East and West. Modern architecture was defined as original, independent of tradition and liberated from imitation of styles of the past. The emphasis was on functional architecture that was devoid of ornaments and was strongly associated with the United States and democracy and averted by the Nazis during the war. This made modern architecture an ideal instrument of identity-building and a means to differentiate in the context of

Cold War Berlin.

Whereas the West embraced the modern style, the GDR distanced itself from it. SED leader Ulbricht was one of the biggest detractors of modern architecture and wanted to avoid American influences. From 1950, the *Sixteen Principles of Urban Design*, which were based on Soviet ideals, had a large influence on urban and architectural developments in the GDR. These principles proposed that culture should be socialist in content and nationalist – and therefore traditional – in form. This resulted in historized, decorative architectural styles being adopted as the socialist style, something many East German architects did not support due to their association with Nazi architecture. Many East German architects saw modern architecture as the fitting style for socialism, rather than for capitalism. This resulted in an architectural discourse in which architects alternately subverted and accommodated the repressive SED as they attempted to define the new socialist style (Pugh, 2014).

In the 1960s, after the death of Stalin, the architectural policy in the GDR shifted from a focus on developing a national building style to a discussion of the techniques and economics of construction. Nikita Khrushchev's speech in 1954 titled 'Building Better, Cheaper and Faster' announced the change in policy towards industrialized building methods. This revolved around standardisation, for which the East turned to aspects of Neues Bauen since the German avant-garde architects of the Weimar era had already concerned themselves about comfortable mass-produced housing. Standardisation and prefabrication were applied primarily in the production of housing as the East dealt with a housing shortage (Pugh, 2014). Henselmann's Haus des Lehrers is an example that shows that prefabrication was applied in public buildings as well.

The SED's scientific technical revolution and destalinisation started a shift in the East towards a socialist architectural style that demonstrated modernist influences.

Chapter two: Architecture as a political tool

Architecture and politics are often described to be closely intertwined. Authoritarian regimes with megalomaniac plans are the first to come to mind when speaking of political symbolism in architecture. However, it plays a role in democratic states as well. This chapter describes how architecture can be used as a political tool.

Power is a keyword in understanding the relationship between architecture and politics. Politics revolves around power and so does construction, as the act of building requires valuable resources and connections. Add to this the characteristic that buildings are long-standing and very visible structures in society, and architecture is turned into a means to express power (Sudjic, 2005). Especially in situations of conflict between two political systems, architecture is a common tool to express ideology. One of the reasons for this is that architecture allows governments to express political ideals indirectly, without violating treaties (Pugh, 2014).

In literature about Berlin post-war architecture, the term 'Schaufenster' is frequently mentioned. It describes how architecture was used by the East and West to express themselves as the superior society. Understanding who is targeted is important when examining politics in architecture. In the case of Berlin, three groups were targeted: the other side of the wall, the state's own population and the international world (Broadbent & Hake, 2012).

There is also a difference between intended and unintended political symbolism, although this is sometimes hard to define and distinguish. The modernist relation to symbolism is an example that proves this complexity. Modernists strive for architecture free of symbolism in order to put more emphasis on functional requirements (Bell & Zacka, 2020). However, as architectural ornaments can serve as markers of social standing, so can their removal convey a meaning. This is also why the application of modernist architecture as a building style – which is supposedly free of symbolism – in post-war Berlin is already a strong political expression considering the GDR's aversion to it.

Adolf Arndt - an SDP (Social Democratic Party) politician - discussed how architecture and politics were related in post-war Berlin in his speech at the *Berlin Construction Weeks* in 1960. He explained that in a democracy, political and architectural form are interdependent and together shape the democratic lifestyle. Despite its name, the German Democratic Republic is in this research not considered an example of democracy due to its communist one-party leadership. Arndt stated that it is easier for totalitarian regimes to express their ideology through architecture than for a democracy. This is due to the balanced contradiction of openness and shielding in space and society in democracy (Arndt, 1961).

Democratic architecture can be defined in different ways. One could say it is an architecture that is the outcome of a participative process. Another interpretation is that democracy is best understood as institutionalized uncertainty and could therefore be expressed in architecture that reflects this open and undetermined character. The use of glass to signify transparency and with that symbolising trustworthiness is

another way to represent democratic values. The collective and community also play a role in democratic architecture (Bell & Zacka, 2020).

