

# Germany Today

## Thank you, you “peoples of the world”

After six decades of reconciliation: Germany, a free voice of the free world. BY RAINER BIELING

Since the unconditional surrender of 1945 Germans have defeated National Socialism politically and shaken off actual socialism peacefully. What a gain for peace and freedom in Europe!

The Germany, that in June 2007 is host of the G-8 summit in the Baltic spa town of Heiligendamm, is a free and peaceful country, the homeland of a proud nation. Proud of its historical performance in putting paid to two dictatorships in six decades.

The Allies defeated National Socialism militarily. But to defeat it politically as well was something Germans had to do. It cannot be said that they found it an easy task. But they managed it – in tough, decades-long struggles. Today, they will not let anybody get away with trying to recast a wrongdoer from then as a victim.

And National Socialism had to swallow a third defeat: the “Final Solution to the Jewish Question” failed. There has been a viable state of Israel for almost 60 years and even in Germany, where evil ran its course, Jews again feel at home. In Munich, the one-time “Capital of the Movement” (Adolf Hitler, 1935), they rebuilt their synagogue in 2006, right in the city center. What a triumph!

But in one part of Germany, democratization didn’t take place at all to begin with, because one dictatorship had replaced the other. And in the other, larger part it proceeded only in fits and starts. Initially it was the architects of reconstruction and the Wirtschaftswunder (the

Economic Miracle) who brought the country into the free world. People like Social Democrat Ernst Reuter, like Christian Democrat Konrad Adenauer, like Free Democrat Theodor Heuss tamed the old totalitarian powers as best they could. That taming often meant including, was the accusation the 1968’ers threw at them a generation later. Unfairly, because without the opportunists who had been members of the NSDAP that rapid rise would not have been possible in the slightest. Rightly, because it was the demand for decency and responsibility that sealed the political defeat of National Socialism and brought forward Germany’s moral rebirth.

But without the help of the peoples of the world, Germans would not have had this new beginning. And also not without the readiness for reconciliation between them, the good guys, and us, the bad guys.

In the other, smaller, part of Germany, it never came to that at all. Here, people had to defend themselves against the continuation of dictatorship, this time a socialist one. The world’s first uprising against the new totalitarian rulers took place on June 17, 1953 in Berlin. Many other attempts would follow – Warsaw, Budapest, Prague and Beijing. The defeat of the Berlin uprising was followed by people voting – with their feet. Two million Germans chose to flee before the building of the Berlin Wall, on August 13, 1961, put paid to their desire for freedom. Twenty-eight years later, on November 9, 1989, the Wall fell and there was no stopping: Leipzig, Budapest, Prague, Warsaw and two years later even Moscow itself. The collapse of the Berlin Wall ended the trauma of actual socialism throughout the world. What a triumph!

Once again, it was the peoples of the world who gave their blessing to Germany’s reunification or stretched out their hands in reconciliation towards the former wartime opponent. We are grateful for this. We are proud that we have twice dared to make a new start and so doing defeated National Socialism politically and cast out actual socialism peacefully to create a Germany that lives in unity and justice and freedom.

But we are not basking in our pride (we do our actual basking in the Mediterranean) but trying to give the peoples of the world something back from our gratitude. Because we know the effort

shaking off dictatorship and despotism takes or to prevent it from getting established in the first place, we are helping everywhere we can to defend and secure freedom and democracy against the mighty and power hungry. Yes, that is interfering in internal affairs. And it has helped us very much. But take a look for yourself. Turn the pages and join us on a journey through our recent past and see the wonderful results. Germany, a free voice of the free world: modern, and facing the future.



WIKIPEDIA



THOMAS PFLAUM/ISIUM



AKG-IMAGES



SCHROEDIG/DPA

The American and English airlift enabled free Berlin to survive and Germany’s rebirth as a democratic nation.

From top to bottom: “You peoples of the world, you peoples of America, England, France and Italy! Look upon this city and recognize that you may not surrender this city and this people and cannot surrender them!” Those were the words uttered by Berlin’s mayor, Ernst Reuter, on September 9, 1948 in front of the Reichstag. The Reichstag today with the distinctive glass dome by Sir Norman Foster. The building is the seat of the German Bundestag, the freely-elected parliament of the Federal Republic of Germany. Flown-in via the airlift brick by brick: the Reuter power station, named after the legendary mayor, provided West Berlin with power and bright light. The “Power of Darkness” (Ernst Reuter, 1948) had no chance.

