World Heritage Scanned Nomination

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SITE NAME: **Town Hall and Roland on the Marketplace of Bremen**

DATE OF INSCRIPTION: 7th July 2004

STATE PARTY: GERMANY

CRITERIA: C (iii) (iv) (vi)

DECISION OF THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE:
Excerpt from the Report of the 28th Session of the World Heritage Committee

Criterion (iii): the Bremen Town Hall and Roland bear an exceptional testimony to the civic autonomy and sovereignty, as these developed in the Holy Roman Empire.

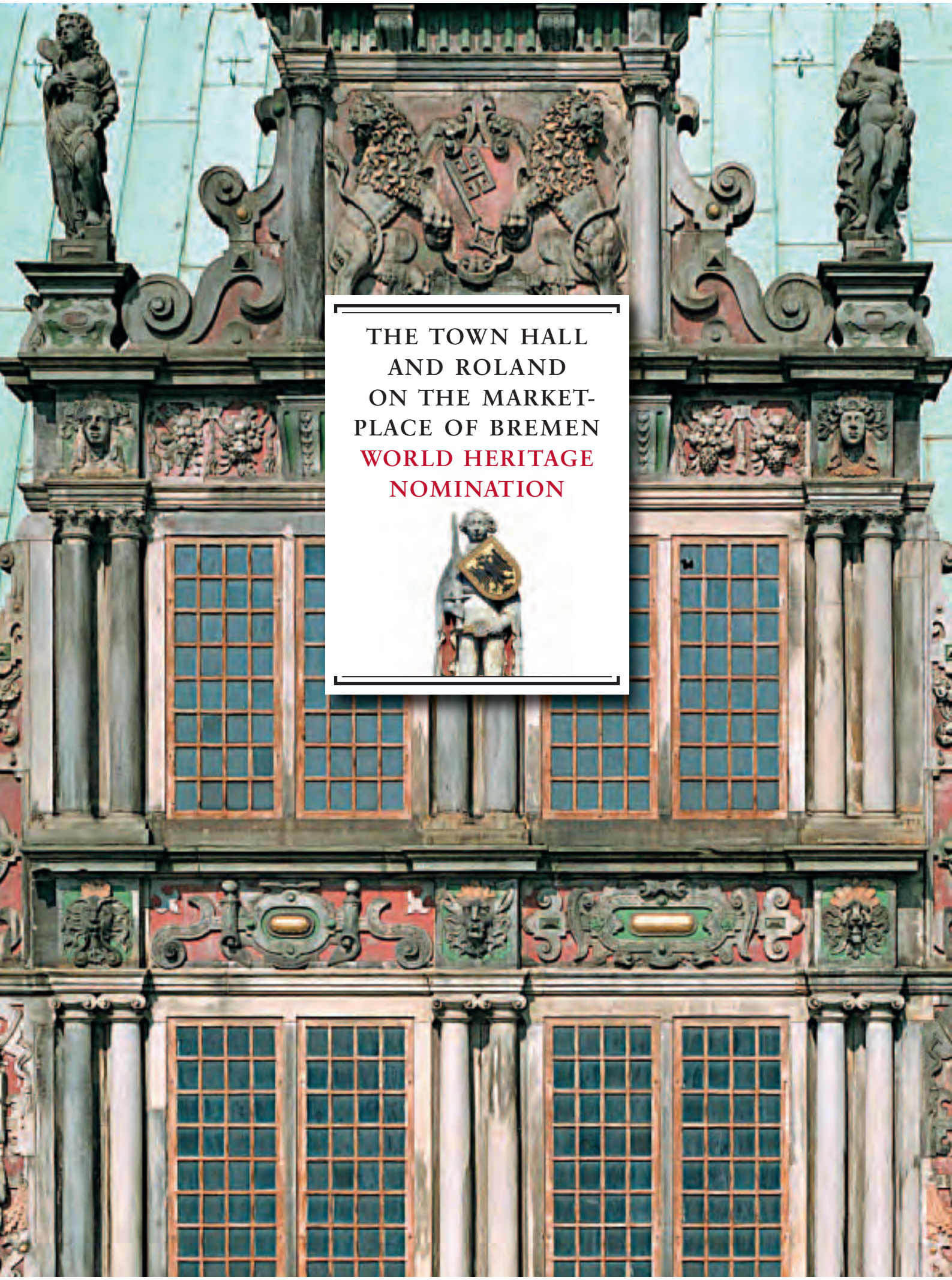
Criterion (iv): The Bremen Town Hall and Roland are an outstanding ensemble representing civic autonomy and market freedom. The town hall represents the medieval Saalgeschossbau-type of hall construction, as well as being an outstanding example of the so-called Weser Renaissance in Northern Germany. The Bremen Roland is the most representative and one of the oldest of Roland statues erected as a symbol of market rights and freedom.

Criterion (vi): the ensemble of the town hall and Roland of Bremen with its symbolism is directly associated with the development of the ideas of civic autonomy and market freedom in the Holy Roman Empire. The Bremen Roland is referred to a historical figure, paladin of Charlemagne, who became the source for the French 'chanson de geste' and other medieval and Renaissance epic poetry.

BRIEF DESCRIPTIONS
The Town Hall and Roland on the marketplace of Bremen in northwest Germany are outstanding representations of the civic and trading rights as they developed in the Holy Roman Empire in Europe. The old town hall was built as in the Gothic style in the early 15thcentury, after Bremen joined the Hanseatic League. The building was renovated in the so-called Weser Renaissance style in the early 17th century. A new town hall was built next to the old one in the early 20th century as part of an ensemble that survived the bombarding during the Second World War. The statue is stands 5.5m tall and dates back to 1404.

1.b State, Province or Region: City of Bremen

1.d Exact location: N53 04 33.5 E8 48 26.9



THE TOWN HALL AND ROLAND ON THE MARKET-PLACE OF BREMEN

WORLD HERITAGE NOMINATION

The central architectural ensemble of the City of Bremen derives its uniqueness from the fact that,

in a manner unequalled in the world, it consists of preserved buildings, sculptures and squares representing

the history of the Free City-Republic of Bremen from the ninth century to the present. No comparable

free city-republic still existing today possesses such well-preserved structural testimonies to the various,

often conflicting societal forces that led to its emergence.

The Town Hall and Roland
on the Marketplace of Bremen:
Nomination for Inscription on the
UNESCO World Heritage List
Bremen, December 2001

THE TOWN HALL AND ROLAND ON THE MARKET-PLACE OF BREMEN

WORLD HERITAGE NOMINATION

Foreword

With this book, the city of Bremen is nominating its town hall and Roland for inclusion on the World Heritage List of the UNESCO.

As the burgomaster and president of the senate of Bremen – and current master of the house – it honours me and gives me great pleasure to represent and support this nomination.

For the citizens of Bremen, the town hall has always been more than a cultural monument, and more than the seat of the Bremen Land government. It has been the city's centre and heart of civil commitment; it has been a place of encounter in the midst of a unique urban architectural setting. For some six hundred years, the town hall of Bremen has functioned as a political centre, but also – and just as importantly – as a communal place of assembly and a municipal festival hall. In the course of these many centuries, it has always been held in high honour and lovingly cared for; every generation has regarded the building's presence and significance as a challenge gladly faced. As a result, the town hall has come down to us in its original form, bearing direct witness to our common history. We will continue to face this challenge in the future, and do so with pleasure. Historically and spatially, the town hall and Roland are located in the direct vicinity of several superb architectural monuments to the ecclesiastical, economic and political history of our old Hanse town. Together, these edifices testify to the republican values of our city-republic: freedom, civic consciousness, independence and a sense of responsibility. This republican spirit is of fundamental importance not only for Bremen but, naturally, for the history of countless other cities and lands, even if in other places its historical evidence is not as magnificent and well-preserved as in Bremen.

I am convinced that the town hall and Roland of Bremen have earned their place in the common cultural heritage of mankind. They must be cared for and preserved not only for Bremen, but now, under the protection of international agreements, for the future generations of the world. The Senate and Parliament of Bremen would therefore like to have the town hall and Roland of Bremen included as integral elements of their spatial setting on the World Heritage List of the UNESCO.

The nomination at hand is at the service of this desire, and the Senate and Parliament have done everything in their power to support it. This book is the common effort of all Bremen institutions concerned with the maintenance and preservation of historical heritage. I wish the book – and the nomination it contains – great success before the committees of ICOMOS and UNESCO.

Dr. Henning Scherf
Burgomaster and President of the Senate of the
Free Hanse City of Bremen

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Inscription of 1950

0a Brief justification

For the Free Hanse City of Bremen, the path towards independence began over eight hundred years ago. Today, as one of the sixteen Federal Lands of the Federal Republic of Germany, it is the oldest city-republic of Europe to have preserved its independence. In no comparable city has the medieval code of law – a body combining classical Greek and Roman structures of democratic self-government with those of early medieval France – become a fixed component of European and extra-European political history to such a degree.

The marketplace of Bremen, with the town hall and Roland, form the centre of this polis founded on a fusion of republican and communal elements. The two monuments are exemplary expressions of the history of the city, referred to by Voltaire during the period of the French Enlightenment as "the community of free citizens." Voltaire considered Bremen the most important model of a democratic body politic. As in an ideal European *civitas* come to life, the town hall and Roland are surrounded by the sacred medieval structures of the Dom and the council church Unser Lieben Frauen, the Renaissance guild house of the merchants and the 1950s house of the Bremen parliament.

Bremen's involvement in European and overseas trade always crystallised on the marketplace. The Hanse period and the emigration era of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries represent two highlights of the city's maritime history. The Hanse cog of 1380, built in the immediate vicinity of the marketplace and found hundreds of years later in a state of nearly perfect preservation, and the organisation of the emigration of seven million persons to the United States of America are achievements testifying to the outstanding significance of the city of Bremen.

The uniqueness of this urban ensemble – which is as outstanding from a political as from an architectural point of view – lies in the continuity of its utilisation. The Dom is still the religious centre of the city, the guild house of the merchants is today the chamber of commerce in which all of the city's larger enterprises are conjoined, the town hall is the seat of the senate – the executive branch of government – while the democratically elected legislative convenes in the Haus der Bürgerschaft. The judiciary, having been housed in the town hall for many centuries, is now located only a hundred metres away from the historic marketplace.

On the marketplace of Bremen, the mighty driving forces of the will to maintain political autonomy can be traced through many centuries down to very recent times, and now directly experienced. The past and present of an idea of freedom many millennia old are manifested here, and this embodiment – which is today as full of life and architecturally comprehensible as ever – would be an appropriate addition to the UNESCO World Heritage List.

Throughout the centuries of its existence, the town hall has served as a place of representation and assembly, an administrative centre and a seat of government. Its sculptural decoration, its interior fixtures and furnishings and the Roland unite to form an exemplary expression of the political programme of a self-confident city.

Yet the town hall and Roland stand not only for Bremen's history. They embody at the same time the dynamic currents of urban development that made themselves felt in many other European countries as well: a spirited and fruitful sense of self-assurance based upon communal and federal principles.

Moreover, the two artistically outstanding monuments here nominated are members of a unique urban-architectural ensemble consisting of significant buildings and squares,

- the twelve-hundred-year-old Dom, which originated as a mission church and later became a major centre of ecclesiastical power and sovereignty as the cathedral seat of the archbishop,
- the council church Unser Lieben Frauen of the High Middle Ages, one of Germany's most important hall churches,
- the Renaissance structure "Schütting," seat of the representation of the merchants' interests,
- the modern parliament building Haus der Bürgerschaft, and
- the privately owned residential and commercial buildings lining the venerable medieval squares: Markt, Domshof, Domsheide and Unser Lieben Frauen Kirchhof.

These works of architecture served and serve a wide spectrum of ecclesiastical, political, commercial and private claims to use. They nevertheless originated in a harmonic symbiosis which is unique in its continuing existence as an original constellation.

The dominant and central role within this constellation is to be ascribed to the town hall and the Roland. As a monumental structure of the Late Gothic period, the town hall of Bremen unified all of the ideas developed for the town hall as an architectural type. Erected from the ground up in 1405 – a year representing a climax in the emergence of civic power –, the authentically preserved building was so generously laid out that, even after many centuries, it continued to satisfy the spatial demands placed upon it. Later generations merely refined it.

The town hall and Roland embody Bremen's identity; they belong to the city's central and intangible heritage. Their careful and consistent preservation over centuries is an expression of responsibility, public spirit and civic pride. As communal and republican symbols of independence they also stand for values of superordinate significance, which have a strong effect even upon outsiders. They emanate a certain fascination further enhanced by the spatiality of the urban ensemble; they cast a spell not easily evaded. The historical significance of the town hall and its surroundings is magnified by the fact that, to this very day, it has remained the seat of government of an independent city which forms an autonomous polis.

The town hall and Roland stand for the history of a self-confident city-republic. They belong to the cultural heritage of mankind not only by virtue of their rank as monuments but – above all – because of the values they manifest: the values of democracy, freedom of religion and freedom of political and economic self-determination.

This nomination for the inscription of the town hall and Roland on the UNESCO World Heritage List expresses the deeply felt desire of the senate and parliament of Bremen to have these unique cultural monuments placed under the protection of international agreements.

1 __ *Identification of the Property*

1a __ *Country*

Federal Republic of Germany

1b __ *Federal Land*

Bremen

1c __ *Name of property*

The town hall and Roland on the marketplace of Bremen

1d __ *Location and geographical co-ordinates*

The Free Hanse City of Bremen is a two-city-state. The country's smallest federal Land, it is located in the north-west of the Federal Republic of Germany. Both cities, Bremen and Bremerhaven, are located on the Weser River, which flows into the Deutsche Bucht. The statue of Roland is the geographical centre of the city of Bremen.
Co-ordinates: northern latitude 53°05', eastern longitude: 8°49'

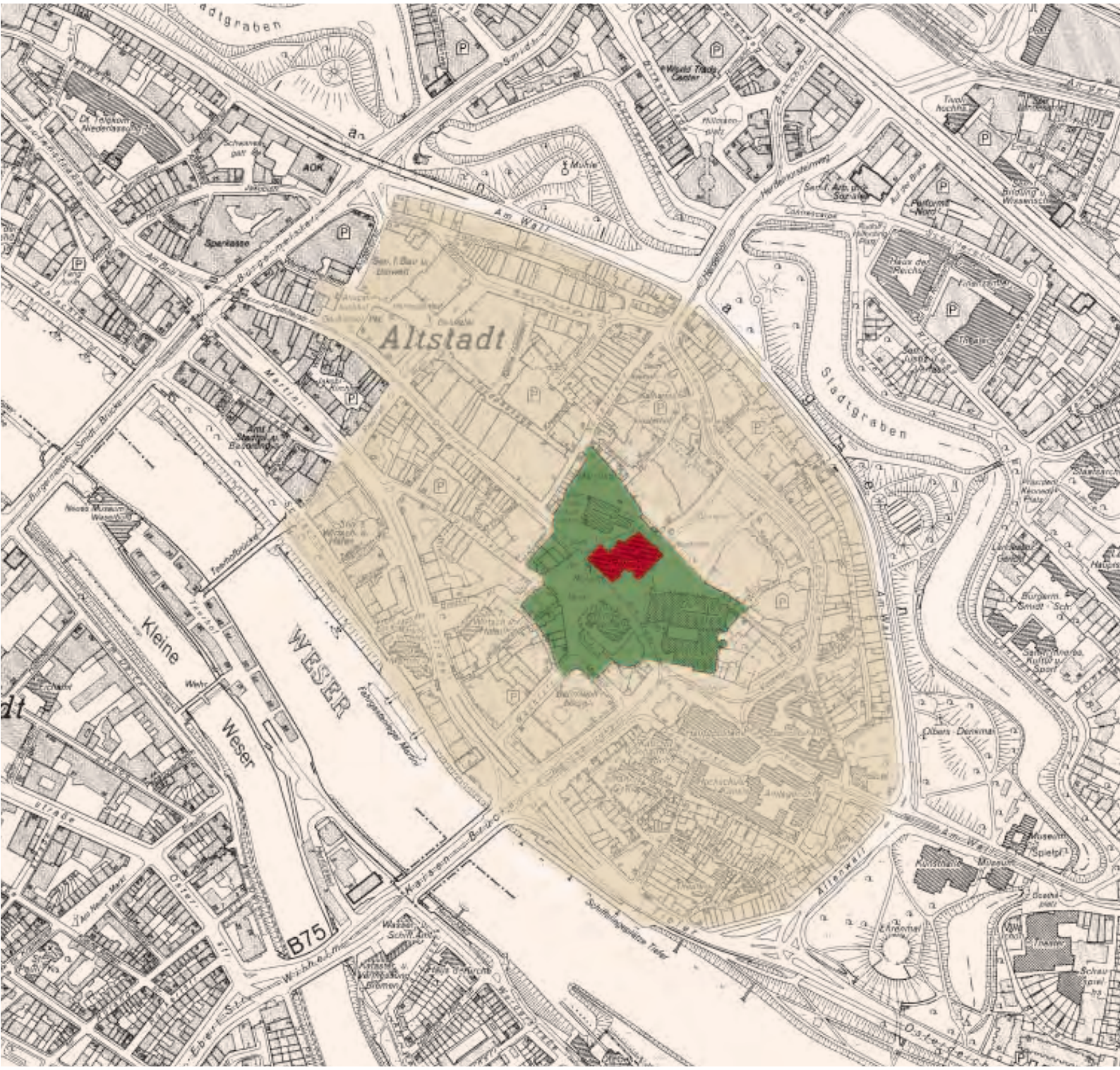
1e __ *Maps showing the boundaries of the area proposed for inscription and the inner and outer buffer zones*

Map 1: The federal Land of Bremen with an orientation map showing the location of the Federal Republic of Germany in Northern Europe
Map 2: Property proposed for inscription with inner and outer buffer zones
Map 3: Property proposed for inscription with inner buffer zone

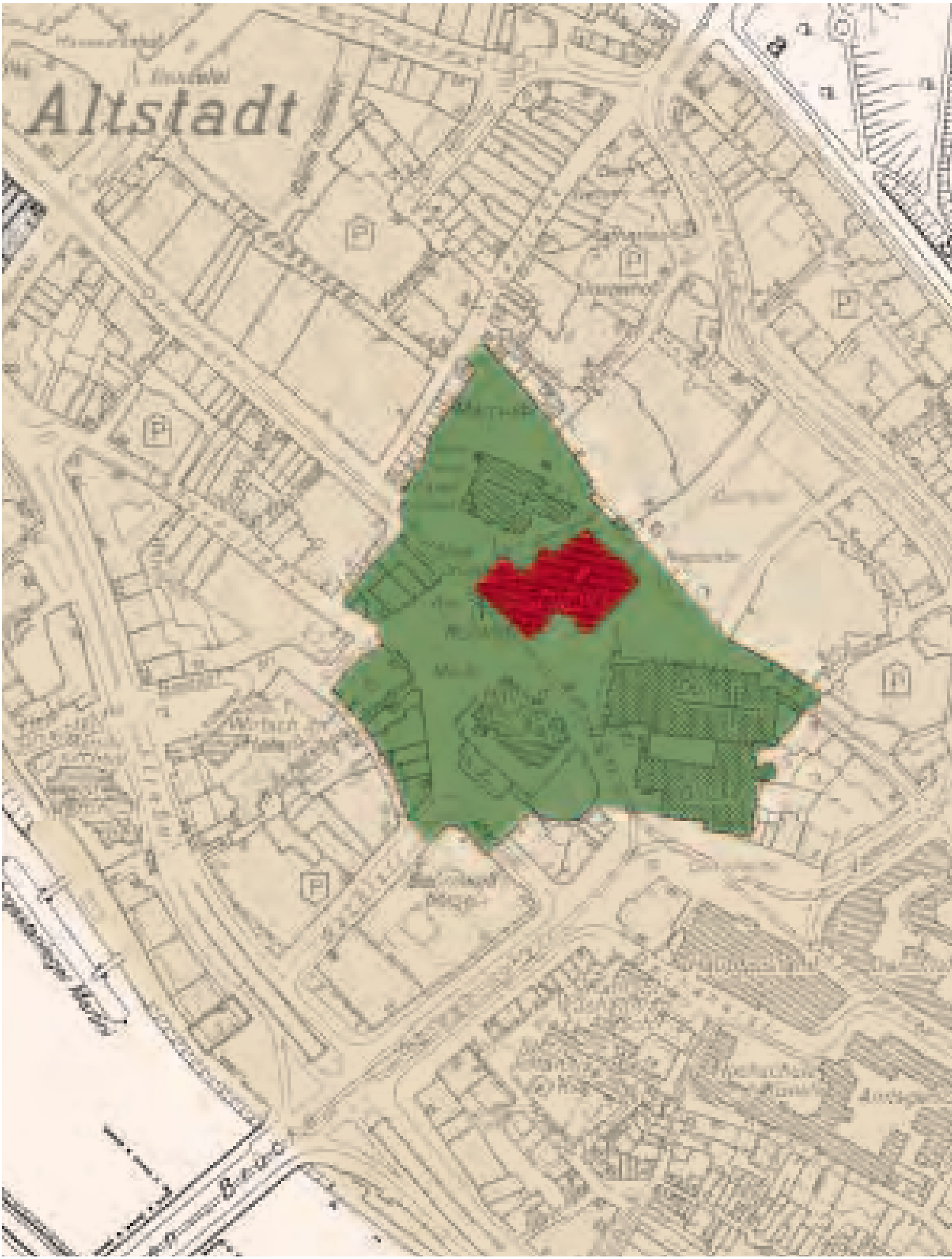
1f __ *Area of the property proposed for inscription and the inner and outer buffer zones in hectares*

property proposed for inscription: 0,287 ha
inner buffer zone: 36,295 ha
outer buffer zone: 375,694 ha
The inner buffer zone comprises buildings which enjoy official protection as historical monuments and ensemble elements within the direct vicinity of the town hall and the Roland.
The outer buffer zone corresponds to the area of Bremen's old town and city centre.

Map 1: The federal land of Bremen with an orientation map showing the location of the Federal Republic of Germany in Northern Europe



Map 2: Property proposed for inscription with inner and outer buffer zones



Map 3: Property proposed for inscription with inner buffer zone

View of the old town showing its pear-shaped outline

View of the marketplace, Unser Lieben Frauen Kirchhof and Domshof

Town hall, south facade

2 Justification for the inscription

Town hall, south facade as seen from the marketplace

2a Statement of significance

The town hall of Bremen is a building still consisting primarily of its original structural substance. By virtue of this fortunate circumstance, it documents nearly six hundred years of uninterrupted use as a community gathering place, a communal administration centre and the seat of government of an independent Land. Its development from a citadel-like palas (the architectural form of the Late Gothic town hall) to an edifice of strongly representative character (lent to it by the Late Renaissance facade), then to the seat of government of an independent part of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation and, finally, to that of a modern city-state makes this building unique and incomparable. In an exemplary manner, it represents a communal political programme which has adhered to the same principle for over seven hundred years: that of the attainment and preservation of independence. Loyalty to this principle was achieved in accordance with the political-philosophical currents and practical requirements of each respective era.