Authoritarian architecture is strongly associated with characteristics like monumentality, axiality and classical references. Scale is an important determinant as well, considering Nazi architect Albert Speer's notion of it: "[...] a monument's values reside in its size is a belief basic to mankind" (as cited in Mair & Zaman, 2020, p. 17). Large and freely visible buildings provoke feelings of intimidation and power. As such, authoritarian states can use architecture to express themselves as the perfect society to divert attention from problems.

This relation between architecture and society plays an important role in understanding architecture as a political tool and comparing the works of Scharoun and Henselmann. Similar to Arndt, Scharoun believes that architecture can influence people's behaviour and shape society. For Scharoun architecture functioned as a social utopia, an expression of what he wished society would be like. He used architecture as a means to create a community and shape a new society (Kirschenmann & Syring, 1993). Henselmann on the other hand did not believe architecture could reform society in a capitalist state, as only a select group within society has the means to make a change. As such his approach aligns with the description of architecture as a powerful tool given by Sudjic. It's also why he chose to work in the East and as such aimed to define an architecture for the new socialist society (Heise & Flierl, 1978).

During the Cold War, German newspaper articles and architectural magazines from the post-war period were used to discuss and opinionize architectural developments in Berlin and show how architecture was used as propaganda. Particularly in the East, through GDR publications like *Deutsche Architektur* and *Neues Deutschland*, architects, historians and critics elaborated on the architectural discourse. These journals had a large influence on the way architects and their buildings were perceived (Castillo, 2003). This articulates the heated architectural debate and its importance in the political conflict between East and West.

Chapter three: Scharoun and Henselmann

In order to analyse and compare the ways in which political ideology was expressed in the architecture of Hans Scharoun and Hermann Henselmann, it is important to understand who they were. This chapter offers insight into these two architects' education, their role during the Second World War, their approach to architectural styles and their political views during the post-war period.

3.1 Hans Scharoun

Scharoun was educated as an architect at the *Technische Hochschule* in Berlin, an academic and dry course that did not stimulate creativity. During the beginning of his career, Scharoun was an expressionist. Together with Bruno Taut, he started an expressionist association with fellow leaders in the Utopian movement, which influenced his work through topics like community, landscape and daylighting. The insight that functional requirements and technical building demands can suggest a new architectural vocabulary later caused a transition from Expressionism to Functionalism; although Expressionist influences weren't left behind entirely. Scharoun's work during the 1920s acted as an exploration in the search for an architecture of his own, which came to be in the 1930s. He started ignoring axial discipline and instead designed in free curves. It was around this period that he realised that his progressive work could only be accepted in Berlin and decided to work on projects there (Jones, 1995, pp. 18-45).

During the war, Scharoun continued his practice in family houses and worked as a surveyor of bomb damage. Besides, he expressed himself through visionary sketches and watercolours, imagining a world after the war. Sketches that seem to have been realised in his designs for the Philharmonie and State Library (Pugh, 2014). When the war was over in 1945, Scharoun was offered the post of City Architect of Berlin. This powerful position allowed him to plan for reconstruction, despite Berlin being in a state of political complexity due to the division of the city into four sectors. He initiated the *Planungs-Kollektiv*, a team of modernist architects who occupied themselves with the reconstruction and development. It shows that Scharoun found teamwork important and his conviction that the planning of a city is a collective matter. The plans that were drawn up by the *Planungs-Kollektiv* clearly reflected influences of the modernist principles of the CIAM *Charter of Athens* (Jones, 1995, pp. 104-117).

After a short post as City Architect, Scharoun proceeded with an academic career at the TU Berlin and also at the East Berlin *Institut für Baukunst* (IfB), where he was assisted by Hermann Henselmann (Heise & Flierl, 1978). During their collaboration, they amended the *Sixteen Principles of Urban Design* so that they could be applied to modernism. The original documents' prescriptive character was reformulated with the aim to stem the Sovietization of East German architecture. Yet, due to growing Stalinist influences in East Berlin, the IfB was closed in favour of a new *Bauakademie* by the anti-modernist Kurt Liebknecht. Although developing a new social architecture within the public realm was more likely in the East, Scharoun opted for a career in the West. With success, as in the West Scharoun got

the opportunity to define a new public architecture centred around the experience of the visitors, with a particular focus on routing and lighting (Kirschenmann & Syring, 1993). This ultimately led to his first commission from a won competition: the design of the concert hall for the Philharmonic orchestra in 1956 which is considered his masterpiece. It was the first building at the *Kulturforum*, which was part of the *Planungs-Kollektiv* plan. Later the State Library – designed in 1964 and finished in 1979 – also designed by Scharoun was added. These two buildings are considered the highlights of Scharoun’s career and have given him his status as a West Berlin star-architect.

