

## INCOHERENT RENOVATION IN BERLIN: IS THERE A WAY FORWARD?

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**Abstract.** This paper briefly describes the fates of four of Berlin's most iconic cultural buildings. These are the *Berlin Palace*, the *Neues Museum*, the *Berlin Dom* (Cathedral) and the *Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church*. Using a variety of historical styles, all these buildings were built, or finished, in the nineteenth century, and all suffered serious damage due to aerial bombing in the Second World War. As all were repairable, the obvious choice might seem to reinstate them to their original condition: but this did not happen to any of them. This paper examines the incoherence of the various renovations, and briefly addresses the problem of formulating a coherent approach to renovation, particularly with reference to the 1964 Venice Charter.

**Keywords:** Berlin, renovation, Venice Charter, iconic buildings, war damage, monstrous carbuncle, wartime bombing, cultural destruction.

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### 1. Introduction

What can be said about all four of the buildings examined here is that:

*All, except in some aspects the Neues Museum, were extremely solidly built, so, given routine maintenance, could have be expected to have lasted for probably hundreds of years.*

*All were severely damaged by aerial bombing during the Second World War.*

*All were repairable.*

*All suffered further destruction due to various political ideologies such as Communism, Modernism and Nationalism.*

*All have been reinstated in a variety of ways, none of which are universally accepted.*

*All suffered from what could be called the Ruskin-Viollet-le-Duc Dichotomy.*

According to John Ruskin, restoration is ‘...the most total destruction a building can suffer,’ as it is ‘impossible ...to restore anything that has been great or beautiful in architecture’ (Semmes, 2009, p122). With the aid of William Morris, the doctrine that any new material added to an historic structure must be different to the original was elaborated. On the other hand, Viollet-le-Duc wrote ‘to restore an edifice means ... to reestablish it in a finished state which may in fact never have existed at any given time.’

Viollet-le-Duc was able to bring to his extensive restoration work an ‘unrivalled technical mastery of medieval design and construction (Semmes, 2009, p.117).

As is well known, modern architecture has, over the past seventy years been a sharply divisive topic, epitomised by the oft-repeated phrase ‘loved by architects and hated by nearly everyone else.’ Extraordinarily, thanks to Ruskin, via what is usually known as the Venice Charter, (Venice Charter, 1964) this polarisation has been carried into the restoration of buildings. So that for every restoration project there are diametrically opposed views, which means there can never be a consensus.

The Venice Charter, officially entitled the *International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites*, is dated 1964. Written at the height of the near total acceptance of architectural modernism, it contained, in Article 9, for restoration the almost deranged requirement that:

*‘It must stop at the point where conjecture begins, and in this case moreover any extra work which is indispensable must be distinct from the architectural composition and must bear a contemporary stamp’*

Until now, ‘contemporary stamp’ can only mean as dictated by modernism. And this means that the requirement is ‘deranged,’ as the basic tenet of modernism is the total rejection of all previous ideas. So, by definition, any ‘extra work’ is bound to be incoherent.

Although this interpretation is almost universally accepted, it is interesting to note that one of the original authors of the charter, Raymond Lemaire, was never quite sure what exactly ‘contemporary stamp’ meant. When he was responsible for the renovation of the Great Beguinage of Leuven (see Note 1), he showed ‘much derogation to the Venice Charter’s articles, including those for which he proved most influential (Houbart, 2014, p.229).

A strange spin-off from all this is something called façadism. This is where the façade of an historic building (see Note 2) is kept intact whilst the interior is demolished to allow something ‘unhistorical’ to be built inside, sometimes appearing incongruously above the retained façade.

The restorations of the four Berlin buildings described here provide ample evidence of the unsatisfactory state of affairs that currently rules such work. To clarify this, the restoration of each building is described and then critically assessed, with the responses to the projects noted. Finally, ways forward are commented on.

