Rebuilding the Past: East German Preservationists as "Time Activists"

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Abstract

This article examines how political time in the GDR was shaped and contested by architectural preservation during that state's formative years. In particular, it investigates the role of historic preservationists in the GDR as 'time activists' who both contributed to and challenged the construction of an ideologically-informed 'order of time'. It argues that preservationists in the GDR helped mould, solidify and reinforce ideas of history and time in the physical environments of East German cities, sometimes to the great frustration of the ruling Socialist Unity Party, at other times in accordance with the party's general objectives.

‘In order to master our own present and future, we require the intensive and comprehensive convergence of the working class, the creative artists and all other workers with the culture and the art of the past […] Our consciousness of the unity of past, present and future is a cornerstone of our workers’ and peasants’ power, a fundament of our socialist path. Our relationship to heritage is a profession of the dialectical unity of past, present and future, of historicity and currency, of continuity and discontinuity, of that which is universally human and that which is class-based’

Hans-Joachim Hoffmann, GDR Minister of Culture, 1980[1]

Introduction

Hans-Joachim Hoffmann’s exhortation to ‘master’ time was revealing of the dynamic temporal vision that structured the politics and ideology of ‘lived socialism’ in East Germany. The ultimate mission to construct communism was anticipated through a trinitarian ‘unity’ of past, present and future. In the official language of the German Democratic Republic, ‘the past’ was not simply a distant field of time, but a living realm whose vitality pulsated through the present. Likewise, the future was prognostically refracted through the here-and-now as the temporal space in which all of today’s societal contradictions would eventually be resolved. The synthesis would be accomplished only once past and future were fully charged with the revolutionary urgency of the present.

This article explores the consequences of this temporal vision for architectural preservation in the GDR. Because the GDR’s leaders saw their state as personifying the most virtuous traditions of German and European history, it was of some significance how the past was represented and shaped in urban spaces. Accordingly, preservationists were to play a particularly vital public educational role. In what follows, I pose a number of questions about how this role was both conceived in theory and executed in practice. In what practical ways, for instance, were East German preservationists enlisted in the struggle to achieve a ‘dialectical unity’ of historical time? Did anything resembling a coherent East German preservation ideal ever emerge? How was preservation work complicated by the need to engage critically with the recent German past? And how did the specifically socialist conception of historical time clash with traditional preservationist ideals? When it comes to implementing in practice the regime’s ideas of how past related to present, we shall see, East

German preservationists cannot simply be bound to either category of 'compliance' or 'defiance'. Instead, preservationist activities in the GDR must be seen as reflecting a much more general tension between past, present and future that never managed to settle into the harmonious ideal envisaged in official discourse.

For all the novelty attendant upon the formation of a future-oriented 'workers' and peasants' state' in 1949, East German preservationists continued to ply their trade in the shadow of European preservation ideals cultivated at the turn of the twentieth century. But these ideals often proved an uncomfortable fit in built environments that were showered with war wreckage and abounding with structures recalling a catastrophic and unconscionable history. The approach developed by art historians such as Alois Riegl and Georg Dehio in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries argued for the preservation of *all* structures based largely on the neutral criterion of age. For them, preservation was an activity concerned with representing an 'authentic' historicity. Riegl's theory rendered the value of a monument dependent on how authentically it wore the scars of time, while Dehio pleaded for 'conservation' rather than 'restoration'.[2] But despite the peans to political neutrality ostensibly contained in the theory of 'age value', in practice a certain sense of historicity is essential to all acts of preservation: the mere act of repairing a damaged structure does not only imply a particular set of social values attached to its function and aesthetic, but also makes explicit a number of assumptions about the historical era that the building is seen as exemplifying.[3] And this was particularly evident in the historically-conscious political environment of the GDR, where all acts of design, demolition and preservation could potentially be seen as expressions of – or challenges to – regime time. Where historic architecture survived in the GDR, the logic of East German political time sought to charge it with new political meaning by embedding it fully into a narrative of historical progress.[4] Historic architecture was an expression not of 'the past', but of *history*: not of the mere 'passage of time', but of a *process*.

But if the GDR's political leaders regarded the built environment as a laboratory for translating an ideal of historical time into material reality, it was also a site that offered fertile opportunities for contesting and challenging its imposition. Whether consciously or not, decisions about architecture and urban planning – even those conducted on the most banal of bases – help shape senses of time and history every bit as much as they reflect them. In the GDR, it was considered a particular asset of 'socialist city planning' that it could retain a degree of ideological control over the historic texture of an urban space in an effort to

construct a socialist 'order of time'. The chief obstacle, of course, was that the territory inherited by the GDR in 1949 was littered with ruins and replete with architectural damage, among which could be counted some of Europe's most admired art-historical landmarks. The East German regime, to be sure, did not always adopt a radically avant-garde approach to its built environment: many historic objects were restored or secured, while new theories of culture were developed to help distinguish worthless heritage from that which was useful. And, in light of the burdensome financial and material restraints with which planners were constantly faced, there remained an ever-present need for pragmatism when managing urban environments. In specific instances of demolition and preservation, ideology was far from the only determining factor. Nevertheless, it always remained the case that the regime attached great importance to its control over the interpretation of historic artefacts. How this control was contested and shaped is the central subject of this article.

As in the Federal Republic (FRG) and other war-scarred European states, the leaders and planning elites of the GDR were confronted with conflicting pressures when developing their reconstruction policies. In the field of architecture and urban planning, attaining a 'dialectical unity of past, present and future' was complicated by competing – and often irreconcilable – ideas of heritage and urban regeneration, as well as by the practical inconveniences involved in appropriating these ideas to the precepts of socialist ideology itself. These left deep stress fractures in Hoffmann's image of a 'dialectical unity' of time. Further complicating the picture, preservation in the GDR embraced a wide swath of participants, from the professionals and art historians who staffed state preservation institutions and organisations, through the *Kulturbund* ('Cultural League') members who acted as two-way mediators between locality and centre, to the large numbers of amateur volunteers who enlisted themselves in local preservation programmes.

The discussion that follows examines how historical time in the GDR was shaped and contested by architectural preservation during that state's formative years. In particular, it investigates the role of historic preservationists in the GDR – loosely defined – as 'time activists'. Whether in virtue of the demands of their vocation, out of their own senses of history and memory, or even out of their own impressions of what a 'correct' socialist historicity should look like, preservationists in the GDR helped mould, solidify and reinforce images of history and time in the physical environments of East German cities, sometimes to the great frustration of the ruling Socialist Unity Party (*Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands*, or SED). Building on a number of existing studies on East German

preservation, this article casts its gaze on the political-temporal component of preservation activities. At first glance, this choice of focus might appear somewhat banal: *obviously* preservationists hold an interest in conveying a certain vision of the past in their work, and *obviously* this would, from time to time, stand in direct tension with the radical modernism on which an ideology of socialist regeneration is predicated. Yet within the political conditions of the GDR, where public cultural practices were always imbued with a political purpose, and where the reigning ideology envisaged a very distinctive conception of historical time, historic preservation was a deeply contested domain precisely *because* practice consistently struggled to harmonise with ideology in the way that regime rhetoric demanded.

Time

Ideologies – especially governing ideologies – carry with them a certain set of ideas about time. These are often expressed through policies, symbolic practices and official language. In a recent book, Christopher Clark has explored the capacity of political regimes of power to 'bend time' just as 'gravity bends light'.[5] Time, his analogy suggests, is not simply an empty or steady-state substance that apportions quantities of duration and speed to human activity from a point of Olympian detachment, but is itself woven into the very fabric of human activity. Time is layered, textured and ever-changing, and a powerful regime, like a clever narrator, can pleat or fold it at will. The communist regimes of Eastern Europe exemplified this aspect of dictatorship in a manner perhaps without parallel in the continent's twentieth-century history.[6] Under their auspices, time was defined by the great Marxist evolution of history, in which the fundamental contradictions of successive socio-economic formations resolved themselves through the revolutionary vehicle of the class struggle. However tortuous in practice, the relentless march to a classless utopia was inscribed into the very logic of the modern world.