3.2 Hermann Henselmann

Hermann Henselmann is widely known and described as *the* GDR-architect. He started off his career as a hand craftsman, was educated at the Arts and Crafts school in Berlin and gained experience in the field of architecture at the firm of Arnold Bruhns. He designed his first house in modernist style in 1930 (Heise & Flierl, 1978). Henselmann is a prime example of an architect who converted from a modernist to working for the socialist GDR. Many architects at the time were in the challenging situation to position themselves in relation to the SED, socialism and modernism. During this post-war period, the correct approach to architectural styles was constantly debated. Many architects were interested and involved in the process of defining an architectural style for the new socialist society, which would express its political values. In 1951 Henselmann attended an event at which SED general secretary Walter Ulbricht described how the Bauhaus design heritage should be rejected and instead Soviet design precedents should be pursued. The targeted architects were all committed modernists a year earlier but converted due to the alluring idea of becoming the heroes of post-war architecture (Castillo, 2003). As described in chapter one, however, this was a constant process in which architects in the East alternately subverted and accommodated the SED, in the search for new socialist architecture.

Henselmann advocated for more industrialisation in the construction industry, embraced the large influence this would have on the architectural design language and as such helped define the socialist architectural style. In his opinion, capitalism constrained the new and necessary innovation. Unlike Scharoun, Henselmann did not believe that architecture could resolve the class struggle since architecture is



Image 2: East German publicity photo of Hermann Henselmann in centre with two construction workers by his side (Castillo, 2003 p. 41)

always built on behalf of a class. This was why he became a communist architect after the war (Heise & Flierl, 1978).

When he was invited to join the competition to design the *Hochhaus am Weberwiese* in 1951, Henselmann initially neglected the brief and designed a proposal with modernist influences. The SED's disapproval caused him to alter his design, which resulted in him winning the competition and becoming a party favourite. This embodiment of Henselmann as a hero whose life story pivoted was actually the party's aim, and the newspaper *Neues Deutschland* played an important role in this. By deliberately describing Henselmann's initial rebellion against the socialist order and his later accommodation to it, the SED aimed to persuade other architects to convert as well. A propaganda publicity photo taken in 1952 (image 1), portrayed Henselmann in Lenin's iconic pose and turned him into an East German celebrity. This describes the important role of publications in newspapers and magazines in the architectural conflict (Castillo, 2003, pp. 39-41).

Despite this public posturing, Henselmann expressed his enduring interest in modern architecture in his design for the Haus des Lehrers (Pugh, 2014). Developments in the SED's architectural policy due to destalinization and the scientific-technological revolution in the East made this possible.

Chapter four: Analysis of the case studies

In this chapter, first the case studies by Scharoun and Henselmann will be described and then analysed based on three themes. These themes are important to understand how architecture was used as an expression of political ideology. The themes are monumentality, community and relation to the past.

Monumentality is an important theme when discussing the relationship between architecture and politics. It relates to a buildings' resemblance and significance and can be an expression of megalomania. Considering that – as described in chapter two – the act of building is an expression of power it can be argued that the greater the monumental value, the greater the expression of power.

In the post-war reconstruction period, a lot of emphasis on both sides of the division was on the expression of community and the creation of a new society through architecture. Both architects referred to the notion of *Heimat* in descriptions of their work.

After the Second World War, any association with Nazism was avoided. Architecture was used as a political tool to express condemnation of the Nazi past. Simultaneously, associating the architecture of the other side with this negative past was common in the conflict between the two and architectural publications played a role in this conflict.

4.1 Case studies

Case studies Hans Scharoun: Philharmonie and State Library

The Berlin Philharmonie designed by Hans Scharoun was built between 1961 and 1963 and can be considered his most well-known work. It was designed as part of the *Kulturforum* in West Berlin, which was initiated in the *Planungs-Kollektiv* led by Scharoun. Its location along the border between East and West Berlin gives the building particular political significance. The building replaced the old Philharmonie which was destroyed during the war. The building stands out due to its organic aesthetic and the concert hall's configuration in which the stage is on all sides surrounded by seats (Wang, 2013, pp. 13-22).