## **2. Historical background of Germany and Berlin**

On 18 January 1871, princes of the German states, except Austria, gathered at the Palace of Versailles to proclaim William I of Prussia as the German Emperor, Kaiser Wilhelm I, of a politically and administratively integrated German nation-state. The kingdom of Prussia had been proclaimed in 1701, with Berlin as its capital. Prussia had been ruled for centuries by the House of Hohenzollern, and it was from this family that the German Kaisers came. So the new unified Germany was in many ways an extension of Prussia, with Prussia’s capital Berlin becoming Germany’s, and its ruling family, the Hohenzollerns, becoming the ruling family.

The Kaisers ruled until 1918, but with the end of the First World War, the then Kaiser, Wilhelm II, abdicated, and Germany became a democratic republic, usually known as the Weimar Republic. This effectively came to end in 1933 when Adolf

Hitler, leader of the National Socialist Party, the Nazi Party, was appointed Chancellor of Germany. By national referendum, Hitler was confirmed the leader, the Führer, in 1934, and Germany became the German Empire, or the Third Reich (The Holy Roman Empire and the Prussian led German Empire, being the first two).

Hitler pursued an aggressive foreign policy, culminating with the invasion of Poland in September 1939, provoking the most destructive event in human history, the Second World War. This ended May 1945 with millions killed, maimed and traumatised, and much of Europe left in ruins, including Berlin.

The victorious powers, the USA, Soviet Union, France and Great Britain divided Germany into four zones, which remained intact until 1949, after which the Soviet zone became the German Democratic Republic, or GDR, and the rest, West Germany. It was only in 1990 that East and West Germany were united to form the present day Germany.



**Figure 1.** Map of Berlin pre-1989

The city of Berlin was entirely within the Soviet zone, so was inside East Germany. However the city was divided into four sectors in line with the zoning of post-war Germany. When the Soviet zone became East Germany, the sector became East Berlin, the other sectors being amalgamated into West Berlin, which was part of West Germany. This division, now hardened by the Cold War, became a physical reality in 1961, when the East Germans made the separation concrete by building a physical wall between East Berlin and West Berlin, which could only be crossed at armed check points – the infamous Berlin Wall. The whole wall was subject to East German armed surveillance, and unauthorised crossings meant the transgressor could be shot to death, which occurred multiple times.

### **3. Four Berlin buildings of cultural significance**

The buildings are presented in historical order of construction.

#### **The Berlin Palace – *Berliner Schloss* or *Stadtschloss***

The **Berlin Palace** is a building in the centre of Berlin, and served as the main residence of the Electors of Brandenburg, the Kings of Prussia, and after 1871, the German Emperors. Although the site had been used since the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the palace described

here was only started in 1701. The design was changed a number of times and the shape of the palace was only finalised by the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The dome, designed by Karl Friedrich Schinkel, was only built in 1865. The palace was built in the baroque style.



**Figure 2.** The Berlin Palace in 1898

The Weimar Republic turned part of the palace into the Museum of Applied Arts, with other areas being used for state receptions. After the Nazis came to power in 1933, the palace was basically ignored.

During the Second World War the palace was twice hit by bombs, and caught fire, with a large part of the palace being burnt out. However the shell remained stable and much of the original decoration still intact, and some parts of the palace could still be used, and were until 1949. Then further damage was done to the building during the filming of the Soviet film *The Battle of Berlin*.



**Photo 1.** War-damage



Though repairable, in 1950 the GDR leadership decided to demolish the ruins of the original palace, as it was an icon of Imperial Germany, and this did not suit their ideology. In 1973, twenty-three years later, construction began on the **Palace of the Republic**, which was complete by 1976. Built in the International Modern style, the new palace housed the seat of the parliament of the GDR, plus many other facilities for public use.



**Photo 2.** Palace of the Republic in 1990 just before closure

In 1990, the building was closed due to the presence of asbestos, and by 2003 all the asbestos had been removed together with all the internal and external fittings. It had stood unused from 1990, and in 2003 it was decided to demolish it, though demolition only started in 2006.