When Bremen undertook to erect the Roland and the town hall anew in 1404, the city had in effect been independent from regional sovereignty for one hundred years. Its councillors pursued politics that were independent from those of the regional feudal ruler, the archbishop of Bremen, and guided solely by the town's own interests. Thus Bremen looks back upon many centuries of freedom, suspended for only two brief periods: between 1810 and 1813 due to the influence of foreign power, from 1933 to 1945 on account of the abolishment of the federal constitution during the Third Reich. An inscription on the shield of Roland states that the council regarded this freedom as something granted directly by Charlemagne and no later emperor – among the German free imperial cities a unique claim.

Along with the Roland, the town hall symbolically embodies the dynamic forces of urban development that affected many other European and non-European countries as well: It stands for the active self-confidence of communal and federal principles. Yet the independence attained by Bremen in the Late Middle Ages did not dissolve in centralist units, as elsewhere, and was not limited to local significance, but finally succeeded in developing into the form of the federal Land. Furthermore, the town hall and Roland are part of an urban ensemble of squares and buildings, an ensemble consisting of older parts to which they respond, and younger parts which they stimulated. All of the ensemble's parts are of outstanding significance both as individual objects as well as in their entirety and in their interaction with the town hall. The twelve-hundred-year-old St. Petri Dom, the council church Unser Lieben Frauen of the High Middle Ages, its churchyard and the buildings on the Markt – the Renaissance structure of the merchants' association "Schütting," the modern Haus der Bürgerschaft and several privately owned houses – served and still serve today the assertion of a wide range of ecclesiastical, political, commercial and private claims to utilisation. At the same time, they are the fruit of a well-developed and harmonic symbiosis which is unique in its still-existing original constellation.

The construction of the town hall of Bremen for the representative purposes of the communal town government began in 1405. As a sovereign council, this government had taken the

place of an ecclesiastical prince, the archbishop of Bremen. The see of Bremen had originated in the Carolingian-era mission of the eighth and ninth centuries, with which the Christianisation of Scandinavia and the Nordic peoples had its beginnings under Archbishop Ansgar. The mission with which the church of Bremen was entrusted was unique in its internationality, a characteristic already expressed in the medieval designation of the town as the "Rome of the North." From the Early Middle Ages on, Bremen was thus a base for missionary as well as mercantile activities. In the High Middle Ages the operational areas of the Bremen merchants corresponded with the old sphere of interest in the north (Iceland, Norway), while in the Late Middle Ages, the contacts of the Hanse City of Bremen were strongly westward oriented (Netherlands, Flanders). Beginning in early modern times, transatlantic trade and European emigration to the U.S. were a primary domain of the city's activities. Along with its surroundings, the town hall of Bremen testifies to these various interrelationships, which cover a span of twelve centuries.

From the time of the Reformation on, the council was able to assert the claim to clerical leadership in addition to political and economical. As a *sumepiscopus* it became the mediator between the citizens and the church, a status also manifested in the structural alterations of the town hall carried out between 1595 and 1612. These measures left the core structure as well as exterior elements of the Gothic building – particularly its figural programme – essentially intact. The biblical figures on the east and west sides were reinterpreted, however, so that ideas of Humanism and the Reformation were now pictorially represented.

Both the exterior of the town hall and the interior of its Upper Hall exhibit a correspondence between the council's claim to and exercise of real power on the one hand and pictorial presentation in its architecture on the other.

The Upper Hall has undergone only two significant rearrangements, both politically inspired: One comprised the alterations and embellishments of 1532, including the wall paintings on the north side – the "Solomonic Judgement" and the depiction of Charlemagne and Bishop Willehad as the founders of the city and bishopric —; the other was the construction of the Güldenkammer (golden chamber) between 1608 and 1616. The pictorial language used in both cases refer to good and just regency and the republican virtues of ancient Rome, on which the council regarded itself to be founded. The Güldenkammer is considered the chief work of the Weser Renaissance, a special form of German Mannerism. It has characterised the hall's appearance since its construction.

The most recent manifestation of political will was the extension of the chronicle in the north-west corner of the hall to include reference to the fate of the Hanse City during the period of National Socialist rule, the destruction it underwent during World War II and its restoration as an independent Land of the Federal Republic of Germany. This chronicle is thus an expression of the hall's continuing significance for the political life of the city.

In former times, the town hall was directly adjacent to the Palatium (archbishop's residential palace) built by Archbishop Giselbert in 1293 and ceded to the Free Hanse City of Bremen by the Electorate of Hanover in 1803. A building facing the Domshof, it was then altered to serve as a Stadthaus (a "new" town hall which existed from 1819 to 1908). In the complex comprising the Old Town Hall and the Stadthaus, the executive, legislative and judiciary branches were united for the last time.

The second and last New Town Hall was built in 1909–1913 according to plans by the Munich architect Gabriel von Seidl (1848–1913). Through his choice of materials, proportions and forms, Seidl achieved with this annex one of the most successful symbioses between a traditional artistic structure and a new building mindful of the dignity of its function. As a kind of *architecture parlante*, the annex announces the significance of important rooms to the outside. It has always commanded respect as an outstanding work of architecture, being left in its original state throughout the coming and going of other styles, even before its official recognition as a cultural monument only thirty years ago.

The town hall of Bremen is a late example of the Northern German / Dutch town hall style. Thus all of the ideas, all of the developments that emerged for this building type in one place or another were united in the work of Bremen. It concludes an architectural typal development that occurred throughout the Hanseatic region, from Flanders to the Baltic provinces, and comprised the image of the church, the palas, the figural programme which describes the status of the town at the close of the Middle Ages and in the era of the Reformation and Humanism, the merchants' hall and the hall of the council and court and, not to be forgotten, the town hall cellar. The building's significance – thus made pictorially comprehensible – is enhanced by its six-hundred-year-old function as the seat of government of an independent city forming an autonomous polis. To the very present, the town hall and Roland are two valuable and highly significant architectural monuments at the centre of a unique ensemble that evolved in the course of centuries and consists of ecclesiastical, corporative, public and private buildings.

The town hall and Roland of Bremen manifest not the power of a great state, but rather the history of a self-confident city-republic. They belong to the cultural heritage of mankind not only by virtue of their rank as monuments but – above all – because of the values they embody: the values of democracy, freedom of religion and freedom of political and economic self-determination.

Schütting

Buildings on the west side of the marketplace

The statue of Roland

Kirche Unser Lieben Frauen

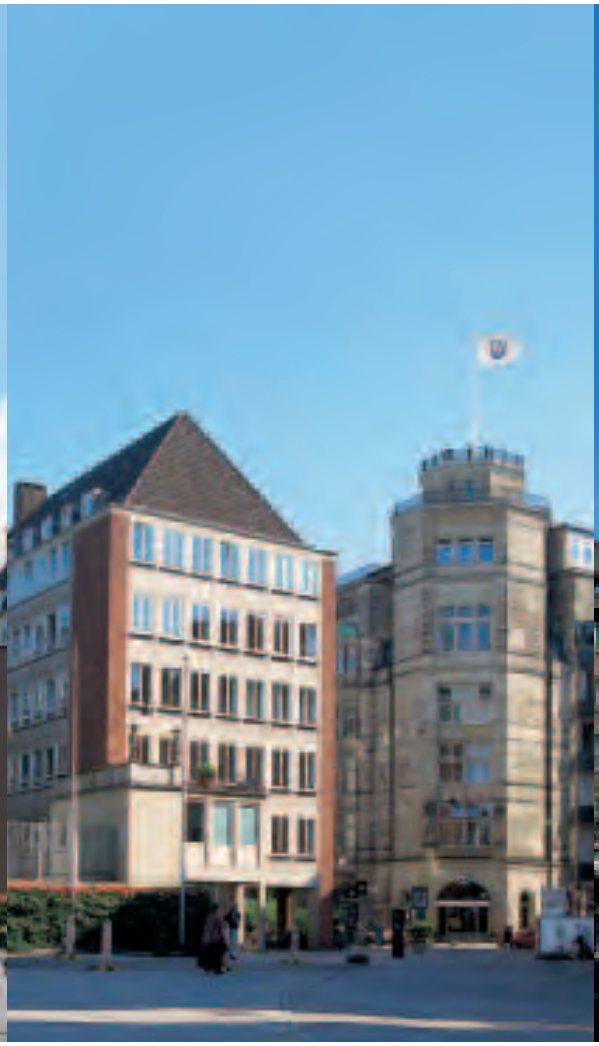
The town hall

The New Town Hall

St. Petri Dom

Haus der Bürgerschaft

View of the Bremen Markt ensemble, 1667,
drawing by Erik Dahlberg (Staatsarchiv Bremen)



Baumwollbörse

Buildings on the south side of the marketplace

The Markt

Bremen has four central squares: Domshof, Domsheide, Liebfrauenkirchhof and Markt. Whereas the archbishops never succeeded in leaving an unmistakable and permanent mark on their territories – Domshof and Domsheide –, the civil society that was gradually supplanting archiepiscopal rule gave the Markt a character which has survived the centuries. Located between the cathedral precincts and the free town, always the possession of the people, the Markt was the place where the citizens met to exchange wares, voice indignation, rally defence, or witness council action.

The council placed the Roland, the symbol of the free city, before its own house, in a location bounded to the north and east by ecclesiastical territories – the first parish church and the cathedral precincts. The council house, in turn, was placed in such a manner that the citizens' representation was precisely between the two spiritual locations, acting as an intermediary. The next to position itself on the Markt was the merchants' association with the Schütting, then the wealthiest merchants with their private dwellings, after them the bourgeoisie with the Börse (stock exchange). The latter originally stood in front of Unser Lieben Frauen, but later moved to the eastern edge of the Markt, where its power-exuding new quarters were on a par with the town hall. That is the location now occupied by the Haus der Bürgerschaft.

If the city always focused on the Markt, the Markt focused on the town hall. The other buildings around the square – the public ones such as the Schütting and the Börse, as well as the private ones – conformed to the standards set by the Rathaus, occasionally with competitive intentions. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the square had attained its acme with regard to form. Following a phase of economic and artistic decline, the council intervened "from above" and dictated a return to old traditions. Within the context of urban renewal measures around 1900, the lot on the north-western corner of the Markt, i.e. between the Markt and the Liebfrauenkirchhof, was to be redesigned. This space was considered worth the organisation of two competitions for its planning, contests which, along with the nearly contemporaneous ones for the New Town Hall, testify to the efforts that were made to make the Markt "Bremen's front parlour" once again. This endeavour also bore good fruits within the context of the square's reconstruction following the destruction of the buildings surrounding it during the last world war.

The present image of this square is determined by the wide main facade of the Town Hall to the north, a group of privately owned, commercially used buildings to the west – the corner house at the southern end of this row displaying a facade transferred here from elsewhere in the city –, the Schütting and several business buildings to the south and the modern Haus der Bürgerschaft to the east. With the exception of the town hall, all of the buildings around the Markt had to be restored or entirely reconstructed after World War II. The Haus der Bürgerschaft is nevertheless the only modern building on the square.

2b ___ *Comparative analysis*

In the cities north of the Alps, the various phases of economic and political development took place with a delay of at least one hundred years in relation to the cities of Italy, and with marked differences between France and England on the one hand and the Netherlands and Germany on the other.

The communal palaces of Italy, represented for example by the ones in Padua and Siena, are incomparably larger. They are structures built by the citizens of Upper Italian towns to demonstrate the power they had obtained early and rapidly – power that would soon disintegrate again just as rapidly. Indeed, the fact that the buildings were able to survive intact is due to precisely this early forfeiture of autonomy on the part of the cities. It is therefore only logical that the entire historical centre of Siena was inscribed on the World Heritage List, and not merely the town hall. In France and England, on the other hand, the development towards freedom of the cities was cut off at an early stage by the rising monarchy and its increasing political centralism. These were circumstances under which no independent architectural style for town halls could develop. In the Netherlands and Germany, the situation was different. In these countries, as in Italy, representative committees emerged from the merchants' estate – bodies of increasing independence and obstinacy – and defended their interests against the local rulers. They had obtained the right to do so either by virtue of their role as cosmopolitan and financially strong advisers, by force, or by purchasing it from local or regional sovereigns, even kings, who were always in financial straits. Initially they assembled in merchants' halls. The only large, covered halls of the Middle Ages, however, were the cloth halls, which in fact often formed the beginnings of communal council houses – Ypern and Thorn being only two of many such examples. The *domus theatralis* of Bremen may well have originated as a cloth hall itself. With the construction of its new town hall, however, Bremen abandons this thread of development, even if the newly erected hall provided space for mercantile activity on its ground floor.

The following aspects present themselves for comparison:

- What is the structural concept to which the comparable town hall adheres?
- To what extent is the town hall a likeness of the respective city?
- Are there indications of contractual ties to the emperor, of religious affiliation?
- What is the degree of authenticity?
- What is the present legal status of the town hall?

The first group of buildings to be discussed in this context are the town halls of Lübeck, Rostock and Stralsund. The origins of these three town halls date back to the thirteenth century and are to be attributed to a type that can be referred to as "merchants' hall town hall." This type developed from a double row of merchants' stalls with a public lane down the middle and a structure uniting the two rows and the courtyard at one end. This genesis is most distinctly preserved in Stralsund, while in Lübeck and Rostock the courtyards were covered – either initially or later – and three-building groups thus formed.

Despite imposing facades that echo motifs of ecclesiastical architecture, there is no evidence that any of these town halls was intended as a likeness of the respective city. On the contrary, they do nothing to deny that they are groups of market buildings. Only in the case of Lübeck do we know of the city's imperial ties through depictions of the emperor and princes painted on copper. This tribute to the empire is also found elsewhere in the city, for example on the main portal in Lübeck's Breite Strasse. In comparison to that of Bremen, the town halls of Lübeck and Stralsund exhibit no direct religious affiliation, even if the references to the respective council churches, St. Marien and St. Nikolai, are clearly visible.

All three town halls have undergone multiple, in some cases large-scale alterations and restorations reducing their original medieval structural substance. Particularly the measures undertaken in the late nineteenth century have led in all three instances to difficulties in determining the history of the buildings' development. They presently all serve only as municipal town halls. The town hall of Bremen was never subjected to such major intervention in its original structural substance, and the expansion which took place after 1900 is one of the most significant solutions ever found to the problem of expanding a venerable old building with new construction.

With regard to typological considerations, the town hall of Bremen also presents itself as an ideal specimen. Unlike many other town halls, such as that of Lüneburg, it does not form a conglomerate of rooms added to existing parts as they became necessary, but was made in one casting with the kind of brick used widely in the North and Baltic Sea regions. The effect of the brick was enhanced not only by the generous application of

ashlars but also by the alternation between glazed and unglazed layers. What is more, it occupies the very centre of the city and, due to its Gothic appearance, was a likeness of that city. It was a medieval palas and not a merchants' hall, even if it did contain a hall for mercantile activities. With its figural ornamentation, the town hall of Bremen presented itself as that of a city with a connection to the emperor and the empire. Here it is to be mentioned that, in addition to the "genuine" imperial cities, there were many which acted independently of local or regional rule in practice, although they were not free imperial cities de jure. Examples are Lüneburg and, for a long while, even Cologne, which did not receive this status until 1475. What really counted was whether or not the city was invited to the Imperial Diets, and whether it fulfilled the duties and bore the burdens connected with direct imperial subordination. Bremen considered itself to be free of these burdens because, according to the interpretation of the council, it had been a free city from the very start through privileges granted by Charlemagne. Yet however unmistakably the town hall of Bremen depicted the political status claimed by the city, its form also clearly demonstrated the council's open acknowledgement of the Christian doctrine of salvation as a guide for its actions.

The town hall of Bremen also attains a rank of outstanding significance by virtue of its authenticity. Particularly with regard to its symbolic elements, the Gothic town hall has survived intact from cellar to attic, while the ornament applied to the south facade around 1600 is also authentic to a large extent. Finally, it is to be pointed out that, to the present day, Bremen has continued to uphold its claim to direct imperial ties.

Matters are different with regard to the town halls of Aachen, which may have served the town hall of Bremen as models in connection with the figural programme of the south facade. One of Aachen's town halls was created in the first half of the fourteenth century by altering those parts of Charlemagne's imperial palace which had still been in use until sometime in the thirteenth century. So many parts of the palace were integrated into the Gothic structure that, in the consciousness of the time, the town hall remained permanently linked with Charlemagne's person. The fourteenth-century structure exhibited a crenellation – a reference to the well-fortified city –, delicate corner towers and a platform that served as a "proclamation balcony." Special references to imperial bonds – for example through depictions of the princes elector – were superfluous here, as the building had hosted the coronation banquet for centuries. Precisely these elements of the Aachen town hall were lost, however, and their renewal in the nineteenth century changed them in both form and content.

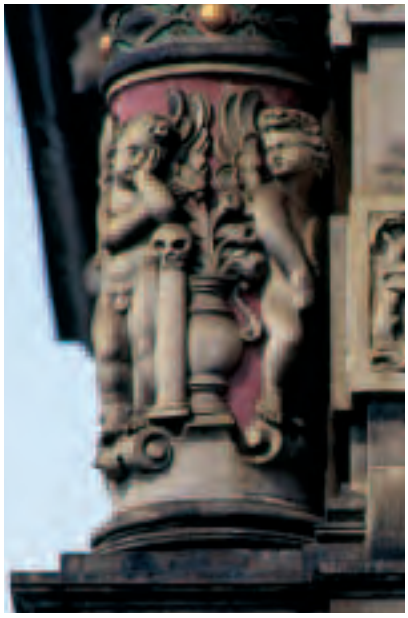
If not here, depictions of the princes elector appeared elsewhere in Aachen: on the facade of the older town hall of 1267, where they were placed beneath the pointed arches of blind arcades. They are older than the corresponding depictions on the town hall of Cologne and presumably the oldest on this theme.

In order to maintain its direct imperial ties, Bremen sought means of demonstrating its close relationship to Charlemagne, one such means quite probably being a clear reference to the town hall of Charlemagne's own city.

In addition to the town hall of Aachen, it is the town hall of Frankfurt – the "Römer" – which perhaps most clearly manifested the idea of imperial freedom guaranteed by the emperor. Through its destruction during World War II and the way in which it was restored, however, the "Römer" almost entirely forfeited its authenticity. As an imperial palace and host to the election and coronation of the German kings, Frankfurt was a place where kings and emperors actually resided. Bremen, on the other hand, cultivated imperial propaganda and emperor cult as the immaterial and intangible heritage of its political and spiritual self-conception.

With regard to artistic standards, the town halls of Ghent and Bruges – with their prominent towers – and that of Brussels are incomparable, and they therefore served as prototypes for historicising town hall construction not only in Germany. The situation in Bremen was different, however, because of the fact that, when the town hall was built, the north tower of the Dom, the one closest to the town hall, had recently been heightened. This project had been pursued by the burgomaster and director of the cathedral works Hinrich Doneldey (born ca. 1335) with the support of the townsfolk. What is more, the north tower of the council church Unser Lieben Frauen was also a work of the citizenry. Thus the town hall was closely flanked by two towers whose construction was attributable in both cases to the town council and the townspeople. And although the cities of Flanders emancipated themselves again and again from their regional sovereigns – the counts of Flanders, the dukes of Brabant and Burgundy and finally the respective governors from the House of Hapsburg – they remained subordinate to regions, even if they were the capitals of those regions. The figural programme on the town hall of Bruges, renewed in the second half of the nineteenth century following destruction during the French revolution, is therefore not a declaration of independence but rather a tribute to the regional sovereigns, the counts of Flanders. In this town hall, the latter received the tribute paid them by the city before granting the city its rights. The same applies to the town hall of Brussels, inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1998 within the framework of the "Grand Place." There as well, the self-presentation of the council and the motif of homage to the dukes of Brabant are of equal significance. Against this background, the much simpler town hall of Bremen, with its absolute loyalty to civic freedom and independence from the local feudal lords – be they clerical or (after 1648) secular – was unique.

The town halls of Stralsund, Lübeck,
Lüneburg, Aachen, Bruges



Old Town Hall, details of central bay

Side wall of the old council stalls
(Focke Museum Bremen)

2c — *Authenticity*

The political and spiritual continuity of the Bremen town hall throughout more than six centuries was rendered possible in great part by the fact that the building was never destroyed or defiled by fire or vandalism. Nor did it ever undergo any alteration – with the exception of the quite deferential one around 1600 – of the kind that superimposed the taste of a different period: Baroque or historicism. In essence, the town hall of Bremen has survived in its authentic form.

What has remained of the Gothic town hall is the exterior masonry up to the eaves, the cellar vault, the entire construction of the Lower Hall and the facade figures standing on consoles under canopies, although it must be pointed out that some of these figures have been replaced by copies for their own protection. Of the works dating from the Reformation era, the two wall paintings of the Upper Hall and some of the additions to the north side have survived, as did all of the Renaissance-period alterations affecting the facade and the Upper Hall.

Whereas the structural substance has remained essentially intact, isolated elements of the interior furnishings have been changed or lost. The town hall possessed a precious stained glass window, for example, of which nothing remains but a few sparse memoranda. Moreover, a large number of windows decorated with coats of arms shattered when the "Braut," the city's powder magazine, blew up on September 22, 1739, having been struck by lightning. One very painful loss is that of the citadel-like set of council stalls originally located beneath the painting of the "Solomonic Judgement" whose pictorial programme identified them as the furnishings of a council and court of justice. The stalls were destroyed when Bremen was incorporated into the French Empire. Four side walls survived, however, and together they form the nucleus of the Medieval Department of the Bremer Landesmuseum für Kunst- und Kulturgeschichte (Focke Museum: Bremen Land museum for the history of art and culture). The ceiling of the Upper Hall also forfeited some of its original quality through restoration work undertaken in 1857 with the means and in the spirit of early historicism. At that time

the painted planks were removed and repainted without regard to the original arrangement of the pictorial fields, with the aim of giving the ceiling a Nazarene look. There were thoughts of restoring the ceiling to its original condition a hundred years later. They were not pursued, however, and the version of 1857 was accepted as a testimony to the period of its origin. Further losses are known but not documented, such as the exchange of the warrior figures on the balustrade before or around 1900; the originals no longer exist.

The conservation and restoration work done on and in the town hall between 1900 and 1970 are better, if not perfectly, documented – here the loss of the construction archive during the war is a particularly painful one, as it contained records that may have gone back as many as four or five decades. It should also be noted that, in former times, not every conservation measure was recorded.

