

GERMANY

Contrary to most other European and overseas countries, the conservation of monuments in Germany is not centrally organised. Instead, in accordance with the German constitution and the independence of the 16 *Länder* (States) of the Federal Republic of Germany in cultural matters, the protection and conservation of monuments and sites are the responsibility of each individual *Land*, which itself pursues this task in co-operation with the towns and communities on a regional and local level. Since the German re-unification, this applies also to the five East German States on the territory of the former GDR, as well as to the State of Berlin. The former Central Institute for Monument Conservation of the GDR was dissolved. In accordance with this constitutional regulation, all German States have their own monument protection laws, which, although they have many important principles in common, take regional peculiarities into consideration: for example, the competence and regulations regarding the relevant authorities and levels of administration.

On the whole, the ministries in each State responsible for either culture and the arts or for buildings and town planning are also legally and politically in charge of conservation issues. The so-called *Landesämter für Denkmalpflege* (State Conservation Offices), responsible for the conservation of monuments and sites as well as for parks and archaeological sites on a regional level, are subordinated to these ministries. Their main tasks are listing and research on these monuments, to give expert opinion on matters of conservation and restoration, to prepare documentations and to grant and distribute public subsidies. The State Conservation Offices work together with the local conservation departments of the districts and the larger towns.

In total there are approximately one million listed monuments in Germany, about 100,000 objects each in Bavaria and Saxony, the lowest numbers being in the City States of Bremen, Hamburg and Berlin. Apart from public subsidies for monument conservation, for the largest part provided by the 16 States, there are certain cases where funds from the Federal Government can be obtained. This applies, for instance, to grants from the programme concerning 'cultural goods of national value', looked after by the German Federal Government Commissioner for Cultural Affairs and the Media. Very considerable subsidies have been granted by the programme of the Federal Ministry of Buildings on 'urban conservation'. The five East German States and the eastern part of Berlin have profited from this programme, which is equally funded by the *Länder* and the towns. Thus, in more than 120 large-size monument areas (including entire towns, ensembles and complexes), the decay of the historic building fabric has been stopped and a revitalisation of endangered old town-quarters has begun since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989/90. During the past 10 years, the *Deutsche Stiftung Denkmalschutz* (German Foundation for Monument Conservation) has also supported a large number of individual objects in Germany, focussing mostly on East Germany and thus preventing the loss of important monuments. The biggest private foundation for monument conservation, the *Messerschmitt Stiftung* in Munich, has contributed not only to saving individual sites in Bavaria but also in Brandenburg and Saxony.

However, the innumerable private owners of all kinds of monuments are responsible for their maintenance and protection. On the whole, these owners receive no public or other funds worth mentioning for maintaining their buildings and gardens or for letting their property, so that it can be managed sensibly and used properly on a long-term basis. Tax legislation offers owners of monu-

ments important opportunities to write-off measures necessary for their upkeep and sensible use. These tax advantages are also intended to serve as an incentive for private investors to buy unused empty monuments and repair them for a new purpose, instead of investing in competing plots for new houses, which contribute to spoiling the landscape outside historic village and town centres.

Current Threats to Monuments in Germany

Obvious or gradual threats to the monument stock have very different and sometimes contradictory reasons. First there is the pressure by large, internationally active firms threatening monuments in the attractive central areas of our towns by wanting to change them in accordance with their demands. The characteristic results of conservation in large towns, being full of conflicts anyway, are examples of so-called *façadism*, a type of backward erosion, sacrificing the fabric of the interior of buildings for the sake of basement garages, whole storeys for technical equipment and maximum utilisation of properties. Sometimes nothing remains other than 'stage-set' façades adorning the townscapes (for example in Berlin, Frankfurt/Main, Hamburg, Leipzig). The most recent example of such a brutal development plan is the 'Europa-Passage' project in Hamburg, where an entire complex of historic buildings, including two especially important merchant houses from around 1900, are destined to be sacrificed.

In view of the stagnating or even declining economic situation and a worrying demographic development, as can be seen particularly in some regions of East Germany, the problem of unused old buildings and monuments has reached an alarming stage. This applies not only to agricultural, commercial and industrial buildings, which due to rapid economic and structural changes increasingly stand empty and need new solutions for a sustainable re-use, but especially to the stock of residential buildings, which is indirectly affected by the declining population in some areas. Current discussions of publicly sponsored 'demolition programmes', first stages of which have already been implemented, illustrate the dramatic developments. These programmes have also made an impact on old buildings at least worth preserving or sometimes even of monument status. There are, for instance, individual examples of late-19th century blocks of flats or of 20th-century Modernism, which the public has difficulties in accepting as architectural monuments.