In 2006, it was decided to rebuild the Berlin Palace, with three of its façades being exact replicas of the original, that is to be re-built in the baroque style. The fourth façade and the interior are to be modern, but will include exact copies of some of the Kaiser's rooms. The re-built palace will house the Humboldt collection and non-European art.



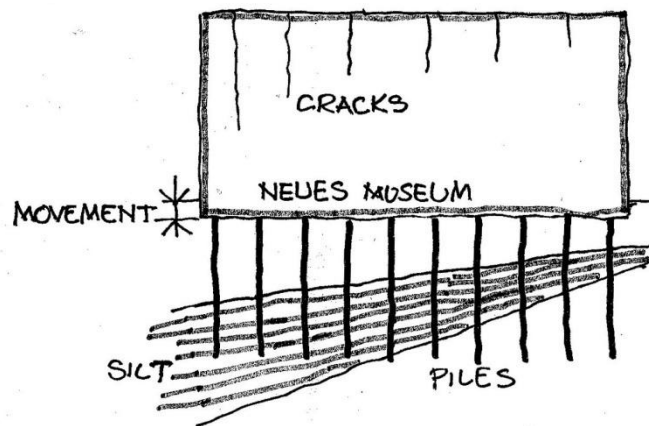
**Photo 3.** Model of the Humboldt Forum to be completed in 2019, with the Humboldt Box on the left

The object that appears to the left of the rebuilt palace is called the Humboldt Box, which opened in 2011. It is supposed to be a temporary building, to be dismantled after the opening of the Humboldt Forum.

### The Neues Museum

The museum was built between 1843 and 1855 to plans by Stüler, a student of Schinkel, in the Neo-Classical style. It housed collections of plaster casts, ancient Egyptian artefacts and prehistoric items, as well as many other items. The museum building was one of the first to use new industrial construction techniques, which included the use of structural iron and steam-hammer driven piles for the foundations.

The design of the superstructure was kept as light as possible, as under the building was a layer of unconsolidated organic silt of variable thickness. Due to practical length limitations, not all the original piles passed through this layer to the solid ground below. This resulted in differential settlement, almost as soon as it was opened, which caused cracking of the walls – see Fig. 3. (Eisele & Seiler, 2012)



**Figure 3.** Uneven settlement of the pile foundations resulting in crack formation in the walls

The interiors were richly decorated with painted frescos, patterned ceilings and floors.



**Photo 4.** The museum in 1930

During World War II the museum was heavily bombed, and much of it was destroyed. Like the Berlin Palace, after the war the museum found itself in the GDR, which had neither the money nor the will to renovate it, so the ruins were left to deteriorate, with some of the useable spaces being used as storage. Some reconstruction work did start in 1986, but was abandoned in 1989, with the fall of the Berlin Wall.



**Photo 5.** The Neues Museum as an abandoned ruin

In 1997, planning for the reconstruction project was resumed, and English architect David Chipperfield was appointed to lead the project. Chipperfield is known to be a hard-line modernist architect, (see Note 3) so the demands of the 1964 Venice charter were rigorously enforced. As Chipperfield has no expertise in conservation, Julian Harrap Architects were appointed to deal with that aspect (Taylor, 2009). The restored museum opened in 2009, rebuilt with a mixture of variably restored existing elements, and completely new elements.



**Photo 6.** The restored façade in 2009, with the façade to the left reconstructed without its classical ornamentation

### **The Berlin Dom (cathedral)**

The current Berlin Dom, a Protestant cathedral, is the fourth to be built on the site, and was constructed in the Neo-Renaissance style between 1893 and 1905.





**Photo 7.** The Berlin Dom in a 1900 postcard

During the 1930s, the Berlin Dom often served as a backdrop for Nazi parades.



**Photo 8.** The German Führer delivers a speech in front of an adoring crowd in front of the Berlin Dom

During the Second World War the Berlin Cathedral was bombed in 1940, and 1944. The 1944 attack set the Cathedral on fire, and caused extensive damage.