Nevertheless, mention should be made here of the protective measures undertaken in 1928–1930 by government architect Gustav Ulrich, who was to become the city's first curator of architectural monuments after 1945. He noticed that the middle gable, which housed the Güldenkammer, had sunk dangerously. The gable had to be partially removed and newly founded before its reconstruction. Numerous cracked ashlars were replaced in the process. The work was excellently documented by a plan on which the stone replacements were recorded.

The town hall survived the war almost completely undamaged; only one section of the lower balustrade broke off. Important elements of the exterior – for example the figures on the main facade – and the interior were protected or, as in the case of the Güldenkammer, stored elsewhere. Fortunately, the latter elements were returned in 1945 and immediately reinstalled. In the 1960s, the eight figures on the main facade and the four on the west were replaced by copies, the originals being entrusted to the Bremer Landesmuseum. In the same decade the wall paintings and ceiling of the Upper Hall were restored, the latter to its state of 1860. Further restorations bear the influence of the kind of purification that was characteristic of the 1960s spirit. According to this concept, the crowding of the hall with souvenirs of the past and historicising additions was to be strictly avoided.

The rooms used for representative purposes were successively restored after 1985, the various measures being documented to a large extent. Here it should be pointed out that the New Town Hall and its rooms were not classified as historical monuments until 1975. This part of the town hall had nevertheless always been treated by the respective maintenance authorities with particular care, although it should be taken into account that the New Town Hall is the seat of the Bremen Land government and must therefore fulfil certain functional requirements.

Side wall of the old council stalls
(Focke Museum Bremen)

Overall view of the town hall complex

The rooms and objects to be restored in this most recent phase were: the Upper and Lower Güldenkammer and, to relieve the Lower Güldenkammer functionally, the so-called Wittheitsstube, a small room next to the Upper Hall; in the Upper Hall the ships' models and the Meybach clock of 1737; the festival hall of the New Town Hall, including the reconstruction of a bronze chandelier presumably given away during the war as scrap, the adjacent Kaminzimmer (fireplace room), the tapestries of the Gobelinzimmer (tapestry room) and various pieces of furniture in the vestibules, halls and corridors.

At the time of the writing of this nomination, a goods lift was installed in the New Town Hall. This measure was carried out in co-ordination with the monument protection authorities in response to the fact that hundreds of events take place in the town hall every year, each requiring specific equipment. The installation of the lift thus directly serves the protection of the rooms and their furnishings. No historically significant rooms or room furnishings are affected by this measure.

The authenticity of the Roland statue must be judged according to other criteria. The figure has always been the historical symbol of Bremen's independence and can thus be regarded one of the city's most sacred goods. It stands, completely unprotected, on the Markt. Because of the design of the canopy – and even in times when the canopy was equipped with protection from the rain – the head has always been strongly exposed to the weather. Thus the monument has continually received special care, the long series of documented major and minor protective and restorative measures beginning in the year 1512. As a result, more of the figure's stone has been replaced than would otherwise have been the case. The original head, badly damaged by water dripping from the canopy and cracked (by frost), was finally replaced by a copy and is now on exhibit in the Bremer Landesmuseum. The statue is nevertheless not to be regarded as a copy in the sense of the NARA Document, for the stones were replaced successively, as needed, in the course of five hundred years.

Quite a positive aspect of Roland's history is that the various work done on it was more regularly and in general more precisely documented than comparable work done on the town hall, already long before the monument protection authorities thought of requiring records of restoration measures. The Staatsarchiv Bremen (Bremen state archive) thus possesses a fascicle devoted exclusively to Roland, containing among other documents the research, assessments and reports carried out by the archivist and Roland expert of Oldenburg, Georg Sello, as well as the reports on the protective and restorative measures carried out in 1938–1939. Extensive records of the 1982 restoration are in the possession of the Landesamt für Denkmalpflege (Land office for monument protection).

In view of the property description below (under 3 a) and the iconological significance of the exterior and interior decorations, the inclusion of the Bremen Town Hall on the World Heritage List is to be based on the following criteria:

— Criterion 3: The town hall of Bremen is an unusual testimony to a culture that is partially still intact, because it recognisably lends expression to the unity of religious, philosophical and secular action in a secular building, and because the continuity of its utilisation – comprising the legislative, executive and judiciary in pre-constitutional times – lives on today in the executive. Criterion 3 also addresses the singular harmony between the town hall – at the core of the ensemble – and the other forces represented by the Dom and the council church Unser Lieben Frauen, the merchants' association with the Schütting, and the legislative branch – formerly incorporated into the town hall and now accommodated by the Haus der Bürgerschaft opposite – as well as the fact that this (not always harmonic) coexistence is still in place today, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, as though it had only just been invented.

New Town Hall, inscription above the entrance

— Criterion 4: The town hall of Bremen is an outstanding example of the "Rathaus" (town hall) as a Central and Western European type due to its exceptional location between the older Dom, the first citizens' church and the free town. Thus positioned, the town hall clearly separates the Markt – which owes its existence to the construction of the town hall – from the older ecclesiastical authorities. This circumstance is to be regarded as a conscious act of civil emancipation of the Middle Ages, further confirmed by the position of the Roland. The structure's spatial hierarchy – leading from the people's hall in the cellar to the merchants' hall on the ground floor and the council and court hall on the upper floor – is a further factor rendering it an outstanding example of the building type so important for the development of European democracy. As is, finally, the artistic form lending expression to the aspects mentioned under Criterion 6 with regard to the core structure of 1404–1410, the alterations of 1600 – including the incorporation of the Güldenkammer into the Upper Hall – and the New Town Hall of 1909–1913 as well as the Roland, which is unique among all surviving Roland statues by virtue of its form, size and the message it conveys.

The alterations of 1600 and the Güldenkammer, both in the style of the Weser Renaissance – a form of Northern German / Dutch Mannerism – form the culmination of this artistic form.

All of these aspects have survived in their authentic form.

— Criterion 6: The iconology of the Bremen Town Hall is based primarily on late medieval and Humanist avowals of faith which serve as the foundation for the system and sense of justice still prevailing today. It furthermore documents the city's and council's claim to being the first free imperial city in the empire. The self-conception of the senate is documented with particular exemplariness by the New Town Hall of 1909–1913, where the letters "SPQB" – Senatus Populusque Bremensis –, occasioned during the era of the German Empire and inscribed on the portal leading into the senate hall, recall the republican roots of this body's constitution. (From 1820 on, the "Rat" [council] was designated as the "Senat" [senate].)

The statue of Roland

West side with the statue of Emperor William, seen from the south side of the Liebfrauenkirche

All views: Old Town Hall, 1907

South side, seen from the Schütting

South side, seen from the stairway of the Börse

North side, seen from the north-east pillar of the Liebfrauenkirche

Cellar, overall view of the main cellar, looking eastward

Cellar, Bacchuskeller, view of the Bacchus barrel

Lower Hall, overall view to the east

Upper Hall, from north-west to south-east

Upper Hall, view of the Güldenkammer wall

Lower Güldenkammer, view to the south-east

3 Description

Old Town Hall, east side

Statues of the prophets

3a Description of property

The Exterior of the Old Town Hall

The town hall of Bremen is being nominated for inclusion on the World Heritage List because it is the most significant building in an ensemble with whose most important buildings it corresponds – and has corresponded throughout the nearly six hundred years of its existence – not only formally but, even more so, with regard to spiritual and political aspects. To a very large degree, the significance of the town hall is founded on spatial interrelationships encompassing these philosophical, spiritual, political – in short, the entire spectrum of societal – factors, and on the interplay between the parts of this unique ensemble. The related buildings are the Dom, the church Unser Lieben Frauen, the Schütting and the Haus der Bürgerschaft. Although they are not being nominated explicitly, these works of architecture form the central framework for the town hall, both historically and currently. They will therefore be touched upon by means of brief accounts (in the boxes) of the most important dates and facts pertaining to them.

The town hall occupies the north side of the Markt in its entire width, and accordingly separates the Dom from the city's first parish church. The Dom: built in the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries as the seat of the archdiocese of Bremen. The church: possibly dating back to the tenth century as a church for visiting non-local merchants, originally under St. Veit patronage but declared council church under the patronage of the Virgin Mary even before the construction of the town hall, probably due in part to its proximity to the preceding town hall, the *domus theatralis*, also called the *domus consularis*. By virtue of its location, the town hall also separated the Markt, as the townspeople's square, from the ecclesiastical squares surrounding both the cathedral (Domshof and Domsheide) and the parish church (the Liebfrauenkirchhof). Yet the grandly expansive town hall not only separates, it also makes a point of its own: Bordered by this building, the Markt is initially dominated by it; the Dom recedes somewhat into the background. And from the perspective of the town's main thoroughfare, Obernstrasse, the town hall pushes itself in front of the Dom, thus to some degree forming a colossal gate before the main church of a diocese which at the time of the town hall's construction comprised a significant portion of Northern Germany: The way to salvation thus led through the house of this city's council.

The large town hall – some 41.5 x 15.8 m – was built from the material most commonly used in Northern Germany and the Netherlands: brick, a plain material, refined here by the alternation between rows of raw and black-glazed bricks. The masonry

Portal

Portal, detail

was further enhanced by a large amount of *Grauwerk*, i.e. processed grey ashlars from the nearby Deister ridge in the Weser Mountains. As far as we know, the archiepiscopal Palatium (which stood on the site of the New Town Hall) was of comparable size but plainer, possessing neither alternation of colour in the brickwork nor such extensive use of ashlar.

The town hall presents itself to the Markt as a two-storeyed building with an arcade that extends along its entire width and a balustrade beneath a high roof. This was clearly a case of the "palas" style – typically used for the representative and residential seat of the regional sovereign – being adopted here by the highest communal authority, the council. The main facade consists of eleven axes, of which the three in the middle are accentuated by their formation as a wide bay with a high gable in the style of the Weser Renaissance: On the Gothic building only the middle axis was emphasised by a platform from which the council read out its proclamations. Eight figures adorn the window piers of the first upper storey: those of the emperor or king and the seven princes elector of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation. All of them stand on consoles and under canopies. With this figural cycle the council was expressing its self-conception as a loyal member of the empire, free from regional authority and subordinate only to the imperial sovereign. Before the alterations of 1600, the eaves were lined with a crenellation, making the town hall even more clearly recognisable as a "likeness of the city."

The two triaxial narrow sides each bear four figures, also placed on consoles and beneath canopies. Those on the west side are identified by inscriptions as Plato, Aristotle, Demosthenes and M. Tullius (Cicero). These assignments are now presumed to date from the period around 1600, for both historical reasons – in the early fifteenth century not enough importance was yet attached to the classical philosophers to merit their presentation in so conspicuous a place – as well as emblematic reasons. The figures originally represented the four prophets Ezekiel, Jeremiah, Isaiah and David, all of whom foresaw the coming of the Redeemer. Accordingly, on the side facing the Dom, Peter (the Dom was dedicated to Mary and Peter), Jonah or Daniel, Job and Moses are depicted. Thus the council declared itself to be a body subject to divine law, for the prophets are the heralds and guardians of justice and thereby the model for every judge. Yet because the prophets also point to the incarnation of God and the Last Judgement, the council was also describing itself as a body under the protection of the New Testament. This reading is

Old Town Hall, statue of Isaiah / Demosthenes and supporting figure

confirmed by the shape of the large portals beneath the biblical figures. Their mouldings exhibit tree trunks with leaves and isolated roses, as well as sections of branches with leaves and escutcheons. In the manner employed here, these depictions refer to Mary, so that the sculptural programme of the narrow sides serves as an avowal of faith to the New Testament with reference to its roots in the Old Testament. Citizens incapable of reading such veiled references in the architecture at least understood that the council was in a position to measure its strength with the grandeur of the churches.

On the left-hand corner of the western facade, the last of four caryatid-like Gothic figures originally supporting small corner towers can be seen. This is the remainder of a battlement that surrounded the building in front of the roof and comprised peel towers at the four corners – a clear indication of the fact that the town hall was conceived of as a symbol of the well-fortified city. This figure – considered by art experts to be the best of the town hall sculptures – is the only one that has survived of a four-part cycle, whose iconographical import can therefore no longer be clearly established. The most likely interpretation is that it represents one of the four documentarily identified master builders – Johan, Henning, Salomon and Kurd.

Who these four master builders were, where they came from, where they had been trained, we do not know. Entries in the book of accounts related to the town hall construction, a record not begun until 1405, suggest that Master Johan was in charge of the overall construction process. Stylistic comparison leads us to assume that the builders were influenced by Westphalian depictive art but were also familiar with works of the Parlers in Bohemia and Southern Germany. The iconographical programme, on the other hand, might be attributed to Johann Hemeling the Younger. Hemeling was born in the mid fourteenth century and died in 1428; from 1382 on he was a member of the council, from 1405 to 1410 a burgomaster. Beginning in 1390 he was also the director of the cathedral works, several significant Dom artworks being made under his supervision. It is also known that, after the death of the chroniclers Gert Rynesberch and Herbord Schene, he continued the chronicle he himself had initiated, interpreting it in the spirit of his political outlook. He was involved in the 1398 revision of the council constitution and probably the person who saw to it that written records were made of the town's most important events and privileges. He can thus well be thought capable of drawing up an architectural plan so clearly aimed at representing the town's free status and the council's faith in God.

The master builder in charge of the alterations of 1595–1612 was Lüder von Bentheim (ca. 1555–1612). Before undertaking the town hall renovations, he had built Bremen's Stadtwaage (communal weigh-house) in 1587 and its Kornhaus (granary) in 1591, as well as reconstructing the exterior of the Gothic town hall of Leiden (Netherlands) beginning in 1585 – a task similar to the one he would carry out in Bremen. He not only supplied the stone – he favoured the hard sandstone from the Obernkirchen quarries – but, along with his workshop, also gave the new Bremen facade its overall form. The participation of other renowned stonemasons in the project is documented. Von Bentheim, however, will not have been the author of the extremely complex figural programme consisting primarily of reliefs. In this matter we are more dependent on suppositions than in the case of the construction of the town hall 190 years earlier. If we assume that the alteration of the originally pointed-arch windows of the south facade into rectangular ones marks the beginning of the measures and, further, that changes of these proportions would have had to be planned well in advance, two men can be considered as candidates for this task: Burgomaster Daniel von Büren (1512–1993) and the theologian he brought to Bremen, Christoph Pezel (1539–1604). Against considerable resistance both in and outside Bremen, they had introduced the city to the Calvinist creed within the framework of a second Reformation, following Bremen's receptiveness to the Lutheran reform from 1524 on. The pictorial development of the new facade and the Güldenkammer not only played a role in helping the town hall reobtain the foremost rank on the Markt following the 1594 "modernisation" of the Schütting, but can also be regarded as the sum of the new faith, whose stronghold Bremen would become.

While the town hall had previously faced in three directions, each with its own figural programme, the Lüder von Bentheim

Old Town Hall, Markt facade
left: Gable above the Güldenkammer,
Güldenkammer bay
right: Small side gable, partial view of the facade with
the statues of the electoral princes and the arcades

alterations gave it a decisive orientation towards the Markt. This was necessary because the council's perpetual contrapposto – the merchant elders – had gotten the better of the town hall with their new Schütting facade. In the 1604 Markt view by Wilhelm Dilich (see p. 92), the Schütting may well have been overemphasised, but the depiction shows what a modest impression the town hall made in contrast to its new vis-à-vis in the consciousness of the times. The alterations were thus to a certain extent an act of self-assertion by the council against a body which, in its eyes, was of clearly second-rate importance. In the four hundred years since these changes, the town hall has incontestably held the topmost rank.

The interventions in the core structure of the Gothic edifice were not as extensive as they first appear: The originally pointed-arch arcade now exhibited Tuscan columns and round arches. Over the spandrels and a Triton frieze is a balustrade of vegetable entrelac and masks, interrupted by the triaxial bay whose front is flush with the arcade. This bay represents the greatest "injury" to the Gothic structure because it took the place of the uniaxial platform and encompasses two storeys in front of the one-storeyed hall construction. The bay extends upward to the roof zone, now surrounded by a roof balustrade instead of the defensive-looking crenellation. Both the middle gable – whose height exceeds the ridge of the roof (also rebuilt around 1600) – and the two accompanying smaller side gables rise up behind this balustrade.

The fashioning of the new architectural elements was carried out under the influence of and according to direct plans by Hans Vredeman de Vries, Hendrik Goltzius, Jacob Floris and other masters of the Dutch Renaissance. The architectural structure is densely covered with sculptural ornamentation: reliefs on the arcade spandrels, friezes, balustrades and the areas of the entablature between the consoles of the cornice, as well as softly bulging scrollwork and "gnarled" forms. A unique characteristic of the form taken by the German Late Renaissance in the Weser region – the so-called Weser Renaissance – is the abundance of allegorical and emblematic depictions whose prototypes are of primarily Dutch origin, as mentioned above: illustrations of virtues and vices, evangelists, the five senses and the artes liberales, classical deities (planets) and heroes as well as the four seasons. These representations join in a moral appeal to the rulers and the people, made in the spirit of a Calvinist form of life and faith and in invocation of Roman-republican civic virtues. The intellectual profundity of the themes addressed by the reliefs and the excellence of their artistic quality raise the town hall of Bremen clearly above all other works of the Weser Renaissance. With regard to ornamentation, this town hall occupies a special position among the contemporary architectural works of Northern Germany and the Netherlands.

The changes carried out by Lüder von Bentheim also spread to the building's sides, which became subsidiary facades. Thus the pointed arches of the side windows were straightened here as well. This measure, however, like the plaster work covering the brick facade, was reversed in 1862.

The north side, on the other hand, underwent an entirely separate development. While the Gothic appearance of the northern exterior can be only vaguely reconstructed, it is known for certain that the Upper Hall was originally reached via a covered stairway here, that in the period of unrest after 1530 the stairway structure was removed, the Upper Hall entrance walled up and its function assumed by the new spiral staircase in the interior. A short time later, in 1545, between the north side and the Palatium, the town hall received its first expansion in the form of a three-storeyed building with a high *welsch* (outlandish) gable to house the town treasury and a room for the Wittheit, as the council was called when it met in its twenty-four-member entirety. Towards the end of the same century, a small chancellery wing was also added on the north, a structure then expanded in the late eighteenth century to be on a plane with the western side of the Gothic town hall.

The Interior of the Old Town Hall

The expansions were the necessary consequence of the increasing – and increasingly complicated – tasks demanded of the council and now only performable with a permanent stock of employees and rooms for specific functions. In 1410, when the newly completed town hall was occupied, things had been simpler. At that time the town hall essentially consisted of three rooms: the cellar for the common folk, the Lower Hall for the merchants and the Upper Hall for the council. In addition to providing access to the Upper Hall, the early northern stairway structure probably also comprised a separate room for the Wittheit; its cellar is all that remains of this structure.

Town hall cellar, main hall

The Town Hall Cellar

The town hall cellar served as a wine cellar from the start and was furnished with the exclusive right to the sale of Rhine wine in Bremen. Within the walls of the core structure it comprises a three-aisled hall, vaulted above cruciform pillars and with eleven axes. On the north side are several side rooms, the cellar rooms of the structure once housing the Upper Hall stairway.

The wine was originally stored in the main cellar barrels – whose pictorial bottoms of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries represent a special element of the cellar's ornamentation – and in the twelve apostle vats of the Apostle Cellar. There was also a small separate section in the north-eastern corner of the large cellar: the "rose" – four barrels containing the four oldest wines. This chamber is the setting of the Phantasien im Bremer Ratskeller by the Swabian writer Wilhelm Hauff (1802–1827), who wrote the work after a visit to Bremen and a night spent drinking there. In 1874 the "rose" was moved to an extension of the Apostle Cellar, and some time later the painter Max Slevogt (1868–1932) decorated the separate back section of the main cellar with frescoes depicting Hauff's "fantasies."

In one part of the old cellar's side rooms are the Senatszimmer (senate room) and the room now referred to as the Kaiserzimmer (emperor's room). Within the framework of renovations carried out in 1875, both rooms were decorated by Bremen's foremost history painter Arthur Fitger (1840–1909).

Fresco by Max Slevogt in the Hauff Cellar (1927)

Apostelkeller

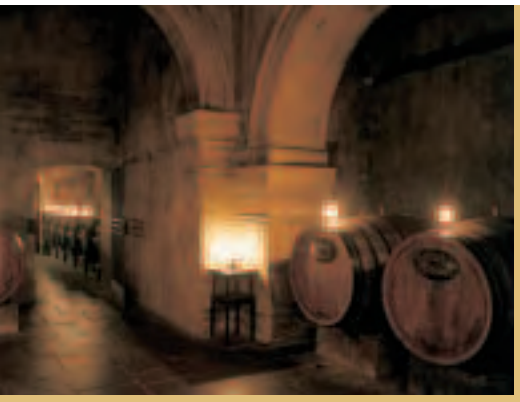
The Bacchus Barrel

Wine barrel of 1773

All other parts of the town hall cellar are more recent than the Gothic structure. The Bacchus Cellar was built in 1620 to serve the Alte Börse (old stock exchange). After the latter burned down in 1888, the cellar, having originally been at street level, was lowered. The side rooms of this cellar, which underwent redecoration in 1927, are of special decorative quality, and at one end of it is the Bacchus Barrel, the trademark of the town hall cellar of Bremen. Naturally, the utility cellars are also of later origin. They extend to the foundation walls of Unser Lieben Frauen and beneath Domshof almost as far as the Dom and the Bremer Bank, and contain the largest treasury of German wines – an "encyclopaedia of German wine" –, of which the oldest still drinkable is a Johannisberg wine of 1727.

Town hall cellar, floor plan

1 Main cellar
2 Apostelkeller
3 Rosekeller
4 Kaiserzimmer
5 Senatszimmer
6 Bacchuskeller, Bacchus Barrel
7 Utility cellar
8 Storage cellar for bottled wine



top: Rosekeller with view into the Apostelkeller
bottom: The Bremen Town Musicians in the Senatszimmer of the town hall cellar

The town hall, its cellar, the Roland and the Markt in the works of famous authors

Johann Karl August Musäus

Between 1782 and 1785, J.K.A. Musäus of Jena published a series of folk tales. One of them, bearing the title "Stumme Liebe" (mute love), takes place in Bremen. A young merchant's son of Bremen, having squandered his inheritance, finds a treasure buried in his father's garden. Now he has the means of marrying the beloved young lady with whom he has never exchanged so much as a word, and becoming a successful merchant. The young couple takes up residence in a house on the marketplace in the direct vicinity of the figure of Roland.

Musäus set the fairy tale "Stumme Liebe" in Bremen because a niece of his, Amalie Kotzebue, had married the Bremen syndic of the merchant elders, Dr. jur. Johann Friedrich Gildemeister. She, then, was the source of the various facts about Bremen which were woven into the story by her uncle.

