



Research article

Turning the project of dictatorship into an example of democracy? Chances and risks of participation at the Nazi relic Prora

Florian Rietmann^{1,*} 

¹ PhD candidate, DFG Research Training Group 1913 'Cultural and Technological Significance of Historic Buildings', Brandenburg University of Technology (BTU), Cottbus-Senftenberg, Germany

* Correspondence: florian.rietmann@yahoo.com

Guest Editor: Jitka Cirklová, Faculty of Civil Engineering, Department of Social Science, Czech Technical University, Czech Republic

Submission date: 11 July 2023; Acceptance date: 6 September 2023; Publication date: 3 September 2024

How to cite

Rietmann, F. 'Turning the project of dictatorship into an example of democracy? Chances and risks of participation at the Nazi relic Prora'. *Architecture_MPS* 29, 1 (2024): 2.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14324/111.444.amps.2024v29i1.002>.

Peer review

This article has been peer-reviewed through the journal's standard double-anonymous peer-review process, where both the reviewers and authors are anonymised during review.

Copyright

2024, Florian Rietmann. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution Licence (CC BY) 4.0 <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>, which permits unrestricted use, distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited • DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14324/111.444.amps.2024v29i1.002>.

Open access

Architecture_MPS is a peer-reviewed open-access journal.

Abstract

This article explores a participatory process organised to deal with the highly contested former Nazi project Prora on the Baltic island of Rügen. It was carried out on behalf of the German government in 1996. The participatory process was an exceptional way of dealing with a heritage that remains difficult for Germany to this day. Key aspects shifted in Prora as a result of the procedure: away from the ideal of conscientious and careful conservation of the building as a memorial to past dictatorships and towards an active process of highlighting, rejecting and changing qualities of Prora for the construction of a new and alternative future. The main focus shifted from memory work to different present-day demands of the local population and the associated future scenarios for their island. The article argues that during the participatory process Prora was a real-life laboratory in which

many things were tried out that were to become important pioneering approaches in heritage management over the next two decades. However, the participatory process in Prora is not only an impressive example of the potential that lies in such approaches; as an experiment it also points to new problems that are associated with them.

Keywords participation; difficult heritage; contested heritage; heritage communities; heritage management

Introduction

With the participatory process in Prora, the German government took a new and exceptional path in dealing with a Nazi heritage. To understand how this decision came about, I first provide an overview of the turbulent history of the building complex. In the following passage, I point out the conflicts that led to the participatory process. Having set out the framework conditions, I then focus on the participatory process itself. I show how the conflicts that ignited around Prora were deeply rooted in contemporary conflicts on the island, which were being negotiated based on historical relics. I describe the seemingly irreconcilable positions of various interest groups and the efforts of the Berlin development company S.T.E.R.N. ([STERN] Society for Gentle Urban Renewal) – which was commissioned to organise the process – to overcome these in an initially open-ended process to reach a common consensus. However, the participatory process in Prora is not only an impressive example of the potential that lies in such approaches; as an experiment, it also points to new problems that are associated with them. Some are briefly outlined at the end of the article.

The burden of a conflict-ridden past

An unfinished Strength through Joy seaside resort

Prora was built between 1937 and 1939 by the Nazi organisation Kraft durch Freude (Strength through Joy). It was a central construction and propaganda project of the regime. As a gigantic seaside resort, it was designed to provide 20,000 guests from working-class families with low-cost seaside holidays. The Strength through Joy seaside resort was meant to mobilise support for the regime among politically disenfranchised workers. As a gigantic holiday machine without equal in the modern world, it should have illustrated the socio-political power of the regime in the domestic and international arena.¹

During the Third Reich, however, no tourist ever saw the sea in Prora. The gigantic building never got beyond the shell and was never put into operation by the Nazis. With the outbreak of the Second World War, the project was stopped and the construction workers were relocated to projects classified as more important to the war effort. What remained was an almost 5 kilometres long, half-finished ruin on the beach.