### End and beginning



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May 8, 1945: German armed forces capitulate unconditionally. In the photo Field Marshal Keitel signs the ratification of the capitulation on the May 9, 1945 in Berlin-Karlshorst. May 11: Edict “Directive JCS 1067” to the Joint Chiefs of Staff: “Germany will not be occupied for the purpose of liberation but as a defeated enemy nation. Your aim is not oppression but to occupy Germany for the purpose of realizing certain important Allied objectives. (...) You will strongly discourage fraternization with the German officials and population. The principal Allied objective is to prevent Germany from ever again becoming a threat to the peace of the world. Essential steps in the accomplishment of this objective are the elimination of Nazism and militarism in all their forms (...) and the preparation for an eventual reconstruction of German political life on a democratic basis.”



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August 2, 1945: Potsdam Agreement deals with, among others, denazification, deconcentration of the economy, demilitarization and – on at the instigation of Joseph Stalin (the photo shows him at the start of the Potsdam Conference on July 17 with Harry S. Truman and Winston Churchill – from left to right) – the separation of the territory east of the Oder-Neisse line. Whereby Germany loses a quarter of its territory as of 1937 and at least 12 million Germans lose their homes. The expulsion from the eastern areas costs some 2 million people their lives, around 10 million find a new home in the first two post-war years: 3.67 million in the British zone, 3.25 million in the U.S. zone, 3.16 million in the Soviet zone (as of April 1, 1947). The French zone accepts only a few refugees.



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November 20, 1945: Start of the Nuremberg trials against leading National Socialists and war criminals (until October 29, 1948). In the dock (front row from left to right), Göring, Hess, von Ribbentrop and Keitel. The international military court found 35 defendants not guilty and sentenced 24 to death, 20 to life and 98 to prison terms from between 18 months and 25 years. At the same time the Allied Control Council is, since January 1946, pursuing a policy of removing National Socialists from public office and leading positions.



# Germany today: Innovation and high-technology



**Germany today:** Montage of Heidelberg presses in a printing plant near Heidelberg, Baden-Württemberg. Printing presses from Germany are precision machines sought after throughout the world. **Germany 1450:** Johannes Gutenberg from Mainz invents a wooden printing press with metal movable type.

**Germany today:** Assembling a Porsche Cayenne in Leipzig, Saxony. Upmarket vehicles from Germany are flagship products driven with pleasure throughout the world. **Germany 1886:** Carl Benz patents his invention, the automobile. His first car takes to the road in Mannheim. Photo below right: A Porsche Carrera.



**Germany today:** Manufacturing Aspirin in Bitterfeld, Saxony-Anhalt. Pharmaceuticals from Germany set the standards. Aspirin, today, is a synonym all over the world for painkillers. **Germany 1897:** Arthur Eichengrün, in Wuppertal, discovers the pain relieving effect of acetylsalicylic acid. Bayer has been marketing the drug as Aspirin since 1899.

## Denazification and currency reform



"followers" and "exonerated persons". By 1950, more than six million cases examined in the Western zones classified almost 1,700 people as major offenders, 23,000 as offenders, 150,000 as lesser offenders and 1.6 million as followers. In the east, by March 1948, 520,000 people had been released on political grounds. In early 1948 the "hot phase" of denazification ended in the Russian zone and soon afterwards in the western ones – the "hot phase" of the Cold War starts.

**March 5, 1946:** Law for the Liberation from National Socialism and Militarism. Whoever was not among the 7.5 million members of the NSDAP (which means 90% of Germans were not party members), bears no guilt or can lie convincingly, receives a "clean sheet": "Due to the information in your registration form you are not affected by the Law for the Liberation from National Socialism and Militarism of March 5, 1946." The denazification process differentiates between "major offenders", "offenders", "lesser offenders",



**April 22, 1946:** Founding of the Socialist Einheitspartei Deutschlands (SED), the future state party of the GDR. In the photo sitting to the right: Walter Ulbricht, the future dictator of the GDR. After the "Wende" (the fall of the Berlin Wall) on February 4, 1990 SED changed its name to the PDS, currently (since June 16, 2007) active under the name "Die Linke" ("The Left") as an all-German leftwing party. The SED-dictatorship drove millions to flee. Up to 1989 hundreds lose their life in the process. Unlike the NSDAP the SED was not banned when its totalitarian regime came to an end, but transformed itself virtually overnight into a democratic party and today again controls – together with Ernst Reuter's social democrats – the capital, the State of Berlin.