While an ever-expanding series of works on history and temporality continue to uncover the many ways in which societies construct and negotiate their relationships to time,[7] there remains much to say about the relationship between time and ideology in East Germany during each of its Stalinist, post-Stalinist and 'late socialist' phases. If, as Clark and Johann Chapoutot have argued, the National Socialist regime signified a 'flight from' or 'abolition

of' history as an irresistible, unfolding process,[8] the communist regime that was established in its aftermath was concerned principally with restoring a logic of temporal continuity, of resituating German society once again within the relentlessly forward-moving flow of modern time. Its leaders sought deep roots in the German past and scripted the Cold War battle with their capitalist West German adversaries into a living drama of the class struggle. They promised historical redemption through a future-oriented programme of intensive labour and intellectual cultivation. And finally, recognising the powerful diagnosis that the Nazis had presented against the disruptions of modernity, they promised to channel the disorderly currents of modern time into a tidy, controlled stream – at the cost, of course, of an immense concentration of power in the single-party state. The new state would, as its national anthem proudly intoned, be 'risen from the ruins and facing the future'.

However, it was precisely *because* the relationship between politics and time was at once so obvious and omnipresent in communist Eastern Europe that the space between 'political time' and the temporalities of lived experience only continued to expand as the years unfolded and the communist project proved incapable of fulfilling the promises it had made for itself. In communism, time was elevated out of the realm of lived experience and reified into an ideology that simply reinforced its defences whenever it was exposed to empirical invalidation.[9] With every expansion of the disjuncture between official rhetoric and lived experience, communism's power to mobilise was weakened: 'political time' and 'social time' continued to drift apart at an accelerated pace. And rather than seeking to resolve this problem, the very logic of the political discourse by which socialist regimes maintained their power only served to exacerbate it.[10]

Perhaps it could not have been otherwise. Because the ideological assumptions of communist time inhered so deeply in the project itself, lived socialism contained no space for political time to be questioned. For this reason, regimes like that of the GDR never ceased to guard their temporal order jealously against all possible interference. Its leaders' consciousness of the fragility of their temporal order rendered the complete elimination of contingency and unpredictability the most fundamental goal of state policy. And in its urban interventions, the SED often proved especially dismissive of public opinion.[11] But this is far from a story of faceless totalitarian repression pitted against courageous dissent. If it is true that time is a resource of power which is endlessly contested and negotiated, then it follows that *all* forms of engagement in shaping a society's temporal structures may be considered a form of 'activism'. This article accordingly takes historic preservation as just one example of

how a ‘temporal order’ can be both created and contested in such conditions, employing preservationists as a case study into ‘time activism’ in communist Eastern Europe. What the article offers is less an analysis of historic preservation in the GDR itself than an account of its place as a vector between competing conceptions of time.

‘Activism’ in this context is taken to mean a concerted effort to participate in the political shaping of a society, and in this sense is not necessarily oppositional in nature.[12] Sometimes, of course, preservationists *were* explicitly oppositional in their activities: during the 1940s and 1950s, great numbers of them openly voiced their disgust at SED plans to demolish rather than restore a series of valued architectural landmarks. In 1968, meanwhile, large protests were triggered in Leipzig by the party’s decision to demolish the city’s University Church and in Jena by its efforts to annihilate the historic city centre in the name of modern urban regeneration.[13] During the final years of the GDR, preservation became a flashpoint for open conflict between civic activists and the party, as the increasing visibility of structural deterioration combined with savage cuts to preservation budgets and a new round of threatened demolitions to embolden the residents of cities like Dresden, Potsdam, Schwerin and Erfurt to take an open stand in the name of their historic local identities.[14] At times, indeed, preservationists could appear to perforate the GDR’s temporal order simply by doing their jobs. But, following the emerging scholarly consensus that binary categories like ‘repression’ and ‘dissent’ actually do a great disservice to the true complexities of life in the GDR,[15] the focus of this article is not on ‘oppositional’ activity as such. It argues instead that East German preservationists were ‘time activists’ because their practices consistently threatened to undermine the state’s official vision of time – the ‘unity of past, present and future’ that Hoffmann projected in 1980. Their power as ‘time activists’ derived from their role in shaping the ‘visual identity’ of the GDR’s architecture and urban ensembles – whether this adhered to the ambitions of the party or not.[16]

In this way, the case can also be made that, if preservationists were activists in the broad sense here defined, they may also fulfil the attributes of an ‘intellectual’ ascribed by Katherine Verdery; namely, that they were ‘sometime occupants of a site that is privileged in forming and transmitting discourses, in constituting thereby the means through which society is “thought” by its members, and in forming human subjectivities’. This site, Verdery continues, is ‘part of the space of ideology and legitimation’ but, critically, ‘does not always serve the existing system of power but may be a locus for forming alternative consciousness or images of social reality’.[17] The privilege of the preservationist arises from the power they

possess to shape or confirm the assumptions about time and history that a community carries, and especially those that endow a community with its historical-political identity. In political conditions like those of the GDR, this can manifest itself as a top-down assertion of 'socialist historicity' inscribed into an urban landscape, or it can be an expression of resistance against such an imposition. But in most cases, preservation activities in the GDR were not so black-and-white: if they existed at all, central guidelines were often unclear, exposing the fates of East German cities, towns and villages to the arbitrary whims of regional party authorities. More significantly, as an artistic and aesthetic practice, preservation always retained a considerable amount of space for interpretative ambiguity, giving local and regional preservationists a wide berth to reinterpret the 'public transcript' for their own ends.[18] What was at stake in battles over preservation in the GDR was nothing less than the power to shape the 'material authority' of East Germany's historic structures and urban ensembles – an authority that possessed an essential power in helping create, maintain and challenge the temporal order of the regime.[19]

A number of recent advances in the history of architecture and preservation in communist Eastern Europe have helped pave the way for a more sustained engagement with the problem of time. In recent years, scholarship in the field has veered away from its traditional concerns with institutions, planning regimes and aesthetics and has increasingly come to centre on questions of identity and spatiality. To this end, authors such as Virág Molnár have explored the complexities encountered by Eastern European architects as they sought to navigate changes in how the relationship between the built environment, modernity and socialist identity was configured.[20] Such a contextual approach has also proved conducive to a second recent direction in the field – namely, a focus on the international dimensions of socialist planning. Historians working in this area have not only sought to locate socialist architects, planners and preservationists within international networks and to emphasise the transnational circulation of ideas – they have also begun to consider how the political-cultural pressures being exerted upon them reflected social challenges and professional debates that can be detected across much of the European continent, both East and West.[21] And because they take seriously the roles played by values, ideologies and shifting cultural contexts in the production of material space, these two flourishing lines of inquiry also provide some promise for opening up the study of architecture, urban planning and preservation in Eastern Europe to explicit questions about the political-cultural construction of time.

Work on the GDR has followed a similar trajectory – even if considerably more attention has been granted to the life of East German built environments *after* 1989.[22] Even while the German Democratic Republic still existed, scholars closely observed its architectural, planning and preservation practices. As a result, the evolution of the GDR's aesthetic and planning norms has been well documented.[23] From the neo-classicist Stalinist monumentalism of the immediate post-war years, through the homogenous and economical modernism of the late 1960s and 1970s, to the heritage shift of the Honecker years (1971-1989),[24] the GDR's attitudes to preservation and historic styles generally reflected those of its brethren socialist states in Eastern and Central Europe. And yet, at the same time, there was perhaps no state comparable to the GDR when it came to the shabbiness of its heritage institutions, the paucity of its preservation budgets, or the apparent indifference of its political leadership to the fate of its historic buildings.[25]

Preservation inhabited a strange institutional space in the GDR. It fell into no single policy jurisdiction (such as architecture, planning or culture), but at the same time did not exist as an island, undisturbed by external institutional or political pressures. Bruno Flierl – himself a significant figure in GDR architectural circles – argues that East German preservation institutions in fact constituted one of the very few 'bridges' that linked culture to the otherwise technical or even industrial provinces of construction and planning.[26] Perhaps as a consequence of its ambiguous institutional status, GDR preservation itself has only very rarely been the subject of historical investigation. The two most significant exceptions are Sigrid Brandt's 2003 analysis of *Denkmalpflege* in the former Saxon territories between 1945 and 1961 and Brian Campbell's exhaustive 2005 dissertation on the tortuous evolution of the GDR's preservation institutions.[27] Both authors reveal in fine detail the many disagreements that arose in matters of East German preservation. They evaluate the reasons why competing ideas of preservation rose and fell over time, as well as the numerous ways in which preservation was politically weaponised by the SED.[28] Finally, both Brandt and Campbell explore the multitude of practices, theories and ideologies that helped shape East German preservation. Their works are therefore invaluable in grasping the full complexity of historic preservation in times of limited financial and material resources, and when the clamp of party control might be tightened or relaxed at any moment.