Amalie Gildemeister had been one of the young women courted by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe in Weimar in the 1770s. In order to impress the lady of his fancy, the infatuated young Goethe wrote the play "Die Geschwister" for her and played a role in its premiere.

Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm

The folk tales collected and recorded by Musäus in the spirit of the Enlightenment were quite popular in Germany at the end of the eighteenth century. They served as the direct prototype for the famous fairy tale collection of the brothers Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, who published the tale of the Bremen Town Musicians for the first time in 1819. It is one of the very few fairy tales to be associated with a particular locality.

In the nineteenth century, the "Bremen Town Musicians" – a story inextricably linked to the city of Bremen – was already the best-known German fairy tale in the world. This fame was brought about not only by the translation of the Grimm collection into French and English but also by illustrations, of which most depicted the motif of the four main characters.

In 1927 one of Germany's most famous painters, Max Slevogt, made a large wall painting of the beastly musicians in the town hall cellar. Moreover, a bronze sculpture of the four has stood in front of the narrow western facade of the town hall since 1953. It was made by one of the most important German sculptors of the twentieth century, Gerhard Marcks, for whom Bremen established a museum in the late 1960s.

Wilhelm Hauff

Wilhelm Hauff had just ended a several-day visit to Bremen, where he had accepted a special invitation to the town hall and its wine cellar, when he wrote his famous "Phantasien aus dem Bremer Ratskeller" in 1826 (published in 1827). The writer spends a night alone in the town hall cellar and makes the personal acquaintance of the city's famous citizens, first and foremost Roland. The conversations wander from contemporary literature to Bremen history, touching again and again on the subject of love.

Hauff, the first to have called the Bremen wine cellar "Ratskeller" – a designation later officially adopted by the senate –, had met the young Josephe von Stolberg during his stay and fallen madly in love with her. Her brusque rejection provided the direct inspiration for the story of the lonely drinker in which a lover's grief, the exquisite Rhine wines of the Bremen Ratskeller and the histories of Bremen and Germany become "fantastically" interwoven.

Hauff had come to Bremen to visit his friend Heinrich, the son of nineteenth-century Bremen's most important burgomaster, Johann Smidt. The latter was himself a writer who frequently invited other men of letters to the city. It was thanks to his skilful negotiations at the Congress of Vienna that Bremen recovered its independence following the Napoleonic occupation. Moreover, Johann Smidt established the first large-scale port of the industrial age on the mouth of the Weser, a project which greatly interested the elderly Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and may have been referred to in the final scenes of his Faust II.

The senator to lead Hauff through the famous Apostelkeller and Rosekeller like a guest of state was Johann Gildemeister, the eldest son of Amalie Gildemeister. During those same days, Amalie and her foster daughter, Josephe von Stolberg, were paying Johann a visit, through which circumstance Hauff became acquainted with his great love.

As the Bremen author Johann-Günther König remarked, two women – intentionally and unintentionally – acquired two "orchestra seats in world literature" for the town hall, the Roland and the Markt of Bremen.

Heinrich Heine

Three months after Hauff's stay in Bremen, another "famous drinker," Heinrich Heine, paid the town a call. Heine, who can be regarded as Germany's most important lyric poet, incorporated his likewise alcohol-soaked night into the second part of his two-part cycle "Die Nordsee" (1825–1826). He may well have been familiar with the manuscript of Wilhelm Hauff's short novel, for both writers had the same publisher. Heine writes from the point of view of a wine-fuddled gentleman who drinks to the health of his bitterest enemies, forgives all inept writers and, like Hauff, sees the Markt and the world in a new light at the break of day: "The glowing son above / Is merely a red, drunken, nose / The nose of the spirit of the age; / And around the red spirit nose / The whole drunken world revolves."

And Hauff, forever spurned by his beloved as a drunkard, leaves Bremen thus: "As I passed the Roland column I greeted the old warrior in a right friendly manner, upon which, to the dismay of my coachman, he nodded goodbye to me with his stone head. To the old town hall and its cellar halls I blew a kiss, then withdrew into the corner of my coach and allowed the night's fantasies to float past my eye."

Peter Weiss

Peter Weiss, the most significant German dramatist of the post-1945 period, spent the first fourteen years of his life in Bremen. In 1934 he and his family emigrated via London to Prague, and from there to Sweden in 1939. He received Swedish citizenship in 1945.

Peter Weiss's relationship to Bremen is reflected in his autobiographical works *Abschied von den Eltern* (1961; tr. *Leavetaking*, 1962) and *Fluchtpunkt* (1962; tr. *Vanishing Point*, 1967), and the city plays an important role in his final major work, the *Ästhetik des Widerstands* (1975–1981) for which he was awarded the Bremer Literaturpreis (Rudolf Alexander Schröder Prize) in 1982.

The work revolves around the events that took place in the months immediately following World War I, when Bremen formed a "Räterepublik" (republic governed by commissars) soon forcibly dissolved by regular Reichswehr troops on the order of the first president of the Weimar Republic, Friedrich Ebert. (Friedrich Ebert lived in Bremen and played an important political role there for many years.)

For Peter Weiss, the Markt and the town hall are places in and on which the class antagonisms of the time are reflected.

The Bremen Literature Prize is presented to Peter Weiss, 1982

Old Town Hall, Lower Hall

Floor plan, ground floor

1 Lower Hall
2 Festival stairway
3 New Town Hall entrance
4 Lower corridor
5 Chancellery wing

The Lower Hall

There is every reason to refer to the Lower Hall as "die Gotische" ("the gothic"). Like the cellar it is three-aisled but, instead of pillars and vaults, several mighty, coarsely hewn, upright oaken beams support longitudinal girders, so-called *Lucht-balken*, across which the beams of the Upper Hall lie. Bevelled struts made of knee timbers, *Knaggen*, strengthen the bearing power of the upright beams. Reddish-brown *Schebelplatten*, sandstone plates from the Weser Mountains, cover the floor. The longitudinal walls are broken up by blind niches on one side and deep window niches on the other. The screen-protected spiral staircase in the south-western corner leads to the Upper Hall, having taken over the function of the stairway originally on the northern exterior. Along the northern wall are seven doors, of which several now have purely decorative function.

Construction detail

Old Town Hall, Lower Hall, portal to the Niedergerichtsstube

From west to east, they are the door to the chancellery, built in 1683 with a wooden architectural frame and an escutcheon over the lintel, followed by the portal to the former Niedergericht (petty sessions court) chamber originally built into the hall. When that chamber was removed in 1897, the wooden portal, made by Hermen Varwer in 1636, was moved to its present position. Next in line is the sandstone portal of 1660, attributed to the mason Johann Prange II; with its deep jambs it framed a former northern exit. A portal alongside it of ca 1650, presumably made by Garlich Schürman to provide access to the Kriegskammer (office for the levying of taxes to finance war), is crowned by a coat of arms depicting a key. The following two portals of 1911–1913 lead into the New Town Hall and to the festival hall staircase. At the very end is the portal to the former treasury (Kämmerei) on the ground floor of the 1545 annex. While it is constructed with a console lintel in the older Late Gothic style, it also exhibits decoration in the newer style of the Renaissance.

The Lower Hall served as a merchants' hall, but also as a setting for early theatrical performances. Today it almost continually houses exhibitions of public interest. When the New Town Hall was built, there were plans to use the Lower Hall as an entry hall to the new banqueting rooms. For this reason, two double doors lead to the festive hall staircase, a route used today only for the annual February "Schaffermahlzeit."

Lower Hall, portal to the Kriegskammer

Lower Hall, portal to the Ratskanzlei

Old Town Hall, Upper Hall

Upper Hall, Güldenkammer exterior

The Schaffermahlzeit in the Upper Town Hall

Schaffermahl

The Upper Hall as a Place of Festive Hospitality

The Free Hanse City of Bremen celebrates its most important representative events of society and politics in the Upper Hall of the Old Town Hall. For festive receptions, large banquets, official ceremonies, conferrals of honour, concerts and lectures, the Upper Hall provides an atmosphere of dignity and tradition.

The annual highlight of these events is the "Schaffermahlzeit," or "Schaffermahl," Bremen's oldest guild banquet: Since 1545, the chairmen – "Schaffer" – of the "Haus Seefahrt," a foundation for the care of retired captains and captains' widows, have assembled for this feast 457 times. The date of the banquet, the second Friday in February, originally coincided with the melting of the ice and the end of the winter break for shipping. In the olden days, the dangers of seafaring were such that every journey, every leave-taking could be the last. The Haus Seefahrt was founded so that captains could at least rest assured that their loved ones would be cared for. The Schaffermahl was thus a leave-taking banquet, as well as the occasion on which the foundation rendered its accounts. Even today, the guests are requested to make a donation to this worthy establishment. The "Schaffer" are businesspeople of Bremen. Every year, three of their number are elected as members of the Haus Seefahrt; two years after their election, these three persons host the banquet. The term "Schaffer" – aside from simply meaning "labourer" – was the professional designation for the man who oversaw the food provision system on board ships.

The third Haus Seefahrt was destroyed in 1944 and the new quarters, located on the bank of the Lesum (a side arm of the Weser), have no banqueting room. For this reason, the Schaffermahl now takes place in the Upper Hall of the Old Town Hall.

The setting is more than festive – it is splendid: The long "three-pronged" dinner table – three tables placed lengthwise and a fourth crosswise at the head are reminiscent of

Pieces of the council silverware

Neptune's trident – is decorated with magnificent silver candelabra, silver centrepieces (of which many make reference to seafaring) and large silver tankards for seamen's beer. Alongside each of the place settings, which are provided by the Haus Seefahrt, is a cone-shaped bag of gold and silver paper holding pepper, salt and folded sheets of blotting paper. The guests use the latter to clean their knives and forks between courses, for at this meal the silverware is not exchanged.

Only men can take part in the Schaffermahl, though nowadays a table is laid for the ladies in the Kaminsaal of the New Town Hall. The event requires its participants to wear evening dress or a uniform, it proceeds according to venerable old ceremonial and is actually quite strenuous. In addition to thirteen speeches, the five-hour meal comprises five courses: saurel with mustard sauce, green kale with "Pinkel" (sausage), smoked meat, marrons and fried potatoes, veal roast, celery salad, prunelles and steamed apples. As a chronicler of the year 1862 remarked about this sequence of courses: "Strangers who are served it claim that strong habit is necessary to find it edible and they seldom spoil their appetite with it. Natives of Bremen, on the other hand, have a certain fondness for it ..."

In addition to this most well-known and oldest of Bremen's annual banquets, a whole series of other representative meals take place in the Upper Hall, for example the "Foundation Celebration of the Bremen East Asia Association," the "Kapitänstag" (captains' day) – to which all captains, chief engineers, Weser pilots and (more recently) aeroplane pilots whose work has taken them to Bremen or Bremerhaven on that day are invited –, the trade unions' "Labour Banquet" and the "Roland Meal" hosted by the Industry Club. For all of them, the Upper Hall provides an unforgettably elegant and representative setting.

Portal to the Güldenkammer

The Upper Hall

The Upper Hall is a space entirely without pillars, nearly forty metres long and fourteen wide. It is one of the largest secular rooms of the Middle Ages north of the Alps, and never ceases to impress visitors with its beauty. Shrouded in the subdued light that shines through more than eighty escutcheon windows, the atmosphere is festive. The room is a testimony to the tradition of its six-hundred-year-old history, made tangible by precious artworks and a small number of keepsakes. The writer Rudolf Alexander Schröder (1878–1962), a native of Bremen, called it "the sanctuary of Bremen's civic pride."

The primary focal point is the Güldenkammer. Two storeys high and richly embellished with carving and painting, it is set like a shrine into the light-flooded bay. According to an inscription on the upper portal, the chamber – an element of Lüder von Bentheim's alteration programme – was not completed until 1616, after the death of the master builder. The identities of several of its makers are known. The housing and the staircase were the work of the council's master carpenter Reineke Stolling and his journeyman Ronnich, who was a foreigner, a circumstance which led to trouble with the respective guild: The upper storey exhibits a stylistic break which may be attributable to the guild's having demanded Stolling's replacement. The carvers of the portal are identified as Evert Lange and Servas Hoppenstede.

Like the stone sculptors working under Bentheim's supervision, the carvers worked from engravings, nearly all of which have been accounted for with regard to authorship. Here we encounter self-contained picture series, on the staircase for example engravings from the edition "Offiziere und Soldaten der Leibwache Kaiser Rudolphs II" (officers and soldiers of Emperor Rudolph II's bodyguard) by Jacques de Gheyn after depictions by Hendrik Goltzius. Other sources are works by Pieter Brueghel the Elder, Hans Sebald Beham, Johann Vredeman de Vries and Jacob Floris.

Of particular impressiveness is the artistic fashioning of the freestanding staircase. Its centre post is crowned by Hercules, depicted at the end of the steeper climb (on the inner edges of

the steps) as a paragon of virtue, while the less strenuous outer route ends with an image of Voluptas. The railing exhibits not only soldiers after the series by Jacques de Gheyn, but also allegorical depictions of the planet gods, the senses and the virtues. The visitor's gaze is attracted no less by the magnificent ornamental portal, whose focal centre is the alabaster depiction of the Roman knight Marcus Curtius' sacrificial death, a subject with which the city calls for selfless devotion to one's fatherland. Warriors flank this chief element of the portal, whose frame is crowned by a coat of arms displaying a key and borne by lions as well as, over it, like a Madonna victrix, the figure of Justice. The work is framed by extremely sumptuous ornamentation featuring "gnarled" forms in the style of Wendel Dietterlin.

Detail of the Güldenkammer stairway

Floor plan, upper storey

1 Upper Hall
2 Güldenkammer
3 Festival hall
4 Kaminzimmer
5 Gobelinzimmer
6 Senate hall
7 Upper lobby
8 Hansazimmer
9 Festival stairway

Door to the Upper Güldenkammer

Door handle by Heinrich Vogeler

The two pictorial friezes on the chamber exterior allude to the council's role as a court and magistracy. The six pictures of the lower frieze depict allegories with explanatory inscriptions describing the wise and just manner in which a sovereign is to act, while the upper series can be understood as a general admonition to him to conduct himself accordingly.

The interior of the Güldenkammer was the splendidly furnished "Neue Gemach" (new chamber), a conference room which obtains its special atmosphere through its view of the Markt and which has lost nothing of its impressiveness in the course of the centuries. It was decorated with a gilt leather wall covering – hence the name "Golden Chamber" –, and the stone window mullions were painted.

After 1900, when the city "rediscovered" the Old Town Hall, the painter, graphic artist and interior designer Heinrich Vogeler (1872–1942) was commissioned to redecorate the room. Vogeler belonged to the Worpswede artists' circle, for a time even leading a kind of sub-centre of that group at the "Barkenhoff" estate he himself had enlarged. The Barkenhoff community included many personalities of significance for the cultural life of the times, among them the poet Rainer Maria Rilke (1875–1926). Vogeler's refurnishing of the Güldenkammer – with wainscoting designed according to historical models, fine inlays, bronze appliqués and door fittings, the leather wall decoration, fireplaces and furniture – is one of the finest examples of German art nouveau. Less vegetable-decorative than the Belgian-French approach to this style, less strictly geometrical than the Viennese, Vogeler's elegant linework serenely captures the golden medium.

Interior of the Güldenkammer by Heinrich Vogeler, 1905

The wall painting of Charlemagne and Willehad

The Solomonic Judgement

Upper Hall, view of the ceiling

The Upper Hall is spanned by a trabeated ceiling, whose skilful construction of the year 1609 does not become apparent until one visits the roof (see Roof Truss below). The ceiling insertions bear a painted geometric pattern presumably meant to look like coffer work, in the centre of which thirty-three emperors from Charlemagne to Sigismund are depicted. This decoration once again recalls Bremen's direct legal relationship to the empire, propagated and practised for more than two hundred years. The imperial portraits were renewed within the context of the ceiling restoration of 1857.

On the north side are two large wall paintings and a row of fine portals. The eastern section of the wall displays a 1532 rendering of the Solomonic Judgement attributed to the Westphalian workshop of Bartholomäus Bruyn. It is the classical image of jurisdiction, with texts admonishing the judges to act justly, particularly the captions beneath the half-length portraits to the left and right of the painting. These figures – Old Testament on one side, Roman on the other – are accompanied by their statements on good jurisdiction. The medieval council stalls destroyed in 1811 originally stood beneath this picture. We are well informed about the appearance of these stalls, for the inscriptions on their backrests were recorded in writing in the eighteenth century and four of their side walls survived.

On the western half of the north wall is the picture of Charlemagne and Bishop Willehad holding the Dom between them. This picture was also produced in 1532 in the Bruyn workshop. A work containing a large number of encoded messages, it depicts Charlemagne to the right of the Dom – as on the Bremen town seal of 1366 – i.e. in the higher-ranking position. He is wearing all the insignia of his rank, while Willehad holds only the episcopal staff. The accompanying text, while more difficult to comprehend, is of greater political significance. It is the rhymed chronicle written by Herbord Schene and Gert Rynesberch in 1410 and "revised" by Johann Hemeling. Its subject is the foundation of the city and the participation of its citizens in the crusades, and it formulates the basic law of Bremen's independence.

Between the two wall paintings are five portals. The oldest is the one beneath the Solomonic Judgement. It dates from 1550 and once led into the Neue Wittheitsstube in the 1545 annex between the town hall and the Palatium. It is a delicate Renaissance portal with calycine capitals over demi-columns, topped by a lintel whose tympanum frames the head of a man, while four escutcheon-bearing angels have been placed on the crown of the gable. The coats of arms are those of the officiating burgomaster of the time – a motif encountered frequently on both the exterior and interior of the town hall. The next portal con-

Inscription of 1950

Upper Hall, model of the Johann Schwarting, 1650

De Grote Jung, 1779

tains the "Tablet of 1491." The framework and the door itself date from the period of redecoration around 1900, while the tablet presumably came from the room that must have been located in the early northern annex to the building. Twelve rules for wise and just government were chiselled into the stone tablet in Gothic writing – here again, the four coats of arms of the officiating burgomaster appear. This is followed by a portal formerly leading into the Rhederkammer (a tax office). The wooden construction, presumably a work of 1660 by Evert Behrens, is framed by "gnarled" ornamentation in low relief. The following portal once led into the Collectenkammer, a further tax-collection office. It is a particularly beautiful work, made in 1573 by Adam Liquier Beaumont, the most important Northern German sculptor at the close of the sixteenth century. The round arch of the portal is topped by a relief panel showing three female figures: victory between justice and law. At the end of the row beneath the western painting, is a simple, classicist double portal.

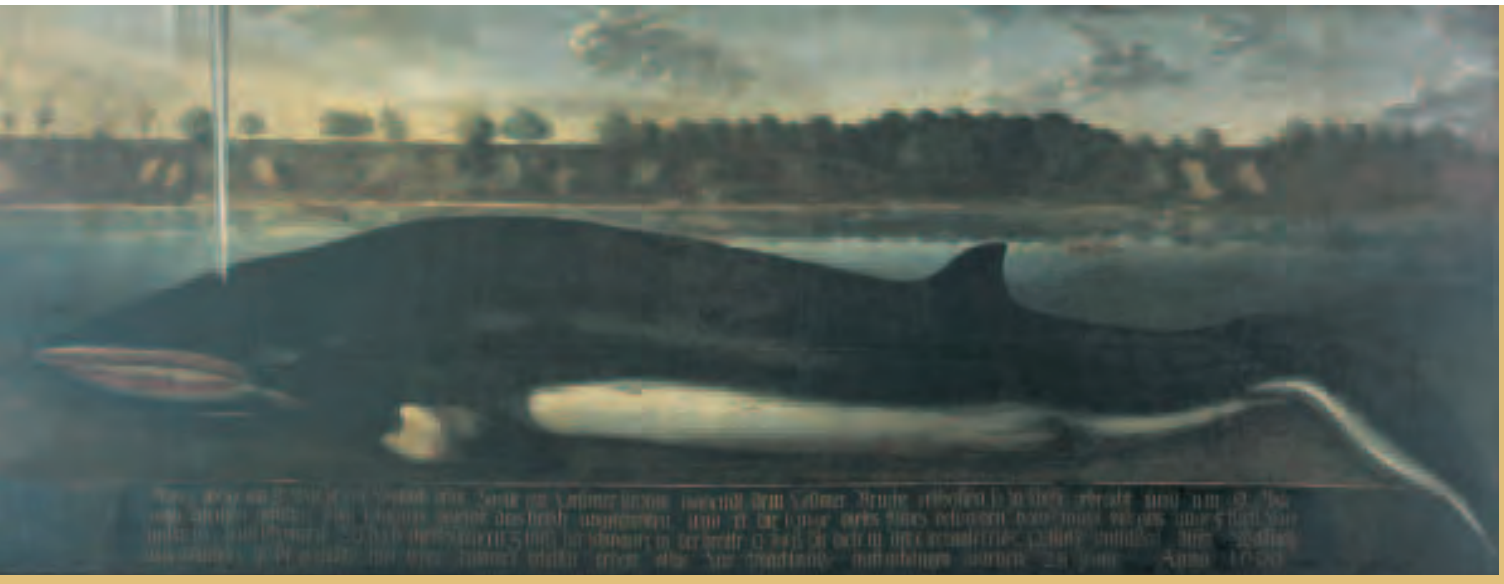
A painting nearly ten metres in width, depicting a whale, once hung over these portals. Because the marine animal was a town trophy, the council had it painted by the town's most respected painter. The picture – as well as the skeleton – hung in the Upper Hall.

Among the hall's permanent furnishings are models of the four "Orlog" ships which accompanied and protected the merchants' convoys on their way to the North Sea. The largest, the Johann Schwarting of the year 1650, whose cannons can fire a real salute, was a present from the merchants in the Schütting. The next ship is the Älteste, built in the sixteenth century and likewise a gift from the Schütting. It is followed by a model whose transom board bears the date 1770, and the Grote Jung of 1779. Along with the eighty painted coats of arms decorating the windows and the splendid chandeliers – the largest of them, a gift from the merchants' association in the year 1869, has forty arms and sixty candles – they convey the impression of great opulence.

A final reminiscence of the era when Bremen was a member of the Hanse is the picture of the House of the Osterlinge in Antwerp, a branch office of the Hanse built in 1563–1568. When the Hanseatic League was dissolved, the painting as well as some silver now kept in the Bremer Landesmuseum für Kunst- und Kulturgeschichte devolved on Bremen.