Important historic industrial monuments, which in some places in East Germany survived during the post-war years, are now under considerable pressure: due to a lack of economic demand there are no concepts of funding for adequate re-use and modernisation. The recent public dispute about the future of Vockerode power station may be representative of this current threat. The power station is a landmark of modern architecture from the time between the two World Wars, located in the 'industrial-garden kingdom' of Dessau-Wörlitz (Sachsen-Anhalt): its prominent group of chimneys were detonated in September. The taskforce for 'Industrial Archaeology' of the Union of German Conservationists has protested against similar attempts to demolish the overburden-conveying bridge of Böhlen II, situated near Leipzig (Saxony) and considered as 'the flagship of the history of brown-coal mining from the 1930s'. The taskforce has appealed to the people responsible to preserve the oldest and longest conveying bridge for



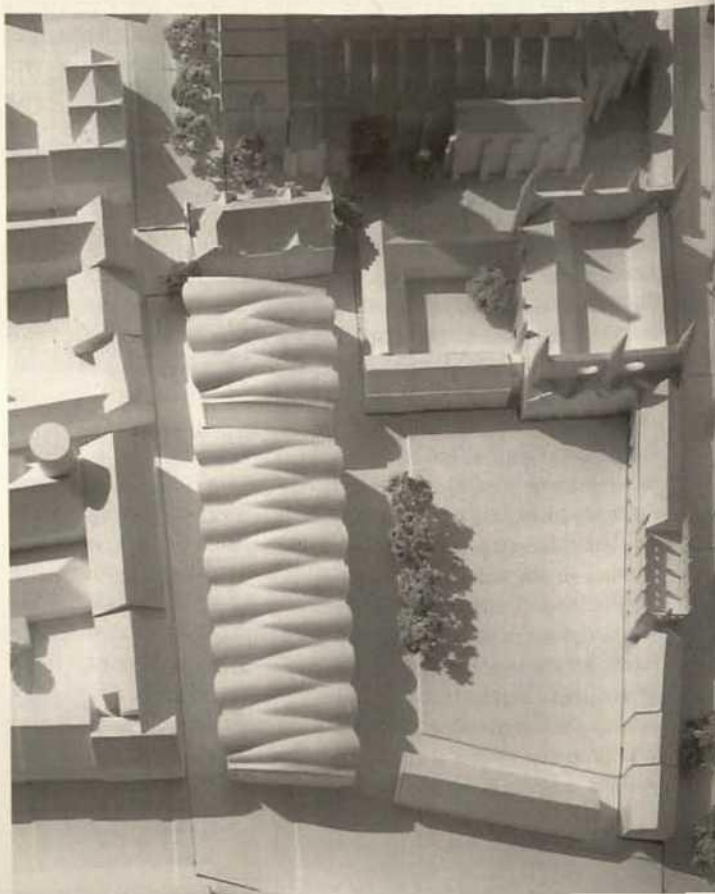
Lübeck, view from the Petri church to the market square, showing the town hall and St. Mary's church. In the foreground the former post office.

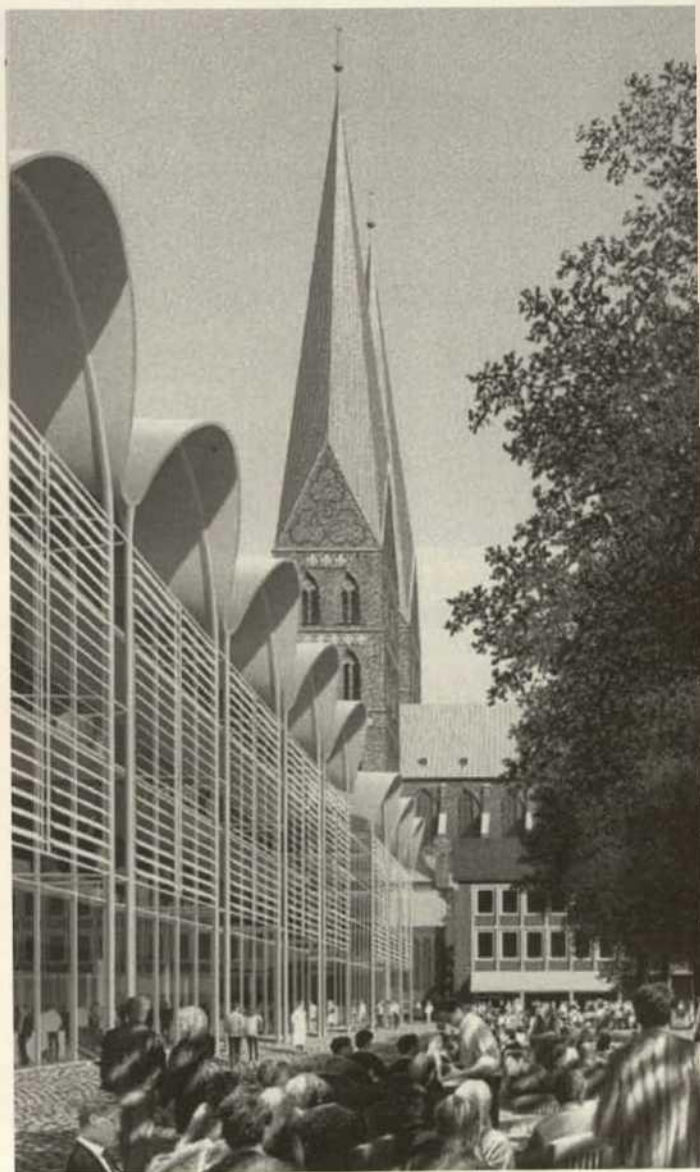
brown-coal opencast mining in Germany as an industrial monument.