The State Library (image 2) is also part of the *Kulturforum* and offers an interesting comparative insight into the role of political symbolism in the public works of Scharoun. Both buildings are realisations of the 1940's sketches that depicted Scharoun's ambitions and intentions for architecture after the war (Jones, 1995). The State Library was constructed between 1967 and 1978 and its construction was supervised by Edgar Wisniewski after Scharoun's death in 1977. The building's architectural language is similar to that of the Philharmonie, although appropriately adapted to the program of a library (Jones, 1995, pp. 196-217).

Case studies Hermann Henselmann: Haus des Lehrers and Fernsehturm

One of Berlin's contemporary icons in the skyline of Berlin is the Fernsehturm at the *Alexanderplatz*. The tower was built in East Berlin between 1965 and 1969 and

although there is unclarity about who can claim to be its architect, Henselmann without a doubt played an important role in its conception. In a plan he drafted for the city centre in 1958 he already drew a 300-meter tall tower like the one existing today, called *Turm der Signale* (image 3). He intended the structure to be purely monumental but in the end, it has gotten its function as a television tower (Broadbent & Hake, 2012, pp. 89-98). The Fernsehturm has played an important symbolic role in the relationship between East and West.

The other building that is discussed is the Haus des Lehrers (House of Teachers), with the attached congress hall. When Henselmann designed this building in 1961 it marked a change in the architectural policy of East Berlin. The construction of the wall made the division appear definitive and allowed the East to take architectural action like the West did before that already; with statements like the construction of the Philharmonie (Scheer, Kleihues, & Kahlfeldt, 2000). The building is an interesting socialist modernist expression near Alexanderplatz and was constructed to replace the building of the teachers association that – like the Philharmonie - was destroyed during the war. At the third and fourth floors, the building houses a teacher’s library. Henselmann combined the programmatic requirement of darkness for the storage of the books, with a large mosaic artwork that circumferences the building. This Socialist frieze by Walter Womacka is a typical socialist expression and a striking element on a modern building like this (Heise & Flierl, 1978).



Image 2: Photograph by Daniele Ronda of the reading hall in the State Library designed by Hans Scharoun in Berlin (Divisare, 2018)

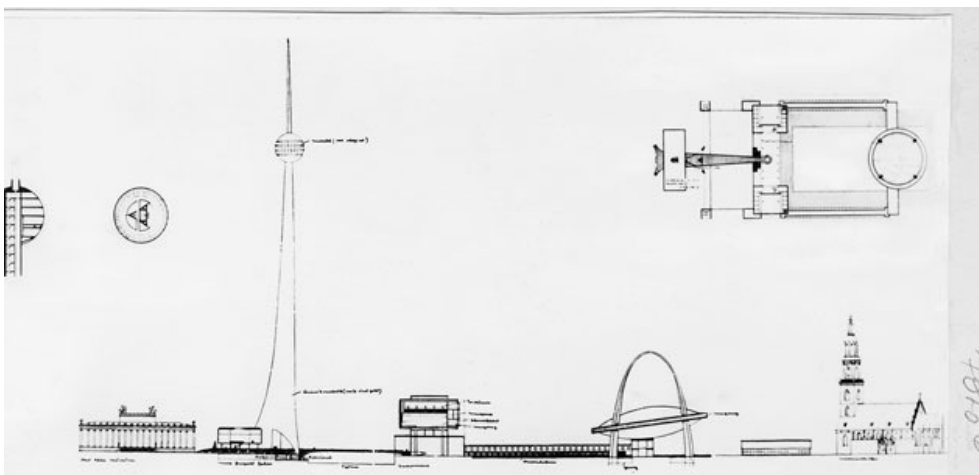


Image 3: Hermann Henselmann’s design of the Turm der Signale for the ‘Competition for socialist redevelopment of the city centre of the capital of the GDR Berlin’ in 1959. (Flierl, 2018 p. 79)

4.2 Monumentality

In Franco Borsi's *The Monumental Era*, it is described that the conservative image of monumental architecture signifies both the strength of democratic institutions as well as the aggressive power of dictatorial states. The declamatory quality of monumental architecture gives it a symbolic power (Borsi, 1987, pp. 193-197). Considering the unclear and unsure political situation in Berlin after the Second World War, it is no wonder that this symbolic power caused monumentality to play an important role in architectural warfare.