Upper Hall, escutcheon window

Portals along the north wall of the Upper Hall



The whale painting by Franz Wulfhagen

The Whale Painting

On May 8, 1669, a piked whale strayed into the Lesum, a Weser side arm affected by the tides. The Lesum formed the border between Bremen – a free imperial city since 1647 – and the Duchy of Bremen and Verden, which had been awarded to the young Great Power Sweden by the 1648 Peace of Westphalia. Whalers of Bremen killed the whale, which had stranded on one of the riverbanks. The people of Bremen claimed it had lain on the Bremen bank, the Swedes that it had stranded on their side. The latter version is supported by the fact that Bremen had the valuable quarry – said to have been 29 feet long – hauled into town as a trophy and the city council commissioned the most highly respected Bremen painter of the time, the Rembrandt pupil Franz Wulfhagen, to paint a life-size depiction of it. For this he received 95 marks in silver, at that time an exorbitant sum. Furthermore, after the whale was cut up on May 9, its skeleton was "delicately reassembled," according to the sources, and hung from the trabeated ceiling of the Upper Hall. The Swedes threatened to invade the city unless the whale was returned to them, but the council nevertheless steadfastly refused to satisfy their demand.
Measuring 3.8 x 9.8 metres, the whale painting of Bremen is the largest known example of this genre. It is also one of the earliest naturalistic – one is almost tempted to say "characterful" – depictions of a marine animal, far removed from the fairy-tale-like illustrations of ship-swallowing leviathans. Only ten years longer, and the picture would have hung in the Upper Hall for a full three centuries. It was taken down in 1960, and in the year 2000, following restoration, was taken over provisionally by the German Maritime Museum's newly opened exhibition collection.

Details of the Old Town Hall
roof truss, 1612

The Roof Truss

A tour of the roof truss is a special treat for experts, as not many so cleverly constructed wooden roof trusses have been preserved in the original. It was built in 1609 within the context of alterations of the south facade, when the crenellation was replaced by the three gables and the new balustrade. The Upper Hall presumably did not receive its flat ceiling with a span of over thirteen metres until this construction phase, and will previously have had a vaulted roof construction. Now the carpenters integrated a load-bearing system for the ceiling into that for the roof, using butt-jointed rafters, X-shaped wind braces, and four levels of collar beams. The girders on which the ceiling joists of the Upper Hall are hung rest on extended beams and are pressed upward with king posts by means of braces. Thus the construction is based on a balance of the predominating tractive and compressive forces, so that in the end the outer walls bear only vertical pressure. The two interlocking constructions have survived in the original.

Section

Markt front

Diagonal view, including main entrance

Domshof front

View of the Schoppensteel

All views: New Town Hall, 1913

Upper lobby

Festival stairway

Kaminsaal

Marble cabinet adjoining the festival hall

New Town Hall, south front adjoining Old Town Hall, main front facing the cathedral and view from Domshof

The New Town Hall

The New Town Hall was built in 1909–1913 according to a design by Gabriel von Seidl of Munich. Between 1900 and 1907, five architectural competitions had been carried out: two for the design of the council café diagonally across from the town hall at the north-western corner of the Markt, one devoted to the search for native building forms and two, in 1903 and 1907, for the design of the town hall. Step by step, the competitions overcame the use of historicising forms, primarily Gothic and Renaissance, for it was recognised that the spatial programme for the expansion of the town hall had to be limited to representative purposes and the needs of the government chancellery. To this end the police headquarters, the Staatsarchiv and the registrar's office now all received premises elsewhere. Only under the conditions thus created was Seidl able to introduce the new construction to the Old Town Hall with the utmost caution and sensitivity. For the fundamental design, he looked to the three-storeyed, three-winged construction of the Stadthaus created through alterations of the Palatium in 1816–1819. At the same time, with his fashioning of the facade, he also took advantage of the opportunity of forming a new square between the corner formed by the Old and New Town Halls, the Börse (since replaced by the Haus der Bürgerschaft) and the Dom. Even more important than this adoption of the overall form is the application of Oldenburg *Handstrich* clinker with light-coloured joints and quickly weathering Southern German Muschelkalk stone under a copper roof. By these means, the new building took on the weathered appearance of the old one within just a few years.

Upper lobby with statue of Burgomaster Smidt

Portal to the senate hall

Senate hall

The arrangement of the windows – their grouping and incorporation in bays – corresponds on the one hand to functional aspects, while reacting to differentiated spatial hierarchies on the other. Examples are the Hansa Zimmer – the room of the senate president (chief burgomaster) on the side facing the Markt and the Old Town Hall – and the senate bay on the side facing Domshof. The small bay indicating the burgomaster's room and the projecting section that dominates the Domshof side cleverly transfer the motif of the large Renaissance bay and side gables of the Markt facade to these spaces. The gable of the senate bay is flanked by two copper repoussé figures of councillors and crowned with a tellurion. Another very sophisticated feature is the facade facing Unser Lieben Frauen, a picturesque arrangement combining a circular tower with the portal of the old chancellery of 1579 and a row of five gables which respond to the gables of the council church Unser Lieben Frauen.

Reserved austerity rendered elegant by the tension of the basic ground line characterises the Dom-oriented main facade with its asymmetrical portal, above which the "SPQB" – Senatus Populusque Bremensis – reveals much of the spirit prevalent in the senate of Bremen, one of the only two (city-)republics in the German Empire.

The building's interior is made accessible by spacious indoor lobbies and the generous staircases in the chancellery wing and the section facing the Dom, as well as those leading to the banquet halls in both town halls. The representative rooms are all on the first upper storey. They were furnished according to plans by Seidl and, in the case of the senate hall, by Rudolf Alexander Schröder, numerous donations by citizens and firms of Bremen being integrated into the designs: It is a further noteworthy feature of the Bremen town hall that all of its decorative furnishings – old and new – were donated by the townspeople.

A portrait of the architect Gabriel von Seidl painted by Leo Samberger and the marble statue of Burgomaster Johann Smidt (who regained Bremen's independence at the Congress of Vienna and founded Bremerhaven) made by Carl Steinhäuser in 1848 are on display in the upper lobby. A later addition is "Die Klage Bremens," a painting by Franz Radziwill (1895–1983) intended to recall the destruction of Bremen in the last world war. It is one of the few not exclusively documentary confrontations with the experience that contained such horror for the city.

This lobby leads to the large, column-framed portal into the senate hall. This is the only room emphasised by the display of its name: SENAT. Its interior was furnished according to plans

Following double page: Franz Radziwill, Die Klage Bremens, 1946

17th-century tapestry depicting the myth of Artemis

by the Bremen writer and translater and – as is little known – respected architect and interior designer of ships Rudolf Alexander Schröder. Mahogany heightened with gold and red silk coverings give the room a warm tone. The walls bear several emperors' portraits of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, works originally on the walls of the Neue Wittheitsstube, the older of them having been painted by Franz Wulfhagen (1624–1670), the author of the great whale painting of 1669.

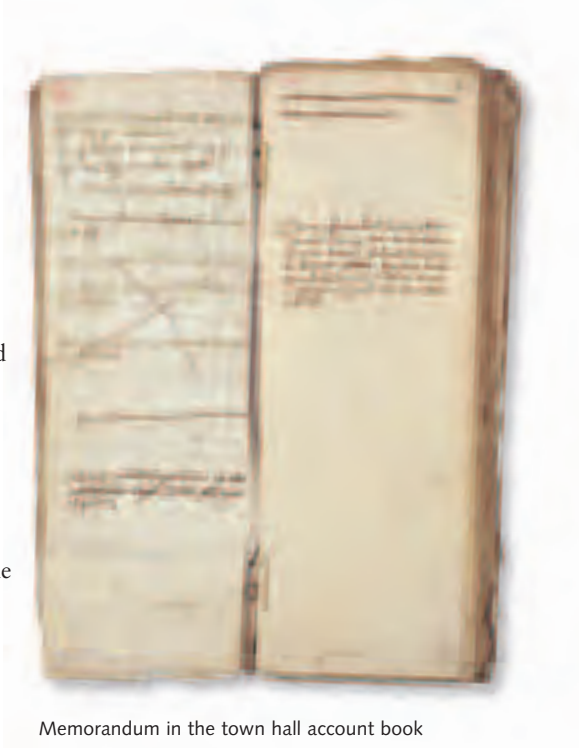
The passage to the Kaminzimmer displays furniture of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries donated by citizens of Bremen. The Kaminzimmer, also called Kaminsaal, is a small, almost intimate banquet hall, also exhibiting donated pictures. In the neighbouring Gobelinzimmer is a French tapestry from an Artemis cycle of the first half of the seventeenth century; another one decorates the wall in a hallway of the second upper storey. The Kaminzimmer opens into the large festival hall splendidly decorated in the Emperor William II style, two-storeys high and containing galleries for the musicians and the ladies. Whereas in the lower zone the brown of the wainscoting and cabinets dominates, the galleries are lined with fine sandstone work underlaid with delicate shades. Four of the portals described above in the section on the Upper Hall lead to the festival hall; above them hangs a painting of Bremen's historical riverfront, made for the New Town Hall by Carl Vinnen (1863–1922), like Vogeler a member of the Worpswede artists' colony. On the same wall are the coats of arms of Hamburg and Lübeck – at the time of the New Town Hall construction both still free imperial "sister" cities – and a mirror made after a design by Georg Römer of Munich. The four pictures in the corners serve as reminders of the four fortification gates of Old Bremen. The magnificent chandelier is a replica reconstructed in 1993–1994 on the basis of old models, the original having apparently been donated within the framework of the National Socialist call for scrap metal during the war. In the tower so picturesquely integrated into the exterior is a marble cabinet, open to the festival hall and decorated with depictions of the virtues. The Bürgerschaft – Bremen's parliament – convened in this festival hall before it occupied its new accommodations on the Markt diagonally across from the town hall.

Kaminsaal

View of the festival hall

Mirror in the festival hall

Detail of the festival hall chandelier



Memorandum in the town hall account book on the erection of the Roland statue ("Roland van Steene": stone Roland) in the year 1404 (Staatsarchiv Bremen)

Roland

The account book pertaining to the town hall construction of 1405 begins with a memorandum stating that the Roland had been erected in stone in 1404 in an undertaking that had cost 170 Bremen marks. This is a clear indication that the two construction measures are closely connected, that the erection of the Roland is to be considered one element of the town hall construction. It also means that, through the construction of the town hall and the Roland – who gazes in the direction of the road from Hamburg (and *not* towards the Dom) – the Markt was established: topographically and as an urban planning factor.

Roland is depicted as a knight wearing a cloak and standing in front of a supporting pillar; the gloved hand holds a sword, while the left hand touches the *Dunsing*, the armour belt. Framed by stones carved to look like jewels, an angel playing a lute is depicted on the buckle. Next to it, the only visible link of the belt bears a rose. Between the statue's feet lies a figure. Finally, Roland carries a shield with a double-headed eagle and a marginal inscription.

The meaning of the knight figures seen in many of the Northern German cities under Saxon law – Brandenburg, Stendal, Quedlinburg, Magdeburg and Zerbst, to name just a few – has never been satisfactorily explained. One possible interpretation is that the figure is a legal symbol of market rights granted by the king. These rights were conferred upon the city by the dispatching of a royal glove. If this interpretation is correct, Roland represented the deliverer and, as a sword-bearer, the protector of the rights granted by the king. The question remains, however, as to how the messenger and Roland, the paladin of Charlemagne, came to be one and the same figure. This connection is known to have applied already to Bremen's wooden Roland, destroyed by supporters of the bishop in 1366. What is more, while there are many comparable figures, the Bremen Roland is the only one to be depicted as a martyr – by virtue of the angel and the rose – and thus to form a clear link to the historical Roland, the Margrave of Brittany: In the consciousness of the Middle Ages, Roland was a martyr for having died in the struggle against heathens. At the same time, the shield presents the historical martyr as a real messenger of the emperor. Attached in an inorganic fashion and thus particularly conspicuous, the shield is the decisive element of the Bremen Roland. For the inscription – "vryheit do. ik. ju openbar. de karl / vnd. menich vorst vor war desser. stede. ghegheuen. hat des. danket. gode. is my radt" – states that it was Charlemagne, the first emperor of the newly ordained empire, who had brought freedom to Bremen. This declaration is explained in the text beneath the picture of Charlemagne and Willehad in the Upper Hall of the town hall. In the text, Willehad is said to have requested this freedom for the citizens of the capital of the bishopric he and Charlemagne had founded together, and the emperor to have granted his petition. Thus, quintessentially, the shield contains the basic law of Bremen's freedom.

Roland statue with shield and armour belt

Topographic situation of Bremen in the 8th – 9th centuries

The prehistory and early history of the Markt

The mementoes that lie buried beneath the surface of the earth inform us about a site's prehistory to the same degree as visible architectural memorials recount the history of an urban square.

The section of the dune with an altitude of approximately 11 m above sea level – the site of the town hall and the Dom – represents a particularly prominent section of the Bremen dune. This section was even more pronounced in pre-urban times: The side of the cathedral dune sloping gently down to where the Balge once flowed (this watercourse has since been filled in) was formerly much steeper.

Altogether about eight kilometres long, the dune extends through the Bremen Basin, parallel to the Weser, in a north-westerly/south-easterly direction. Because it adjoins the geest at both ends, the dune range will have been an important traffic route from the earliest of times, as archaeological finds confirm.

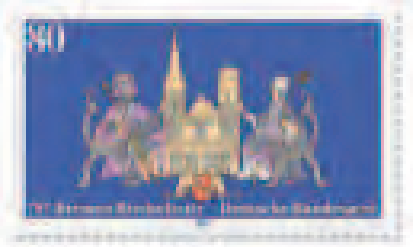
Only recently has it become possible to answer – affirmatively – the question as to whether the old town area had already been settled before the founding of the mission seat by Willehad (ca 782). Excavations carried out in the Dom in 1973-78 uncovered a strikingly large number of potsherds dating back to the pre-Roman Iron Age as well as a belt hook of the same period, certain evidence of a settlement on the summit of the dune. In the lower culture stratum of an excavation site below the Markt, ceramic dating back to the seventh century A.D. was found. Finds made at excavations in Katharinen-strasse, i.e. behind the town hall, date from the time of the Roman Empire and the migration of the peoples. The early culture stratum at the lower end of the Markt, apparently dating back to the seventh century, finds its sequel towards Langenstrasse: In recent years it has been possible to document a culture layer of the Carolingian era there. In a two-

A cargo vessel of 808 found in a construction pit south of the marketplace

posted pit dwelling that was found buried in the dune and the culture stratum, a clay weaving weight as well as potsherds dating from the late ninth century were uncovered.

The finds and findings of the Langenstrasse and lower Markt are to be regarded as archaeological evidence of an early riverside market reaching back to the Saxon era, at which time it developed on the high bank of the Balge, the side arm of the Weser used as a harbour. At the top of the dune – and accordingly dry even when lower-lying areas were inundated – was the early cathedral, the market church St. Veit/Unser Lieben Frauen, a further market and, above all, the cathedral fortification with its rampart and moat surrounding the cathedral and the Wilhadi Chapel. In 1909, during construction of the Old Town Hall annex, two fortification moats and a mighty wall were uncovered in the foundation pit – apparently the precinct wall built around 1000. Two deep wedge-shaped moats and remnants of a wall were observed on Domshof in 1941, presumably the part of the bishop's castle facing the outlying settlement. One of these moats may date back to the Carolingian era.

Along with the Roland and the Markt – which had shifted from the Liebfrauenkirchhof to its present location –, the early-fifteenth-century town hall was therefore placed precisely at the intersection of two areas, one being the medieval bishop's castle, the other the outlying settlement that developed to its west and comprised a craftspeople's and merchants' quarter. The town hall and the Markt thus spatially adjoin the old Balge riverbank market.



German postage stamp of 1987 depicting
Emperor Charlemagne and Bishop Willehad

3b — *History and significance*

Preliminary remarks

For some six hundred years now, the town hall of Bremen has been in use as a communal place of assembly, municipal administration centre and seat of government of an independent Land. Its development from a Late Gothic town hall – which underwent major decorative alterations in the Late Renaissance – to the seat of government of a modern city-state is what makes this building unique.

In this form the town hall – along with Roland – symbolically embodies the forces of civic development, forces operative in many other European and extra-European countries: the living consciousness of communal and federal principles.

In Bremen, however, these principles did not become absorbed by central governmental units, but developed into the form of a federal republican Land. Moreover, the town hall and Roland are two parts of an urban-architectural ensemble which is also of outstanding significance.

More than twelve hundred years of religious history – from both the cultural and political points of view – come alive in the St. Petri Dom of Bremen. The significance of this development extends far beyond regional boundaries: As an archdiocese under St. Ansgar, Bremen became the missionary centre for the entirely still heathen north of Europe, and the first bishoprics on Scandinavian territory were founded on the initiative of Bremen, the "Rome of the North."

The Dom and, beginning the High Middle Ages, the Palatium occupied Bremen's topographically highest point. There, on the border between the ecclesiastical and communal settlements, enframed by the market church Unser Lieben Frauen, the Palatium and the Dom, the Old Town Hall has been the predominant work of communal architecture since 1405.
As part of the Markt ensemble, the town hall and Roland have always been surrounded by private residential and commercial buildings – with a view of the Schütting, the corporate house of the Bremen merchants' association, today neighbouring the Bürgerschaft, the parliament of the two-city-state Bremen.
The history of the town hall and Roland cannot be isolated from the history of the city and Land of Bremen; the genesis of the town hall can only be understood within this context.

Episcopal crook
from a grave in the
St. Petri Dom of Bremen,
Limoges, 13th century

Earliest settlement and foundation in the Carolingian era
Along with the St. Petri Dom directly to the east and the church Unser Lieben Frauen directly to the west (formerly the market church of St. Veit), the town hall is located on the summit of a range of dunes which extended several kilometres along the Weser and was of decisive importance in the choice of the site as the seat of a mission and bishopric.

The Balge, a side arm of the Weser, met the latter river's undercut bank at this location, forming a natural harbour at an intersection of land and water routes adjacent to a tract of land that was extremely flood-safe. In the catchment basin of the Weser marshlands this was an important prerequisite for settlement.

Following Willehad's choice of Brema as the site of a mission centre for the Lower Weser Region in 780 and its later rise in status to a bishop's seat, a settlement of cathedral officials and servants developed around the cathedral church, forming a cathedral castle that was soon fortified with ramparts.

Between the fortified cathedral and the Balge was an open area on whose summit the present-day town hall was later constructed. Beyond it, along the Balge (the course of today's Langenstrasse), a river/roadside settlement grew up in the ninth century independently of the cathedral castle. It was home to

fishermen, craftsmen and, quite early on, merchants as well. At a very early point in its history, Bremen was thus oriented towards shipping traffic on the Balge and Weser, a circumstance brought alive again in 1989 by the discovery of a large river vessel from the period around 800 near Wachtstrasse.

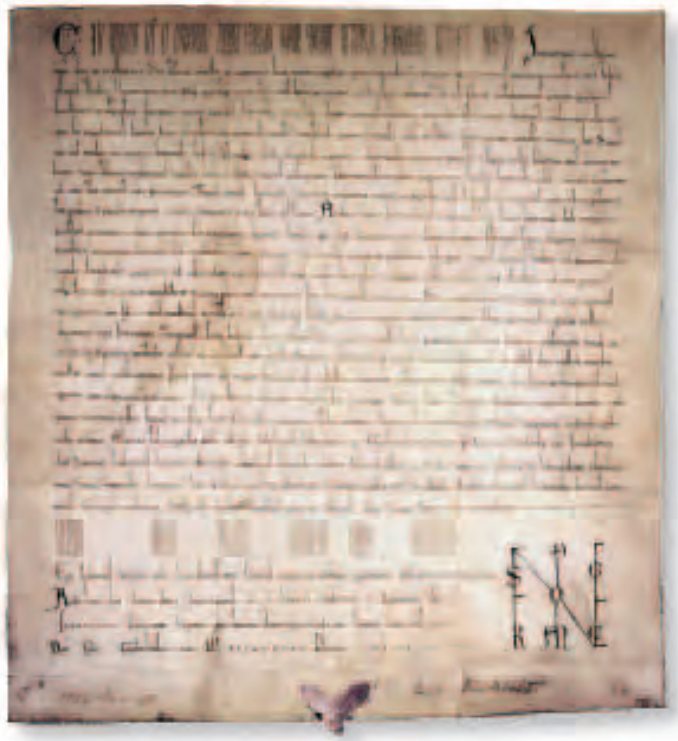
Thus Bremen's development as a settlement in the Early and High Middle Ages had already been established long before: The town grew up in a kind of topographical dualism comprising the ecclesiastical district with the cathedral castle on the one hand and the unfortified mercantile/crafts settlement on the other. The area between these two settlement zones – where later the town hall would stand – was still vacant.

In 864, under Archbishop Ansgar, Bremen was declared the seat of an archdiocese fulfilling missionary duties throughout Northern Europe. In 888, the locality was granted market, coinage and toll rights by King Arnulf, an indication of the mercantile activities carried out in the area of the Balge harbour and the Markt dune. Due to the important role played by the Bremen archbishops in Scandinavia and the formation of suffragan bishoprics in Denmark and elsewhere, the cathedral dune and the area of land which is now the Markt became a centre of the imperial prince-bishops' power and government.

The archbishops knew how to use their position in the empire and the church to expand their seat of power. In 937, 965 and 967, Archbishop Adaldag acquired important diplomas for the church of Bremen, granting it immunity, judicial authority and economic privileges. In the document of 965, the market and the nearby merchants' community were explicitly mentioned, a clear sign that in the shadow of the archiepiscopal cathedral castle a mercantile town was gradually beginning to develop around the Markt, Balge harbour and riverbank settlement.

In 1035, Konrad II granted Bremen the right to conduct two fair-like markets per year, and according to the chronicler Adam of Bremen, the town became a destination for merchants "from all the lands of the world."

As the court of the ambitious bishop-prince Archbishop Adalbert (1043–1072), Bremen reached an early zenith in its development. The Bremen metropolitan's superior rank in the empire ended in 1066 with Adalbert's downfall, and the ecclesiastical developments in the north of Europe were also of far-reaching consequence for Bremen: Through the emancipation of the Scandinavian national churches, Bremen's role as an internationally significant ecclesiastical centre came to an end at the beginning of the twelfth century.