**June 20, 1948:** Monetary reform in Germany's three western zones, after June 23 in Berlin's three western sectors. The photo shows people lined up to change old Reichsmark into the new currency near Berlin's Zoo station. Introduction of the Deutschmark, a "hard" currency. Overnight, shops are full, everything can be bought, it's worth earning money again – the Economic Miracle begins. Today, Germany, measured by its gross domestic product (GDP), is the world's third largest economy, behind the United States and Japan. The D-Mark no longer exists. Germany now has the Euro. Its introduction in January 2002 unleashed a "Euro-shock" from which the country didn't recover until only recently, in 2007.



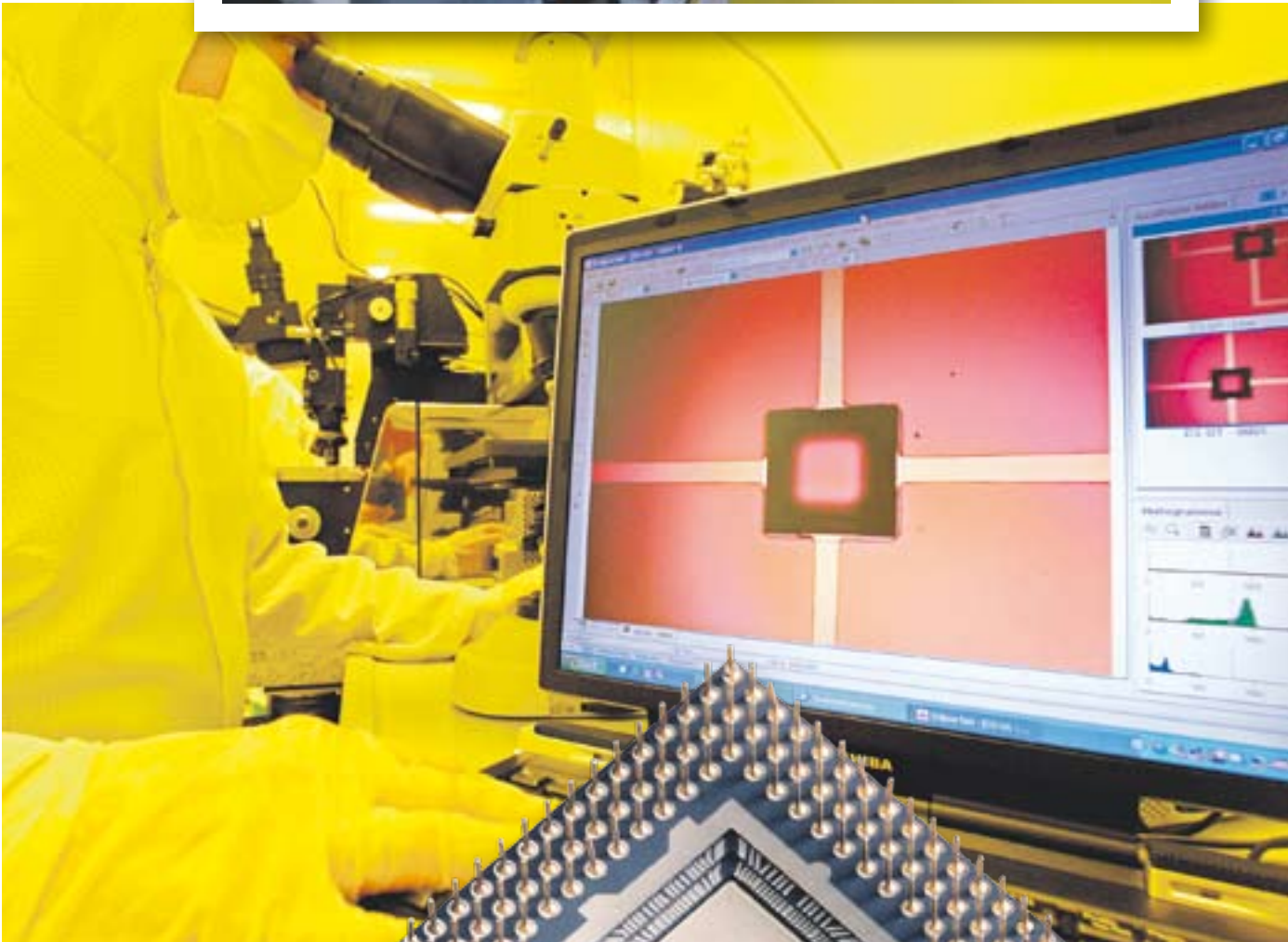


**Germany today:** Wind turbine in Germany's first offshore wind energy plant, near Rostock, Mecklenburg-West Pomerania. Renewable energy technology is a German ecological specialty. **Germany 1920:** Albert Betz, director of the Aerodynamic Laboratory at Göttingen, formulates Betz' Law for the use of the wind's kinetic energy which determines the shape of the blade.

**Germany today:** Microprocessor manufacturing at AMD in Dresden, Saxony. Germany has a highly skilled workforce. Companies from all over the world appreciate the fact and invest in German chip production. **Germany 1926:** Julius Edgar Lilienfeld registers the first patents describing the construction and operation of the transistor, which allows the miniaturization of processors.



WEISLOFFREIENS POOL



DPA-WOITAS

**Germany today:** Microbiochip inspection in the clean rooms of the Biocity Leipzig, Saxony. The new high-tech laboratories in Germany specialize in biomedicine and green biotechnology. **Germany 1840:** The inventor of meat extract, Justus Liebig, discovers the growth-promotional effect on plants of nitrogen, phosphates and potassium and invents mineral fertilizer.



**Germany today:** Late shift in the Medienhafen Düsseldorf, North Rhine-Westphalia. Frank Gehry's distinctive building also houses the WDR, Germany's largest regional broadcaster. **Germany 1935:** The world's first, high quality, regular television broadcasts take place in Berlin. The 1936 Olympic Games are the first to be televised – to several thousand viewers in public television salons.

VISION PHOTOS

Blockade and division