The collective picture drawn by these studies reveals that professional preservationists played something of an ambivalent role in the formative decade of the German Democratic Republic. On the one hand instinctively beholden to the traditional German notions of

Heimatschutz (‘protection of the homeland’) and *Denkmalpflege* (‘heritage preservation’) in which they had often been schooled, and on the other completely dependent for their work on funds from a communist regime that carried very specific ideas of what the past should look like and how it should be represented, East German preservationists often found themselves caught between irreconcilable pressures. Principally, they were expected to cultivate the artistic achievements of the past without betraying any impression of sentimentality or nostalgia. The assumption was not that they would simply ‘preserve’ structures that had been obliterated by the depredations of the Second World War. Rather, they were perceived as central actors in contorting the past to the needs of the present – as critical in their role as historical mediators as were professional historians, history teachers and museum directors.

Continuity

One of the chief difficulties for the new East German regime in the field of heritage management was that popular preservation in Germany boasted a long and problematic tradition, dating from the bourgeois *Heimatschutz* movement of the Wilhelmine era.[29] In Imperial Germany, historic preservation had not only performed a compensatory function for the dislocating transformations of modernity, but was also a central cultural factor in processes of state-building.[30] However, it also tended to incubate a deeply nationalistic, anti-modern and – often – anti-Semitic sentiment which in subsequent decades would easily map itself onto the ideology of National Socialism. The *völkisch* stain on pre-1945 German preservation meant that the GDR was forced to confront a profound problem of institutional and ideological continuity. As Rudy Koshar points out in his authoritative account of German preservationist traditions, even the centralised cultural policy structures of the GDR still required a great deal of voluntary support in preservationist work at the local level, and the *Kulturbund* (‘Cultural League’) members who fulfilled these duties were ‘the diminished but still relevant East German descendants of the cultured *Bürgertum* that had always supported preservation’.[31] Pre-war impulses and traditions could also be detected within official preservation practice. Those who sought to develop and impose a distinctly ‘socialist’ approach to preservation were battling against the strengths of these traditions with weak and untested weapons.

Fear of ideological continuity was aggravated by the unavoidability of institutional continuity. And during the 1950s, there was a considerable degree of institutional continuity – not only between the preservation offices of the GDR and those of the National Socialist state, but also with the institutions of the Weimar Republic, whose employees had overwhelmingly transitioned into the Nazi dictatorship and continued their activities largely undisturbed by the new regime.[32] Until the abolition of the five former federal states in 1952, East German preservation offices were retained within each state as *Landesämter für Denkmalpflege*, and in at least three of five cases (Saxony, Brandenburg and Saxony-Anhalt) were wholly uninterrupted in personnel as well as in the pre-war preservationist values they carried.[33] As Campbell remarks, even conscious efforts to centralise or rationalise preservation policy largely failed to alter preservation practice on the ground, which continued to gravitate around certain individuals who had been influential within the old federal state structures.[34] In such delicate matters as preservation, expertise continued to be valued above ideological orthodoxy.

The very personification of continuity was Wolf Schubert, appointed director of the State Office for Historical Preservation in Saxony-Anhalt in 1945. Born in 1903, Schubert had been an active preservationist during the Weimar years. After the war, he persevered with his traditional art-historical approach, maintaining that the sole concern of historical preservation was the 'artistic importance' of the object at hand.[35] In practice, as Campbell puts it, this meant that he carried a perspective on preservation which was centred on 'great works of art and architecture, not national memorials or monuments to workers and anti-fascists'.[36] Needless to say, Schubert's view would sit uncomfortably with the new regime's ambitions for historical re-education.

Schubert's unapologetically traditional approach to preservation never ceased to infuriate party officials. A 1958 report from the Ministry of Culture complained of Schubert's unshakable conviction that preservation was 'not a task for lay people'.[37] Another report from the same year concluded that he was 'an intellectual with typically petit-bourgeois – in part hostile – views'.[38] An exhibition Schubert independently set up in the treasury of Halberstadt cathedral between 1952-58 was denounced by frustrated local officials as 'an idealistic and aesthetic show' which 'does not make the slightest attempt to historically depict the cathedral treasury', meaning that the exhibition offered 'little more than decorative excitement'.[39] To 'historically depict' the objects on display was to situate them within a progressive historical master narrative which emphasised the class struggle and the dialectical process of cultural

creation: preservation carried out in the name of 'aesthetic beauty' or 'age value' was, quite simply, a bourgeois indulgence. All preservation activities, these critical officials maintained, were supposed to rest on their forward-looking aspect.

Schubert's species of preservation was high-minded, elitist, church-centric – and, in the end, very, very effective. Even while constantly forced to confront his socialist superiors' accusations of 'bourgeois arrogance' and reactionary tendencies, he managed to emerge 'as the preeminent conservator in the GDR' throughout the 1950s.[40] His work was widely appreciated by locals and even respected by his ideological antagonists, and indeed the results of his efforts were often acclaimed as cultural achievements of the GDR itself: in 1955, for example, the restored Magdeburg cathedral appeared on an East German postage stamp series of 'Historic Buildings of the GDR'.[41] Moreover, Schubert could continue to count on the fact that his essential views on the purpose and task of the preservationist were shared by many of his most important colleagues. This became especially clear during the furious petitioning triggered by the impending demolition of the Berlin City Palace in September 1950 – an event described by the East German preservationist Peter Goralczyk as 'perhaps the most powerful symbol of the [GDR's] critical evaluation of the past' during the immediate post-war years.[42] In a seven page document sent directly to SED First Secretary Walter Ulbricht in August that year, Schubert affirmed the historic and aesthetic value of the Palace in a sober and technical language, lacking all pretences to speak in the name of 'the people' or 'the progressive class'.[43]

Despite political pressures, Schubert refused to relinquish his aesthetic vision of the restored monument as a single moment captured in time – an image that held forth an arrested past, unmolested by the ravages of the modern present. But in the view of the SED, this was an approach to history that was emptied of all dynamism. In official ideology, the historic building possessed a historical vitality that formed the proper starting point for both art history research and preservation practice. Aesthetics were but epiphonema of the class struggle – the real substance of history. In theory, then, it was the ambition of the GDR's political leaders to transcend the 'bourgeois' preservation traditions represented by figures like Schubert and to craft a new 'socialist' approach to the restoration and reconstruction of damaged architecture.[44]

Change

In creating a socialist approach to preservation in East Germany, the Soviet model was an obvious point of departure. Yet in reality the Soviet influence on East German preservation proved to be a mixed one. In the formative years of Russia's communist experiment, a fireball of tensions had erupted around questions of preservation, restoration and destruction. Propelled by the romantic impulses unleashed by the furies of 1917, novel visions proliferated of a communal future unshackled from the accumulated material burdens of the imperial past. But in the end, Lenin's personal authority was sufficient to carry through his plea to Russian citizens not to 'touch a single stone' and to 'maintain the monuments, buildings and ancient things' that his revolutionary movement had inherited.[45] After the formation of the GDR in 1949, however, Lenin's example was seldom followed in practice. Even though the 'Sixteen Principles of Urbanism' formally adopted as the guidelines of socialist construction in July 1950 extolled 'the historic evolution of the city's structure', and even though leading architects like Edmund Collein demanded 'that the new culture of urbanism must further develop and assimilate that which is great and beautiful in the national heritage',[46] appeals by preservationists and ordinary citizens for the SED to emulate the Bolsheviks' dutiful attitude to their artistic inheritance failed to forestall the destruction of a great many architectural masterworks.[47]