Barracks of the German Democratic Republic

In the aftermath of the Second World War, the complex in the Soviet Occupation Zone was first occupied by refugees and later slated for demolition. However, demolition attempts failed halfway through and the complex was left abandoned.

What finally saved Prora was the intensification of the Cold War. After Stalin ordered the German party leadership in East Berlin to re-establish its armed forces, Prora was finally completed as a military base of the communist GDR in 1956. At first, mainly combat troops were stationed in Prora; later, several military schools were established there. Officers from so-called 'Third World' countries – with which the GDR maintained military relations, often out of ideological solidarity – were trained in Prora. It was also one of the largest bases for housing *Bausoldaten* (construction soldiers), the GDR's pacifists who refused to serve with a weapon. Sealed off from the outside world and known for a harsh regime within the barracks walls, Prora always remained a threatening foreign body for the majority of the local population.

A battlefield of different stakeholders

This changed with the fall of the Berlin Wall. After German reunification in 1990, the GDR army was disbanded and the military base in Prora was finally abandoned (Figure 1). Due to the withdrawal of the military, many people in Rügen lost their jobs and the islanders had to deal with enormous changes.

Under these circumstances, Prora's difficult past continued to weigh on Rügen. It soon became fuel for current conflicts on the island, especially when it became known that the federal government wanted to sell the huge site in its entirety to an outside investor. Plans were being prepared for a large shopping, leisure and entertainment centre with overnight accommodation for up to 6,000 people and 15,000 parking spaces for day tourists. People in Rügen did not see the government's plans as salvation. They feared that a repurposed Prora would dominate the entire island, produce extensive car traffic and strangle small-scale developments. Fierce resistance formed against the sale plans. With reference to the Nazi-era plans, citizens' initiatives spoke of a 'monster of mass tourism' that had to be opposed.² Over the next few years, Prora evolved into a battleground of different actors, such as heritage activists, government agencies, citizen groups and investors. In the wake of this conflict, not only the past was fought over, but a wide variety of future scenarios were also projected onto the complex. Under these circumstances, the planned sale and development of the site became impossible.

Figure 1. Prora as an abandoned military base (Source: Antoine Beaudoin, 2012)



The discursive process

To resolve the deadlock, the federal government changed its strategy and worked more closely with the community on the island. It developed a plan to bring all the stakeholders to the table to reach a viable consensus. A solution for Prora should be developed 'as part of an ongoing discussion process

until a consensus is reached'.³ In March 1996, the government published a call for a mediator and finally decided to commission the renowned developer STERN from Berlin, to 'cut through the Gordian knot of Prora'.⁴

By commissioning STERN, the federal government trod an unusual path. The STERN protagonists were not heritage experts in the classical sense; however, they had a lot of experience in working with the existing fabric and with inhabitants of inner-city areas. They developed a strategy that became popularly known as *Behutsame Stadterneuerung* (gentle urban renewal). A way of redeveloping inner-city areas while involving residents and respecting existing structures rather than demolishing them. Participation played a central role in this. Gentle urban renewal was first implemented on a large scale by the head of STERN – the architect Hardt-Waltherr Hämer – at the International Building Exhibition (IBA) 84/87 in Berlin. It marked a real change of paradigms in urban planning and moved away from the demolition and modernist rebuilding of nineteenth-century neighbourhoods that dominated German post-war planning far into the 1970s.

STERN proposed to organise for Prora a participatory proceeding in the form of a discursive process, strengthening the democratic impulse in the plans of the federal government. With the discursive process, the STERN protagonists drew on a strategy they developed during their many years of work to preserve inner-city residential areas, and their milieu, in Berlin.

However, STERN was confronted with very different conditions in Prora. The proceedings surrounding Prora took place in the wake of a radical economic transformation, the privatisation of the formerly state-controlled economy in East Germany. 'The practice after 1991 proved to be an entrepreneurial state of emergency aimed at acceleration, which captured the organisation and its personnel as a privatisation competition,'⁵ as historian Marcus Böick described the atmosphere of the time concerning the responsible government organisation Treuhand, which handled privatisation on behalf of the federal government and was in charge of Prora from 1995.