**June 24, 1948:** The blockade begins. Berlin's western sectors are no longer accessible by land or water. June 25: The Americans and English determine to start an airlift. Flights begin the following day. In the photo, a "Candy Bomber" coming in to land. **September 9:** Ernst Reuter appeals to the "Peoples of the World" (see previous page). **September 22:** Founding of the Free University Berlin. Until May 12, 1949 the airlift provided 2.2 million Berliners in the western part of the city with all life's essentials. The population refuses to buckle under. Students and professors, their bellies empty, found a free university. The Soviet attempt to lever the western sectors into their sphere of power fails. Stalin gives up. Berlin remains free. There will be two Germanys until 1990.



**May 23, 1949:** Founding of the Federal Republic of Germany. The Basic Law, the provisional constitution, comes into effect on May 24. Photo: the President of the Parliamentary Council, Konrad Adenauer, signs the Basic Law. On September 15 he will become the first Federal Chancellor. In its preamble of 1949 the Basic Law states: "The entire German people remains committed, in free self-determination, to complete the unity and freedom of Germany." This "precept for reunification" was realized by Germans in east and west on October 3, 1990. Since then, the Basic Law has been the valid constitution for all Germans. It granted the Federal Republic of Germany almost 60 years of stable democracy with all rights and freedoms for its citizens. It is the most successful example of the redemocratization of a country.



**Oktober 7, 1949:** Founding of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) in the Soviet occupation zone. Photo: Constituent sitting of the Provisional People's Chamber of the GDR on October 7, 1949 in East Berlin. Walter Ulbricht, later Head of State and the party: "It must all appear democratic but we must hold everything in our hand!" The GDR exists almost 41 years until the new States join the Federal Republic of Germany on October 3, 1990. While the GDR creates a planned economy and fails, the west chooses a market economy. That leads quickly to high rates of growth, full employment and prosperity. As early as 1950 the gross domestic product (GDP) of the Federal Republic of Germany reaches that of the German Reich of 1936, the year the Olympic Games were held in Berlin.