Monumentality is often associated with axuality, classicist references and the use of natural stone, particularly in totalitarian/authoritarian states (Sudjic, 2005). In East Berlin, this type of monumental architecture was induced by Soviet influences. The Stalinallee and Henselmann's *Hochhaus am Weberwiese* are examples of this. As previously described, this style was imposed on him by the SED; originally he designed something more modern. In his public buildings, which were designed later (in the 1960s), monumentality is not actively applied. The increased acceptance of modern architecture in the East is an explanation for this.

Although Henselmann's Fernsehturm is symmetric, it is not considered a monument for that specific reason. Taking into account that the tower was considered a modernist structure (Broadbent & Hake, 2012, pp. 89-98), the application of symmetry as a symbol would also not fit the style. Rather this symmetry fits the typology of a television tower. Still, Henselmann deliberately designed the Fernsehturm as a monument for East Berlin in his plan for the city centre in 1958. It was designed to symbolize a Soviet Sputnik satellite. In the end, it was the combination of technical necessity, which gradually transitioned to also comprise symbolic monumentalism, which made the project happen. When the tower was opened by SED leader Walter Ulbricht in 1969 it was celebrated as an "emblem of Berlin". The idea of the GDR *Ministry of Construction* to include an observation deck and restaurant added to its character as a landmark, just as its prominent position relative to the Stalinallee. During the process of planning the tower's location, the sightlines of the tower from West Berlin were carefully taken into consideration (image 4). The Fernsehturm is a prime example of the way the conflict between East and West played out. The building was both a symbol of the importance of television in the SED's campaign



Image 4: The Fernsehturm in the East as seen from the Friedrich-Ebert-Platz in the West in 1983 (Kasperski, 1983) [Stiftung Berliner Mauer]

to build socialism, as well as a demonstration of the East's superiority over the West, which did not build a structure of this scale (Broadbent & Hake, 2012, pp. 89-98). The largest Egyptian newspaper *Egyptian Gazette* even declared that the East Germans already won the architectural Cold War battle: "People in West Berlin... watch (the tower) grow taller wondering when they themselves will have such a tower... 'the sight of it will be a daily shock'" (Egyptian Gazette as cited in Broadbent & Hake, 2012 pp. 96). This quote articulates how architectural rivalry was experienced between East and West.

Scharoun's Philharmonie was also intended to be a monument. Although axuality cannot be recognised in the design and the entrance is deliberately positioned asymmetric - not only for political reasons but also to enhance visitors' excitement - it is still clearly designed as a monument. Its tent-like roof structure is described to act as a "beacon of democracy" that is visible from the other side of the wall (Campbell, 2007). As the first building at the *Kulturforum*, in a heavily ruined area, the Philharmonie got a symbolic meaning within west Berlin's post-war reconstruction (Pugh, 2014). Whereas the Philharmonie was a clear expression directed as a political gesture towards East Berlin, the State Library had - besides this role - also the role of gaining the trust of the West Berlin population. The building symbolised West Berlin's political aim to return those belongings which had been stored elsewhere during the war. The library was both in scale and scope a reflection of the political intention to create 'the largest German library overall' (Pugh, 2014), clearly to demonstrate its competence. That the library was described to be designed as "a modern-day temple for the 'performance' of democracy" (Pugh, 2014, p. 94) emphasises its political and monumental value.

Contrastingly, the Haus des Lehrers and its mosaic frieze were not intended as a monument (Jenkins, 2021). Henselmann did not believe that an office building should be designed as a monument to socialism. According to him that was something that would be possible in a 'capitalist downtown' but not in a 'socialist city centre' (Moravánszky, Hopfengärtner, & Kegler, 2016, p. 270). However, being one of the first modernist expressions in East Berlin Haus des Lehrers was still conceived as a monument. The GDR architectural magazine *Deutsche Architektur* wrote that through buildings like the Haus des Lehrers, the reconstruction of the East Berlin city centre would elevate the international renown of the republic (Pugh, 2014, p. 130). The building signalled a change in the SED's architectural policy, which came after the division of Berlin became definite in 1961 and de-Stalinization took place which decreased the Soviet influences on East German architectural aesthetic (Broadbent & Hake, 2012). It was the first architectural action as a response to the plans for West Berlin's expressive Philharmonie (Scheer, Kleihues, & Kahlfeldt, 2000).

