

collapse of the berlin wall

Collapse of the Berlin Wall: A Turning Point in History

collapse of the berlin wall marks one of the most monumental events of the twentieth century, symbolizing the end of the Cold War and the reunification of Germany. This iconic barrier, which once divided East and West Berlin, stood as a physical and ideological boundary between communism and democracy for nearly three decades. Understanding the collapse of the Berlin Wall involves delving into the political tensions, social movements, and international dynamics that culminated in its dramatic fall in 1989.

The Origins of the Berlin Wall

To truly grasp the significance of the collapse of the Berlin Wall, it's essential to explore why the wall was erected in the first place. After World War II, Germany was divided into four occupation zones controlled by the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and the Soviet Union. Berlin, although located deep within the Soviet zone, was similarly split into East and West sectors controlled by these powers.

The Cold War Context

The ideological conflict between the capitalist West and communist East led to increasing tensions. East Germany, officially the German Democratic Republic (GDR), became a Soviet satellite state with a communist government. West Germany, or the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), aligned itself with Western democracies. As East Germans fled to the West in search of freedom and better opportunities—over 2.5 million people between 1949 and 1961—the East German government decided to build a barrier to stop this mass exodus.

Construction of the Wall

On August 13, 1961, East German authorities began erecting what would become a heavily fortified wall stretching 155 kilometers (about 96 miles) around West Berlin. The Berlin Wall was not just a concrete barrier; it was equipped with guard towers, barbed wire, anti-vehicle trenches, and a "death strip" designed to prevent escapes. The wall physically split families, friends, and a city, becoming a stark symbol of division and oppression.

Events Leading to the Collapse of the Berlin Wall

The collapse of the Berlin Wall did not happen overnight. Instead, it was the result of a

complex interplay of political change, public pressure, and international developments throughout the 1980s.

Political Changes in Eastern Europe

By the mid-1980s, reformist leaders like Mikhail Gorbachev in the Soviet Union introduced policies of glasnost (openness) and perestroika (restructuring). These reforms encouraged more transparency and economic change, indirectly undermining the rigid control of communist regimes in Eastern Europe. Countries like Poland and Hungary began to loosen their grip on power, inspiring hope for change in East Germany.

Growing Public Dissent

East Germans were increasingly frustrated with their government's repression and lack of freedom. Peaceful protests, notably the Monday demonstrations in Leipzig, gained momentum throughout 1989. Citizens demanded the right to travel freely and called for democratic reforms. The East German government struggled to maintain control amid mounting pressure.

The Role of Neighboring Countries

In the summer of 1989, Hungary opened its border with Austria, effectively creating a hole in the Iron Curtain. Thousands of East Germans took advantage of this escape route, further embarrassing the East German regime and fueling demands for reform. The wave of change sweeping through Eastern Europe made the Berlin Wall increasingly untenable.

The Night the Wall Fell

The collapse of the Berlin Wall was as much a result of miscommunication as it was a reflection of the unstoppable tide of change.

The Press Conference That Changed Everything

On November 9, 1989, East German official Günter Schabowski mistakenly announced at a press conference that travel restrictions for East Germans would be lifted "immediately," without clear instructions on how this would be implemented. This caused a surge of East Berliners to flock to the wall's checkpoints, demanding to cross into West Berlin.

Guard's Dilemma and Opening the Checkpoints

The overwhelmed border guards, unsure of what to do and fearing violence, eventually allowed people to pass through. Crowds began chipping away at the wall, celebrating their newfound freedom. What was meant to be a controlled easing of restrictions quickly turned into a spontaneous, jubilant collapse of decades-old barriers.

The Impact of the Berlin Wall's Fall

The collapse of the Berlin Wall was more than just the physical dismantling of a barrier; it set off a chain reaction that reshaped Europe and the world.

Reunification of Germany

Less than a year after the wall fell, East and West Germany were officially reunified on October 3, 1990. This reunification was a complex process involving economic integration, political restructuring, and social reconciliation. The fall of the wall made reunification possible, symbolizing the triumph of democracy over authoritarianism.

End of the Cold War

The Berlin Wall's fall is often seen as the symbolic end of the Cold War. It signaled the collapse of communist regimes across Eastern Europe and paved the way for the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991. The ideological divide that had shaped global politics for decades began to dissolve, leading to new international relationships and cooperation.