In addition, we must refer to the dangers and still unsolved cases mentioned in *Heritage at Risk 2000*. Despite public protests, the cultural landscape around Neuschwanstein Castle remains threatened by a hotel project, although this is comparatively smaller than the earlier plans. Sadly, this project has already been approved by the municipality of Schwangau. Contrary to this situation, the threat of drastic redevelopment of the Olympic Stadium in Munich, a masterpiece of 20th-century architecture (see case study in the *Heritage at Risk Report 2000*), has fortunately been averted and the stadium will remain as it was.

As far as German World Heritage sites are concerned, a positive development is noticeable in the case of the Völklinger Hütte (iron foundry), thanks to new management and conservation plans, as well as to better funding. There is a fear, however, that the palaces and parks in Potsdam will be negatively affected by the expansion of the Havel River as a waterway. This development plan would change the unique landscape of rivers and lakes and could harm those buildings immediately by the water. In the Hanseatic city of Lübeck, on the World Heritage list since 1987, the centre of the ensemble is endangered by the project for a large department store on the city's market square. Even the version illustrated here, which has already been reduced in height, is still a drastic interference into the historic centre of Lübeck, whose building fabric suffered enough during World War II and the post-war era. The department store is intended to replace the former post-office, a comparatively unobtrusive and modest building, as well as another post World War II building. The fact that a department store is considered a valid counterpart to the outstanding group of buildings, consisting of the town hall and St. Mary's church, and would compete with these famous historic buildings in its dimensions, is a frightening precedent for all friends of Lübeck's townscape. Although the protest of ICOMOS Germany has had extensive coverage by the media, this has not yet led the decision-makers to reconsider their plans.

Model for the project of a new building complex on the west side of the market square





West side of the market square with view onto the steeples of St Mary's church: present and projected condition

Case Study: Berlin

Instead of a case study focussing on one object, we would like to describe briefly the general situation in Berlin. After the fall of the Berlin Wall (1989/90) and the German reunification (1990), building and conservation activities in the German capital were dominated by the move of Parliament and Government to Berlin. The majority of government authorities have been accommodated in historic monuments, some of which are well-known and controversial buildings from the Nazi era (for example, the buildings of the Aviation Ministry, the Reichsbank extension, the Propaganda Ministry, the Ministry of the Interior and the Navy Department). Other buildings date back to the time of the German Democratic Republic (the Council of State, the Patent Office and the Press Office buildings). In the course of the move of Government and Parliament, several listed buildings have been renovated and

restored to be used as seats of embassies, residences, missions, head associations and lobbyists: for example, the Swiss Embassy in the Spreebogen or the House of German Craft in the Friedrichstadt. Quite a number of these buildings were damaged during World War II and lost their original function after 1945, being only provisionally repaired.