# Germany today: Lifestyle, culture and leisure



**Germany today:** Unloading DHL containers at Leipzig-Halle airport, Saxony. Above, a freight plane on its way in a globalized world. DHL is the world's largest express delivery service and belongs to Deutsche Post. Germany's logistics industry is the country's third largest after automobiles and machine tools. **Germany 1490:** Kaiser Maximilian I orders Franz von Taxis to create a postal service. The princes of Thurn und Taxis of Regensburg are responsible for Germany's post until Prussia nationalizes the service in 1867. Today Deutsche Post is again a private enterprise.



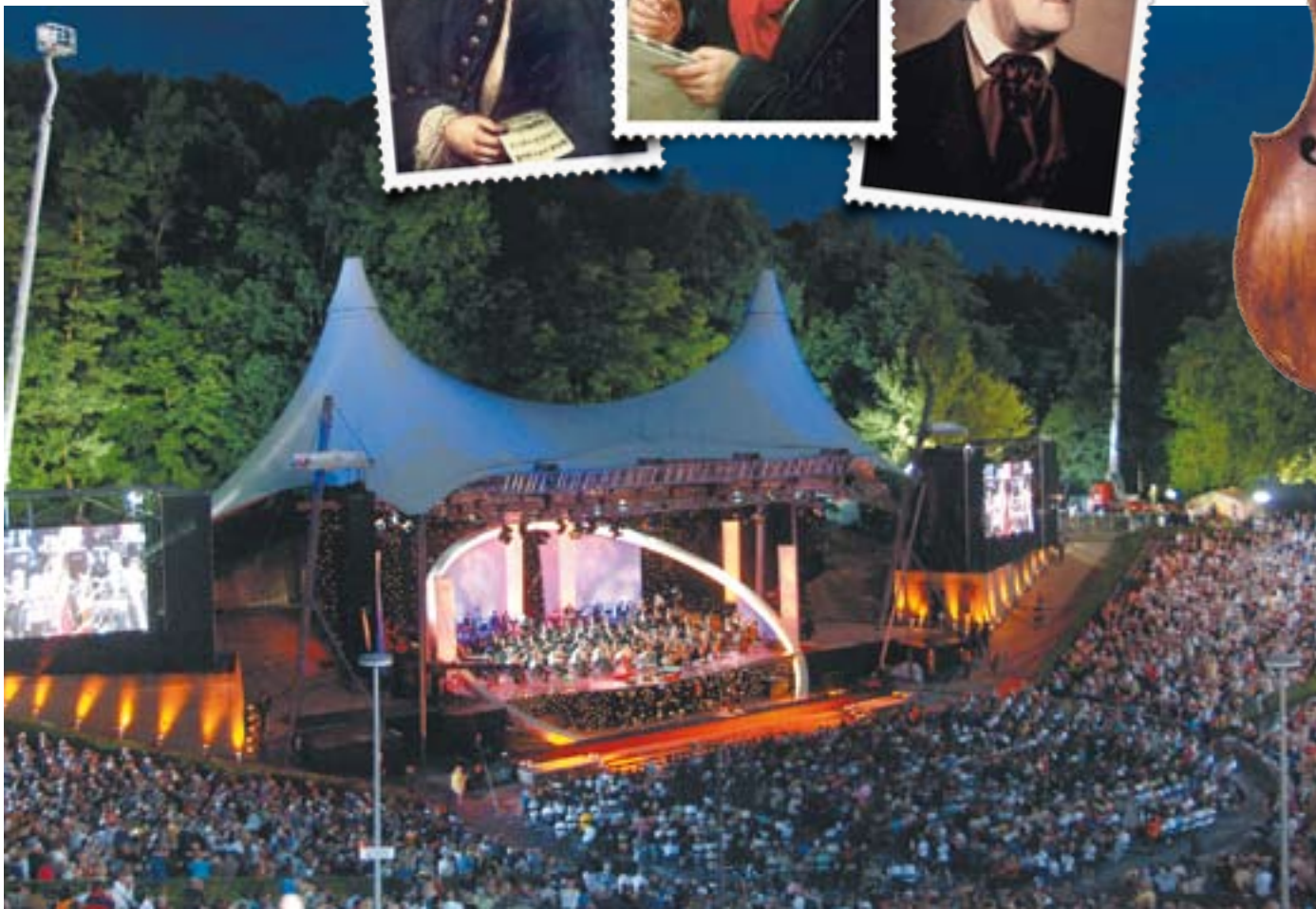
**Germany today:** Cubicles with access to computers at internet company Ebay in Kleinmachnow near Potsdam, Brandenburg. Like these employees more than half of all Germans on their personal computers are online every single day. **Germany 1941:** Konrad Zuse, working in Berlin's Kreuzberg district, develops his Z3 computer, the world's first functional of its kind. The Z3 is a fully automatic computer that works in binary floating-point calculation with a memory and central processor. In the year of his death, 1995, Konrad Zuse meets Bill Gates.