Legacy and Remembrance

Today, remnants of the Berlin Wall stand as powerful reminders of the past. Memorials, museums, and preserved sections attract millions of visitors annually. The wall's history teaches valuable lessons about freedom, resilience, and the human spirit's desire for unity.

Lessons From the Collapse of the Berlin Wall

Reflecting on this historic event offers insights into political change and the power of collective action.

- **The power of peaceful protest:** The largely nonviolent demonstrations proved that

sustained public pressure can bring about significant political change.

- **Importance of communication:** The confusion during the press conference highlights how critical clear communication is during political transitions.
- **Role of international dynamics:** Changes in neighboring countries and global politics can influence domestic affairs dramatically.
- **Hope in times of division:** Even the most entrenched barriers can fall when people unite for freedom and justice.

Understanding the collapse of the Berlin Wall helps us appreciate the complexities behind political shifts and the enduring human quest for liberty. It remains a profound example of how walls—both physical and ideological—can be overcome through courage, determination, and the desire for change.

Frequently Asked Questions

When did the Berlin Wall fall?

The Berlin Wall fell on November 9, 1989.

What was the Berlin Wall?

The Berlin Wall was a concrete barrier that divided East and West Berlin from 1961 to 1989, symbolizing the Cold War division between the communist East and the capitalist West.

What events led to the collapse of the Berlin Wall?

The collapse was influenced by political reforms in the Soviet Union, widespread protests in East Germany, and the easing of travel restrictions announced on November 9, 1989.

Who was the East German leader during the fall of the Berlin Wall?

Egbert Schramm was the acting leader during the period, but the key figure associated with reforms leading up to the fall was Egon Krenz.

How did the fall of the Berlin Wall impact Germany?

The fall led to the reunification of East and West Germany, officially completed on October 3, 1990, ending decades of division.

What role did international pressure play in the collapse of the Berlin Wall?

International pressure, especially from Western countries and the Soviet Union's shift in policies under Mikhail Gorbachev, contributed to the easing of restrictions and eventual fall of the Wall.

How is the fall of the Berlin Wall commemorated today?

It is commemorated through annual events, memorials like the Berlin Wall Memorial, and educational programs highlighting the significance of freedom and unity.

Why is the fall of the Berlin Wall considered a significant historical event?

It marked the end of Cold War divisions in Europe, symbolized the triumph of democracy over communism, and paved the way for European integration.

Additional Resources

Collapse of the Berlin Wall: A Turning Point in Modern History

collapse of the berlin wall stands as one of the most significant geopolitical events of the late 20th century, symbolizing the end of the Cold War and the ideological division between East and West. Erected in 1961, the Berlin Wall physically and ideologically separated East Berlin, controlled by the German Democratic Republic (GDR), from West Berlin, a democratic enclave within Soviet-controlled East Germany. Its sudden fall on November 9, 1989, marked not only the reunification of Germany but also a profound shift in global politics, economics, and society. This article provides a detailed examination of the collapse of the Berlin Wall, its causes, impacts, and legacy.

Historical Context Leading to the Berlin Wall

In the aftermath of World War II, Germany was divided into four occupation zones controlled by the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and the Soviet Union. Berlin, although located deep within Soviet-controlled East Germany, was similarly partitioned. Over time, the ideological rift between the communist East and capitalist West deepened, culminating in the establishment of two separate German states in 1949: the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) in the West and the German Democratic Republic (GDR) in the East.

The division of Berlin became a focal point of Cold War tensions. Between 1949 and 1961, approximately 2.5 million East Germans fled to the West, many through Berlin, seeking political freedom and economic opportunity. This mass exodus threatened the stability of the GDR, prompting East German authorities, backed by Soviet support, to construct the Berlin Wall in August 1961. The wall was designed to stop the flow of refugees and solidify

the division between the two Germanys.

Factors Contributing to the Collapse of the Berlin Wall

The collapse of the Berlin Wall was not an isolated event but the culmination of several intertwined political, social, and economic pressures that had been mounting throughout the 1980s.