Nevertheless, the SED's seeming indifference to matters of preservation did not deter some believers from trying. In the early post-war years, the most significant figure in translating Lenin's ideas into East German preservationist practice was Gerhard Strauss. Like Schubert, Strauss came from a traditional art-historical background, but 1945, in his view, demanded a complete reorganisation of the 'fundamental ideas' of monument preservation and their replacement by a wholly 'new form' that was befitting of the new social conditions of the post-war era.[48] This new, 'progressive' form of preservation would divorce itself radically and completely from the aesthetic impulses of the 'bourgeois' traditions developed by nineteenth-century practitioners like John Ruskin and Alois Riegl. In the GDR, preservation would no longer be impelled by a bourgeois 'idealistic conception of history', and nor would it centre on traditionalist concerns like 'age value' or the 'original purpose' of a structure.[49] 'The Old is not valuable "in and of itself", Strauss wrote in a programmatic article on 'Progressive Monument Preservation' published in the SED organ *Neues Deutschland* in 1948, 'but only worthy of preservation when it is still able to offer a fundamental message for the future'. This meant that it was not the task of the preservationist to concern himself with

'just any old substance', but to preserve selectively and objectively in accordance with the socialist objective of recognising 'the continuation and development of the humanist endeavours of all preceding epochs'.[50] The social role of the preservationist was measured by nothing less than his capacity to 'contribute consciously to transforming the world in harmony with universal progress (*allgemeinen Entwicklung*)'.[51]

To rephrase Strauss' ideas in a less jargonistic way: the purpose of preserving, restoring or conserving a building was never simply to suspend it in time, like a three-dimensional photograph. To the contrary, the ambition of his socialist preservation was to charge a structure with the full dynamic force of progressive history – to place it in the developmental flow of time. His conception of 'historical value (*Geschichtswert*)' differed from its bourgeois cousin (*historischer Wert*), according to which the value of preservation work inhered in its capacity to reveal the 'original' substance of a building so as to convey facts about the historical conditions of its construction.[52] What this concept lacked in Strauss' view was any meaningful connection between past and present. For him, 'historical value' instead emanated from the confluence of 'time and the monument's original content'.[53] Correctly preserved, a structure would document the 'totality of historical conditions' in a way that no 'written text' ever could.[54] In his view, art history research was not a descriptive endeavour, but should instead be aimed at uncovering the connection between the object and the historical class dynamics that had produced it. The preserved building would not capture a particular historical moment, but would instead be interpreted through the vitality of progressive history.

For similar reasons, Strauss also held a special distaste for the bourgeois idea of 'age value'. Articulated most prominently by the Austrian art historian Alois Riegl in the later nineteenth-century, this idea maintained that preservation should be concerned with the 'authenticity' of a structure, and help 'display the workings of time and history on its physical form'. In contrast, Strauss maintained that 'age value' simply 'privileged the value of nostalgia over a forward-looking socialist democracy'.[55] The dichotomy was clear: while 'preservation without socialist content' was motivated by a sentimental longing for an imagined past, socialist preservation proudly faced the future.

But first and foremost, Strauss' idea of socialist preservation was anti-elitist, opposed in every way to bourgeois intellectual notions of 'historical-' and 'artistic value'.[56] Instead, he advocated a form of preservation that was closely linked to the preservation of the local

Heimat – a concept of acute importance in the SED's efforts at constructing a socialist national identity.[57] It also contained a public dimension, insofar as it was expected that preservationists would communicate and disseminate their work broadly through publications and public talks (Schubert – perhaps needless to say – did none of this).[58] Furthermore, Strauss' idea of preservation was unashamedly political – engaged in the building of a 'new, humanitarian society' and centrally institutionalised in order to restrict the possibilities for independent initiatives in the regions.[59] In the process, it was anchored in the antagonistic language of the Cold War.[60]

The dilemma for the East German political leadership was that Strauss remained something of an exception among preservationists. The GDR could either fill its preservation offices with zealot neophytes, and thus risk losing what few architectural treasures had survived the wartime bombings (and in the process very likely incurring the scorn of the Soviets and the disapproval of the Poles), or it could continue to rely on the expertise of professionals trained in their craft before the war and thus instilled with suspect 'bourgeois' tendencies. Strauss' ultimate professional fate captures these tensions perfectly: his willingness to pursue a new, Leninist model of preservation in East Germany led to his intimate involvement in the deeply unpopular demolition of the Berlin City Palace in 1950.[61] In turn, his active participation in the act incited his colleagues to shut him out of their academic circles, doing irreparable harm to his reputation and his mission of instituting a new socialist form of preservation. And while he persisted with his complaints that art history research (*Kunstwissenschaft*) in the GDR continued to be stocked with experts hostile to the party (as evidenced by the wealth of opposition generated within the discipline by the demolition of the Palace), Strauss would never again enjoy the status he had attained in the late 1940s and early 1950s.[62] Even in the face of acute party pressure, the old guard had stood its ground – for now, at least.

The contest between the two visions of preservation reached its denouement in the mid-1960s. In 1964, Schubert was appointed Director of the Gardens and Palaces at Sanssouci in Potsdam. But two years later – with the demolition of the eighteenth-century *Garnisonkirche* impending as part of a foundational urban reformulation of the city – representatives of both the state Ministry for Culture and the district party began raising the volume of their complaints about Schubert's lack of political aptitude in his preservation practices. While the preservation work taking place at Sanssouci was satisfactory, they concluded, 'all remaining areas […] suffer from work that is lacking in concept and completely inadequate management'. The problem was identified as being Schubert himself. Under his leadership,

'principles of socialist management (*Leitungstätigkeit*)' were scarcely to be found. The prevailing view was that Schubert needed to be replaced as general director by 'a comrade' – by somebody who could bring a perspective of 'socialist preservation' to bear on one of the GDR's most significant and popular historical sites. Furthermore, the authors of the report contended, 'in its current structure, the pedagogical department is not capable of guaranteeing an interpretation of the historical tradition of Sanssouci that is partisan (*parteilich*) and scientific'. The suggested remedy for this shortcoming was an infiltration by 'academic comrades' 'as soon as possible'.[63] Work on the physical condition of the palaces of Sanssouci was, in the eyes of the party, inseparable from a 'total conception' that derived from 'present cultural-political tasks'.[64] By 1967, Schubert was gone: after nearly twenty years, the regime's temporal order had finally succeeded in dislodging him from his pedestal.

Schubert and Strauss represented two possible approaches to preservation in the GDR. But there were others. Something of a synthesis between the postures of Schubert and Strauss was adopted by Hans Nadler, chief conservator of Saxony until 1952, and thereafter head of the Dresden branch of the Institute for Monument Preservation. Nadler's programme of popular preservationism concentrated as much on 'ordinary' buildings as it did monuments and masterpieces.[65] Though never an SED member, he perceived a clear compatibility between his preservationist vision and a socialist rhetoric that extolled the virtues of a 'culture for the people'.[66] And though Nadler frequently found himself on the wrong side of the party authorities, his work was widely respected. In his practice, he viewed his role as one of public enlightenment, and of generating open discussions about cultural monuments that did full justice to their inherent complexity as historical and symbolic objects.[67] His Institute branch was especially effective at enlisting armies of amateur volunteers to assist with inventories of local monuments, while its public lecture series attracted thousands of attendees.[68] For Nadler, preservation activities were anchored neither in theory nor politics, but in the communal sense of *Heimat* they could stimulate.[69]

But regardless of whether we point our spotlight at Strauss' cultural-political brand of preservation or at Nadler's populist alternative, the basic thrust of 'socialist' preservation differed both from that which had preceded it and that which was being practiced in the capitalist West at the same time. The architect and theorist Rem Koolhaas identifies (and critiques) the 'domination' of contemporary preservation by ideas of 'authenticity, ancientness, and beauty'.[70] But these tenets were almost entirely insignificant within the ideas of preservation that circulated in the GDR during the late 1940s and 1950s. One reason for

this is that Koolhaas' three listed precepts all suggest a certain timelessness: they are predicated on the fiction that authenticity, ancientness and beauty are unchanging qualities that inhere in a structure itself, and that the role of preservation is simply to enhance them. Preservation in the GDR, however, did away with this fiction in the name of another – namely, that the value of a building could be measured according to how its production fit into the progressive thrust of an overarching historical schema. The GDR's perspective situated a historic structure within the ever-moving currents of progressive historical time, thus generating a complete contrast to the timeless bourgeois qualities of 'authenticity' and 'beauty'. As in any other political, cultural or intellectual realm of the GDR, the class struggle was rarely far from the surface.