DPA/IMAXPPP/COSTA

**Germany today:** Anna Netrebko in a red dress and the orchestra of the Deutsche Oper Berlin on stage in the Waldbühne, July 7, 2006. The open-air venue in Berlin's Charlottenberg district holds 22,000 spectators and is constantly sold out for classical concerts. **Germany 1685:** Johann Sebastian Bach (small photo left) is born in Eisenach. The famous Baroque composer marks the start of the Golden Age of German classical music. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, born 1756 in Salzburg (today in Austria), Ludwig van Beethoven, born 1770 in Bonn (photo center), and Richard Wagner, born 1813 in Leipzig (photo right), will follow – to name but only the very greatest.

FRANZ SCHLICHTER/DEAG CLASSICS, WIKIPEDIA (3)



## Uprising and rearmament



**November 14, 1951:** Reopening of the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research by Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno following its closure by the National Socialists in March 1933. Photo: Adorno (front, right), Horkheimer (front, left) and Habermas (behind, right, hand in hair). The restart of academic Marxism in Western Germany. The Institute's "critical theory" is the intellectual impulse for the Socialist German Students' Alliance (SDS), the non-parliamentary opposition in the years 1967-69 and Jürgen Habermas, Germany's most famous contemporary philosopher. The "New Left" of the 1968'ers owes thanks to the "Frankfurt School" fighting talk, terms such as "authoritarian character" and "establishment", important for the political victory over National Socialism in people's heads.



**June 17, 1953:** Uprising in East Berlin and other parts of the GDR. First attempt in the eastern block to shake off the party's dictatorship. Photo: Soviet tanks use violence on Berlin's Leipziger Street to assert Russia's claim to power over central Europe following the declaration of martial law. 55 people are killed as the uprising is crushed. June 17 becomes a public holiday in West Germany and remains so until it is replaced in 1990 by the Day of German Unification, October 3. Even today the "Street of June 17", in front of the Brandenburg gate, sets a seal of pride on the uprising. It's good to remember Bertolt Brecht's satirical poem from December 1959, in which he wrote "the people have thrown away the trust of the government" and whether or not it wouldn't be easier if "the government dissolved the people and elected another?"



**May 5, 1955:** Founding of the Bundeswehr. May 6: The Federal Republic of Germany joins NATO. Whereupon the Soviet Union founds the Warsaw Pact on May 19, to which the GDR also belongs. The Cold War almost reaches freezing point. Photo: A demonstrator using Third Reich symbols against the rearmament of Germany in 1956. Criticism of rearmament begins in the 1950s. Since 1960 there are Easter marches in Germany against nuclear weapons. In the 1980's the peace movement fights the December 12, 1979 NATO Double-Track Decision, initiated by the Social Democrat-led Federal Government of Helmut Schmidt, to deploy the Pershing II rockets and Ground Launched Cruise Missiles that contributed greatly to the failure of the Soviet all-out armaments program and the collapse of the Russian imperial system in 1991.





**Germany today:** Spring is asparagus season while late autumn and Christmas is roast goose time. **Typically German:** A leg of goose with Thüringer Klößen (dumplings), gravy and red cabbage. Best enjoyed with red wine, such as a Spätburgunder. Left: A bundle of fresh white asparagus. Particularly sought after is asparagus from Bruchsal, Baden-Württemberg, or Beelitz, Brandenburg. Best accompanied with white wine e.g. a Riesling.



**Germany today:** Sitting in a café, enjoying a latte, surfing the Internet or busy with the laptop. **Typically German:** The “Digital Bohemian” has his hands full, as everyone can see, never has any time nor, also, any money – never enough at any event. The café is a waiting-room between graduation and full-time employment.