The oldest monument in Berlin used for government purposes today is the so-called *Invalidenhaus* (1747), commissioned by the Prussian King Frederic II (the Great), now seat of the Federal Ministry of Economics. Its historic wooden-beam ceilings and clay panel construction were partly left visible. The most recent monument was formerly used as the 'permanent representation of the Federal Republic of Germany in the GDR'. Its high and well-lit roof studios were designed by Hans Scharoun in 1950 as a post-



Berlin, World War II ruin of the suburban church of St Elizabeth (1832-34) by K.F. Schinkel, condition of 1993



Student village of the Free University of Berlin in Schlachtensee (1957-60), designed by Fehling, Gogel & Pfankuch, funded by donations from the United States of America, state of 2001



war provisional solution for the building academy. Now the building has been restored for use as a library with a readers' gallery for the Federal Ministry of Education and Research. The most drastic example of political controversy, clearly illustrating the conflict of how a democratic State should handle witnesses of its undemocratic predecessor States, has been the still unsolved case of the Palace of the Republic, situated on an island in the River Spree. It was opened in 1976 on the site of the former Royal Palace, which itself had been demolished by the GDR in 1950/51, and was closed again in 1991. Another open question is the future of the Nazi bunkers in the old government quarter and close to the site of Hitler's *Reichskanzlei*, which itself was blown up in 1949.

Due to the very political character of many historic buildings, as well as of many conservation debates, other highly important works of architecture and art sometimes do not receive the necessary public attention in cases of danger. For example, the ruins of the baroque *Parochialkirche* (1700) and K.F. Schinkel's St. Elizabeth Church (circa 1830) are some of the most problematic cases of religious architecture in Berlin. There is no funding at the moment to continue and finish the stabilisation and restoration measures begun after 1990; in addition, the future use of these buildings is completely unclear. The baroque castle complex of Niederschönhausen in Pankow, circa 1760, used as a guesthouse of the GDR government, is probably the most dramatic case among several castles and manor houses that have been without any function for more than ten years and urgently need to be repaired. The largest and best-known example of a historic park in Berlin, the former electoral *Grosser Tiergarten* between the Brandenburg Gate and the Siegessäule, which has been open to the public since the 18th century, is confronted with the destruction of its natural and cultural values due to mega open-air events, especially the so-called 'Love Parade'. The parade has attracted about one million people, surging through the park during one weekend every year since 1996. The plant protection authority and the conservation office in Berlin have discovered that central areas of this park monument, which covers 210 hectares, have not recovered from the damage caused every year. Instead, in places, the park's ecological health and conservation have been set back by years (see the further discussion in the Parks and Cultural Landscapes report on page 240).

The privatisation of listed properties originally belonging to the government, which has already been initiated and will continue on a large scale, must be seen as a particular challenge and chance to preserve historic monuments and parks adequately. In Berlin, these measures particularly concern the housing estates built between the two World Wars. The State of Berlin or the non-profit-making property companies are parcelling out these estates and selling them to innumerable private owners, without ensuring that the conservation of the characteristic uniformity of these houses is guaranteed by contract. On the current list of planned demolitions in Berlin, there are mostly monuments of the 20th century, especially of the post-war era. In the eastern part of the city this usually happens for ideological or political/aesthetic reasons (for example most recently the so-called 'Maple Leaf'); in West Berlin the reasons are usually economic or technical. Despite forceful protests from university and conservation circles, the Senate of Berlin has, for instance, decided to sell the listed student village of Schlachtensee (1957/58, designed by Fehling & Gogel). The village is a symbol of German-American friendship and the anti-totalitarian founding years of the Free University of Berlin. The intention is to demolish the buildings, in order to use this attractive plot of land for a more lucrative development and to attract wealthier customers.

GUATEMALA

MAYAN CIVILIZATION

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TICHALES

Monument of the Cold War: death strip and remains of the Berlin Wall in Bernauer Strasse, condition of 1999



Ten years after the opening and the fall of the Berlin Wall, the scanty remains of the Iron Curtain in Berlin are neither secured by planning regulations nor by adequate funding. The present process of converting former plots near the border of the Wall into development areas for investors is a decisive threat to the remaining relics of the Berlin Wall – the latter are obstacles for a legally permissible and politically wanted building activity. On the one hand, the remaining parts of the Wall as well as of the watchtowers are either pulled down or moved, on the other hand the historic no man's land and the 'death strip' become unrecognisable because of new buildings. Despite the fact that the remains of the Berlin Wall

are nationally and even internationally considered as an important witness of the separation of Berlin and of Germany during the Cold War, no special programme is intended at the moment to preserve and repair the listed parts of the wall, or to renovate and use the former watchtowers. The Federal Government and the State of Berlin should set a good example to private monument owners by initiating conservation measures for State-owned former frontier installations, which have been classified as monuments of recent German history.

ICOMOS Germany



Façadism: the so-called "Zollernhof" Unter den Linden during transformation into the capital studio of the ZDF (Second German Television channel) in 1998