Political Liberalization and Reform Movements

The 1980s witnessed a wave of political change across Eastern Europe, largely driven by the policies of Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev. His reforms of glasnost (openness) and perestroika (restructuring) encouraged greater transparency and economic reform within the Soviet Union and its satellite states. These policies indirectly emboldened citizens and dissidents in Eastern Europe, fostering movements demanding political liberalization.

In East Germany, public dissatisfaction with the authoritarian regime grew, fueled by economic stagnation and lack of freedoms. Peaceful protests, especially in cities like Leipzig, became increasingly frequent and larger in scale by 1989, signaling a loss of control by the GDR government.

International Pressure and Changing Global Dynamics

By the late 1980s, the global balance of power was shifting. The United States, under President Ronald Reagan and later George H.W. Bush, engaged in diplomatic dialogues with the Soviet Union, emphasizing arms reduction and cooperation. Reagan's famous 1987 speech at the Brandenburg Gate, urging Gorbachev to "tear down this wall," became emblematic of Western pressure against the division.

Simultaneously, the Soviet Union's declining economic power and internal challenges made it less willing to enforce strict control over its Eastern Bloc allies. This tacit allowance for reform created a political environment in which the GDR leadership could no longer maintain the wall as a symbol of division.

Miscommunication and the Fall: The Night of November 9, 1989

The immediate cause of the collapse of the Berlin Wall was a botched announcement by Günter Schabowski, an East German official. During a press conference on November 9, 1989, Schabowski mistakenly indicated that East Germans could cross the border "immediately." This statement led to a surge of East Berliners converging on the wall's

checkpoints.

Unprepared and overwhelmed, border guards eventually opened the gates. Scenes of jubilant East and West Berliners climbing and dismantling the wall were broadcast worldwide, signaling not just the physical destruction of the wall but the ideological victory of freedom and reunification.

Impact and Legacy of the Berlin Wall's Collapse

The collapse of the Berlin Wall had profound and far-reaching consequences, shaping the political landscape of Europe and beyond.

German Reunification and European Integration

The fall of the wall set in motion the process of German reunification, formally completed on October 3, 1990. This reunification ended decades of division and reestablished Germany as a unified, democratic state. Economically, integrating the communist East with the capitalist West proved challenging, requiring significant investments and reforms to modernize infrastructure and social systems.

More broadly, the collapse accelerated European integration. It paved the way for the expansion of the European Union eastward and contributed to the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, signaling the end of Cold War-era alliances.

Symbolism and Memory

The Berlin Wall remains a potent symbol of division, oppression, and the triumph of human spirit over authoritarianism. Its collapse is commemorated worldwide as a victory for democracy and freedom. Today, remnants of the wall serve as historical monuments and reminders of the dangers of ideological extremism.

Challenges and Critiques

While the collapse of the Berlin Wall was widely celebrated, it also brought challenges. The rapid reunification exposed economic disparities between East and West Germany, leading to social tensions and migration patterns that transformed the country. Some critics argue that the transition was too swift, causing economic hardships for many in the East.

Moreover, the geopolitical vacuum left by the Soviet retreat led to new uncertainties and conflicts in the post-Cold War world, demonstrating that the end of the Berlin Wall was both a beginning and a complex transition.

Key Takeaways from the Collapse of the Berlin Wall

- The Berlin Wall's collapse symbolized the end of the Cold War and the ideological divide between communism and democracy.
- Political reforms in the Soviet Union and peaceful protests in East Germany were crucial drivers behind the wall's fall.
- The event triggered German reunification and influenced the broader reshaping of European political boundaries.
- Despite its symbolic victory, reunification posed economic and social challenges that required long-term solutions.
- The Berlin Wall remains an enduring symbol of both division and hope, informing contemporary discussions on freedom and human rights.

The collapse of the Berlin Wall not only reshaped a nation but also altered the course of modern history, illustrating how political will, public sentiment, and historical circumstance converge to dismantle entrenched systems. Its legacy continues to inspire discussions about freedom, unity, and the ongoing pursuit of democratic ideals worldwide.

Collapse Of The Berlin Wall

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collapse of the berlin wall: *The Fall of the Berlin Wall* Jeff Hay, 2010 Collects nineteen essays that offer varying perspectives on the destruction of the Berlin Wall, discussing the history of the wall, controversies, and the political and personal significance of the wall's destruction.