Ruins

As Gerhard Strauss continued to discover during the late 1940s and 1950s, the theory of a socialist approach to preservation did not marry easily with practice. Especially in the early years of the GDR, the intergenerational time-horizons with which preservation activities are usually undertaken were drastically condensed by dire physical conditions and resource shortages. Much professional discussion was therefore occupied by more technical questions of 'securing' ruins and damaged buildings so as to keep open the possibility of a full reconstruction in years to come. But the recognition that war damage would remain a semi-permanent feature of East German cityscapes stimulated a new set of aesthetic problems.

Ruins have not been systematically been studied in the GDR context, leading historians to a mixed set of conclusions about the functional, aesthetic and memorial roles that they played there. Rudy Koshar argues that – through accident rather than design – the 'ruin found a more hospitable home in East Germany [than in West Germany], where an emphasis on new building marginalized the reconstruction of landmarks'.[71] The point was that the unavoidable presence of ruins in East German cities had to be factored in to state planning initiatives even though 'they were not seen in toto as permanent elements' of the new urban designs.[72] Koshar contrasts the presence of ruins between the two German states in ideological terms: in the West, the 'rapidly disappearing ruin' reflected a return to 'normality'. In the East, meanwhile, 'ruins were more visible and politically instrumental for the regime's antifascist ideology' – their presence may often have frustrated planners and ideologues, but they came

to comprise a 'natural' component of the everyday life of East German streetscapes.[73] The ruin could thereby serve as a visual record of the destructive legacy of the GDR's two interminable enemies – the fascists who had launched the war in the first place, and the 'Anglo-American bombers' who had aggravated its carnage. (In 1959, Gerhard Strauss reflected that the aerial bombing campaign of the Second World War was a 'devastating example of the historical dialectic, that the late bourgeoisie so poignantly delivered the destruction to that which their forefathers had once erected with masterly proficiency'.[74]) This was the logic behind the preservation of the GDR's most famous ruin – Dresden's *Frauenkirche*, which was officially transformed into a monument in the mid-1960s. Reinscribed as a memorial bearing an admonitory message – a *Mahnmal* – the *Frauenkirche* demonstrated how a ruin could potentially assimilate itself into the regime's sense of historical time in a way that transcended its functional obsolescence.[75]

But this picture is only partly correct. More often than not, the prolonged presence of ruins in the GDR reflected more a pragmatic response to their sheer preponderance than any inherent compatibility with the politics of the East German regime. In fact, for the GDR's planning officials and political leaders, ruins – however inescapable – continued to represent a series of fundamental technical, aesthetic and ideological problems. Primarily, the regime's ideology determined that they could not contain any value simply in virtue of being a 'ruin': the Romantic sensibility that transfigured 'rubble into ruins' existed in GDR discourse only a dangerous instantiation of nostalgia.[76] Not for the likes of Walter Ulbricht was the ubiquitous presence of charred wrecks a vehicle for reflection and the contemplation of loss and past glories. Without any living function, ruins were something of a vexing – even haunting – presence in East German landscapes. Above all else, they were apparitions of alternative temporal orders.

Andreas Schönle explains this vexation simply: 'Ruins', he writes, 'disrupt utopia'.[77] If urban space was a vital domain in shaping a resolutely future-oriented order of time, then planners were aware that the proliferation of ruins enhanced the possibilities for alternative, layered histories to incubate in local memory. As Schönle and Julia Hell point out, the ruin is a 'uniquely ill-defined' object. As such, it lends itself easily to open interpretation – is it 'an object or a process? Does it signal the loss or the endurance of the past?' Does it 'evoke nostalgia for the past or shame over it? Faith in future progress? The breakdown of utopia?'[78] One can see within these questions the problems that a ruin might pose for the construction of a rigid and progressive order of political time. Small wonder, then, that the GDR's political

language seemed to be saturated with the metaphor of the transcended ruin. 'Risen from ruins' was much more than just a rousing mantra: it perfectly captured the temporal vision that pulsated throughout the political and cultural discourses of the whole East German state.

Invoking Reinhart Koselleck's notion of *Zeitschichten*, or 'layers of time', Amir Eshel describes how ruins condense 'several historical times' into 'one material stratification', enabling narratives to be constructed that 'promote conflicting notions of the past'.[79] Similarly, in his seminal study into the emergence and character of modern time, Peter Fritzsche remarks that modernity had the effect of transforming the ruin into 'a foundation for an alternative present'. The material ruin evoked not only an alternative point in time, but an alternative history *as such*.[80] One can readily perceive the problems this might pose for a modern planning regime resolutely geared towards social regeneration and renewal. In his recent study of the Marzahn housing project in East Berlin, Eli Rubin has shown how the standardized reality of East German construction aimed at condensing the existing, palimpsestic layers of historical time into a single stratum, in which an immensely diluted present worked to foreclose all possibilities for memories and expectations that did not reflect the progressive historical master-narrative by which the 'political time' of the GDR was structured.[81] The 'concrete utopias' of planned East German urban environments, in other words, represented an antithesis of the ruin, with its exhaustive capacity to summon alternative pasts and activate alternative memories.

In the political language of the GDR, the ruin was an object of suspicion not only because it secreted alternative memories and historicities, but also – in a blander way – because it signified functional obsolescence in a political world that was exclusively geared to progress and renewal.[82] As it turned out, however, the intuited connection between the ruin and obsolescence proved to have an unexpected value for the SED when it came to confronting 'bourgeois' preservationists who sought to protect historic structures on art-historical grounds. The mere redescription of a damaged structure as a 'ruin', party propagandists realised, could discursively burden it with the crushing weight of obsolescence, forcing its defenders to summon new arguments that better approximated the regime's less stratified language of political time. It is striking that almost all architectural demolitions in the GDR – especially those conducted in the face of protest from art historians – were justified in official rhetoric through reference to the obsolescent, functionless ruin. Labelling a damaged structure a 'ruin' was a strategy calculated both to delegitimise 'bourgeois' arguments that invoked its art-historical value *and* to disarm any efforts to reconstruct and reappropriate

damaged buildings in line with acceptable socialist precepts. Hence, in official discourses it was never the Berlin 'City Palace' that was to fall, but the 'City Palace *ruins*';[83] not the Leipzig 'University Church', but the 'University Church *ruins*';[84] not the Gotha Theatre, but the 'Gotha Theatre *ruins*'.[85]

It is important to note that the 'ruin' appellation was not simply an argument that political leaders summoned in order to veil a more sinister ideological rationale for their demolition plans. It actually reflected, in a very acute way, broader discourses concerning obsolescence and renewal in the construction of the GDR. Obsolescence, of course, inheres in the very notion of progress, and the demolition of historic architecture in the name of urban regeneration was hardly a sight to be witnessed only on the eastern side of the Iron Curtain. And the middle of the twentieth century was a particular highpoint for anti-obsolescence enthusiasm. As Florian Urban points out, when it came to questions of housing construction, mid-century planning wisdom in capitalist and socialist states alike was driven by the idea that the relentless march of progress would render all new housing obsolescent in just a few decades' time, demanding their demolition in turn. The time-horizons of new construction, then, was limited to a couple of generations at best. Even restoration works conducted on the exteriors of historic tenements were not animated by any desire to liberate East German planning from the cycle of perpetual renewal that theories of 'obsolescence' demanded and wrench it into the eternal time-horizons of preservationist discourse. The actual aim was simply to prolong 'the "life span" of the tenements [by] a mere forty to fifty years' – to a time when housing shortages had been resolved and a fresh round of demolition and reconstruction could commence.[86] Durability was not an idea fixed in the firmament of East German planning.