**Photo 9.** Wartime damage showing the destruction of the main dome



After the war the cathedral was in the Communist GDR, officially an atheist state, however, in 1975 some reconstruction started which included simplifying the original design but, at the same time, demolishing an undamaged part of the cathedral called the 'Denkmalskirsche'. This was for ideological reasons, as it honoured the Hohenzollen dynasty. The cathedral partly reopened in 1980, and in 1993, the nave was reinaugurated. The dome and surrounding cupolas are yet to be rebuilt to their original design, as is shown by comparing Photos 7 and 10.



**Photo 10.** Berlin Cathedral in 2005 showing altered dome and cupolas

### **Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church (*Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedachtnis-Kirche*)**

The foundation stone of this Protestant church was laid on 22 March 1891, which was Kaiser Wilhelm I's birthday; the church was dedicated on 1 September 1895. The church was built in the Neo-Romanesque style by the third and last Kaiser, Wilhelm II, as a memorial to his grandfather.



**Photo 11.** Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church around 1900

Like the other buildings described, the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church was bombed during the Second World War, being extensively damaged in 1943. What was left was a remnant of the main spire, a secondary spire, and parts of the entrance hall and baptistery. The ruin was in the American sector of Berlin.



**Photo 12.** Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church after WWII

In 1947, the curatorium of the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche foundation decided they wanted the church rebuilt, but exactly how was argued over until the late 1950s. In 1956, an architectural competition was held, being won by the modern architect Egon Eiermann (see Note 4). He initially proposed that what was left of the church be demolished, but following a public outcry, he decided to demolish only some of the remaining structure – compare Photos 12 and 13.

In the area now available around what remained of the ruin, Eiermann designed a new modern church, a new chapel and a new bell tower. All were clad with translucent glass, with the remaining ruins given cursory repairs to make them weatherproof.



**Photo 13.** The new elements around the remains of the ruin



**Photo 14.** The interior of the church

Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church

#### 4. Critical Assessments

The restorations of the four Berlin buildings described here provide ample evidence of the unsatisfactory state of affairs that currently determines architectural reconstruction. To clarify this, the fate of each building is critically assessed, and the responses to the projects noted.

The Communist government of the GDR declared that the Berlin Palace was a symbol of Prussian militarism, but its demolition was only ordered in 1950. There was considerable opposition both inside the GDR and outside, with the director of the Administration of Palaces and Gardens writing ‘... the blowing up of the Berlin Palace is an inconceivable act of a fanatical will to destroy, which history will judge as senseless and wanton’ (see Note 5).

As with the original palace, many people in the GDR opposed the demolition of The Palace of the Republic, and various protests were held (see Note 6). In spite of being variously described as ‘East Germany’s ugliest, but best-loved building’, ‘a Socialist Realist monstrosity’ or ‘Erich’s Lampshop’ (after Erich Honecker the leader of the GDR), in a 2006 poll, 60 percent of eastern Germans said they opposed tearing down the Palace, as it would ‘destroy a part of the GDR’s history’ (see Note 6). So it would seem that, in spite of its generally agreed ugliness, many people wanted the palace to remain due to fond memories; however, demolition was complete in 2006.

As already noted, in 2006 it was decided to rebuild the Berlin Palace, with three of its façades being exact replicas of the original, and with the fourth façade, and the interior to be modern. In other words, partly following the Viollet-le-Duc branch of the Ruskin-Viollet-le-Duc Dichotomy; however, building the fourth façade in a modern style seems incongruous. So what is being built is a strange version of façadeism.



**Photo 15.** Rendering that shows the proposed modern fourth façade

When complete, one might have thought that modernist critics will label it a pastiche, but, amazingly, architectural journalist Jonathan Glancey chose it as one of the best buildings of 2018 (Glancey, 2018). He claims, rather oddly that ‘Now, here it is again, all stone and marble, its walls pregnant with Baroque but with a distinctly modern style’, though how something that is Baroque can have a distinctly modern style is not explained.