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collapse of the berlin wall: *The Fall of the Berlin Wall* Jeffrey A. Engel, 2009-10-22 The fall of the Berlin Wall sent shock waves around the world. It was, quite literally, a world-changing event. Now, more than two decades after the Wall's collapse, this book brings together leading authorities who offer a fresh look at how leaders in four vital centers of world politics--the United States, the Soviet Union, Europe, and China--viewed the world in the aftermath of this momentous event. Jeffrey Engel contributes a chronological narrative of this tumultuous period, followed by substantive essays by Melvyn Leffler on the United States, Chen Jian on China, James Sheehan on Germany and Europe, and William Taubman and Svetlana Savranskaya on the Soviet Union. These historians reinterpret the meaning of 1989 in the context of global history in the late 20th and early 21st century and explore such questions as why communism failed in Europe, why China took a different route following the turmoil of Tiananmen Square, and why the peace of 1989 might well prove illusory.

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collapse of the berlin wall: *The Fall of the Berlin Wall* Kathleen Tracy, 2020-02-04 There is perhaps no greater symbol of both political oppression and the human spirit of the twentieth century than the Berlin Wall. Built during the height of the Cold War in 1961, the Wall was meant to both stop the number of citizens trying to leave East Germany for the freedoms and opportunities of the West and to prevent people spreading the ideals of democracy from coming in. In the 28 years the Wall stood, it is estimated over 1,000 people were killed trying to escape into West Berlin. In the end, the Wall fell without a shot being fired. As Mikhail Gorbachev was laying the foundations for

the peaceful dismantling of the Soviet Union, the people of East Berlin and East Germany began demanding their city and country be freed from Soviet occupation. Finally, in November 1989, the Wall was torn down and Germany was once again reunited. This is the story of the dark rise and the eventual uplifting triumph over the Wall that split not only a city and nation, but friends and families.

collapse of the berlin wall: The Year that Changed the World Michael Meyer, 2009-09-08 ON THE TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FALL OF THE BERLIN WALL, MICHAEL MEYER PROVIDES A RIVETING EYEWITNESS ACCOUNT OF THE COLLAPSE OF COMMUNISM IN EASTERN EUROPE THAT BRILLIANTLY REWRITES OUR CONVENTIONAL UNDERSTANDING OF HOW THE COLD WAR CAME TO AN END AND HOLDS IMPORTANT LESSONS FOR AMERICA'S CURRENT GEOPOLITICAL CHALLENGES. Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall! President Ronald Reagan's famous exhortation when visiting Berlin in 1987 has long been widely cited as the clarion call that brought the Cold War to an end. The United States won, so this version of history goes, because Ronald Reagan stood firm against the USSR; American resoluteness brought the evil empire to its knees. Michael Meyer, who was there at the time as a Newsweek bureau chief, begs to differ. In this extraordinarily compelling account of the revolutions that roiled Eastern Europe in 1989, he shows that American intransigence was only one of many factors that provoked world-shaking change. Meyer draws together breathtakingly vivid, on-the-ground accounts of the rise of the Solidarity movement in Poland, the stealth opening of the Hungarian border, the Velvet Revolution in Prague and the collapse of the infamous wall in Berlin. But the most important events, Meyer contends, occurred secretly, in the heroic stands taken by individuals in the thick of the struggle, leaders such as poet and playwright Vaclav Havel in Prague; the Baltic shipwright Lech Walesa; the quietly determined reform prime minister in Budapest, Miklos Nemeth; and the man who privately realized that his empire was already lost, and decided -- with courage and intelligence -- to let it go in peace, Soviet general secretary of the communist party, Mikhail Gorbachev. Reporting for Newsweek from the frontlines in Eastern Europe, Meyer spoke to these players and countless others. Alongside their deliberate interventions were also the happenstance and human error of history that are always present when events accelerate to breakneck speed. Meyer captures these heady days in all of their rich drama and unpredictability. In doing so he provides not just a thrilling chronicle of the most important year of the twentieth century but also a crucial refutation of American political mythology and a triumphal misunderstanding of history that seduced the United States into many of the intractable conflicts it faces today. The Year That Changed the World will change not only how we see the past, but also our understanding of America's future.