Under the above-mentioned conditions, STERN's mission was a balancing act. On the one hand, the company acts within the framework set by the federal government, and the government has the clear objective for Prora of achieving a social and political consensus that will enable a profitable sale or at least establish economic viability, so that the state can completely withdraw from trusteeship for Prora – and thus also from the costs and responsibility for this difficult and cumbersome heritage in the broader framework of liberal economic politics.⁶ However, the 'shock therapy'⁷ of rigorous privatisation of the East German economy after the fall of communism met with increasing opposition from the affected population because of the social consequences. This unrest fuelled the fierce opposition by heritage activists and the local community in Rügen between 1993 and 1996. Representative of the federal government Hildegard Kramer aimed therefore to 'enable the example of privatisation by consensus'⁸ in Prora, setting a more positive example for federal politics in East Germany. However, with this goal in mind, Kramer was already establishing a tendency to reach a consensus on an outcome that had already been predetermined by the federal representatives.

On the other hand, the STERN protagonists wanted to go beyond the government's formulated consensus for privatisation. 'Hämer's ambition [in Prora] goes further. He wants to turn a project of dictatorship into an example of democracy. A social transformation should succeed that is not imposed on the people. But the good title is missing, a successful formula like "Gentle Urban Renewal" once was.'⁹ This idealistic approach in turn presupposes that the promise of an open-ended process is seriously pursued vis-à-vis those involved in the procedure.

To live up to their democratic claim, the STERN protagonists tried to give the process as broad a basis as possible. The political institutions on the island and the local opinion-forming initiatives and associations were directly involved in the process. With them, there were labour-intensive workshop phases lasting several weeks – in which the basis for informed decision-making was developed in smaller groups – alternating with two-day forums in which the participants made joint decisions based on the principles developed with the aim of gradually reaching a consensus. The general public was also involved through joint press releases and regular citizens' evenings. It was an intensive process that extended over eight months (from May to December 1996).

Rationalisation as a guiding principle

On 13 May 1996, Hardt-Waltherr Hämer opened the proceedings by appealing to the 'discursive capacity of our democratic society' in dealing with a 'legacy of two dictatorships'.¹⁰ He quoted the acting director of the Institut für Sozialforschung (Frankfurt Institute for Social Research), Helmut Dubiel: 'The quality of public debate is the oxygen of democracy.'¹¹ A quotation he used as a motto for the discursive process and recalled again and again in front of the discussion forums during the following months.

Regarding Dubiel, Hämer required the participants to uphold and follow three principles, which were to be expected of every 'responsible active citizen who makes public statements' to: (1) 'take note of all information that can be obtained within a reasonable time in the matter in dispute'; (2) 'examine all opposing motives and arguments in the light of impartial principles and to calculate the consequential effects of his proposal on those affected'; and (3) 'base all his public statements not on short-term opportunity, but on principles to which he can still commit himself tomorrow'.¹² The first meeting started with these introductory words.

Negotiating the future

During the process, it quickly became apparent that the various groups on Rügen were by no means pulling in the same direction, but rather how dissonant and heterogeneous the community on the island was. While the different groups were largely united against the federal government's plans to sell the land, conflicts and power imbalances were now coming to the surface.

First, the political representatives of the town of Binz – to whose municipal area Prora belongs – were given the opportunity to present their claims. They aimed to make pragmatic use of the building complex. It quickly became clear that, regardless of its history, Prora was seen above all as a useful resource for the politicians who were currently setting the tone in Binz. The mayor of Binz, for example, was pushing for a part of the building complex to be repurposed to provide accommodation for people who were being forced out of Binz.¹³ Hämer saw the needs presented by the mayor as a good base on which to develop a mixed-use scenario as one possible way to reach a consensus.