Notwithstanding the doubts about the fourth façade, the fact that the other three façades will be exact replicas of the original highlights the difficulty current

architectural design find itself in; that is being unable to design a new building that is compatible with its historic neighbours.

Whether the Humboldt Box, which the daily newspaper the *Tagesspiegel* called ‘an architectural monster of galactic proportions,’ (Heinke, 2011) will be dismantled, remains to be seen.

It is perhaps worth mentioning a similar ‘fourth façade’ solution is being applied to an historic building in Lisbon, called the Palace of Ajuda (see Note 7). The construction of the Ajuda Palace, which began in 1796 and lasted until the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, was a project plagued by various political, economic and artistic/architectural problems (IGESPAR, 2011). Built as a rectangle of four wings, the western wing was never completed. However, recently it had been decided that it will be completed in a manner that rigidly applies the ‘logic’ of the Venice Charter.



**Photo 16.** Rendering that shows the proposed modern fourth façade of the Palace of Ajuda

These modern additions could be considered examples of what might be called ‘monstrous carbuncleism’. The term ‘monstrous carbuncle’ was famously coined by Prince Charles in a speech in 1984 (Prince Charles, 1984). He was describing a proposed new addition, designed by architects Ahrends, Burton and Koralek, to the National Gallery in London.



**Photo 17.** A model of the original monstrous carbuncle



The restoration of the Neues Museum follows the Venice Charter. This meant new work followed the tenets of modernism, thus by definition introducing elements that were intended to be unsympathetic to the original building. Much of the existing building has been preserved in its ‘as found’ state, imparting a type of ‘shabby chic’ (see Note 8). Sadly none of the elements with a contemporary stamp remotely achieve the standard of elegance and decorative interest that the original achieved.



**Photo 18.** A white concrete modernist stair.



**Photo 19.** Damaged wall frescos stabilised ‘as found’

The renovated Neues Museum

Naturally, critics who habitually praise modern architecture, like the previously mentioned Jonathan Glancey, find the architecture ‘thrilling’ and that its former glory has been ‘surpassed’ (Glancey, 2009). The renovation even won the Mies Van der Rohe award in 2011. However, not everyone was so enamoured, as many people in Berlin would have preferred to see the museum restored to the original; this has led to a fierce cultural battle (Richter, 2009). Members of the Society of Ancient Berlin saw the architectural concept as a form of cultural destruction, (Richter, 2009) which in many ways it was.

Again, thanks to the Venice Charter approach, the restored front façade – see Photo 6 – is another case of monstrous carbuncleism, though rather watered down. It seems clear that the restored façade should have followed the original – see Photo 4. However, the architect chose to follow the general arrangement, but with alterations in detail and dimension that has caused visual ruination.

The restoration of the Berlin Dom was perhaps the most sensible, as it didn’t try to introduce any type of innovatory interventions; it basically followed the Viollet-le-Duc branch of the dichotomy. Unfortunately, due to lack of money and/or expertise, the restoration was not technically of the highest standard, and simplifications were introduced. But worse, due to political ideology, the intact ‘Denkmalskirsche,’ was demolished. Compared to the Medici Chapel, this can only be viewed as wanton destruction. The Berlin Cathedral Building Society wants to rebuild it.