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thought, humanistic Marxism and existentialism. It was a major democratizing force as Brazil emerged from dictatorship in the late 1970s. In the 1980s, however, the popular appeal of progressive Catholicism came under threat. Focusing on a Catholic community near Rio de Janeiro, Manuel A. Vásquez's incisive study shows how economic and political changes have affected religious practices, and argues that the plight of progressive Catholicism in Brazil forms part of a wider crisis of modernity and of humanist discourses.

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collapse of the berlin wall: The Fall of the Berlin Wall Charles River Editors, 2015-03-04
*Includes pictures *Includes accounts of the night the wall fell and celebrations afterward *Includes footnotes and a bibliography for further reading *Includes a table of contents This is a historic day. East Germany has announced that, starting immediately, its borders are open to everyone. The GDR is opening its borders ... the gates in the Berlin Wall stand open. - German anchorman Hans Joachim Friedrichs The Berlin Wall, constructed in October of 1961, stood for 28 years as an ugly divider of a once united Germany. The wall was successful at keeping many East Germans inside a country that fell further and further behind in living standards, democratic privileges, and individual freedoms. Despite its success, many found a way to cross the barrier to obtain a better life in the West. In addition, the Soviet Union was going through a period of political instability as several aging leaders had taken the top position in the Soviet Union only to die a short period of time later. In 1985, Mikhail Gorbachev became the leader of the Soviet Union. Gorbachev came to power seeking to repair the Soviets' economy, and he took a softer stance toward the United States. The two leaders signed agreements to reduce the number of nuclear weapons and eliminate certain types of ballistic missiles. Gorbachev also reformed the Soviet Union internally, lifting restrictions on individual freedoms. Limited political reforms, such as broadcasting uncensored debates in which politicians openly questioned government policy, backfired when they energized eastern European opposition movements which began to overthrow their communist governments in 1989. Gorbachev was unwilling to reoccupy these eastern European nations and use the Soviet army to put down these revolts. Things came to a head in Berlin that November. With rapid change throughout Europe, the wall faced a challenge it could not contain, the challenge of the spread of democracy. On the night of November 9, 1989, the Berlin Wall was effectively removed from the midst of the city it so long divided. It was removed with pick axes and sledgehammers, but also removed from the hearts and minds of the people on both sides who only hours before had thought the wall's existence insurmountable. The fall of the Berlin Wall is often considered the end of the Cold War, and the following month both President Bush and Gorbachev declared the Cold War over, but the Cold War had been thawing for most of the 1980s. President Reagan is remembered for calling the Soviet Union an evil empire and demanding that Gorbachev tear down the wall, but he spent the last several years of his presidency working with the Soviet leader to improve relations. The end of the Soviet Union came when Gorbachev resigned on December 25, 1991. The Soviet Union formally dissolved the next day, and the Cold War was over, with the United States outlasting its long-time adversary. The Fall of the Berlin Wall: The History of the Unification of Germany and the End of the Cold War looks at the history that led to the fall of the Berlin Wall. Along with pictures of important people, places, and events, you will learn about the construction of the Berlin Wall like never before, in no time at all.

collapse of the berlin wall: The Rise and Fall of the Berlin Wall R. G. Grant, 1991 The story of the Wall itself and of all that it came to signify in East-West relations, from the fall of the Third Reich in 1945 and the division of Germany to the series of events leading to reunification in 1990.

collapse of the berlin wall: Collapse Vladislav M. Zubok, 2021-11-30 A major study of the collapse of the Soviet Union—showing how Gorbachev’s misguided reforms led to its demise “A deeply informed account of how the Soviet Union fell apart.”—Rodric Braithwaite, Financial Times “[A] masterly analysis.”—Joshua Rubenstein, Wall Street Journal In 1945 the Soviet Union controlled half of Europe and was a founding member of the United Nations. By 1991, it had an army four million strong with five thousand nuclear-tipped missiles and was the second biggest producer of oil in the world. But soon afterward the union sank into an economic crisis and was torn apart by nationalist separatism. Its collapse was one of the seismic shifts of the twentieth century. Thirty years on, Vladislav Zubok offers a major reinterpretation of the final years of the USSR, refuting the notion that the breakup of the Soviet order was inevitable. Instead, Zubok reveals how Gorbachev’s misguided reforms, intended to modernize and democratize the Soviet Union, deprived the government of resources and empowered separatism. Collapse sheds new light on Russian democratic populism, the Baltic struggle for independence, the crisis of Soviet finances—and the fragility of authoritarian state power.