But the ideas of the municipality of Binz had their dark underbelly. Homelessness in Binz was a process that was actively driven by the municipality itself. The mayor openly declared to the press, 'We have to accommodate 400 people looking for accommodation because the first rows by the sea have to be cleared,' justifying it with 'The silver spoons that we have brought into the German Reunification must be used.' Binz should again become the 'five-star seaside resort' it was before communist times. Hotels that had been converted into living spaces were to be put back into operation. To realise this, superfluous residents must move to Prora. But Prora offered even more potential. For Binz to be a 'five-star seaside resort', a 'two-star seaside resort' was also needed as a place for not-so-well-off tourist groups. Prora was presented by the mayor as ideally suited for this.¹⁴

However, Binz's ideas met with fierce opposition from other island communities. The tourist uses envisaged by the local politicians of Binz conjured up the spectre of mass tourism for the representatives of the island of Rügen. They continued to see Prora as a threat to the rest of the island and – in the form of a 'two-star seaside resort' – especially for the small guesthouses in the interior of the island. Along the way, Binz's treatment of its own citizens was harshly criticised. The district representatives accused Binz of not doing enough to counter the 'brutal and antisocial displacement process' taking place in their midst.¹⁵

As a result, the district politicians positioned themselves in the discursive process with a radical counter-proposal; the majority of the listed buildings should be demolished to banish the dark ghosts of supposedly Strength through Joy style mass tourism.¹⁶ Only two blocks out of five were to be preserved and, together with the ruins, assume a 'monument and memorial function', which were largely unused. A second district councillor, Udo Knapp, justified the plan, 'we can rid ourselves of the Nazi and GDR past in one fell swoop' and linked it to the tangible interests of the local hoteliers. 'It's about giving the middle class that now exists on the island a chance and not a large corporation from outside.'¹⁷

As these examples show, with the initiation of the discursive process, the competing future scenarios of stakeholders quickly became the focus of the negotiations.

Throughout the negotiations, the STERN moderators tried to soften entrenched party positions. While supporting Binz's wish to develop a mixed-use scenario for Prora, Hämer warned that to turn

Prora into 'a ghetto for the ones who did not get their fair share'¹⁸ is not in the long-term interests of Binz to misuse the difficult legacy of Prora as a container into which its problems were shunted. In the process, Hämer, as the leading moderator, repeatedly appealed to Dubiel's principles of taking note of all information, judging it according to impartial principles, keeping an eye on the impact on those affected and thinking in the long term.

In the course of the negotiations, the STERN moderators finally succeeded in getting the parties involved to agree to Hämer's demand for 'the highest possible quality for Binz and Prora'¹⁹ as a common goal. The mayor of Binz then issued a clear rejection of the 'degradation of Prora through inferior uses'.²⁰

The moderators endeavoured to detach the scenarios from the respective actors who first proposed them, so that the participants could view them neutrally. For this purpose, the scenarios previously named after political interest groups were given neutral and factual names to lessen partisanship (for example, the scenario 'District', which is favoured by Rügen District Council and calls for the demolition of a large part of the structure, was renamed 'Partial Demolition and New Construction'). The individual scenarios were then neutrally examined in the course of the procedure and their advantages and disadvantages weighed up.

This careful consideration formed the basis upon which promising approaches can be extracted from different scenarios. In the further course of the process, the promising aspects are then combined into new scenarios, which should offer the possibility of creating a balance of interests and profitable syntheses for all parties involved. In contrast to the former mono-functionality of the site as an 'Aryan' worker's seaside resort or as a military barrack, the guiding principle of a 'colourful mix' of functions emerged.

However, as these conflicts make clear, the competing futures projected onto the site are closely entangled with conflicting historical meanings, which were attached to Prora by different stakeholders. This made it necessary to simultaneously reassess the past and its material remains from a future perspective, so as to bring the future and the past into a new meaningful coexistence.