**Germany today:** Treading water stimulates the circulation and strengthens health. **Typically Germany:** Many people trust the simple applications of naturopathy before they put themselves in the hands of orthodox medicine. Treading water dates back to Sebastian Kneipp (1821-97), a Bavarian priest and hydro therapist. He turned Bad Wörishofen in Bavaria into the first such treatment center, or Kneippbad.

The official soccer ball of the 2006 FIFA World Cup™ in Germany.



**Germany today:** Fan Mile on the Strasse des 17. Juni in front of the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin during the FIFA World Cup in June 2006. **Typically German:** Hundreds of thousands of people come together in the open air at large-scale events to enjoy “public viewing,” as Germans call it whenever a sporting or musical “event” (also now a German word!) takes place and is shown on giant monitors while the party spirit flows.

## The Wall and student revolt



**March 25, 1957:** Signing of the Treaties of Rome, at the center of the table, Federal Chancellor Konrad Adenauer. The Federal Republic of Germany is a founding member of the European Economic Community (EEC), predecessor of today's European Union (EU). Reconciliation between Germany and France is what makes the initial step towards West European unification body even possible in the first place. Both countries are and remain the Union's engines of further development and expansion. The EU's greatest triumph since German reunification was Europe's “little reunification” of 2004 through the inclusion of the Central and East European countries that were part of the community of Western values for 900 years before the Iron Curtain cut off their peoples from freedom and the right to determine their own development.



**August 13, 1961:** The Berlin Wall goes up and barriers are erected along the inner German border. The photo shows the famous snapshot of the escape by a Volkspolizist (East German policeman) over the barbed wire. June 26, 1963: John F. Kennedy visits the enclosed western part of the city and announces to the world: “Ich bin ein Berliner”. The construction of the Berlin Wall extended the division of Germany by a further 28 years and leaves psychological wounds that have still not healed to this day. Incredibly, the people in East Germany, following two defeats, “June 17” and “August 13”, summon up the strength for a third attempt and finally shake off the dictatorship and bring down the Wall. Remarkably, that after John F. Kennedy it was practically only Ronald Reagan who still believes: “Open this gate, Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall! . (June 12, 1987). For the majority of West Germans that was still just so much madness.



**April 11, 1968:** Easter unrest following the murder attempt on Rudi Dutschke, symbolic leader of the extra-parliamentary opposition. Climax of the student revolt in Germany, followed by the Paris Maydays (occupation of the Sorbonne, May 3) and the flowering of the Prague Spring (after Dubcek's reform program of April 5). The protest movement of 1968 is a worldwide attack on the “Establishment”, in the west from disappointment over the inadequacies of democracy and the Vietnam War, in the east in the hope of bringing the rulers into a dialogue and loosening the Soviet grip. Both movements end in success. West: in Germany, Federal Chancellor Willy Brandt says he will “dare more democracy”; on April 30, 1975 the last U.S. helicopter leaves Saigon. East: initially everything goes wrong, but Charta 77 and Solidarnosc do not give up. After the Wall collapse there is no stopping.



# Germany today: More beautiful than yesterday

**Typically German:** Meticulously restored half-timbered houses in Quedlinburg, Saxony-Anhalt. The old town, on the edge of the Harz mountains, the highest range in north Germany, has been a UNESCO World Heritage site since 1994. **Germany yesterday:** Like Quedlinburg, many of the historical town centers in the GDR were very run down after 44 years of socialism because there was no money for their upkeep. Luckily for many of them the peaceful revolution of 1989 came just in time. Money from the market economy stopped their collapse and financed the reconstruction of these beautiful old town centers.



**Typically German:** Hohenzollern Castle near Hechingen, Baden-Württemberg. The seat of the aristocratic dynasty that gave Germany her last Kaisers lies high over the Schwäbisch Alb, surrounded by endless forests. **Germany yesterday:** The German forest, a trademark of this country, was, in the 1980s, dying, having surrendered to environmental pollution. No so the Germans: they took up the fight, passed clean-air legislation and invested in forest preservation. The fall of the Wall helped here, too. The collapse of the eastern planned economy reduced air pollution in Europe. The forest is on the way to recovery.