It can be concluded that monumentality was used by both Scharoun and Henselmann as a means to impress and convey a message to the other side of the wall and its own population. To some extent, their work could even be perceived as expressions of the government's megalomania. Both architects created remarkable and unique designs which were built at strategic locations. Whereas Scharoun's designs for the Philharmonie and State Library were clearly intended as monuments, just like Henselmann's Fernsehturm, the Haus des Lehrers was actually not intended that way, but in the end, still served as one. Monumental design features like axuality and the use of natural stone were not actively applied by the two architects in these case studies. The reason for this is that at the time these projects were built, governments inclined more towards modern styles. Moreover, the association of monumental design features with Nazism was avoided.

4.3 Community

As described in their biographies in chapter three, both Scharoun and Henselmann were concerned with the creation of a new society, just like many other architects at the time. For Scharoun this revolved around a new style for public architecture (Kirschenmann & Syring, 1993), for Henselmann this expressed itself in the search for an architecture that would fit the new socialist society (Castillo, 2003).

Descriptions of Scharoun's Philharmonie elaborate thoroughly on the role of community in the design. Scharoun himself described the building as a place that turned its visitors into active participants. A community was formed as there was no segregation between producers and consumers. The way the auditorium (image 5) is designed, a visitor's view is always filled with musicians and with audience members, which makes them feel like they belong to a collective. By dividing the hall into different sections, the visitors are still given a state of autonomy through which Scharoun made sure that the collectivity does not feel forced (Campbell, 2007). The design allows habitués of the concert hall to move to a closer empty seat just before the beginning of the concert easily; a permeability that marks the open democratic society (Wang, 2013, pp. 13-22). This balance between the individual and the community is at the centre of Scharoun's design and shows that the Philharmonie is not a backdrop, but rather an active participant in the creation of democracy (Campbell, 2007).



Image 5: Auditorium of the Berlin Philharmonie designed by Hans Scharoun (Patt, 2015)

The way the theme of community is expressed in the design of the State Library is largely influenced by Scharoun's connection with Bruno Taut around the 1920s. Taut was interested in the interplay of light and glass to explore the notion of an ideal community. In his vision, he blended the civic with the spiritual for the unification of a fragmented society. The State Library is an embodiment of these ideas. Light and glass were used as symbols for societal transformation. Scharoun argued that glass would help create a more open and unified social order to engender an emotional response and bring people together. In this way architecture became a mediator between individuals and their community. It is interesting how the State Library's design is influenced by pre-war symbolism and stylistic idioms, which signify something different in the context of post-1961 divided Berlin. The symbolism had a heightened significance within the divided city, turning the State Library into the centre of the formation of a new harmonious community and the symbol of

the reunification of Berlin and Germany. In his ground-breaking speech in 1967, Scharoun reflected his interest in the power of architecture to build a community. The building is often described to forge community and evoke a sense of liberation among its visitors (Pugh, 2014, pp. 97-102).

The library played an important role in the establishment of a connection between West Berlin and the German Federal Republic, despite their difference as political entities. This perception of a community as united yet divided shares commonality with the notion of Heimat. Heimat is a German term and is usually described as ‘home, homeland or native region’, a place you feel at ease or your heart feels at home (Blickle, 2004). Through the design of the State Library Scharoun intended to create a space for West Germans within West Berlin: a ‘spiritual Heimat’ (Pugh, 2014).

In his endeavour to create an architecture for a socialist community, Hermann Henselmann devoted himself to the notion of Heimat as well. He believed the creation of a socialist community meant to provide not only for the physical but also the psychological and emotional well-being of East Germans. Among others, Henselmann concerned himself with the question of how prefabricated buildings could facilitate rather than hinder the process in which physical structures can build a community and shape a personal and collective identity (Pugh, 2014). This is a different approach than that of Scharoun and articulates how a community and society can be shaped by architecture in various ways.

In Henselmann’s Haus des Lehrers it is not necessarily the architecture but rather the mosaic frieze around the façade that is an expression of community. Mosaic wall art was common in East Berlin to signify a distinct socialist culture (image 6). It is even argued that visual arts in the built environment allowed for transitions between competing visions of what socialist architecture should be. The artwork at the Haus des Lehrers portrays an ideal image of a socialist society that is based on modern technology, peace, the friendship between peoples and classlessness. This is typical of East Berlin’s state of scientific-technical revolution. This depiction of Socialist society had the aim of manipulating the population into a positive attitude towards the state (Jenkins, 2021). The Fernsehturm shapes a community in a different way. Due to its sheer scale, one’s individuality is diminished and people are imposed to be part of the collective, which was the socialist aim.