Reassessing the past

In the public eye and the press, Prora was regularly condemned for its ugliness and monstrosity, as a 'German nightmare made of concrete', a 'gaping wound in the landscape', a 'place of garbage and junk', 'a materialised antithesis of culture' and so on.²¹ It was precisely the heritage activists involved in the process who vehemently defended and wanted to preserve Prora's off-putting appearance. They brought the relevant monument preservation authorities onto their side, who insisted at the beginning of the discursive process on maintaining the deterrent external impression, as it reinforces Prora's character as a memorial with a dark Nazi past. Keeping Prora's architecture in the status of an 'eyesore' is seen here as an important social and educational task to remember the horrors of the Nazi era.²²

The efforts of the monument preservers to freeze the building complex's appearance in the past, as it were, were increasingly blocking the way to the future. It was therefore no wonder that in dealing with the monument preservation authorities, the STERN protagonists tried to find out whether they would accept changes that softened the overall deterrent impression of the site to make it more attractive for new uses. Art and architecture historians were called in by STERN – as external experts – to come to a better understanding of the context of the historical time in which the building was constructed as well as its palimpsest layers. STERN benefitted from the fact that during the discussion it became increasingly clear that the deterrent appearance is not so much the result of a conscious intention on behalf of the builders, but is rather the result of a complex process in which unfinished design intentions, pragmatic further use and natural processes of decay interact. As a result of these discussions, the monument conservators concluded that, in the face of new uses, a trend towards the 'beautification' of the site was justified and probably inevitable. However, it is a question of 'qualified beautification and its controllability'.²³ The focus shifted to 'the viability of the concepts to be developed and the consequences of the concepts for Rügen'²⁴; that is, future scenarios. The aesthetic and moral evaluation of the historical architecture would have to be separated more strongly here. 'Prora was not planned to be ugly',²⁵ despite the sinister function of the building in Nazi propaganda and the architectural gesture of power.

In the discussion, the questions ‘what should be left out, what should be allowed to be shown?’ were subsequently brought to the fore: to what extent does it make sense to ‘push back’ the ‘power gesture [of the National Socialists] towards modernism’ as an aspect more compatible with a new use?²⁶

Finally, STERN had a façade in Prora painted white which showed how a simple gesture can cancel out the deterrent impression of the facility (Figure 2).

Figure 2. A courtyard in Prora: turned from an ‘eyesore’ (on the left) into luxury apartments (on the right)



Difficult heritage as a catalyst for change

After eight months of negotiations, a proposal under the title ‘Prora for Rügen’ crystallised as the process reached its consensus. Due to the economic structure of Rügen, it relied on tourism again. As discussed earlier, STERN representatives were allowed to bring modern tourism back into the discussion without a reflexive fear of a ‘monster of mass tourism’ with the late completion of the Nazi seaside resort. In fact, STERN moderators presented 13 projects that were constructed in the early 1990s in Rügen. They alone created twice as many beds as STERN proposed as a compromise for Prora, and many similar projects were planned in Rügen. This put the spectre of Prora’s incalculable size into perspective. While tourism in Prora would make further use of already sealed buildings and areas, most of these new construction projects were built on greenfield sites and were increasingly destroying untouched nature, the island’s unique quality and most important resource.²⁷

The focus was now on re-evaluating Prora and understanding its potential – which was previously perceived as a mere burden or nightmare from the past – as an opportunity for a better future. For this purpose, the local communities should work together to redirect tourist energies to Prora and to relieve the rest of the island ecologically. The continuing use of Prora should stop the destruction of nature elsewhere on the island by eliminating the need for construction projects there. Prora could thus relieve the burden on nature locally and globally.

Likewise, as the federal government wanted to withdraw, its responsibilities should be passed on to local stakeholders. However, STERN proposed to do it in a more socially responsible way rather than letting it be governed by the principle that might be right. Profit-oriented uses such as hotels and holiday rentals were to contribute to less economically viable uses such as social housing, cultural initiatives and museums for documentation work on site (for example, by co-financing the latter with higher rents for profit-oriented uses). The principle of ‘altruism before egoism’²⁸ should apply via the implementation

of local mechanisms and thus counteract the displacement mechanisms on the island, which were so obvious in the town of Binz.

To maintain the energy released in the process and to give the different groups a common focus beyond the process, STERN proposed that Rügen should present itself as a model region at EXPO 2000 in Hanover through this new approach to a difficult heritage. Rügen should reinvent itself with Prora as an example of sustainable tourism, which now deals with a dark heritage in such a way that it creates socially and ecologically sustainable structures.