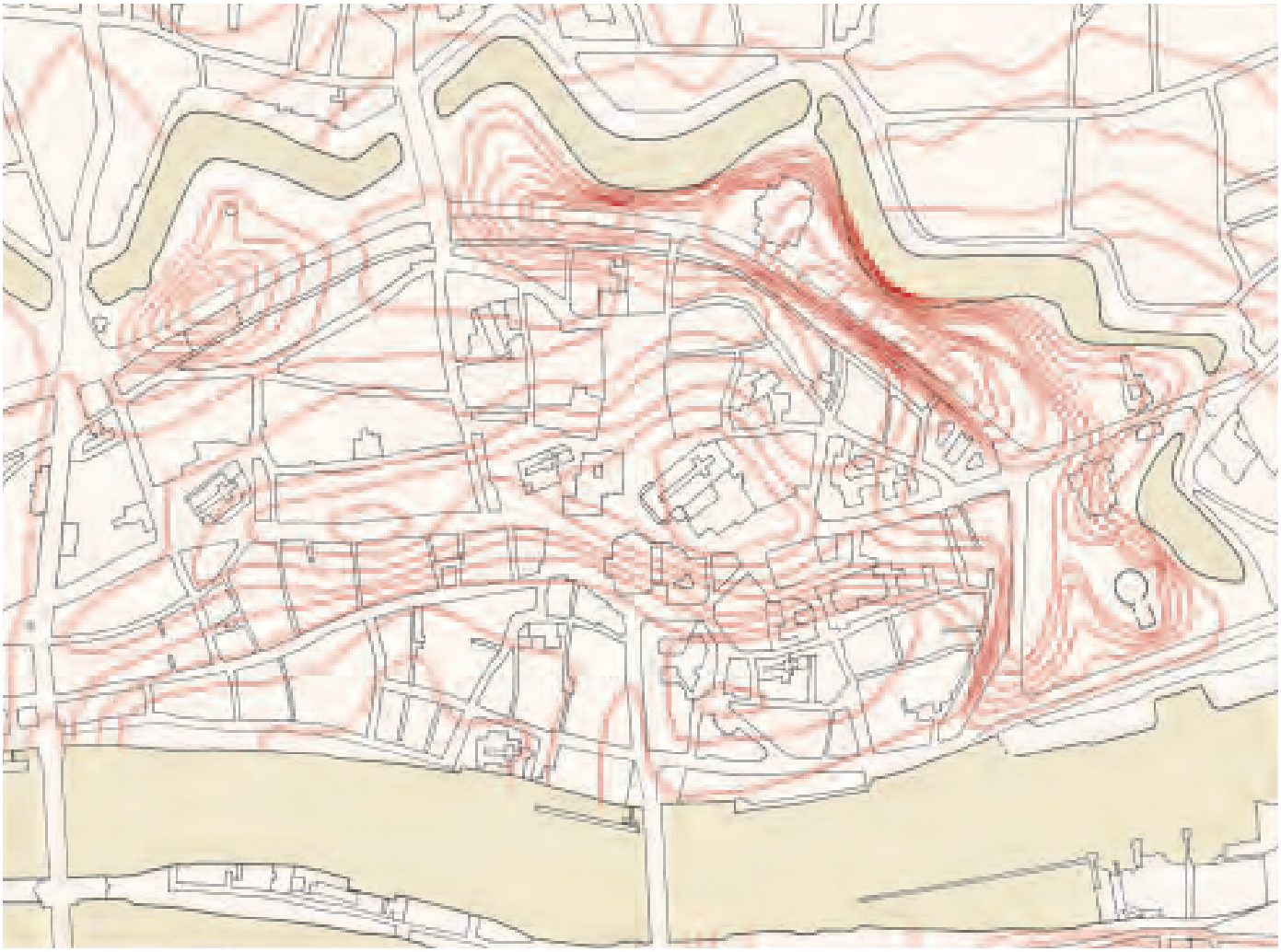
The Barbarossa diploma of November 28, 1186. Emperor Frederick I bestows liberties and privileges on the citizens of Bremen (Staatsarchiv Bremen)

The development of the urban community in the High Middle Ages

As the archiepiscopal seat expanded, the part of the town settlement involved with crafts and commerce developed and consolidated, and from the twelfth century on it provided the primary impulses for the city's further growth. As before, the tract of duneland between the cathedral castle, the Balge harbour and the riverbank settlement formed the centre of the settlement, even if the locality's dynamic core gradually shifted from the Dom to the free town as the craftspeople's and merchants' settlement to the west and north of the Markt grew.

The Church of St. Veit (Unser Lieben Frauen) was built in the eleventh century at the latest, possibly already much earlier. As the communal market church it now formed a chief point of reference for early urban life. Around the church, the houses and market stands bordering the Liebfrauenkirchhof demarcated a level square definable as the town's earliest marketplace. Between this square and the cathedral castle, the summit of the dune – a large area sloping steeply down to the Balge harbour – initially remained more or less vacant of construction.

Along with its citizens, the urban community developing in Bremen now becomes documentarily ascertainable for the first time. Beginning in 1139, the citizens of Bremen are referred to in documents as *cives Bremenses*, though without any indication as to the nature of their form of communal organisation, even if they did appear as a politically active group. In the *Bürgerweidebrief*, a document of 1159, they negotiated the boundaries of the community pasture with the town's ruler; in 1167 they formed an alliance with the Count of Oldenburg against Duke Henry the Lion. In a privilege effected by the intermediary of Archbishop Hartwig II, the Bremen citizens' community obtained imperial recognition as a political corporation. In 1186, Frederick I Barbarossa granted the *cives Bremensis civitatis* privileges whose legal content can be summarised under the motto "town air liberates." The important document forms one of the foundations of Bremen's civic freedom.



Contour plan of the Old Town of Bremen

The communal structures already initiated in the twelfth century were continually expanded by the townspeople in the century that followed. The development of the council, an organ of self-government consisting of councillors (1225: *consules*) empowered the citizens to conclude treaties and agreements not only with the archbishop but – as with the Rüstringen Frisians in 1220 – with non-local powers for the first time. To this end, the town adopted a seal showing Charlemagne and Bishop Willehad as the founders of the Dom, along with the new town wall as a proud reference to the free town's strong fortifications.

The aim of these efforts was to secure the town autonomous rights, protect its mercantile and crafts-related interests and provide its merchants with access to non-local markets and regulated shipping traffic on the Lower Weser, the latter being a factor of vital importance for Bremen.

New churches and cloisters were built along the Weser (St. Martini, St. Stephani), along with various residential settlements. From 1229 until modern times, these parishes formed Bremen's communal districts. In 1250 the banks of the Weser also began to undergo development for use as a harbour.

In 1234, under Archbishop Gerhard II, the citizens of Bremen participated in a crusade against the peasants of the Stedingen Marsh. The peasants were subjugated to archiepiscopal authority, the town rewarded with communal liberties and rights. The withdrawal of these privileges only twelve years later showed, however, that Bremen still had a potent ruler to reckon with in the figure of the archbishop. In 1293, during a phase of general upswing, another holder of this office, Archbishop Giselbert, had an impressive new stone palace – the Palatium – built in the town centre on the boundary between the cathedral castle and

City map by Braun and Hogenberg, before 1598

the citizens' town. Along with the already existing market church St. Veit (Unser Lieben Frauen), the Palatium completed the direct structural framework for the present-day Old Town Hall.

Bremen was a self-confident young town, a participant not only in international maritime trade with lands such as England, Flanders and Norway, but also – with its own ships – in the Third Crusade of 1189. It was natural that the need for a place of communal assembly should be voiced at quite an early stage. Nevertheless, it is not known when the people of Bremen built their first town hall. In 1229 Bremen's town hall is documented for the first time as the *domus theatralis*, clearly suggesting that the building had already long been in use both as a public market and show house and as a court and place of assembly. In 1251, the council testified to a document in *domo consulum*, i.e. in the town hall. The first town hall construction was located diagonally opposite the market church on the Liebfrauenkirchhof. Located on a main intersection between the Liebfrauenkirchhof, Sögestrasse and Obernstrasse, it oversaw the most important traffic routes of the people's town on three sides. Directly adjoining the building to the north, the only side without an open view, was a communal chancellery for the legal transactions of the town and its citizens; documents were kept in the market church tower opposite.

St. Petri Dom, nave

The Dom

A few steps away from the edge of the Markt – just beyond a small, triangular plaza – are the towering stone masses of the Dom.

The original wooden Dom, consecrated in 789, is known to us only through later sources. It presumably stood on the site occupied by the present-day house of God. The building of the cathedral church under Bishop Willerich in 805 marks the beginning of a series of construction measures which comprised expansions and alterations and continued until the fire of 1041. Several phases of this process are documented. Although the construction of the present Dom was begun immediately after that conflagration, the first structural elements to have survived until the present are attributed to the period of activity from Archbishops Adalbert and Liemar to Archbishop Hartwig I (1043–1168). The Romanesque Dom was built during their pontificates; under Archbishop Gerhard II it received its Gothic alterations. The destruction of the northern aisle and the adjacent chapels by fire in 1502 provided the impulse for the construction of a huge north aisle hall, completed shortly before the Reformation. The Dom became Lutheran, and was closed for decades by the Reformed council. During this period the structural substance was neglected to such an extent that the south tower collapsed in 1638. This unfortunate incident led to the opening of the Dom for Lutheran services and thus to the formation of a Lutheran congregation in Bremen. It was soon the town's largest parish, but still did not possess the corresponding rights. The surrender of the Dom to the city of Bremen by the Electorate of Hanover in 1803 finally smoothed the way for the official recognition of the parish, as well as providing a basis for the building's restoration in the nineteenth century. A large majority of the elements viewable in the Dom today can be attributed to this great restoration of 1888–1901, during which the south tower and the crossing tower were reconstructed and other parts newly faced and stabilised.

Two crypts and an abundance of artworks testify to the cathedral's liturgical wealth and to its history, which goes back more than eight hundred years. With its mighty two-tower front it distinctly determines the character of the extended marketplace. And along with the town hall, the council church Unser Lieben Frauen, the Schütting and the Haus der Bürgerschaft, the Dom forms an ensemble in which the interplay of secular and ecclesiastical power finds visible expression that has endured to the present day.

West crypt with gothic bronze font

Relief of the west gallery by Master Evert van Roden, before 1520

top: Kirche Unser Lieben Frauen
bottom: Fresco in the so-called Beinkeller, ca. 1400

The church Unser Lieben Frauen

The origins and predecessors of the present-day parish church Unser Lieben Frauen are closely linked with the earliest beginnings of the community of Bremen.

The parish church Unser Lieben Frauen was first documented as the Marienkirche in 1220, and succeeds the Church of St. Veit constructed under Archbishop Unwan (1012–1029). The fact that its patronage points to Corvey, where several Carolingian-period archbishops of Bremen had come from, suggests that this church may also have looked back upon predecessor constructions.

The oldest preserved section of Unser Lieben Frauen, for example – the large so-called Beinkeller (bone cellar) – is associated with the structural forms of early merchants' and visitors' churches.

After St. Petri Dom, Unser Lieben Frauen is Bremen's oldest parish church, and because it is the first sacred building to have been erected outside the cathedral precincts, special importance is attached to it in connection with the development of the town community. Until the redivision of Bremen's parishes in 1229, it was the parish church for the entire town community. Its location on the top of the dune also marks the economic and political centre of the early Bremen *civitas*, particularly in view of the fact that the area immediately surrounding its churchyard was the town's actual marketplace until the construction of the Old Town Hall, i.e. until 1405. Its old designation as market church (*ecclesia forensis*) further elucidates this association.

The no-longer-existing first town hall of Bremen (*domus consulum*) was directly adjacent to the Liebfrauenkirchhof, and close proximity to Unser Lieben Frauen was also a characteristic of the newly constructed Gothic town hall of 1405. The spatial circumstances made the choice of Unser Lieben Frauen as the church of the Bremen town council obvious. It not only served as the holy centre of the community's leading stratum, but also fulfilled a concrete function in connection with the needs of council rule and the earliest manifestations of civic administration: The council chancellery (*scriptorium*) adjacent to the first town hall was located opposite Unser Lieben Frauen. The *Trese* (from the Latin *thesaurus* = treasury), the archive containing the council's most valuable documents and legal titles, was kept in the treasure chamber located in the north tower of Unser Lieben Frauen from the thirteenth to the twentieth centuries (1909)!

The south tower of the present-day Church of Unser Lieben Frauen dates back to the twelfth century, the two-tower facade and the interior of the three-aisled hall church to the thirteenth. Along with the Beinkeller, these are testimonies to Bremen's earliest architecture, and the church structure also comprises the council government's oldest functional buildings (Tresekammer). The Early Gothic hall is an architectural work of acknowledged quality.

"Dhes stades boke van Bremen": Bremen civil code of 1303.
From the original manuscript of the Bremen council (Staatsarchiv Bremen)

The politics, economy and constitution of the late medieval town

The rivalry between the community and its rulers became more intense in the course of the fourteenth century. Thanks to its dynamic economic development in the crafts and commerce, the town was increasingly capable of prevailing against the archbishop. On the other hand, the council no longer unrestrictedly represented the citizen's community as a homogeneous whole: The council dynasties, the merchants and the craftspeople began to form economic and political interest groups whose conflicts with one another were often fierce. Moreover, estate and Curia officials associated with the Dom and its chapter still formed an important social group within the town's leading stratum.

The privileges of the civic community and the powers of the communal bodies – those with their seat in the town hall – had emerged from a conglomerate of legal deeds and investitures with legal titles, primarily of archiepiscopal but also of royal origin. In practice, the council and the Vogt (the archbishop's secular representative) interpreted and applied them according to need and the respective circumstances. The need for a standardised compilation of Bremen civic law led in 1303 to the council decision to have a codification of the law drawn up. In the course of the following two centuries the council commissioned five further codices of civic law – some of them quite sumptuous –, revisions and changes being recorded in those of 1428 and 1433. Councillors (later designated senators) and new citizens had to swear an oath on these volumes in the town hall. All six medieval civic law manuscripts of the council of Bremen have survived in the original and are now in the Staatsarchiv Bremen.

Bremen law was also adopted by other towns in north-west Germany, leading to the formation of a civic law family according to Bremen law. By having Bremen law codified, the council demonstrated its espousal of a primary task of good government – respect of the law. Nevertheless, this act could not obscure the fact that the town hall had become an arena for interest conflicts and party disputes between the influential council dynasties. In 1304 fights broke out between rivalling dynasties, the nobility and princes of the region intervened and, for the first time, the City of Bremen – represented by its councillors – appeared as a military factor in the maintenance of public order.

For the archbishops of Bremen, the advent of the fourteenth century marks a phase of crisis and loss of influence, leading to their inability to prevail in the so-called archbishops' feud of 1350. In 1366 Archbishop Albert temporarily succeeded in taking sides militarily in an inner-Bremen conflict between the council dynasties and the craftspeople's association. The first wooden Roland – the symbol of civic freedom – was burned, and a council more to the archbishop's liking was installed. Within mere

The second Bremen town seal of 1336: St. Peter and the emperor as the patrons of Bremen (Staatsarchiv Bremen)

The Town Hall in its gothic form, detail from the copper engraving by Wilhelm Dilich, 1603

weeks, however, the town was back in the hands of the old councillors and the archbishop was forced to conclude peace. From then on, the archbishops shifted the focus of their regional authority from the cathedral seat of Bremen to the archdiocese of Bremen and increasingly took up residence in their Bremervörde castle.

The "revolt" had long-standing consequences for the self-conception of the city and the council. The first town seal was destroyed; from now on – until well into the nineteenth century – the second town seal was in use. The archbishops disappeared from the seal image, which no longer showed Charlemagne and the first Bremen bishop Willehad, but the emperor and St. Peter as the patrons of the city and the Dom. In this form, the town seal of 1366 already took on elements of imperial propinquity and propaganda that would soon receive strong emphasis within the context of the new town hall construction.

In general, the fourteenth century was one characterised by social and political struggle. Social conflicts between the council and the merchants and craftspeople broke out again, as did disputes over the composition of the council, a body which filled its own ranks from a small number of wealthy and influential families.

In spite of – and in the course of – all this social unrest, the town developed into a politically potent territorial authority. Because of the fact that overseas trade guaranteed Bremen's prosperity, the town directed special attention to the Lower Weser and the route to the "Salty Sea." Whereas until this time the process of emancipation from the city's rulers had dominated the political activity carried out in the town hall, control of the Lower Weser region now played a decisive role. The regional communities in the marshes surrounding the town were incorporated into Bremen's territory, and the seizure of the castle and district administration of Bederkesa in ca. 1380 marked the first step towards territorial domination of the Weser estuary. In 1358 Bremen joined the Hanseatic League, for which it had previously shown little interest due to its pursuit of independent trade policies. Bremen now recognised the resolutions of the Hanse as binding, but still had a great many differences with the league. The assertion of the city's interests against the Hanse conforms with the self-conception and self-confidence of fourteenth-century Bremen: Without a doubt, the community reached one of the high points of its significance around the year 1400.

The construction of the Gothic town hall in 1405

At the beginning of the fifteenth century Bremen entered a phase of increased imperial propaganda, which was put to use in the struggle concerning Bremen's status, domestically with regard to its own city ruler, externally in relationship to its territorial neighbours and the Hanse. It is no coincidence that the construction of the Old Town Hall and the erection of the monumental stone statue of Roland took place in this period of economic prosperity and political activity. Both the building measures and the diplomatic activities were conducted by a relatively small group of politically active councillors.

The choice of the town hall's location was also determined by changes in the functions of the area that would later become the Markt: The use of the Balge harbour as a mercantile centre had long been a thing of the past; the handling of foreign wares now took place at the Weser harbour. The former harbour grounds now served as a central urban square and supply market.

Around 1400, the members of the council and parliament must have felt so restricted by the structural circumstances of the first town hall that they resolved to undertake new construction at a new site, rather than mere alterations or additions. The functions of assembly hall, court of law, chancellery, wine cellar and merchants' hall could hardly have been accommodated by the old location. Moreover, newly constructed buildings and roads, Hakenstrasse for example, had pushed the first town hall from the centre to the periphery of mercantile activities.

The tract of land on the summit of the dune presented itself as a site for the new construction – the area forming the border between the market around Unser Lieben Frauen and the cathedral precincts. In 1400 several structures stood on this land: market booths as well as permanent buildings such as the tannery, the stone residence of a former councillor of the thirteenth century and the court building, referred to as the *praetorium*. The use of the site for the law court was to be carried on, as the new town hall would integrate this function, but the other predecessor structures had to give way. Begun in 1405, the measures not only produced a new town hall but also decisively changed the urban topography: The construction gave the town a new centre. The market previously spread out around the Liebfrauenkirchhof was now relocated in the area between the town hall and the Balge; for this purpose the slope down to the water was banked up and levelled and, from 1400 on, designated the *forum* of Bremen. At the same time, the impressive new council and citizens' assembly house was enthroned on the dune, immediately in front of the Palatium and the Dom.

Bremen's original Gothic town hall has not only survived intact to a very great extent, but thanks to an unusually good supply of sources its genesis can also be reconstructed in detail. On the one hand, mention of the town hall construction in the annals of Bremen does not exceed the terse generalisations typically provided by comparable cities. On the other hand, the fact that the painstakingly conducted accounts of the medieval stonemasons' lodge have survived in the original is altogether out of the ordinary. They allow us to retrace the progress of the town hall construction from February 1405 to February 1407, complete with the names of all participating overseers and guilds, in detail! Not only are the building materials documented, but also their prices and the workmen's wages.

Under the direction of councillors Hinrich von der Trupe and Friedrich Wigger, the master masons Salomon and Martin of Bremen, the master stonecutter Kurd of Münster and the master

Supporting figure (ca. 1407) thought to represent one of the master builders, west front of the Old Town Hall

The original account book of the town hall construction from 1405 to 1407, paper bound in vellum; entry concerning the year 1405 (Staatsarchiv Bremen)

sculptor Johan, also a non-local, were employed. Master Johan is thought to have fulfilled the function of leading craftsman or "architect." All of the old buildings were torn down between February and May 1405, and the remainders of older walls broken out of their foundations. The ground plan of the new building was first staked out provisionally with poles and yarn; stencils for the stone carvers were made from boards. All around the construction site, craftspeople set up shop, cranes and scaffolding were built, the Palatium of the archbishop, vacant at the time, housed a lime kiln. On May 6, 1405, following the excavation of the pit for the cellar, the cornerstone was laid. The types and forms of the various bricks and ashlars as well as the brickyards and other manufactories supplying this large-scale medieval construction site are all documented in the invoices.

Moreover, the records describe the production methods and storage means of certain components and attribute the sculptures, coats of arms and artworks to the participating stonemasons by name. By these means, the original sculptural decoration of the town hall, which has come down to us almost in its entirety, can be attributed to Master Johan and his journeymen. In early 1406 Johan received a payment of 368 gulden for the sixteen sandstone sculptures of the facade. By May of that year, the shell construction had been completed up to the base of the roof. The master stonecutter was paid his wages, the carpentry work of the framework begun. The year 1407 marks the completion of the shell construction and the end of the detailed bills. The construction process presumably underwent various interruptions in the years that followed, for the next memorandum concerning town hall construction funds dates from 1410.

To a large extent, the core structure of the Gothic town hall has survived to the present. The arrangement of the cellar vaults, supported by two rows of ten columns, was echoed in the ground-level Lower Hall: The three-aisled hall is formed by two rows of ten wooden pillars each. On the next higher level, the Upper Hall formed a space wholly uninterrupted by supports, possibly covered by a vaulted ceiling. With its portals, arches, crenellations and towers, the mighty building appeared as a symbol-turned-stone of the ideal, well-fortified city.

The western narrow side formed the main entrance to the Lower Hall. This side faced the Liebfrauenkirchhof, i.e. the old marketplace and the town's crafts and residential districts. The Upper Hall could be entered from the north side by a covered outdoor stairway. With its massive Gothic portal to the Lower Hall and the arrangement of its windows, the eastern narrow side repeated the appearance of its counterpart to the west.