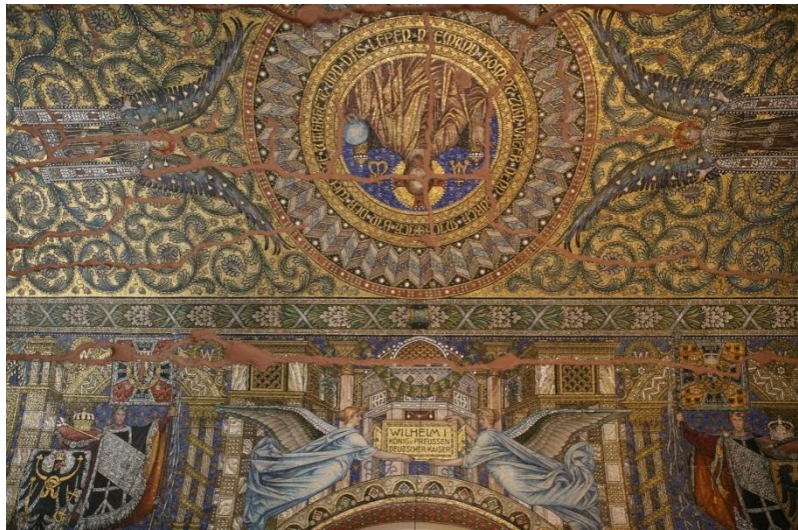
The Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church had the misfortune to have not only been badly damaged by aerial bombing, but the remaining ruins were treated with disrespect by the Allies, who had a policy of destroying German cultural heritage (see Note 9), and again by the winner of the 1956 architectural competition, the architect Egon Eiermann, who ordered further destruction. Eiermann then surrounded what was left of the ruins

with a number of simplistically shaped buildings – hexagons and octagons – all clad in harsh industrial materials.



**Photo 20.** The Denkmalskirche before ideological destruction

Luckily, what is left of the exquisitely detailed original mosaics can still be seen in the preserved remains of the 19<sup>th</sup> church.



**Photo 21.** Preserved mosaics in the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church

In surveying the fate of these four culturally iconic buildings, perhaps the most recurrent theme is that of destruction. All four suffered from the destructive effects of aerial bombardment during the Second World War, which given the extremely violent nature of that event, is perhaps unremarkable. What is remarkable however is that although all the buildings were repairable, they all suffered further destruction – wanton destruction – from a whole range of ideologues. The ideology that was applied ranged from Communism to Modernism, and included various doses of Nationalism. These all made the perpetrators insensitive to the architectural value of the original buildings.

The repairable ruins of the Berlin Palace were dynamited for political reasons, and its replacement the Palace of the Republic was demolished, again for political reasons, though there seems to have been a consensus of opinion that the building was ugly. Its

replacement, currently under construction, seems unlikely to be spiritually uplifting with its bizarre mixture of facsimile the original façades, coupled with the uninspiring inclusion of dreary ‘modern’ elements.

The strange mixture of approaches to the restoration of the Neues Museum by the architect David Chipperfield, has led to accusations of his work as cultural destruction. According to Gerhard Hoya of the Society of Ancient Berlin, Chipperfield ‘doesn’t have the sensitivity that he claims to have’ (Richter). By comparing the elegant original elements, with Chipperfield’s ham-fisted interventions – roof-supporting structures for example – one can see why Hoya would make such a comment.



**Photo 22.** The original elegant decorated roof structures



**Photo 23.** A visually oppressive new roof structure

#### Roof supporting structures in the Neues Museum

The restoration of the Berlin Dom, carried out with expedient simplifications, is scarred by the wanton destruction of the Denkmalskirche, whose reinstatement is yearned for, probably in vain, by the Berlin Cathedral Building Society.

The Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church suffered three destructive events, aerial bombing, further Allied destruction of the ruins, which left Berliners with a half-destroyed church tower, so they nicknamed it the ‘hollow tooth’ (see Note 10). The architect Egon Eiermann ordered further demolition of the parts of the ruins, and then designed a number of incongruous buildings to surround what was left. As is common with public disapproval of modern architecture, his efforts were rewarded with the pejorative names of the ‘lipstick’ and the ‘face powder box’ (Wiethoff).

### 5. Is there a way forward?

The once revered, but now long-forgotten, architectural critic Geoffrey Scott wrote, in 1914, that ‘coherence is the basis of style’ (Scott). That coherence is important can be seen from fishing villages on Greek islands to Georgian Bath, from Haussmann’s Paris to Brooklyn’s brownstones; but with the global modernist coup, architectural coherence has largely disappeared. What modernist architecture has produced are individual oddly-shaped buildings like the Humboldt Box – see Photo 3 – or the new church by Eiermann – see Photo 14 – but mostly thousands of dreary buildings that are lazily based on modernism: see for example Photo 2, or the fourth façade of the Berlin Palace – see Photo 15.