To be sure, such ideas did not extend to cultural monuments.[87] But it was nevertheless difficult for preservationists – even regime-friendly ones like Gerhard Strauss – to prevent them from infiltrating art-history discourses in a way that proved lethal to the fate of much historic architecture. Striving to curtail the iconoclastic plans of some of his more tempestuous colleagues in 1949, Strauss lamented how damaged 'historical substance[s] are regarded as ruin[s] that are no longer subject to cultural monument preservation'. 'Today', he continued, 'it is seen as particularly progressive to dismantle ruins and to use the material for roadworks and the like'.[88] Aversion to ruins was built into the forward-looking character of East German political time: their mere presence was an indictment on the GDR's professions of progress. Defending the decision to demolish the Berlin City Palace in 1950, the city's

SED mayor Friedrich Ebert (son of the namesake former *Reichspräsident*) intoned that 'the new Berlin shall not become a city of ruins like Rome', a sentiment echoed to the word in the workers' magazine *Der Vertrauensmann*.[89] The ruin might temporarily be tolerated in East German landscapes – and indeed, as in the case of the Dresden *Frauenkirche*, might even occasionally prove useful. But it was never something to be celebrated in and of itself.

Conclusion

Visiting the GDR in the early 1960s, a group of West German preservationists praised the work of their East German counterparts, noting that it was not they 'who tear down monuments'. The sense that communism itself was endowed with an elemental tendency to 'historicide' led irresistibly to the idea that preservationist activities in the GDR were inherently activist.[90] This impression remains widespread today: in a sense, all scholars of GDR preservation are the heirs of these West German visitors. But the purpose of this article has not been to argue against the idea that the communist ideology that governed the GDR brought about a great deal of careless architectural destruction. What it has instead argued is that observing East German preservation from the perspective of a simple resistance-repression binary loses sight of the more subtle ways in which preservation practices could be seen as 'activist'.

From the very outset in the mid-1940s, East German preservationists were pressured from a multitude of angles: the state, the party, the locality, their own experiences and training, international colleagues, foreign media, and the resolutely technical and functional impulses that came to drive discussions of architecture and planning in the GDR. And the ongoing push-and-pull that these pressures generated, this article has argued, was animated by a tension of time. Because the fundamental task of preservationists was to make the past present, their very existence necessarily raised questions about the role that the visible past would play in the new socialist society. Moreover, their work sometimes explicitly defied the prevailing time-horizons of East German construction and planning. The point, though, is not that the GDR regime's efforts at re-coordinating experiences of time and space were unsuccessful; rather, the focus of this article has been on the way in which the very *ambition* opened up spaces in which time could become a contested domain, and thus a site of

'activism'. The role of preservationists in such a society meant that they could not avoid being thrust into this contested sphere.

By interrogating how historical time is contested, we can also begin to understand how historical time is constructed. This article has demonstrated how historic preservation was a cultural province of the GDR in which the ruling party's foundational notion of historical time was constantly challenged and negotiated, and in this sense constitutes one case study into a more general phenomenon that I have termed 'time activism'. By considering the role of East German preservationists as 'time activists', the article has identified in their theories, practices and behaviours a microcosmic manifestation of the broader cultural-political problems generated when the conveniences of socialist historical time were confronted with the inescapable messiness of historical reality.

The power of preservation to spotlight the vacant space between regime rhetoric and reality became ever more apparent as the decades passed. By the 1980s, the irreversible decrepitude of much of the GDR's remaining historic architecture inspired a growing number of East German citizens to action. Faced with this escalating urban emergency, and emboldened by the transformations in political conditions witnessed in the late 1980s, new citizen-led preservationist initiatives sprouted up throughout the towns and cities of East Germany, permitting a powerful critique of the regime to be expressed precisely through preservation activities.[91] The result was a very different – and indeed much more powerfully articulated – confluence of activism and preservation than that with which this article has been concerned.[92] But this new form of activist preservation was no less inflected by shifting configurations of time, history and identity. By the time of the state's disintegration in 1989, the GDR's dilapidated old towns stood as crumbling monuments to the party's lost struggle to harmonise the past with the present.

[1] Hans-Joachim Hoffmann, 'Aufgaben und Arbeitsweise des Nationalen Rates der DDR zur Pflege und Verbreitung des deutschen Kulturerbes', *Sonntag* 40, 1980, p. 1.
[2] See Rudy J. Koshar, 'On Cults and Cultists: German Historic Preservation in the Twentieth Century' in Max Page and Randall Mason (eds), *Giving Preservation a History: Histories of Historic Preservation in the United States* (New York and London, 2004), pp. 45-78.
[3] See Patrick Ciccone, 'Space, Time, and Preservation', *Future Anterior: Journal of Historic Preservation, History, Theory, and Criticism* 4, 1 (2007), ix-xi.
[4] The role of architecture in shaping Cold War-inflected identities was not, of course, limited only to how they portrayed the past, but also in how buildings and urban environments conveyed certain values in the present. This was been well documented in the context of Berlin by Emily Pugh, *Architecture, Politics, and Identity in Divided Berlin* (Pittsburgh, 2014).
[5] Christopher Clark, *Time and Power: Visions of History in German Politics, from the Thirty years' War to the Third Reich* (Princeton, 2019), p. 1.
[6] Martin Sabrow argues that 'it is perfectly clear that time as a point of reference played a bigger role in the dictatorships of the twentieth century than in the democracies'; Martin Sabrow, 'Time and Legitimacy: Comparative Reflections on the Sense of Time in the Two German Dictatorships', *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 6 3 (2005), p. 353. But Clark's efforts to identify a distinctively National Socialist 'regime temporality' must – as he himself acknowledges – be tempered by the evident presence of 'ideological variations' within the Nazi leadership; Clark, *Time and Power*, p. 208. My contention is that the GDR regime's historicity was much clearer and consistent than that of the dictatorship it superseded. Stephen Hanson also argues that communism itself should be seen as nothing less than a 'revolutionary experiment in reordering the human relationship to time'; Stephen H. Hanson, *Time and Revolution: Marxism and the Design of Soviet Institutions* (Chapel Hill, 1997), p. 10.
[7] See Alex Paulin-Booth's and Matthew Kerry's introduction to this edition.
[8] Clark, *Time and Power*, pp. 171-201; Johann Chapoutot, 'L'historicité nazie', *Vingtième Siècle. Revue d'histoire* 117, 1 (2013), p. 43-55.
[9] See Marcus Colla, 'The Politics of Time and State Identity in the German Democratic Republic', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 29 (2019), pp. 223-251.
[10] This is elucidated in the Soviet context by Alexei Yurchak, *Everything was Forever, Until It Was No More: The Last Soviet Generation* (Princeton and Oxford, 2006).
[11] See for instance Andrew Demshuk, *Demolition on Karl Marx Square: Cultural Barbarism and the People's State in 1968* (Oxford, 2017)
[12] Mary Fulbrook, 'Popular Discontent and Political Activism in the GDR', *Contemporary European History* 2, 3 (1993), p. 266.
[13] Demshuk, *Demolition on Karl Marx Square*; Beverly Heckart, 'The Battle of Jena: Opposition to "Socialist" Urban Planning in the German Democratic Republic', *Journal of Urban History* 32, 4 (2006), pp. 546-81.
[14] Brian Campbell, 'Resurrected from the Ruins, Turning to the Past: Historic Preservation in the SBZ/GDR 1945-1990' (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Rochester, 2005), p. 398ff and 531ff. Campbell points out, however, that, as with so much protest within the GDR, these groups often acted 'in the corporate interest of their city in a way that *corresponded* with socialist principles'; *ibid*, p. 536 (my emphasis).
[15] See Mary Fulbrook, 'Structures and Subjectivities in GDR History' in Mary Fulbrook and Andrew I. Port (eds), *Becoming East German: Socialist Structures and Sensibilities after Hitler* (New York and Oxford, 2013), pp. 277-290.
[16] 'Visual identity' ('optische Identität') is a term used by Klaus von Beyme in *Der Wiederaufbau. Architektur und Städtebaupolitik in beiden deutschen Staaten* (Munich, 1987), pp. 13-24.
[17] Katherine Verdery, *National Ideology under Socialism. Identity and Cultural Politics in Ceaușescu's Romania* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and Oxford, 1991), p. 17.
[18] Jan Palmowski, *Inventing a Socialist Nation: Heimat and the Politics of Everyday Life in the GDR, 1945-1990* (Cambridge, 2009).
[19] Karen E. Till, *The New Berlin: Memory, Politics, Place* (Minneapolis, 2005), p. 9; see also Jason James, *Preservation and National Belonging in Eastern Germany. Heritage Fetishism and Redeeming Germanness* (Basingstoke, 2012).
[20] Virág Molnár, *Building the State: Architecture, Politics, and State Formation in Postwar Central Europe* (London and New York, 2013).
[21] Some recent examples include Daria Bocharnikova and Steven E. Harris (eds), 'Second World Urbanity: New Histories of the Socialist City,' special section of *Journal of Urban History* 44, 1 (2018); Vladimir Kulić (ed.), *Second World Postmodernisms Architecture and Society under Late Socialism* (London, 2019); Lukasz Stanek, *Architecture in Global Socialism: Eastern Europe, West Africa and the Middle East in the Cold War* (Princeton, 2020); Andrew Demshuk, 'A Polish Approach for German Cities? Cement Old Towns and the Search for