collapse of the berlin wall: 30 Years since the Fall of the Berlin Wall Alexandr Akimov, Gennadi Kazakevitch, 2020-01-08 The year 2019 marks 30 years since the fall of the Berlin wall. This symbolic event led to German unification and the collapse of communist party rule in countries of the Soviet-led Eastern bloc. Since then, the post-communist countries of Central, Eastern and South-eastern Europe have tied their post-communist transition to deep integration into the West, including EU accession. Most of the states in Central and Eastern Europe have been able to relatively successfully transform their previous communist political and economic systems. In contrast, the non-Baltic post-Soviet states have generally been less successful in doing so. This book, with an internationally respected list of contributors, seeks to address and compare those diverse developments in communist and post-communist countries and their relationship with the West from various angles. The book has three parts. The first part addresses the progress of post-communist transition in comparative terms, including regional focus on Eastern and South Eastern Europe, CIS and Central Asia. The second focuses on Russia and its foreign relationship, and internal politics. The third explores in detail economies and societies in Central Asia. The final part of the book draws some historical comparisons of recent issues in post-communism with the past experiences.

collapse of the berlin wall: 20 Years Since the Fall of the Berlin Wall Elisabeth Bakke, Ingo Peters, 2011-01-01

collapse of the berlin wall: The Murky Issue Pasquale De Marco, 2025-05-17 Germany's division after World War II was one of the most significant events of the 20th century. It had a profound impact on the lives of millions of people and shaped the course of global politics for decades. In this groundbreaking book, we delve into the complex history of Germany's division and reunification, exploring the key events, personalities, and forces that shaped this tumultuous period. We begin with the aftermath of World War II, when the Allied powers divided Germany into four occupation zones. We then examine the rise of the Cold War and its impact on Germany, including the Berlin Blockade and Airlift, the establishment of two German states, and the construction of the Berlin Wall. We also explore the efforts to achieve peaceful coexistence between East and West Germany, including the Ostpolitik of Willy Brandt and the Helsinki Accords. We discuss the role of the United States in the German Question, as well as the impact of the Cold War on German society. Finally, we examine the collapse of communism and the fall of the Berlin Wall, which led to the reunification of Germany in 1990. We analyze the challenges of reunification, including the economic and social integration of East and West Germany, the rise of neo-Nazism and right-wing extremism, and the debate over German identity. This book is a comprehensive and engaging account of one of the most important chapters in modern history. It is essential reading for anyone who wants to understand the Cold War and its impact on Germany and the world. ****Key Features:**** * A comprehensive overview of Germany's division and reunification * An analysis of the key events, personalities, and forces that shaped this period * A discussion of the Cold War's impact on Germany and German society * An examination of the challenges of reunification * A thought-provoking

exploration of Germany's role in the post-Cold War world This book is a must-read for anyone interested in modern history, international relations, or German studies. If you like this book, write a review on google books!

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Germany commemorates the fall of the Berlin Wall on 30th anniversary (Manchester Evening News5y) It was 30 years ago today that the Berlin Wall fell, having kept kept families and friends

divided by concrete and razor wire in Germany in the bitter depths of the Cold War. As part of Saturday's

Tens of thousands celebrate fall of the Berlin Wall 35 years ago with concerts and art installations (The Independent10mon) From reproductive rights to climate change to Big Tech, The Independent is on the ground when the story is developing. Whether it's investigating the financials of Elon Musk's pro-Trump PAC or

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Day of German Unity Celebrations (Berlin.de3d) October 3rd is the Day of German Unity and a nationwide public holiday. It commemorates the German reunification, the day

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Set in Berlin in the year before the fall of the Berlin Wall (The Irish News10mon) It's 1980s Berlin just before the fall of the wall and the division in Germany is represented by twins separated at birth. They are the same but different, just like capitalist West Germany and

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Paul Lowe, Sunday Telegraph photographer at the fall of the Berlin Wall and Ceausescu's overthrow (The Daily Telegraph9mon) Paul Lowe, Sunday Telegraph photographer at the fall of the Berlin Wall and Ceausescu's overthrow In Sarajevo he photographed a string quartet playing in the ruins of the town hall: 'People would risk

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