The discursive process in Prora was certainly an outstanding example of how large-scale projects that are perceived as a burden can be positively developed in the future. But what can we learn about new dilemmas and conflicts that can emerge in such a process? To what extent did it succeed in 'transforming a project of dictatorship into an example of democracy' as the STERN protagonists had in mind?

Conclusion

As mentioned at the beginning of this article, the participatory process in Prora was an exceptional one. It was a courageous new way to negotiate the decision on how to deal with a significant Nazi legacy in an open-ended process together with the local population.

In its approach, STERN has created a space of opportunity that demonstrates the potential of a transformative and future-oriented approach to difficult heritage. A burden that inhibits development on the island was transformed into a positive and active asset. It became a tool for actively shaping a new and different future. This tool was used to verbalise and manage conflicts that went far beyond the immediate significance of Prora and not only affected an entire region but also built bridges to national and global issues. However, the concrete framework in which the participatory process in Prora took place points to new risks and problems that can accompany such an approach.

As mentioned before, the emphasis on participation also had to do with the state's general withdrawal of responsibility for a difficult building under the conditions of liberal economic policy and far-reaching privatisation. Under the conditions of market-liberal politics, the call for the withdrawal of the state, experts and institutional responsibility can easily serve as a vehicle for delegating responsibility for difficult heritage to market forces and profit-oriented local actors labelled as the local community. This also shifted the emphasis on how to deal with a difficult legacy. Present-day demands, with an economic background driven by local actors, were given much more weight than the documentation and coming to terms with a difficult history through education. This was shown concretely by the fact that the cultural and museum facilities, which occupied the centre of the site, were to be relocated to the less accessible peripheral areas as a result of the process. The relocation led to fierce protests of the monument activists and museum operators active in Prora. Jürgen Rostock, one of the leading Prora experts who was pushing for the establishment of a documentation centre there, 'left hardly a good mark on STERN's work. To remove commercially lucrative parts of Prora would mean privatising profits ... He also complained that it made a consistently anti-cultural impression when attempts were made to push cultural institutions into the last northern corner ... Prora should not be turned into an interchangeable, sterile holiday paradise.'²⁹

In the case of Prora, the participatory process and its re-evaluation of Prora's qualities opened the door to the commercialisation of the former Nazi legacy; a development occurred within the next 20 years that no one expected during the participatory process. The former eyesore became chic – and really expensive. Large segments of the building once planned and used as mass accommodation were transformed bit by bit into luxury apartments and expensive hotels. Ideals such as 'altruism before egoism' and the idea of a functional mix that is as small-scale as possible proved to be difficult to maintain under such conditions. A more detailed examination of the dynamics that have led to the one-sided commercial development of Prora despite the participatory process, and the extent to which original ideals of the participatory process have survived, should be the subject of further research.