Rootedness in Postwar Leipzig and Frankfurt/Main', *European History Quarterly* 50, 1 (2020), pp. 88-127; Matěj Spurný and Brian Ladd, 'The Stifled Renaissance of Urbanity: Urban Preservation and the Collapse of Czechoslovak and East German Socialism', *Journal of Urban History* (OnlineFirst).

22 This literature is extensive, examples include Daniela Sandler, *Counterpreservation: Architectural Decay in Berlin since 1989* (Ithaca, 2016) and Anna Saunders, *Memorializing the GDR: Monuments and Memory after 1989* (New York, 2018).

[23] See for instance Thomas Hoscislawski, *Bauen zwischen Macht und Ohnmacht. Architektur und Städtebau in der DDR* (Berlin, 1991); many of the contributions to Klaus von Beyme, Werner Durth, Niels Gutschow, Winfried Nerdinger and Thomas Topfstedt (eds), *Neue Städte aus Ruinen. Deutscher Städtebau der Nachkriegszeit* (Munich, 1992); Bruno Flierl, 'Städtebau und Architektur im Staatsozialismus der DDR' in Deutscher Bundestag (ed.), *Enquete Kommission 'Aufarbeitung von Geschichte und Folgen der SED-Diktatur in Deutschland' (12. Wahlperiode des Deutschen Bundestages). Band III, 2: Rolle und Bedeutung der Ideologie, integrativer Faktoren und disziplinierender Praktiken in Staat und Gesellschaft der DDR* (Baden-Baden 1995), pp. 876-903; the contributions to Frank Betker, Carsten Benke and Christoph Bernhardt (eds), *Paradigmenwechsel und Kontinuitätslinien im DDR-Städtebau. Neue Forschungen zur ostdeutschen Architektur- und Planungsgeschichte* (Erkner, 2010); Chistoph Bernhardt, Thomas Flierl and Max Welch Guerra (eds), *Städtebau-Debatten in der DDR: Verborgene Reformdiskurse* (Berlin, 2012), and Tobias Zervosen, *Architekten in der DDR: Realität und Selbstverständnis einer Profession* (Bielefeld, 2016).

[24] Brian Ladd, 'Socialist Planning and the Rediscovery of the Old City in the German Democratic Republic', *Journal of Urban History* 2, 5 (2001), pp. 584-603.

[25] Campbell, 'Resurrected from the Ruins'. The importance of citizen activism in transformations in East German preservation cultures towards the end of the GDR stands at the centre of the new project 'Stadtwende' being undertaken by a number of German research institutions and spearheaded by the *Leibniz-Institut für Raumbezogene Sozialforschung* (IRS) in Erkner; see http://stadtwende.de. See also the forthcoming 'Special Section: 1989 and the Value of Historic Neighborhoods in East Central Europe' in the *Journal of Urban History*.

[26] Flierl, 'Städtebau und Architektur im Staatsozialismus der DDR', p. 884. See also Flierl's writings in his *Architektur and Kunst. Texte 1964-1983* (Dresden, 1984) and *Architekturtheorie und Architekturkritik. Texte aus sechs Jahrzehnten* (Berlin, 2017).

[27] Sigrid Brandt, *Geschichte der Denkmalpflege in der SBZ/DDR. Dargestellt an Beispielen aus dem sächsischen Raum 1945-1961* (Berlin, 2003); Campbell, 'Resurrected from the Ruins'. See also the current series *Forschungen zum baukulturellen Erbe der DDR* issued by Hans-Rudolf Meier and the Bauhaus-Institut für Geschichte und Theorie der Architektur und Planung at the Bauhaus-Universität Weimar. Additional local studies include Sandra Keltsch, 'Stadterneuerung und städtebauliche Denkmalpflege in der DDR zwischen 1970 und 1990. Dargestellt an der Entwicklung von Denkmalstädten in Sachsen-Anhalt' (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Leipzig, 2012) and Katja Wüllner, 'Hinter der Fassade – Das institutionelle System der Denkmalpflege in der DDR untersucht am Beispiel der thüringischen Städte Erfurt, Weimar und Eisenach' (Unpublished PhD Thesis, Brandenburgische Technische Universität Cottbus-Senftenberg, 2015). Critical aspects of East German preservation are also addressed in Brian Ladd, *The Ghosts of Berlin: Confronting German History in the Urban Landscape* (Chicago, 1998) and Andrew Demshuk, *Bowling for Communism: Urban Ingenuity at the End of East Germany* (Ithaca, 2020).

[28] See also Elidor Mëhilli, 'The Socialist Design: Urban Dilemmas in Postwar Europe and the Soviet Union', *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 13, 3 (2012), esp. pp. 641-3.

[29] See Astrid Swenson, *The Rise of Heritage in France, Germany and England, 1789-1914* (Cambridge, 2013), p. 124ff.

[30] Campbell, 'Resurrected from the Ruins', p. 33.

[31] Rudy Koshar, *Germany's Transient Pasts: Preservation and National Memory in the Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill, 1998), p. 247.

[32] Campbell, 'Resurrected from the Ruins', pp. 19-20, 26.

[33] Brandt, *Geschichte der Denkmalpflege*, p. 14.

[34] Such as the 1952 Decree on the Maintenance and Conservation for National Cultural Monuments (*Verordnung zur Erhaltung und Pflege der nationalen Kulturdenkmale*) and the consequent formation of the Institute for Monument Conservation (*Institut für Denkmalpflege*); Campbell, 'Resurrected from the Ruins', pp. 76-77.

[35] *Ibid*., p. 37.

[36] *Ibid*., p. 95.

[37] Quoted in *ibid*., p. 95.

[38] Bundesarchiv Lichterfelde (BArch) DO 4/883, 'Bericht. Betr.: Unterhaltung mit dem Kunsthistoriker, Nationalpreisträger Dr Schubert, Magdeburg', 2 March 1958.

[39] Quoted in Campbell, 'Resurrected from the Ruins', p. 104.