Image 6: Haus des Lehrers by Hermann Henselmann with the mosaic frieze (van der Kolk, 2014)

It could be said that the incentives of Scharoun and Henselmann – both trying to shape and express a community and shape society through architecture – are similar, but the way this is expressed is different. One of the reasons for this is the building program. A concert hall and a library are more suitable typologies to create a community than an office building like the Haus des Lehrers. Another reason could be that Henselmann was given less freedom in his design than Scharoun, due to suspicion and restrictions of the socialist state. Both architects elaborated on the notion of Heimat and let it influence their work.

4.4 Relation to the past

Architecture is a strong tool of expression, which also means it can arouse undesirable associations. In the period after the war, both East and West Berlin avoided any reference to Nazism. An example of this is Scharoun's plan for the *Kulturforum* which repudiated Nazi architect Albert Speer's plan 'Germania', ignoring its original axiality. Likewise, the Philharmonie was constructed at the axis that Speer planned in 1936 (Campbell, 2007).

Also in appointing an architect for a project this symbolism was taken into consideration. For the design of the *Kulturforum* and the State Library, Scharoun was a politically safe choice as he was an advocate of Neues Bauen, which was strongly connected to democracy. This was an easy way to express disavowal of the Nazi era, considering the Nazi's aversion of this architectural style (Pugh, 2014). In the case of the Philharmonie, the angular form symbolised the rejection of Nazi and communist ideology (Campbell, 2007) and the winged figure of Uhlmann's Phoenix on the concert hall's roof is described to symbolically rise from the ashes of the Nazi past (Wang, 2013, pp. 13-22).

The two sides of the wall accused each other of the glorification of Nazism through their architecture. In a critical text about the Stalinallee, which Henselmann worked on, Scharoun drew parallels with Albert Speer's east-west axis. These critiques served to – implicitly – emphasize that West Berlin (and its government) were free of Nazi influences (Howell-Ardilla, 1998). SED leader Walter Ulbricht disregarded the negative association with Nazism of Stalinallee's classical architecture and instead proclaimed it to “mirror democracy from its roots in Greece and mirroring socialism by providing unambiguous symbols of equal meaning to all” (Balfour as cited in Mair & Zaman, 2020 p. 30). This shows that architectural elements can be interpreted and associated differently and how explanations can be twisted to fit the goal.

In the design of Henselmann's Haus des Lehrers he seems to turn his back on Nazi influences and actively disassociate through the influences of Neues Bauen. Yet his flat-domed design for the congress hall, with which he intended to design the “Pantheon of the Germans” (Flierl, 2018, pp. 69-84), provokes an interesting and controversial association with Albert Speer. In his design for the (never realized) *Volkshalle*, Speer referred to the Pantheon as well. However, the flat-dome design is also described to be inspired by the design for the *Congress Rotunda* in Gropius and Belluschi's *Back Bay Center*, which is more plausible considering this is a modernist design (Moravánszky, Hopfengärtner, & Kegler, 2016, p. 270).

Besides anti-Nazi symbolism, Germany's Prussian heritage played a role in Berlin's post-war architectural politics as well. The SPK – a cultural institution in West Berlin – committed itself to the preservation of Prussia. This was surprising considering the anti-Prussian sentiment in Germany and Berlin due to their association with militarism, anti-individualism and authoritarianism. The SPK's concern with the preservation of something that was so disavowed can be explained by the fact that besides a cultural mission, there was a political function as well. A lot of historically significant Prussian buildings were located in the Soviet zone and therefore in the GDR. Through the development of a new cultural centre in the West, the *Kulturforum*, the SPK attempted to claim its own legitimacy as the ‘true’ German capital. Scharoun's State Library was the centrepiece of this political game (Pugh, 2014, pp. 87-89). Publications in architectural journals like *Bauwelt* and *Tagesspiegel* which described the State Library as “the German State Library” (as cited in Pugh, 2014 pp. 89) articulate how the government's intention succeeded.