That modern architecture is a failure for almost everyone except its practitioners, is well-known, and has spawned dozens of books and articles (see Note 11). One result of this is that there is an almost total lack of architectural design competence/vision for new buildings that can fit coherently into historical settings. Perhaps even worse is that the diktats of modernism found its way into the Venice Charter.

Of the four buildings discussed here, the Neues Museum illustrates this incoherence most clearly. As it was decided that the Venice Charter had to be adhered to, this meant that the architect had ‘no choice’ but to add unsuitable elements, as Photos 18 and 23 clearly show. Photo 6 shows another example, where the symmetry of the elevation is ruined by the left-hand reconstruction not following **exactly** the original right-hand side – labelled here as a form of ‘monstrous carbuncleism,’ all too common where historical buildings are ‘restored’ – see also Photo 17.

It is not clear if the Venice charter was also responsible for leaving existing internal decoration in its ruined ‘as found’ state. Maybe the ‘It must stop at the point where conjecture begins’ phrase forbade anything being reinstated as the original. Or maybe the restorers lacked the courage and/or technical ability to recreate the original, which clearly, if professionally done, would have been a far better outcome than leaving the ruined and partially destroyed original decor.

The new buildings surrounding the weatherproofed ruins of the Kaiser Wilhelm’s Memorial Church – see Photos 13 and 14 - are just the standard approach of modern architects; that is, new buildings that are completely out of context with their surroundings. In the case of religious buildings modern architecture fails completely because, as Le Corbusier noted in a rare moment of clarity, when he was trying to design a church, there was an ‘impossibility of reconciling tradition with modernism’ (Gresleri, 2005).

In many ways, the worst form of incoherence, from various points of view, is the reconstruction of the Berlin Palace. The fact that the fourth façade – see Photo 15 – is in what has become the standard modern style, seems like a strange application of the Venice Charter, though in this case the ‘extra work’ with a ‘contemporary stamp’ is no newer than the reinstated three facsimile façades. What is the rationale behind this reconstruction is unclear. The repairable ruins of the original building were demolished for ideological reason. The demolition of its replacement – see Photo 2 - widely acknowledged as ugly, was mourned by many, where it is hard to see how the new building will satisfy anyone from any point of view.

What is clear is that the polarising battle, still being fought between modern and non-modern architecture, impinges negatively on the restoration of pre-modern buildings. Article 9 of the Venice Charter has been responsible for stylistically incongruous elements, both large and small, being incorporated into buildings of historic value on a global scale. It seems obvious that this pernicious Article should be abandoned, and indeed, there are now many voices being raised against it (Hardy, 2008).

However, even if Article 9 was expunged, this would not prohibit the insertion of contextually incoherent buildings such as those shown in Photos 2, 3 (Humboldt Box) 13, and 14. This is because architects trained under the auspices of modernism, that is almost all of them, are technically and culturally unequipped to design contextually coherent buildings, as their underlying formal principles **do not** allow their elements to coexist with those of other styles (see Note 12). This will only happen when courses at



Schools of Architecture are completely reorganised to teach architecture that fulfils basic human needs (Salingaros, 2017).

What has been mainly discussed here is aesthetic coherence, however, there is another aspect to the renovation or replacement of historic buildings that is rarely discussed, and that is cultural coherence. The effect of cultural incoherence between society and an historic building has had a profound effect on all the buildings discussed here. With the Berlin Palace, the Nazis ignored the building, but the GDR government demolished the ruins for cultural reasons, which happened again with the subsequent demolition of the Palace of the Republic. How the partially reconstructed Berlin Palace will be seen culturally, is not known. The objectors to the reconstruction of the Neues Museum labelled it cultural destruction. At the Berlin Dom the intact Denkmalskirche was demolished for cultural reasons, and the GDR government removed as many crosses as possible. Built as a memorial to a Kaiser, the ruins of the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church were further damaged as the conquering Allies had a policy of destroying all German monuments and museums deemed 'patriotic, nationalistic or idealizing German culture' (see Note 9).