[40] *Ibid*., pp. 96-7, 92. See also the *Festschrift* for Schubert produced for his sixtieth birthday in 1963: Elisabeth Hütter, Fritz Löffler and Heinrich Magirius (eds), *Kunst des Mittelalters in Sachsen. Festschrift Wolf Schubert* (Weimar, 1967).
[41] 'Briefmarke: Historische Bauten der DDR, Magdeburger Dom (DDR)', https://www.suche-briefmarken.de/marken/ddr/ddr55049.html, accessed 20 July 2019. On stamps as propaganda weapons see Margarete Myers Feinstein, *State Symbols. The Quest for Legitimacy in the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic* (Boston and Leiden, 2001), p. 186.
[42] Peter Goralczyk, 'Denkmale und Denkmalpflege in Berlin und in der Mark Brandenburg' in Institut für Denkmalpflege, Arbeitsstelle Berlin (ed.), *Denkmale und Denkmalpflege in Berlin und in der Mark Brandenburg* (Weimar, 1987), p. 47.
[43] BArch DH 1/38813, Schubert to Ulbricht, 28 August 1950.
[44] Brandt, *Geschichte der Denkmalpflege*. See also Hoscislawski, *Bauen zwischen Macht und Ohnmacht*.
[45] Quoted in Campbell, 'Resurrected from the Ruins', p. 43. See also the discussions in Richard Stites, *Revolutionary Dreams: Utopian Vision and Experimental Life in the Russian Revolution* (New York, 1989), pp. 64-68 and 190-204.
[46] Quoted in Henriette von Preuschen, *Der Griff nach den Kirchen. Ideologischer und denkmalpflegischer Umgang mit kriegszerstörten Kirchenbauten in der DDR* (Worms, 2011), p. 29.
[47] For example BArch DH 1/38813, Dean of the Faculty for Construction at Technische Hochschle Dresden to Grotewohl, 27 September 1950. On historic preservation in the Soviet Union, see Karl D. Qualls, *From Ruins to Reconstruction: Urban Identity in Soviet Sevastopol after World War II* (Ithaca, 2009), Steven M. Maddox, Saving Stalin's Imperial City: Historic Preservation in Leningrad, 1930–1950 (Bloomington, 2014) and Catriona Kelly, *Socialist Churches: Radical Secularization and the Preservation of the Past in Petrograd and Leningrad, 1918-1988* (Ithaca, 2016)
[48] Gerhard Strauss, 'Fortschrittliche Denkmalpflege', *Neues Deutschland*, 24 March 1948, p. 3. For a brief overview of his life and offices he held see Preuschen, *Der Griff nach den Kirchen*, p. 235.
[49] Strauss, 'Fortschrittliche Denkmalpflege', p. 3.
[50] *Ibid*.
[51] *Ibid*.
[52] Gavriel D. Rosenfeld, *Munich and Memory: Architecture, Monuments, and the Legacy of the Third Reich* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, 2000), p. 25.
[53] Strauss, 'Fortschrittliche Denkmalpflege', p. 3.
[54] *Ibid*.
[55] Campbell, 'Resurrected from the Ruins', p. 46.
[56] Campbell, 'Resurrected from the Ruins', p. 44.
[57] Palmowski, *Inventing a Socialist Nation*; also Pugh, *Architecture, Politics, and Identity in Divided Berlin*, p. 108ff.
[58] Campbell, 'Resurrected from the Ruins', p. 109.
[59] *Ibid*.
[60] Sigrid Brandt reminds us that monument conservation in both post-war Germanies was always incorporated into the 'clash of systems'; Brandt, *Geschichte der Denkmalpflege*, p. 8.
[61] Anja Tuma, *Denkmalpflege am Berliner Schloss. Über die Dokumentation des Wissenschaftlichen Aktivs seit der Sprengung des Schlosses 1950* (Berlin, 2016).
[62] BArch DC 20/3034, Gerhard Strauss, 'Denkmalpflege, Museen und Kunstwissenschaft an den Universitäten', pp. 25-30; Barch DH 2/21212, Gerhard Strauss to Urbschat, 16 October 1950, p. 96. On the central role of Strauss to East German preservation during the years 1945-1961 see Brandt, *Geschichte der Denkmalpflege*, pp. 13-102. See also Brandt's overview of Strauss' attitude to built utopias in her *Stadtbaukunst. Methoden ihrer Geschichtsschreibung* (Berlin, 2015), pp. 269-72.
[63] Brandenburgisches Landeshauptarchiv (BLHA) Rep. 401/4938, Hanke to Wittig, Blum and Puchert, 24 November 1966.
[64] BLHA Rep. 401/4938, 'Ideologische Aufgabenstellung und Konzeption für die Arbeit der Einrichtung, Leitungstätigkeit und Kaderfragen, Unterstellungsverhältnis', 21 November 1966.
[65] Campbell, 'Resurrected from the Ruins', p. 96.
[66] *Ibid*., p. 411ff.
[67] Brandt, *Geschichte der Denkmalpflege*, p. 110.
[68] 'Bericht von Dr. Hans Nadler über die Rolle und Bedeutung der Kreishelfer, 1954 oder 1955', reproduced in Heinrich Magirius, *Die Geschichte der Denkmalpflege Sachsens, 1945-1989. Hans Nadler zum 100. Geburtstag* (Dresden, 2010), pp. 179-180.
[69] Brandt, *Geschichte der Denkmalpflege*, p. 110.
[70] Rem Koolhaas, *Preservation is Overtaking Us* (New York, 2014), p. 16.
[71] Koshar, *Germany's Transient Pasts*, p. 255.

[72] *Ibid*.
[73] *Ibid*., p. 256-7.
[74] See for instance 'Das neue Berlin'; 'Gewissenhafter Abbau des Schlosses. Anglo-Amerikaner haben es zerstört', *Der Morgen*, 10 September 1950. The Strauss quote is from Brandt, *Geschichte der Denkmalpflege*, p. 65.
[75] On the post-war fate of the Dresden *Frauenkirche*, see Matthias Lerm, *Abschied vom alten Dresden. Verluste historischer Bausubstanz nach 1945* (Rostock, 2000).
[76] Peter Fritzsche, *Stranded in the Present: Modern Time and the Melancholy of History* (Cambridge MA, 2004), p. 1.
[77] Andreas Schönle, *Architecture of Oblivion: Ruins and Historical Consciousness in Modern Russia* (DeKalb, 2011), p. 223.
[78] Julia Hell and Andreas Schönle, 'Introduction' in Julia Hell and Andreas Schönle (eds), *Ruins of Modernity* (Durham and London, 2010), p. 6.
[79] Amir Eshel, 'Layered Time. Ruins as Shattered Past, Ruins as Hope in Israeli and German Landscapes and Literature' in Hell and Schönle, *Ruins of Modernity*, p. 137.
[80] Fritzsche, *Stranded in the Present*, p. 97.
[81] Eli Rubin, *Amnesiopolis*: *Modernity, Space, and Memory in East Germany* (Oxford, 2016), p. 6.
[82] On the views of Marx and Engels on obsolescence, see Florian Urban, 'From Periodical Obsolescence to Eternal Preservation', *Future Anterior: Journal of Historic Preservation, History, Theory, and Criticism* 3, 1 (2006), p. 27.
[83] 'Krokodilstränen um Ruinen: Zu den Aufräumungsarbeiten am Schloß', *Berliner Zeitung*, 10 September 1950.
[84] Demshuk, *Demolition on Karl Marx Square*, p. 110.
[85] 'Bürger unserer Stadt!', *Das Volk* (Gotha), 25 Juli 1958.
[86] Florian Urban, 'From Periodical Obsolescence to Eternal Preservation', p. 30.
[87] In an intriguing formulation, Mikhail Yampolsky describes monuments in the Soviet context as 'islets of eternity in the movement of time'; Mikhail Yampolsky, 'In the Shadow of Monuments: On iconoclasm and time' in Nancy Condee (ed.), *Soviet Hieroglyphics: Visual Culture in Late Twentieth-Century Russia* (Bloomington, 1995), p. 97.
[88] 'Kulturdenkmal oder Ruine? Dr. Strauß: Erhaltung um jeden Preis', *Der Morgen*, 8 May 1948.
[89] Quoted in Gerd-H. Zuchold, 'Der Abriß der Ruinen des Stadtschlosses und der Bauakademie in Ost-Berlin. Vom Umgang mit Denkmälern preußischer Geschichte in der Frühzeit der DDR', *Deutschland Archiv* 18, 2 (1985), p. 183.
[90] Koshar, *Germany's Transient Pasts*, p. 269.
[91] See Brian Ladd, 'Local Responses in Berlin to Urban Decay and the Demise of the German Democratic Republic' in John J. Czaplicka and Blair A. Ruble (eds), *Composing Urban History and the Constitution of Urban Identities* (Washington D.C., Baltimore and London, 2003), pp. 263-284.
[92] On these movements see the work of the 'Stadtwende' project at http://stadtwende.de.