**Typically German:** The Rock of Lorelei (also known as Lorelei) near St. Goarshausen, Rhineland-Pfalz. The Lorelei is the narrowest part of the Rhine – and the most dangerous. Legend has it that one of the beautiful Rhine maidens, Lorelei, sat here, combing her long, blond, hair with a golden comb and luring sailors to their doom with her incredibly beautiful singing. (Small watercolor from C.P.C. Koehler, 1873) **Germany yesterday:** Following a chemical spill at Oberrhein, near Basel in Switzerland, in 1986, fish died and the river was ecologically dead. Since then a massive clean-up has done much to restore the balance. Today, as in the old days, the Rhine is again home to salmon, and it's safe to eat them.

## The fall of the Wall and reunification



**October 21, 1969:** First Social-Liberal Federal Government under Willy Brandt. Start of the New Ostpolitik for which he receives the 1971 Nobel Peace Prize. Photo: Willy Brandt sinks to his knees in the famous December 7, 1970 picture that went around the world when he visited the Memorial for the Dead of the 1943 Jewish Uprising against the SS and Wehrmacht in the Warsaw ghetto. Willy Brandt's election ushers in a new era: After 20 years, in which they anchored the partial state in the Western community of values, the Christian Democrats are voted out of government. And it is a stroke of luck for all Germans: The new Social-Liberal coalition leaves the market economy and ties with the West intact and, instead, develops a "policy of small steps" based on this foundation. The "change through rapprochement" leads to the systems competing peacefully: the planned economy and party-dictatorship lose hands down.



**November 9, 1989:** The Fall of the Berlin Wall. Photo: That very same night a large reunification party takes place on Kurfürstendamm in West Berlin. People will no longer relinquish their freedom ever again. Federal Chancellor Helmut Kohl makes the most of the spirit of the hour. March 18, 1990: First free elections in the GDR, Lothar de Maizière's government negotiate the modalities of the accidence. July 1, 1990: Introduction of the D-Mark in the GDR. July 22, 1990: Dissolving of the GDR's 14 districts, restoration of the 5 states of Brandenburg, Mecklenburg-West Pomerania, Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt, and Thuringia. They are the ones which will rejoin the Federal Republic. September 12, 1990: Signing of the Two-plus-Four Treaty, the "Treaty on the Final Settlement with Respect to Germany", in Moscow. The treaty between the two German states and the Four Powers clear the way for reunification.



**October 3, 1990:** German reunification is achieved through the entry of the new states of the GDR into the Federal Republic of Germany and, at the same time, automatically into the European Union. The neighboring countries of Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and seven others join the EU in 2004. The political completion of German unification takes around pretty much 15 years. June 20, 1991: Berlin again becomes the seat of parliament and so relieves Bonn. August 31, 1994: The Group of Soviet Forces in Germany depart, the last Russian soldier leaves the country. September 1999: The government moves to Berlin, start of the "Berlin Republic". November 22, 2005: With the election of Angela Merkel, Germany has its first ever female Federal Chancellor who comes from the former GDR. For the time being things are as unified as they can be. And, Germans are in good spirits since the economy is doing well again.





**Typically German:** The Wadden Sea on the North Sea coast in Schleswig-Holstein, with the Hallig Hooge (left, center photo). When the Sea retreats several kilometers with the tide, the Halligen, mini-islands with a farm on them, can be reached on foot. On the sandbanks between the tidal causeways, sea lions bask in the sun (left, photo top). On the shore, light houses, like this beautiful old example on the island of Sylt, show seafarers the way at night. **Germany yesterday:** Nature conservation didn't count for much and before 1970 Germany didn't even have a national park. Until 1971 it was permitted to hunt seals on the North Sea coast. Today the Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea National Park is the third oldest and largest of 14 national parks in Germany. In 1990 UNESCO recognized it as a biosphere reserve. Today, seals are again a very common sight on the North Sea coast.

**Typically German:** The foothills of the Alps with the picturesque background of the Bavarian mountains near Mittenwald – rich meadows, contented cows and happy hens (small photo, left). Free-range animal husbandry improves the taste of the eggs, makes the farmer smile and raises his profit. **Germany yesterday:** Chickens were kept in small battery cages instead of in the fresh air, lived on wire frames instead of German soil, were fed who-knows-what instead of corn and had no animal protection. That was then. In 2002 the Red-Green government extended animal protection laws to egg-laying hens. Since then the Sunday breakfast egg has again become something to savor.

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