Crowned by windows with pointed arches and figures of the prophets, flanked by fortress-like corner towers, the massive portals of the narrow sides led visitors through a three-aisled basilican hall: A work of architecture had been created which formed a monumental gate. This circumstance reveals itself only when the building is seen within the context of the urban topography, which it now dominated. The axis of the gate-like building and its interior halls was parallel to the major traffic axis that ran along the Weser dune: Ostertor, Domsheide, Grasmarkt, Liebfrauenkirchhof, Obernstrasse. Standing perpendicular to the boundary of the cathedral precincts, the building thus had an inner side to the west and an outer side to the east. The monumental statue of Roland erected one year before the town hall

The Markt ensemble on the city map by Braun and Hogenberg, before 1598. The Roland on the marketplace (Forum) in front of the town hall (Curia); in the background the Kirche Unser Lieben Frauen (Beate Mariae); the archbishop's palace to the right of and behind the town hall (Staatsarchiv Bremen)


der Doem

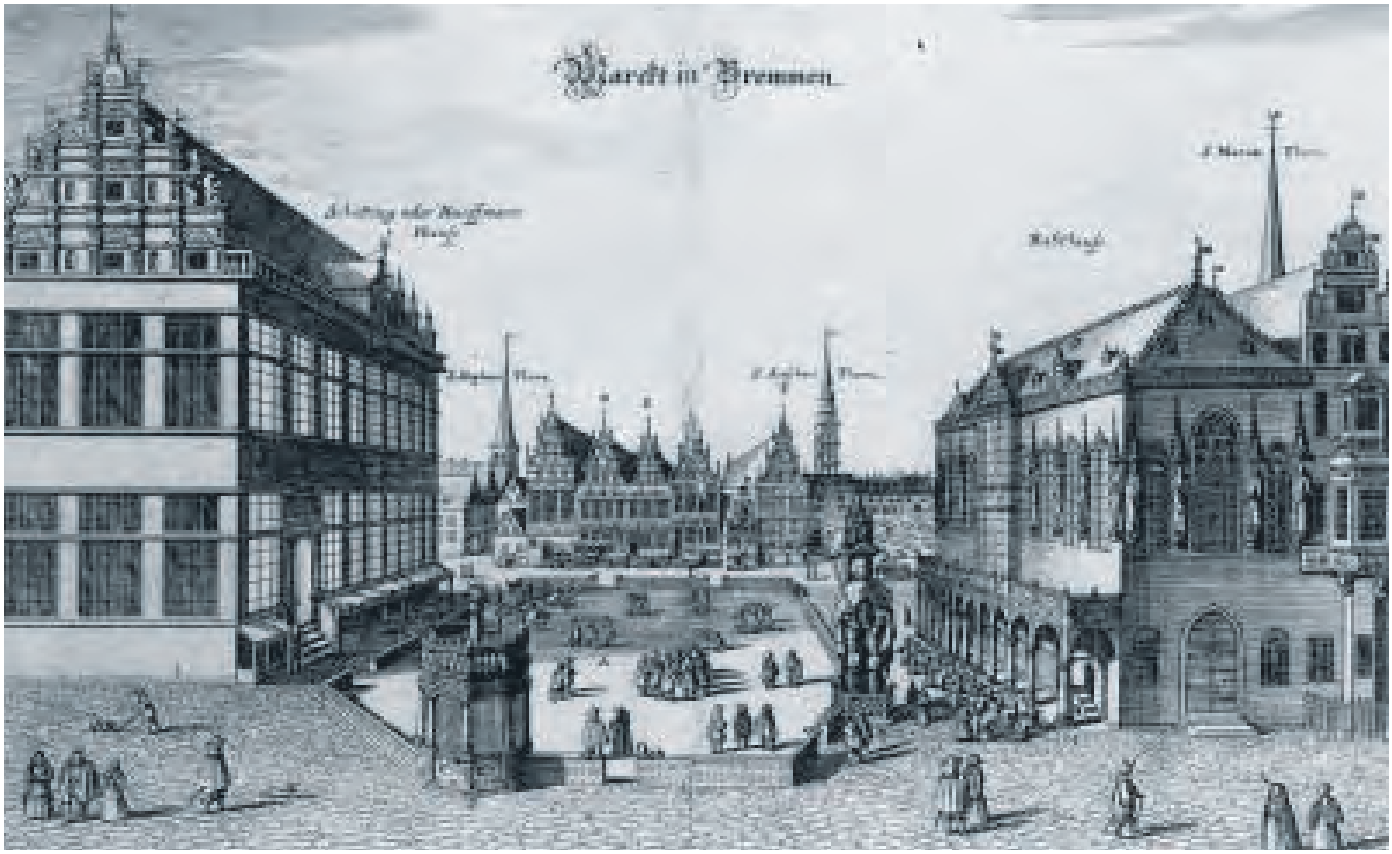
The Markt in Bremen around 1603. Copper engraving by Wilhelm Dilich. To the right the Gothic town hall with the Markt front of 1405–1407, to the left the Schütting with new facade (Staatsarchiv Bremen)

construction began is also aligned with this east-west axis. The figure looks outward along this axis – and by no means rebelliously towards the Dom, as is frequently rumoured.

Thus the town hall repeated the east-west orientation of its predecessor, whose south side also overlooked Obernstrasse, but with its mighty south facade the new construction broke new ground with regard to the town's topography. The south side, facing the area that would now become the Markt, was the building's actual main representative front. An arcade passageway of eleven arches supported by twelve sandstone columns stretched along it. Each arcade bay accommodated one window of the Lower Hall; from the arcades, a crenellation rose upward, set with stone-carved coats of arms and forming a passageway that was to some extent covered. The crenellation was interrupted in the middle by a platform accessible from the Upper Hall and thus providing the council with an opportunity to speak to the townsfolk. Five pointed-arch windows opened up the wall on either side of the platform; between them stood the sandstone sculpture cycle of the princes elector under delicate canopies. Above them, a further row of insignia beneath a second crenellation formed the upper edge of the facade, which was flanked by slender towers at the corners and covered by a flat hipped roof. If the princes elector cycle on the south facade made reference to the town's imperial-legal claims, the figures on the narrow sides confirmed the Christian foundation of the council's authority: As a group of Old Testament prophets, they symbolise the virtues of good and just government. Every detail of the building underscored the self-conception of the council and its politics, thirty insignia of befriended cities and princes signalising the respect the council also enjoyed beyond the city's bounds.

In the town hall interior, the council stalls in the Upper Hall are particularly worthy of mention. In the large assembly hall, the area partitioned off by the old stalls formed the heart of council authority and jurisdiction. Like the town hall and the Roland, the pictorial programme of the stalls' side walls – of which the originals have survived – indicated Bremen's Carolingian origins.

With the construction of the Gothic town hall, Bremen's topographical dualism was finally overcome, i.e. that between



The Markt in Bremen around 1653. Copper engraving by Matthaeus Merian; the town hall now shows the facade by Lüder von Bentheim

the ecclesiastical-archiepiscopalian district surrounding the cathedral precincts in the east and the old merchants' quarter centred around Langenstrasse in the west. Roland and the town hall underscored the east-west traffic axis and occupied its centre. The town hall exterior now unmistakably quoted elements of late medieval palace and fortification architecture. While the narrow sides resembled a fortified gate building, the south facade with the princes elector cycle was reminiscent of a royal palace.

The intention and significance of the Gothic town hall can also be inferred from the ensemble formed by Unser Lieben Frauen, Roland, the Palatium and the Dom, in whose midst it stands. Flanked to the west by the council church Unser Lieben Frauen and the old marketplace around the churchyard, the town hall also had an immediate neighbour to the east – the Palatium with its great Gothic entrance portal. This secular Gothic building unmistakably influenced the design of the town hall's narrow sides with its portals and windows, and even its interior dimensions. The ensemble was completed by the St. Petri Dom, whose covered passageway and blind arcades of the western facade were echoed by the Gothic town hall balustrade. The town thus responded to the buildings representing its ruler's ecclesiastical and political authority by presenting an independently defined political role, not so much a confrontation as a reply at a time when archiepiscopal domination within the town had been overcome once and for all. With a sumptuous new building, the town stood its own alongside a ruler who was receding into the background. At the time of construction, the tension between the city and the archbishop was minimal, as testified to by the use of the Palatium for construction purposes as well as by Archbishop Otto II's financial support of the project. Offensive opposition to the St. Petri Dom would have made no sense – after all, the town's seal featured St. Peter as its patron.

All pictures: Old Town Hall. Statues on the main front. The emperor

The prince elector of Mainz

The prince elector of Cologne

The prince elector of Trier

The king of Bohemia

The prince elector of Bavaria

The prince elector of Saxony

The prince elector of Brandenburg

The Bremen Hanse cog of 1380, German Maritime Museum, Bremerhaven

The Bremen Hanse Cog of 1380

Cogs were the one-masted merchant vessels with which the Hanse cities carried out their trading activities from 1160 on – when the Hanse League was established – leading to the attainment of previously unheard-of economic prosperity that would last for centuries. It was not until the fifteenth century that cogs were succeeded by larger and stronger ship types. Until 1962, cogs were known only from small pictorial depictions on the official seals of the Hanse cities. In that year, an almost entirely preserved wooden wreck was discovered in the Weser a few kilometres downstream from the site of medieval Bremen's town centre. It so resembled the depictions on the seal that there could be no doubt: For the very first time, a cog from the period of the Hanse's ascent and prime had been discovered. By 1965 it had been salvaged in all of its parts, which were reassembled in the then newly erected German Maritime Museum of Bremerhaven in a painstaking process that began in 1972. This was followed by conservation according to a technique that required nearly thirty years. Since May 2001 the cog has been on display to the public in all her splendour.

Careful examinations revealed that the straight oaken trunks used for the keel, posts, planks, crossbeams, etc. had been felled on the Upper Weser in the autumn of 1378, while the elbow pieces used for the timbers had grown in the vicinity of Bremen. There the cog was built in 1379, then launched. In the spring of 1380 she lay without ballast at a quay, ready for fitting out, when she was wrested from her berth by a flood – possibly accompanied by drifting ice – only to get caught in a whirlpool and capsize. Resting on her starboard side, she was soon covered with river sediment and thus preserved by natural means, fully intact up to the upper castle deck rail. It was thanks to this circumstance that she could be compared with the seal depictions and identified as a cog.

The good 80 t of cargo which the cog could carry in her hold had to be packed in watertight containers, e.g. barrels, for all the water that washed over the vessel's sides ran through the deck and into the bilge, from where it had to be pumped out by hand. Living quarters were installed below the castle deck, to date the oldest known accommodations on medieval ships. All in all, the cog is a unique testimony to Bremen shipbuilding and to the suppliers who imported tar and hemp for the rigging from the Baltic region. The only material whose origin remains a mystery is the iron used for the spikes, caulking clamps, anchor and other parts.

Cog seal, 1329

The Bremen Hanse cog of 1380, German Maritime Museum, Bremerhaven

On September 28, 1252 King William of Holland confirms a privilege allegedly granted by King Henry V on May 14, 1111. Early 15th-century forgery (Staatsarchiv Bremen)

Imperial propaganda around 1420

With its monumental town hall construction, Bremen symbolically concluded a process which many cathedral cities of the empire and Europe underwent. In the form of a well-fortified palace, the town hall defended a victory already attained, assigning the opponent a new role without supplanting him. The question as to the role to be assumed by the city itself, the status that befitted it, was a highly controversial one that occupied the council and the citizens repeatedly at the time of the town hall construction. Its answer was directly connected with the construction of both the town hall and Roland. Bremen's relationship to the emperor and the empire – expressed in the princes elector cycle – represented a major problem.

Whereas the Bremen council succeeded in practising politics that were in effect independent of the regional sovereign, it had no legally secured status that confirmed this independence. In reality, a large majority of the city's privileges and rights were based on archiepiscopal conferment. As a result, demands were voiced within the council for documentary proof that would secure the city's legal position. Around 1420, a group of councillors around Burgomaster Johann Hemeling (their names are no longer known) fabricated a series of forgeries and interfered with the town annals with the intent of favourably redefining Bremen's position with regard to both the regional sovereign and the Hanse. The perpetrators of this tendentious act relied above all upon Charlemagne – a person closely associated with the city's founding and greatly honoured by its citizens, and regarded within the empire to be the safest guarantor of medieval legal tradition – and produced a series of forgeries allegedly comprising privileges bestowed upon the town by Charlemagne and confirmed in 1111 by Henry V, in 1252 by William of Holland and in 1396 by King Wenzel.

The council of Bremen thus aimed to obtain the guarantee of specific rights: The citizens of Bremen were to be exempted from citation to the vehmgericht, and Bremen was to hold the regional sovereign right to the pacification of the Weser (protection and escort right). Finally, the council was to enjoy the privilege of wearing gold and colour in its clothing – like the knights – and to decorate Roland's shield with the imperial insignia as a symbol of this right.

These demands point to the council's new level of self-confidence, as well as to actual political conflicts related to the Lower Weser and emulation of other members of the Hanse. Cologne had come to serve as a prime example for the council of Bremen: The Rhenish city's emancipation from the regional sovereign and the demeanour of its leading stratum within the Hanse league

Statue of the emperor on the main front of the town hall

had made a deep impression. Now Bremen attempted to assume a privileged position among the Hanse and prevail against Hamburg to rank third in importance – after Lübeck and Cologne – at league assemblies. As groundwork for this claim, the theory of Bremen's special "emperor's freedom" was developed within the circles associated with the council. Bremen, it stated, was the freest city *in all der werlde* because – unlike free imperial cities such as Lübeck – it was not required to pay any regular rates and taxes to the empire, while as time-honoured arch seat, mediated by the archbishop, it had enjoyed imperial liberties since the time of Charlemagne and Willehad.

This position, clearly reminiscent of the legal status of the free Rhenish cities, was expressed both in the town hall construction and in the Roland. The world-famous Bremen Roland is not only the oldest and largest preserved statue of its kind, it is also far more than a market symbol: It not only supports Bremen's liberties with its symbolic form, but with its shields it also confirms the city's specific imperial propaganda. The imperial eagle and the inscription on the shield herald Bremen's bonds to Charlemagne and to the empire with equal emphasis. Moreover, by means of the rose and angel on his belt, the Bremen Roland is conveyed as the Christian martyr Roland, the historical paladin of Charlemagne.

Territorial struggles over Bremen's status on the Lower Weser, where it took control of Butjadingen in 1420 on behalf of the empire, and conflicts with the Hanse over trade policies – Bremen was expelled from the Hanse in 1427 – dominated the city's destiny for the remainder of the century. In 1427, the council came under pressure by the parliament, which successfully called for new council elections. Reforms of the council election procedures were incorporated into a 1428 revision of the civic law. And however well the town hall advertised council rule as just rule, founded on divine and secular law, it now became the centre of a constitutional crisis with imperial-political consequences. The reforms of 1428 were intended to prevent the domination of the council by a small number of families. The council was newly elected, but then – following many an embroilment – the old council dynasties took legal action against Bremen and the new council before the emperor, leading to an imperial ban. In 1433 a revision of the civic law finally ended the struggle by restoring the former exclusivity of the council's authority.

In the second half of the fifteenth century, the town hall remained the seat of government of a polity which, though liberally composed – measured by the standards of the time –, was in reality dominated by wealthy landowners and merchants. Within the concert of local powers, Bremen took part in feuds and wars with neighbouring noblemen, was still – as an estate of the archdiocese – linked to the destinies of the archbishops and played an important role within the Hanse. Beginning in 1449, the city therefore hosted several Hanse assemblies. The council stalls in the Upper Hall of the town hall served as the setting for these events, which provided the council with an opportunity to demonstrate its status within the Hanse league to the visiting cities as well as to its own citizens.

The Roland on the marketplace

The town hall in the Late Middle Ages and the Reformation

As the centre of government, jurisdiction, trade and commerce, the town hall was undisputedly the most important building of the town. Nevertheless, beginning in the late fifteenth century, alterations and expansions of the town hall were undertaken in response to new requirements. Moreover, the building was located in a constantly changing architectural and social environment, in which it gained further significance during the Reformation.

The unrest of the fourteenth century and fifteenth-century disputes over the composition and election of the council had shown that under council rule large portions of the population as well as the majority of the economically prospering craftsmen and merchants were excluded from a share of the authority. The council controlled both the guilds – referred to in Bremen as *Ämter* (offices) – and the merchants. While the craftsmen were under the watchful eye of certain council members – the so-called *Morgensprachsherren* – who attended their guild assemblies, the merchants were able to attain greater autonomy: Their corporation "The Merchant of Bremen" had its own assembly house – the Schütting – in the Langenstrasse. In 1451 the merchants enacted an ordinance allowing their speakers (elders) to settle their affairs more independently of the council. The Bremen merchants' association was not only the city's economically most important corporation, but was also responsible for certain duties of the public administration, such as the maintenance of fairway and navigation marks.

In 1425, the merchants purchased the lot for a new Schütting on the south side of the Markt. Completed in 1444, the building that emerged opposite the Gothic town hall, permanently cutting off the market from the old Balge harbour, has remained of central importance for the Markt ensemble to the present day. The Schütting not only concluded this ensemble, but was also a significant vis-à-vis for the town hall, with which it was also able to compete architecturally following the addition of its new western gable by Johann den Buschener in 1537–1538. In view of the merchants' increasing self-confidence, the building must have represented a challenge to the council, especially in times of tense relationships, and especially after the Schütting's Markt facade had been once again renewed – by Lüder von Bentheim in 1594.

Beginning around 1500, expansions and alterations of the town hall were also undertaken, responding to specific functional requirements without changing the building's overall character. The northern exterior entrance to the Upper Hall was closed, having proven a vulnerable spot during an uprising. The presently still existing spiral staircase from the Lower to the Upper Hall was installed in its place. While this was a change of primarily functional character, the decades that followed saw a significant increase in the representative decoration of the Upper Hall and several structural additions. In 1532, Bartholomäus Bruyn the Elder produced the wall painting of the Solomonic Judgement that hung above the council stalls, as well as the foundation picture showing Charlemagne and Willehad. The latter celebrates the well-known derivation of Bremen's freedom and its council's authority in connection with the crusade poem, while the former illustrates the council's jurisdictional function. In addition to the paintings, the Upper Hall received a number of new doors and portals in the course of the century – splendid representative constructions allowing passageway to functional rooms, some of them newly added. In addition to the Kämmerei door of 1547–1548 and the Collectenkammer portal of 1587, there was also the 1550 door from the Upper Hall to the Neue Wittheitsstube, which led into the three-gabled annex erected on the north-west side in 1545. In 1579 a further annex was built on the north side – the council chancellery, furnished with an exterior entrance.

These measures were carried out in a period that bestowed upon the council and its hall yet a further increase in renown and authority: The Reformation not only brought about decisive changes in Bremen's religious makeup but also shifts of power with regard to the regional sovereignty – shifts in the council's favour.

Side walls of the old council stalls (Focke Museum)

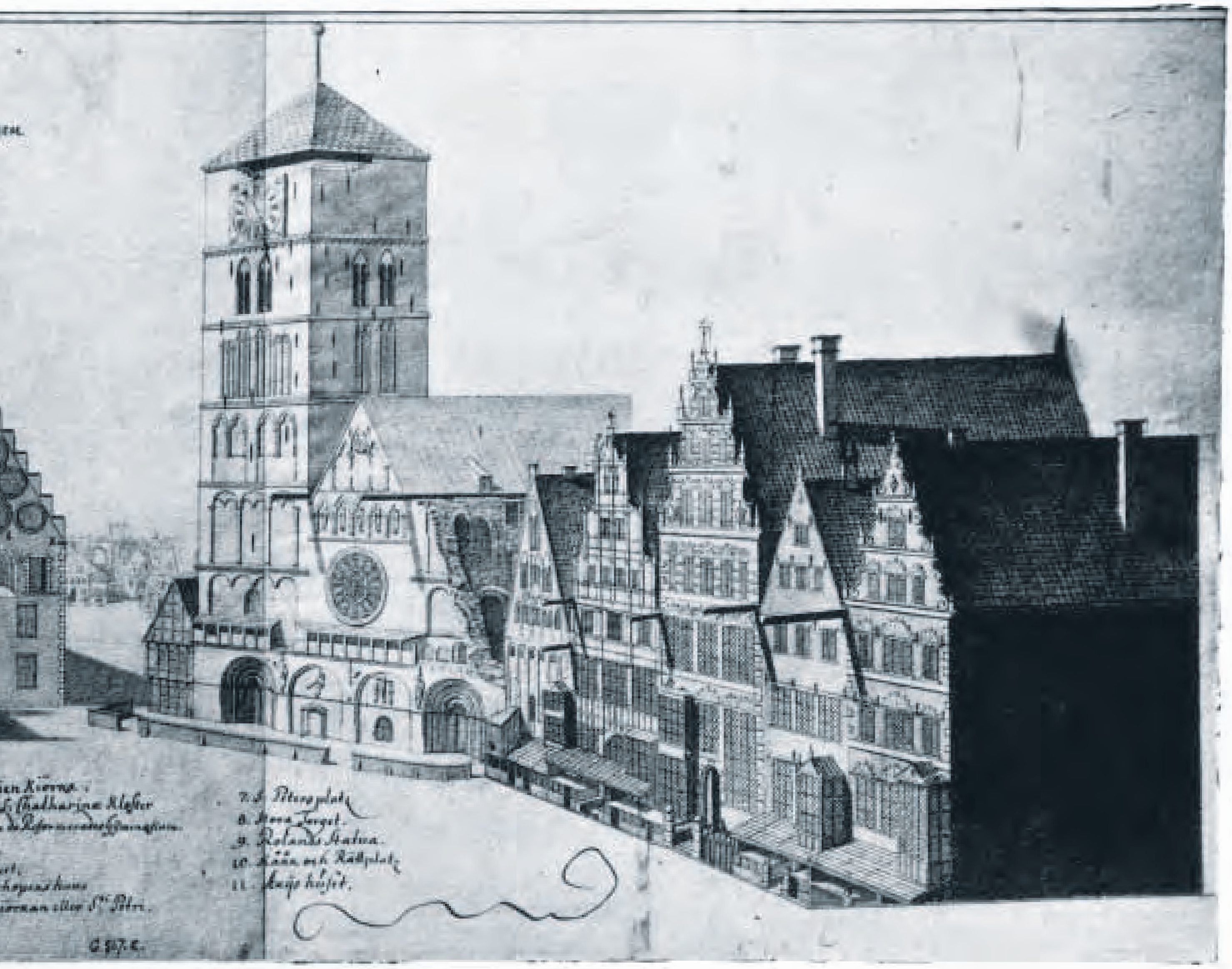
The first Reformed sermon was held in Bremen in 1522. The ideas of the Reformation were quick to take hold among the upper class, and the majority of the councillors were soon Protestant. From the very beginning of the Reformation, the council thus stood in strong opposition to the Catholic archbishop. Now that the estrangement from the nominal regional sovereign was also inward, his expulsion from the city was final. As a sacred building, the St. Petri Dom in the extraterritorial precincts receded in significance behind the Protestant parish churches for centuries to come. This development robbed Bremen's specific, archbishop-mediated freedom of its basis; from this time on, council politics focused on forging a direct link to the emperor and the empire. These efforts are documented, for example, in a proud series of imperial diplomas issued for Bremen under Charles V in 1541; even they did not suffice, however, as a legal basis for the status of imperial estate. At the same time, Bremen did not shy away from resisting the emperor militarily as a member of the Schmalkaldic League. The council's successes in dealing with outside forces was complemented domestically with the massive consolidation of its authority following a severe constitutional crisis of 1530–1532. The "Revolt of the 104" was enflamed by the question as to whether the council should rule with unrestricted authority or be confronted with a regulator in the form of the townsfolk. The newly elected citizen's committee of 104 persons – primarily merchants, craftsmen and shipmasters – was dissolved by the council and a "New Unity," substantially consolidating the council's authority, was invoked.