Notes

- 1 On the plans and construction process to the Strength through Joy seaside resort, see for example Wilkens, 'Gebaute Utopie'; Spode, 'Fordism'; Baranowski, 'Family vacation'. NB: all quotations in this article are translated from German into English by the author.
- 2 INSULA RUGIA e.V., open letter to the Prime Minister of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, Dr Bernd Seite, 4 June 1994.
- 3 Raymund Karg (Oberfinanzdirektion Rostock), telefax to the building authorities of Binz (Rügen), 18 March 1996.
- 4 Hildegard Kramer (Oberfinanzdirektion Rostock) in Schlusche and Rieckmann, *Protokoll der Auftaktveranstaltung*, 1.
- 5 Böick, 'Zwölf Thesen'.
- 6 In the officialese of the authority responsible for the sale – Oberfinanzdirektion Rostock, acting for the Treuhand – to achieve this goal, 'the aim is to reach a consensus with the responsible local authorities in close consultation with them, the specialist authorities as well as with other institutions or initiatives that are active in forming opinions on Rügen in order to examine the identified alternative uses in terms of their planning, economic and political feasibility and to arrive at a preferred alternative. In addition, great importance is attached to including the ideas of possible investors.' Raymund Karg (Oberfinanzdirektion Rostock), telefax to the building authorities of Binz (Rügen), 18 March 1996.
- 7 On the concept of shock therapy with regard to the former GDR, see Ther, 'Der Preis der Einheit'.
- 8 Hartung, 'Der Koloss von Rügen'.
- 9 Hartung, 'Der Koloss von Rügen'.
- 10 Hämer, 'Vortrag Prof. H.-W. Hämer'.
- 11 Hämer, 'Vortrag Prof. H.-W. Hämer'.
- 12 Hämer, 'Vortrag Prof. H.-W. Hämer'.
- 13 Schlusche and Rieckmann, *Protokoll der einleitenden Sitzung*, 1.
- 14 Hartung, 'Der Koloss von Rügen'.
- 15 Rolf Kammann (Bauamt Landkreis Rügen) in Schlusche and Rieckmann, *Protokoll des 1, 7*.
- 16 Karin Timmel (Landrätin Kreis Rügen) in Schlusche and Rieckmann, *Protokoll des 1, 1*.
- 17 Hartung, 'Der Koloss von Rügen'.
- 18 Hardt-Waltherr Hämer in Schlusche and Rieckmann, *Protokoll des 1, 9*.
- 19 Schlusche and Rieckmann, *Protokoll des 2, 3*.
- 20 Schlusche and Rieckmann, *Protokoll des 2, 3*.
- 21 The environmental activist Hannes Knapp, then District Administrator of Rügen, rants against Prora in an impressive cross-section of this namecalling in *Werkgruppe Prora et al., 1. Prora-Symposium. 6. und 7. Mai 1994 im Kinosaal Prora/Rügen. Texte Presse Briefe*, 59.
- 22 About the sometimes 'indispensable' social function of 'eyesores', meaning buildings which are perceived as ugly and problematic, see the excellent book by van der Hoorn, *Indispensable Eyesores*.
- 23 Wilkens and Zander, *Bericht*, 3.
- 24 Wilkens, *Protokoll*, 10.
- 25 Wilkens, *Bericht*, 3.
- 26 Wilkens, *Protokoll*, 6–7.
- 27 Erhardt Pfothenauer (STERN), in Schlusche and Rieckmann, *Protokoll des 3, 2*.
- 28 Schlusche and Rieckmann, *Protokoll des 3, 7*.
- 29 Luczak, 'Schiffswracks und Ostsee-Uni'.

Funding

This article was made possible by the generous support of the DFG Research Training Group 1913 'Cultural and Technological Significance of Historic Buildings' and the Graduate Research School at BTU.

Declarations and conflicts of interest

Research ethics statement

Not applicable to this article.

Consent for publication statement

Not applicable to this article.

Conflicts of interest statement

The author declares no conflicts of interest with this work. All efforts to sufficiently anonymise the author during peer review of this article have been made. The author declares no further conflicts with this article.