So what is needed is a coherent approach both to the built fabric and to the cultural context, but this has various enemies, the proponents of architectural modernism being an obvious one. Nevertheless, destruction of what is perceived as cultural heritage by some, but as cultural heresy by others is still commonplace; removal of statues of Stalin in Eastern Europe, or the destruction of the Buddhas of Bamiyan, are just two examples. All of which makes clarifying coherent policies for renovation and reconstruction of historic buildings problematic, to say the least.

### Notes

**Note 1:** Groot Begijnhof, Leuven, Available at: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Groot\\_Begijnhof,\\_Leuven](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Groot_Begijnhof,_Leuven)

**Note 2:** Historic building – this means any building built before the blanket application of modernism; effectively ANY building built before 1950.

**Note 3:** See for instance the Modern (German) Literature Museum - Available at: [https://www.google.pt/search?q=Modern+\(German\)+Literature+Museum&source=lnms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwi2tZWJgfreAhVEgM4BHWZfDzIQ\\_AUIDigB&biw=994&bih=432#imgrc=sFNRQAvvXXq2hM](https://www.google.pt/search?q=Modern+(German)+Literature+Museum&source=lnms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwi2tZWJgfreAhVEgM4BHWZfDzIQ_AUIDigB&biw=994&bih=432#imgrc=sFNRQAvvXXq2hM)

**Note 4:** Eiermann, Egon, Available at: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Egon\\_Eiermann](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Egon_Eiermann)

**Note 5:** War damage 1945 and demolition 1950 - Available at: <https://berliner-schloss.de/en/palace-history/war-destruction-and-demolition/>

**Note 6:** Berlin's Palace of the Republic Faces the Wrecking Ball - Available at: <https://www.dw.com/en/berlins-palace-of-the-republic-faces-wrecking-ball/a-1862424>

**Note 7:** Palace of Ajuda; Available at: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palace\\_of\\_Ajuda](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palace_of_Ajuda)

**Note 8:** Shabby chic is a form of interior design where furniture and furnishings are either chosen for their appearance of age and signs of wear and tear, or where new items are distressed to achieve the appearance of an antique - Available at:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shabby\\_chic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shabby_chic)

**Note 9:** ‘Allied directives issued in 1945, as part of the “re-education” process, demanded the destruction all German monuments and museums deemed “patriotic, nationalistic or idealizing German culture.” The reasoning behind this process was based in theories propounded by World War One propagandists, which concluded that Germans were genetically more violent than other ethnic groups and had to be “de-militarized” in such a manner that they would lose the “German Will to Wage Future War.” Rampant cultural devastation then ensued by the occupying Allied forces all over Germany, and few objects were exempted from this crusade.’ - Available at:

<http://www.revisionist.net/monuments.html>

**Note 10:** Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church, Available at:

<https://en.wikiarquitectura.com/building/kaiser-wilhelm-memorial-church/>

**Note 11:** See for instance: Peter Blake (1974), ‘Form Follows Fiasco’; Brent Brolin (1976), ‘The Failure of Modern Architecture’; Tom Wolfe (1981) ‘From Bauhaus to Our House’; Nikos Salingaros (2004) ‘Anti-Architecture and Deconstruction’; John Silber (2007) ‘Architecture of the Absurd’; Malcolm Millais (2009) ‘Exploding the Myths of Modern Architecture’; James Steven Curl (2018) ‘Making Dystopia’, amongst many others.

**Note 12:** This is a paraphrase of Semes p.74, where he writes of non-modernist buildings that ‘*their underlying formal principles allow buildings and elements from different styles not only to coexist but to collaborate in architectural works of great complexity and beauty*’.

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