To conclude, both Scharoun and Henselmann condemned Nazism through their architecture, fitting the post-war tendencies in East and West. The rivalry between the two sides resulted in accusations however, which are hard to confirm or reject because architecture as an expression is very associative can be interpreted in different ways. The incentives surrounding in the creation of the State Library show how a certain approach to the past can comprise and express a political meaning.

Conclusion

It cannot be disputed that the post-war public architecture of Hans Scharoun and Hermann Henselmann was used to express political ideology in East and West Berlin. The four case studies – the Philharmonie, State Library, Haus des Lehrers and the Fernsehturm – were all used as political tools in the conflict between two sides. Scharoun's designs clearly fitted the FGR's ideology. Henselmann's designs in the East however, were not always the result of his agreement with the political leadership or vision, but rather based on a deeper incentive to design architecture that suited the new socialist society.

Common goals which the GDR and FGR both aimed to achieve through architecture were to: gain the trust of their population, demonstrate their ability and propagate themselves as the better side and to create a sense of identity among their population. Whereas the West mainly concerned itself with expression to the United States, the East primarily wanted to demonstrate its competence to the other side.

Due to the clear physical division of Berlin into two sides, people are inclined to perceive the matter in terms of extreme opposites. However, this thesis is proof of that it is important to realise that the architectural debate between the two is not black and white. In their post-war work, East Berlin architects like Henselmann were in the complex political position of balancing their own ideals and those of the state. Moreover, political powers and ideologies changed and developed over the course of the Cold War. For example the increased acceptance of modernism in the East in the post-Stalinist period. These realisations are relevant when drawing a conclusion, as it's the context in which buildings were designed that defines their political symbolic value.

Architectural symbolism in post-war Berlin was usually directed either at the other side, the outside world or the own population. The works of Scharoun and Henselmann have turned out to be exceptions to the rule of how expressions in East and West were usually targeted. An example is that the architecture of West usually turned its back to the East, but simultaneously the Philharmonie is described to be constructed as a monument alongside the Berlin Wall as a 'beacon of democracy' towards the East. The East, on the other hand, tended to target expressions primarily at the population of West Berlin and its own population. However, Haus des Lehrer's modern design was described to be an expression to the outside world to elevate the East's international renown.

Articles in architectural newspapers and magazines played an important role in targeting the architectural expressions. The architectural discourse in both East and West was discussed and moreover, not seldomly influenced or altered by these publications. This emphasises the role of architecture as a political tool.

Monumentality as a theme played an important role due to its character to impress and its association with power. In Henselmann's work, this can be recognised in his design for the Fernsehturm, which was intended to be a monumental landmark structure to demonstrate the competence of the Socialist state. Similarly, Scharoun

designed the Philharmonie and State Library as monuments. Haus des Lehrers was not intended to be a monument but was perceived as one because it marked a change in the socialist architectural policy.

Both Scharoun and Henselmann engaged in the creation of a community or society, as their building were expressions of the political system they represented. Scharoun's Philharmonie is renowned for its auditorium which expresses democracy and shapes a community. The State Library is described to forge community as well through pre-war symbolism inspired by Bruno Taut and the SPK's preservation of Prussian heritage. Henselmann's aim to create a socialist architectural style is expressed in his design for the Haus des Lehrers. He believed in modern architecture to be the fitting style for socialism and his design for the Haus des Lehrers was the first time this was expressed. The mosaic frieze that depicts the 'ideal socialist community' is a reminder of the socialist influences.

Due to the devastating impact of the war, associations with Nazism were actively avoided by both East and West. The associative character of architecture and the rivalry between the two states resulted in accusations of Nazi glorification on both sides. Scharoun's architecture succeeds in actively condemning Nazism through irregular shapes and its modernist style. Being commissioned by the socialist state, Henselmann's designs possess characteristics that could be associated with Fascist architecture. Taking into account Henselmann's background, this is very unlikely, however.

This research refers to the descriptions of the architectural debate in newspapers and magazines through literature, to realise a better understanding of the context, the political processes and architecture's influence. However, a full in-depth archival investigation into the perception of political architecture on both sides of the wall could be a valuable topic for further research. Magazines like *Neues Deutschland*, *Deutsche Architektur*, *Architecture der DDR* and *Bauwelt* are recommended sources for this. The emphasis of the research could be on the way architectural developments were perceived by the populations on both sides of the wall and what impact they had.

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