References

- Baranowski, Shelley. 'A family vacation for workers: The strength through joy resorts at Prora', *German History* 25 (2007): 539–59. [CrossRef]
- Böick, Marcus. 'Zwölf Thesen zu Wirtschaftsombau und Treuhandanstalt: Die Rolle(n) und Folgen des Wirkens der Treuhand nach dem Ende der DDR' [Twelve theses on economic restructuring and the Treuhandanstalt: The role(s) and consequences of the work of the Treuhand after the end of the GDR]. In *Deutschland Archiv*, 22 September 2022. Accessed 20 June 2024. <https://www.bpb.de/513279>.
- Hämer, Hardt-Waltherr, 'Vortrag Prof. H.-W. Hämer zum Auftakt des diskursiven Verfahrens für den weiteren Umgang mit Prora am 13. Mai 1996' [Lecture by Prof. H.-W. Hämer at the start of the discursive process for the further handling of Prora on 13 May 1996], Attachment 7, in *Protokoll der Auftaktveranstaltung am 13.5.1996 zum diskursiven Verfahren der STERN GmbH zur Liegenschaft Prora* [Minutes of the opening event on 13 May 1996 on the discursive process of STERN GmbH regarding the Prora property], Günther Schlusche and Karin Rieckmann, 15 May 1996.
- Hartung, Klaus. 'Der Koloss von Rügen' [The Colossus of Rügen], *Die Zeit*, 4 October 1996.
- Luczak, Thomas. 'Schiffswracks und Ostsee-Uni nach Prora? Studie der Stern GmbH scharf kritisiert' [Shipwrecks and Baltic Sea University to Prora? Study by Stern GmbH sharply criticised], *Rügener Zeitung*, 24 March 1997.
- Schlusche, Günther and Karin Rieckmann. *Protokoll der Auftaktveranstaltung am 13.5.1996 zum diskursiven Verfahren der STERN GmbH zur Liegenschaft Prora* [Minutes of the opening event on 13 May 1996 on the discursive process of GmbH regarding the Prora property], 1996.
- Schlusche, Günther and Karin Rieckmann. *Protokoll der einleitenden Sitzung der Werkstattphase 1 am 14.5.1996 zum diskursiven Verfahren der STERN GmbH für die Liegenschaft Prora* [Minutes of the introductory meeting of workshop phase 1 on 14 May 1996 on the discursive process of STERN GmbH for the Prora property], 30 May 1996.
- Schlusche, Günther and Karin Rieckmann. *Protokoll des 1. Prora-Forums am 17. und 18.6.1996 zum diskursiven Verfahren der STERN GmbH für die Liegenschaft Prora* [Minutes of the 1st Prora Forum on 17 and 18 June 1996 on the discursive process of STERN GmbH for the Prora property], June 1996.
- Schlusche, Günther and Karin Rieckmann. *Protokoll des 2. Prora-Forums am 2. und 3.9.1996 zum diskursiven Verfahren der STERN GmbH für die Liegenschaft Prora* [Minutes of the 2st Prora Forum on 2 and 3 September 1996 on the discursive process of STERN GmbH for the Prora property], 20 September 1996.
- Schlusche, Günther and Karin Rieckmann, *Protokoll des 3. Prora-Forums am 4. und 5.11.1996 zum diskursiven Verfahren der STERN GmbH für die Liegenschaft Prora* [Minutes of the 3st Prora Forum on 4 and 5 November 1996 on the discursive process of STERN GmbH for the Prora property], November 1996.
- Spode, Hasso. 'Fordism, mass tourism and the Third Reich: The "Strength through Joy" seaside resorts as an index fossil'. *Journal of Social History* 38 (2004), 127–55. [CrossRef]
- Ther, Philipp. 'Der Preis der Einheit: Die deutsche Schocktherapie im ostmitteleuropäischen Vergleich' [The price of unity: German shock therapy in comparison with Central and Eastern Europe]. In *Deutschland Archiv*, 2 March 2020. Accessed 20 June 2024. <https://www.bpb.de/305972>.
- Van der Hoorn, Melanie. *Indispensable Eyesores: An anthropology of undesired buildings*. New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2009.

- Wilkens, Rainer. 'Gebaute Utopie der Macht. Das Beispiel Prora' [Built utopia of power: The example of Prora]. In *Moderne Architektur in Deutschland 1900 bis 2000*, bd. 3: *Macht und Monument* [Modern architecture in Germany from 1900 to 2000, vol. 3: Power and monument], edited by Romana Schneider and Wilfried Wang, 117–29: Ostfildern-Ruit: Verlag Gerd Hatje, 1998.
- Wilkens, Rainer. Protokoll des 3. Denkmalpflegegespräches zu Prora am 22.09.96 von 17:40 bis 22:40h [Minutes of the 3rd monument conservation meeting on Prora on 22 September 1996 from 5:40 p.m. to 10:40 p.m.], 22 September 1996.
- Wilkens, Rainer and Jörg Zander. *Bericht zum 3. Denkmalpflegegespräch Prora im Rahmen des diskursiven Verfahrens PRO und contRA* [Report on the 3rd Prora Monument Preservation Discussion as part of the discursive process PRO and contRA], December 1996.