

Staging the New Berlin

Place Marketing and the Politics of Reinvention Post-1989

Claire Colomb



This book explores the politics of place marketing and the process of 'urban reinvention' in Berlin between 1989 and 2011. In the context of the dramatic socio-economic restructuring processes, changes in urban governance and physical transformation of the city following the Fall of the Wall, the 'new' Berlin was not only being built physically, but *staged* for visitors and Berliners and marketed to the world through events and image campaigns which featured the iconic architecture of large-scale urban redevelopment sites. Public-private partnerships were set up specifically to market the 'new Berlin' to potential investors, tourists, Germans and the Berliners themselves. The book analyzes the images of the city and the narrative of urban change, which were produced over two decades. In the 1990s three key sites were turned into icons of the 'new Berlin': the new Potsdamer Platz, the new government quarter, and the redeveloped historical core of the Friedrichstadt. Eventually, the entire inner city was 'staged' through a series of events which turned construction sites into tourist attractions. New sites and spaces gradually became part of the 2000s place marketing imagery and narrative, as urban leaders sought to promote the 'creative city'. By combining urban political economy and cultural approaches from the disciplines of urban politics, geography, sociology and planning, the book contributes to a better understanding of the interplay between the symbolic 'politics of representation' through place marketing and the politics of urban development and place making in contemporary urban governance.

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