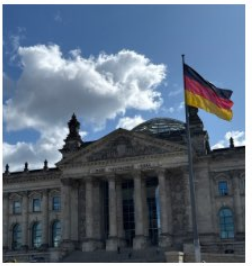
Experiencing democracy in Berlin

It is often perceived that there is no difference between the Bundestag and the Reichstag.
However, the Reichstag is the building, while the Bundestag is the parliament inside it.
When standing in front of the Reichstag, this difference becomes more clear.
Behind its walls is Germany's political center, but also a place that carries a lot of history and shows how important democracy really is.
The first thing that catches the eye inside is the famous glass dome.
Due to its architecture, sunlight fills the entire room and visitors can look down into the parliament hall below.
It is an astonishing design, although its meaning is even more striking because it shows that political power should never be hidden from people.
They ought to be able to see where decisions are being made and how the decision-making process works.
Likewise, the eagle, which is a symbol of the German state, stands above the people who are responsible for making political decisions.
Thus, it is impossible to ignore it and it almost feels as if it is watching over the room.



Reichtagsgebäude

On the other hand, the eagle also carries a warning. The Reichstag has witnessed a Germany that once had a democracy (1919-1933) and then lost it.
The Nazi dictatorship showed how quickly freedom can disappear when democratic values are destroyed.
Then war followed, after it Germany was divided and the Reichstag became a symbol of this broken country. Only decades later (after reunification) did the building become the home of the Bundestag again.
These historical facts make a visit to the Reichstag very special because the building tells a crucial part of Germany's story. It illustrates what can happen when democracy is lost and how difficult, but also how important, it is to rebuild it.
Therefore, the eagle is a national symbol that can be seen as a reminder that democracy may look strong with its elections and laws, but it is never guaranteed and should never be taken for granted!
It needs people who accept different opinions and speak up when democratic values are threatened.
Under the glass dome, with the eagle watching from above, history and the present seem to meet in one moment, which is why I left with a certain message in mind.
Democracy is something we have to protect and value every single day!



Bundestag

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