In the wake of the Reformation, the council also took tight hold of ecclesiastical power. The *sumepiskopat* increased the authority of the burgomasters and councillors over the faithful to a degree that can hardly be overestimated. In 1534 the council approved a new church order, initiated by its own members and sanctioned by Martin Luther. The town hall was now the seat not only of the highest regional and judiciary power, but also of the leading agency guiding the town in questions of faith. Under the leadership of Burgomaster Daniel von Büren, the city which traditionally maintained close relationships to the Netherlands became an outpost of German Calvinism. In 1619 Bremen even joined the Reformed Dordrecht Synod, a step which led to the city's increasing isolation – political as well as religious – from its Lutheran neighbours.

The concentration of political, jurisdictional, administrative and religious authority in the hand of the council led to the increased professionalisation of government activities. Syndics learned in the law counselled the councillors and took over official functions, for the council's business could no longer be carried out solely by merchants in addition to their own professional duties. Scholars, primarily learned jurists, now formed an increasingly important element in the town's politically powerful stratum.

On July 15, 1541 Emperor Charles V confirms the Bremen council constitution, the town's jurisdiction, and council rule over the region (Staatsarchiv Bremen)

View of the Bremen Markt ensemble, 1667, drawing by Erik Dahlberg (Staatsarchiv Bremen)



Marketplace with the Schütting (to the right) and the buildings formerly on the east side of the square (Staatsarchiv Bremen)

The Schütting, marketplace facade

The Schütting

In 888 Bremen received the royal market prerogative, and a diploma issued by Otto I mentions a merchants' settlement there as early as 965. In a city such as Bremen, which has commercial success to thank for its later autonomy, an important role had to be conceded to the merchants' association at an early date.

Thus it is hardly surprising that the development of this association ran parallel to that of the council government, and that, moreover, in certain phases – as the city's most important corporation after the council – it could claim to represent the entire civil population.

The Bremen merchants' guild, called "The Merchant of Bremen," was led by elders from whose ranks a board of directors – the *Collegium Seniorum* – later emerged. In 1451 it enacted its first own written statute (*Ordinantie*).

A body of this kind naturally lay claim to representative headquarters, whose dimensions and form were measured against the standards of the town hall as the town's central secular building.

The Bremen merchants' oldest known guildhall was located in the Langenstrasse, at the south end of the former marketplace and thus opposite the first town hall. When the Gothic town hall construction of the early fifteenth century changed the market topography, the merchants reacted in 1425 by purchasing a lot located between the south edge of the new market – i.e. again vis-à-vis the town hall – and the Balge. Here the second, Gothic Schütting arose. Yet even this building soon failed to meet the demands of assembly hall, inn and storage house, and in 1537, under master builder Johann den Buschener of Antwerp, construction began again. The form and dimensions of the third Schütting of 1537–1538 have survived to the present, although only the western gable facing the Langenstrasse has come down to us in the original. The eastern gable was built in 1565 under a master builder of Bremen, and Lüder von Bentheim was closely involved with the design of the Markt facade whose construction began in 1594. The building's present appearance, however, is dominated by alterations in the Baroque and historicist styles.

Eastern gable of 1565

While the second and third guildhalls formed the merchant association's response to the Gothic town hall of 1405, the opposite was true two hundred years later: The Schütting facade begun in the late sixteenth century – with its dormer window figures and representative ornamentation – had particular model character for the town hall's Renaissance facade. The struggle between the council and the merchant elders over the dominating position within the town centre thus led to an architecturally productive rivalry which still determines the arrangement of the Markt today.

Since 1849 the Schütting has housed the Bremen Chamber of Commerce.

Bremen in the seventeenth century – The alterations of the town hall facade

Bremen had considerably widened its sphere of influence around 1600; it was protected by ramparts as well as by castles in its outlying territory, and even the emperor recognised the authority of its council. The town experienced a political and economic heyday, as documented by the numerous public and private buildings constructed in the Weser Renaissance style before the outbreak of the Thirty Years' War. The stonemason and entrepreneur Lüder von Bentheim played a leading role in the town's architectural development, being involved in the construction of the Stadtwaage (1587–1588), the new Kornhaus (1590–1591) and the alterations of the town hall facade (from 1595 on and 1609–1612).

The elders of the merchants' association, the city's only politically influential corporation, found themselves increasingly excluded from the council. The council's mercantile element decreased during this phase as academically educated councillors took over key positions alongside members of the old council dynasties. The confrontation between the Gothic town hall and the splendidly refurbished Schütting was not of a merely spatial nature.

It was the council which now took the initiative. In the 1590s the architectural image of the Markt had been greatly improved by private residences, the Schütting and a new surface. Now the town hall was renewed in a manner that left no doubt as to the council's comprehensive claim to leadership. Whereas the alterations may well have been planned before 1595 under Burgomaster Daniel von Büren, their realisation took place primarily between 1609 and 1612 during the tenure of Burgomaster Heinrich Kreffting. Under the direction of Lüder von Bentheim, the new Markt facade of the town hall took shape. It was to become Bremen's most important work of architecture and the culmination of the Weser Renaissance style that had spread throughout Northwest Germany and the Western Netherlands. In the eyes of the beholder, a magnificent new building emerged, although the underlying structure remained relatively unaltered. The town hall changed its character from a well-fortified, Gothic palas to a stone allegory of Christian-Republican sovereignty. The previously rather planar exterior was now broken down into a multitude of erudite, classical and above all Christian-inspired decorative elements (see Description of property). The most significant interventions were the construction of the central projection, changing the impression of the building's height, and the replacement of the small Gothic proclamation platform by a shrine of sandstone and glass. In comparison, this new element much more clearly reflected the remote but supervisory and vigilant function of the council authority, housing as it did the council cabinet, the Güldenkammer. The component most important for the purposes of political propaganda – the sixteen sculptures – remained untouched by the alterations. At the beginning of the seventeenth century the princes elector cycle had just as great a programmatic significance as in 1400; the prophets on the other hand – as symbols of Christian supremacy – now underwent reinterpretation as philosophers who, in keeping with seventeenth-century scholarship, bore allusions to classical-republican virtues. The sumptuous refashioning of the facade had its indoor counterpart in the creation of the Güldenkammer, completed in 1616. With its spiral staircase and the carving work on its walls, the Güldenkammer is no less a high point of artistic creation than the facade (see Description). Here again, in the paintings and carvings, allusions were made to the virtues of just and Christian government and jurisdiction. Finally, with the emperor medallions of 1612 on the ceiling, the theme of proximity to the emperor was incorporated into the design of the Upper Hall as well.

The oldest manuscript of the Bremen civil code, begun in 1303, book cover after 1350; from the civil code of 1303/08 a register of judgements passed by the councillors (Staatsarchiv Bremen)

Town Hall, Councillors and Council Rule

The council stalls in the Upper Hall of the town hall formed the nucleus of Bremen's civic sovereignty and jurisdiction. The council's authority was borne by the councillors (*consules*), who were referred to in their entirety as the Wittheit (from the Low German word for wisdom). According to the Bremen civic code of 1303–1304, the Wittheit consisted of three council thirds, comprising twelve councillors each. Each third (one burgomaster and eleven councillors) was in office for one year. In 1330 conditions were established for eligibility to serve as councillor, for example birth in wedlock as a freeman and possession of town property in the value of 32 Marks. All in all, these obligations served to exclude craftsmen and non-moneyed persons from holding the office. Also in 1330, the Wittheit was expanded to one-hundred and fourteen (three times thirty-eight) councillors, in 1348 it was reduced again to fifty, in 1354 to thirty-six. The year 1398 saw the redivision of the council thirds into quarters (*Quartiere*) of six members each (one burgomaster and five councillors), of whom two were always in office.

All these many modifications did nothing to change the fact that lifelong membership in the council – a body which consistently chose its own successors – was reserved for a relatively exclusive and elite circle. The "Eintrachten" (unities) formed in 1433 and 1534 in the wake of political crises only served to strengthen patrician council rule.

From 1822 on, the Rat (council) officially called itself the Senat (senate). The senators elected two burgomasters from their midst, of whom one was elected as president of the senate. Although reforms were initiated by the 1848 Revolution, democratic elections to the senate were first made possible by the constitution of 1920. The senate of Bremen, presently consisting of seven members, still elects two burgomasters of whom one becomes the senate president.

The years leading up to the Thirty Years' War were productive not only for architecture but for areas directly influenced by the council – judicature, historiography, chronology and higher education (establishment of the *Gymnasium Illustre*). These developments came to a standstill during the war, when Bremen invested great sums in bastions and fortifications.

The war brought about two changes which were also of fundamental importance for the town hall: The Archbishopric of Bremen, the territorial state of the now Lutheran archbishops, was secularised. Bremen thus gained a new neighbour in the form of the Swedish Duchy of Bremen and Verden, which made territorial claims on the city and was prepared to assert them militarily. Bremen had to endure two wars with Sweden before the claims were rejected in 1666. In the Upper Hall, the chief work of artistically rendered political propaganda of those years – the whale painting by Franz Wulfhagen (1669) – glorified a Bremen victory in the border conflict with Sweden.

An even more important aspect was the recognition of Bremen's direct bonds to the empire: On June 1, 1646 Emperor Ferdinand III signed the Diploma of Linz, which amounted to the birth certificate of Bremen's sovereignty in modern times. The signature had been preceded by years of diplomatic and legal disputes, in the course of which Bremen had consulted experts, made political concessions to the emperor and invested considerable sums of money. Bremen's elevation to "a free imperial city of the Holy Roman Empire" gave the council an instrument with which the status of imperial estate could be asserted offensively, for example against Sweden.

The former cathedral precincts were now politically and ecclesiastically isolated foreign territory; the Lutheran Dom began to fall into decay. And the historical developments claimed yet a further victim: The Hanse, no more than a shadow of its former self, disintegrated entirely. Beginning in 1629, Bremen, Lübeck and Hamburg acted as the trustees of its inheritance.

The burgomasters of Bremen now acted as sovereigns of an independent, republican state whose life line was the Weser and whose weal and woe was dependent on the economic situation.

In 1620 the town hall cellar had been expanded toward the Liebfrauenkirchhof, and new accommodations for the Börse (the so-called Alte Börse) were built over it in 1685, distinctly changing the previous urban topography. The furnishings and decorations of the town hall were also considerably expanded, for example by an annex for the Niedergericht (the Sternkammer, torn down in 1826) near the cellar entrance, splendid doorways in the Lower and Upper Halls (see Description of property), reliefs, portraits and the whale painting.

The Linz diploma of June 1, 1646. Emperor Ferdinand III installs Bremen as a free and self-governing city of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation (Staatsarchiv Bremen)

A festive procession on the marketplace in 1863. The Alte Börse and the Kirche Unser Lieben Frauen can be seen to the left of town hall and Roland (Staatsarchiv Bremen)

Bremen marketplace with town hall, Roland and Dom, 1834 (Staatsarchiv Bremen)

Autonomous territorial power and mercantile town

In the eighteenth century, Sweden was succeeded in the neighbouring Duchy of Bremen and Verden first by Denmark (1712) and then by the Kingdom of Hanover (1715). These powers also threatened Bremen's sovereignty, which the city was nevertheless able to defend by means of prudent politics during the great European wars at the beginning and middle of the century.

With regard to the neighbouring Kingdom of Hanover, Bremen now succeeded in territorially consolidating the legal status it had attained in 1646. In 1741, the Second Accord of Stade represented the first instance in which a formerly hostile power recognised Bremen's sovereignty over the city and surrounding rural area in full. The burgomaster and the council now controlled a territory to which no other power had a legal claim. This happy conclusion to a long struggle over the sovereignty and role of Bremen as a small republic in the concert of princely powers in the empire and Europe characterise the climate of eighteenth-century Bremen. Nobody, at home or abroad, seriously questioned the council's authority; Bremen settled into its attainments. Despite the many achievements in science, technology, and overseas trade, and despite the many social improvements, it can be described as a restful period.

The town hall also testifies to this basic atmosphere of the eighteenth century: The work undertaken on the property was of a primarily renovative nature. Bremen's mood did not change until the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation came to an end under the blows of the Napoleonic armies. As the result of an 1803 decision of the Deputation of the German Estates, the Hanoverian possessions in Bremen (Palatium, Dom and Domshof) were ceded to the city. The territorial dualism which had endured in the direct vicinity of the town hall for centuries thus came to an end. Bremen's gradual incorporation into the French empire and the unprecedented complete loss of its sovereignty through its degradation to capital of the "Departement of the Weser Estuaries" and bonne ville of the empire finally led to a break of structures in the city. Nothing illustrates this radical turning point in the self-image of its citizens and leading strata better than the danger which threatened the old symbols of Bremen's freedom and sovereignty: In the town hall, the council stalls – the central site of the council's legislative, executive and judiciary power – were destroyed. Only four of their side walls survived. The statue of Roland also only narrowly escaped demolition more than once.

Town hall and marketplace on the occasion of a militia parade in 1849

Development into a modern body politic

Following the collapse of Napoleonic supremacy in 1813 and the territorial reorganisation of Europe, Bremen emerged from the Congress of Vienna as a sovereign state. From 1815 on, Bremen endeavoured to play an appropriate role as a small polity within the German Confederation, mindful of its sovereignty amongst the great monarchical powers. After 1871, Bremen was the smallest state within the German Empire, and although it did not accede to the customs union until 1888 it assumed a self-confidently republican role in the new order.

On November 7, 1813 the legal state of affairs in effect before 1810 were restored by the proclamation of the old constitution of Bremen in the Upper Hall of the town hall. Yet the overall framework had changed both for Bremen's sovereignty and the city's constitution, and they required new justification. In Paris and Vienna the restoration of Bremen's state sovereignty was guaranteed by the great powers, thanks in particular to the diplomatic skill of the Bremen envoy Johann Smidt. At the negotiations over the reorganisation of Germany, Bremen represented the Free Hanse Cities as well as the small states.

On the other hand, the reform of Bremen's constitutional framework – still based on the civic law of the Middle Ages and the "New Unity" of 1532 – dragged on for years without results. The submission of a petition in the Upper Hall on March 8, 1848 finally triggered a series of more productive debates over the constitution. The democratic constitution of 1849 initiated the separation of the judicature and administration and temporarily strengthened the parliament which convened in the town hall. Beginning in 1854, however, the senate once again held the sole executive authority and right to preside over the affairs of state.

In the first half of the nineteenth century Bremen's economy experienced an upswing, thanks to overseas import activities which were soon enhanced by the rising emigration business, primarily with the U.S.A. The Weser still served as the city's mercantile life line, but it was becoming increasingly silted. The foundation of Bremerhaven in 1827 thus proved to be a foresighted decision: At the end of the nineteenth century, against the background of an economy that was booming due to the straightening of the Weser and the construction of transatlantic ports near the city centre, Bremerhaven provided the city with access to world trade.

By means of structural alterations, the old archiepiscopal Palatium was converted into an annex for administrative purposes – the Stadthaus – in 1816–1819. Its direct structural connection to the town hall was made possible in 1825 by the demolition of town hall annexes of 1554–1560. Beginning in the 1820s, a series of minor structural alterations of the town hall, its cellar and its roof, as well as restorations of its furnishings was undertaken. When the Upper Hall was restored in 1857–1861, the town hall was spared from major renovation.

On the Markt, however, the town hall's immediate surroundings underwent their most drastic changes in modern times through the demolition of the medieval and Renaissance citizen's houses lining the eastern edge and the construction of the Neo-Gothic Neue Börse (new stock exchange) in 1861–1865. Previously bounded on two sides by residential houses, the spatial interplay between the town hall and the Schütting was now dominated by a third large individual edifice. The new building was an expression of the merchant association's greatly increased self-confidence and the significance of commerce and crafts in the town.

Emigrants in Bremerhaven, Johannes Gehrts

The Haus der Bürgerschaft on the Markt

View of the marketplace from the main hall

The Haus der Bürgerschaft

On the east side of the Markt is the only modern structure in the ensemble: the Haus der Bremischen Bürgerschaft. It was built in 1961–1966 according to a design by the architect Wassili Luckhardt. The project was highly controversial because it so strongly contrasts with the square's architectural norm.

Heinrich Müller's (1819–1890) monumental Neue Börse had opened in 1864. The building, soon regarded as inappropriately large in comparison to the town hall and the Schütting, was gutted by fire after an air raid of 1943.

With regard to both the design and the function of whatever building would be erected there, high expectations were associated with the site. In 1946 there were thoughts of bringing various Renaissance facades together – preserved ones and ones dug out of the ruins – and erecting them there anew.

In 1951–1952 a competition was advertised for ideas on the future architectural development of the east side of the Markt. When the competition had been concluded, the Chamber of Commerce offered to donate the lot to the city for the construction of a building for the Bremen parliament – the worthiest of the city's institutions which lacked their own premises. In 1958 the parliament resolved to build on the site. Before the Haus der Bürgerschaft could be occupied, two major competitions and additional revision phases had to be carried out, and a bitter public discussion on the appropriateness of a modern glass building on the Markt to be endured. The controversy was triggered by Wassili Luckhardt's Classical Modern design, which provided for a glass curtain wall: In the consciousness of the time, the transparency of glass was associated with the idea of democratic construction. The alternative would have been the design by a Bremen architect who envisioned a hipped-roofed grid building of the kind then typical.

Luckhardt's design met with blanket rejection among the people of Bremen: They wanted gables on their Markt. In the revision process, the designs of both protagonists developed in a conservative direction. Luckhardt now structured the Markt front vertically with intimations of gables, while the competing entry was changed to encompass four gables.

Long discussions ensued, the advocates of the Luckhardt design finally prevailing. In its realisation, the building can be referred to as a work of moderate Classical Modernism. It is the architect's most important surviving work and was declared a historical monument in 1992.

Breaks and continuity in modern times

The years leading up to World War I saw Bremen at the height of an industrial and commercial boom, the primary branches being shipping and shipbuilding. This development came to an abrupt end when war broke out. Following the intermezzo of the so-called Räterepublik (republic governed by commissars), Bremen's political autonomy was also valid in the Weimar Republic, now within the context of a democratic constitution. Democracy and autonomy were lost during the period of National-Socialist dictatorship. Not until Bremen was refounded as a two-city-state within the American-occupied zone could it resume the historical continuum of republican-democratic culture and federal structure as the Free Hanse City of Bremen.

Moderate alterations of the town hall's interior and exterior furnishings were carried out at the start of the twentieth century. Knights and mounted heralds, for example, were erected before the portals, and Johann Georg Poppe's new council seats were installed in the Upper Hall in 1903–1905. A much more substantial measure – and one greatly increasing the town hall's overall artistic value – was the art nouveau decoration of the Güldenkammer interior by Heinrich Vogeler in 1904–1905.

The most important construction project since the Renaissance alteration of the facade was the building of the New Town Hall by Gabriel von Seidl in 1909–1913. Seidl spared the Gothic structural nucleus forming the Lower and Upper Halls of the Old Town Hall, but the Stadthaus, and with it the still-existing elements of the Gothic Palatium (an important part of the Old Town Hall ensemble), had to go. With the New Town Hall, a successful symbiosis of representative seat of government and modern, functional administration building was achieved. The building accommodates splendid rooms, such as the festival hall, as well as purely functional offices, which were connected with the Old Town Hall in an appropriately unobtrusive manner (see Description). Inside and out, the New Town Hall is clearly recognisable as part of the town hall ensemble, but one that neither dominates nor merely imitates the old building. This construction measure can be regarded as the final endeavour undertaken by the elite which had dominated the Bremen senate for centuries to shape and furnish the town hall.

In the wake of the First World War, the November Revolution of 1918 brought workers' and soldiers' councils to power in Bremen. They used the town hall as the government headquarters of a Socialist Räterepublik until February 1919, but remained a temporary episode. During the Weimar Republic the senate was democratically elected for the first time, and the constitution of 1920 laid the modern foundations for the government and administration of the Free Hanse City of Bremen. In the 1920s painted decorations were carried out in the town hall cellar and above all a comprehensive refurbishment of the Markt facade.

Under the National Socialists, the town hall housed a senate dependent on a Reich governor in a system that ended in the ruins caused by the Allied bomb attacks. In view of the losses of historical building substance in Bremen and the destruction of comparable monuments in many other cities, it is to be regarded a very special stroke of fortune that the town hall and Roland of Bremen survived World War II unscathed. The two sacred buildings – the Dom and the Liebfrauenkirche – were also spared for the most part, while the Markt ensemble suffered severe damages.

New Town Hall, Old Town Hall, Markt and Schütting decorated with flags for the centenary of the Battle of Leipzig, October 19, 1913 (Staatsarchiv Bremen)

November Revolution in Bremen, November 15, 1918: Red flag on the Bremen town hall (Staatsarchiv Bremen)

Oskar Kokoschka, Der Marktplatz zu Bremen, 1961 (Kunsthalle Bremen)

Declared a Land in 1947, Bremen became a Federal Land of the Federal Republic of Germany in 1949. It continues the republican tradition of combining communal and federal elements – a tradition hundreds of years old and alive in the town hall to this very day.

Since the post-war period, no substantial structural interventions have been undertaken in the town hall aside from necessary conservation and restoration work on the paintings, the Güldenkammer, the woodwork and the portals. The Roland had been thoroughly renovated in 1938; in 1983–1984 certain of its original parts were entrusted to the Bremer Landesmuseum and replaced with copies, as had been the practice with the princes elector figures. The Markt ensemble underwent changes which preserved the old, long-developed system of interrelationships while also adding new elements. A major war loss was that of the Neue Börse, which was replaced in 1961–1966 by the new Haus der Bürgerschaft, Bremen's first parliament building. In the wake of the Nazi period the parliament was understood as a potent counterpart to the seat of government in the town hall, and its political significance in the democratic self-conception of the Free Hanse City of Bremen is clearly expressed in the striking work of architecture by Wassili Luckhardt.

The western edge of the Markt had long been dominated by private commercial and residential buildings, and it remained that way after the war. To the south, the reconstruction of the Schütting as the seat of the Chamber of Commerce ensured the presence of Bremen's private enterprise on a prominent site – the site at which this element of the city's history had been represented for many centuries.

Thus the town hall and the Roland stand today as valuable and highly significant architectural monuments in a unique ensemble which evolved in the course of centuries and comprises sacred, corporate, public and private buildings. They symbolise the history of a self-confident republic. Because of the values they embody – the values of democracy, freedom of religion and freedom of political and economic self-determination – these works of architecture are part of humankind's cultural heritage.

Archival and administrative records and files

The Staatsarchiv Bremen contains several series of files on the town hall, some of them quite extensive. They belong above all to the former council archive (Town Hall: StAB 2.-P.2.; 2-R.1. Roland: StAB 2-P.2.) and the senate registry (Town Hall: StAB: 3-G.7. New Town Hall: 3.-G.7). More detailed information on the inventory structure and further materials concerning the town hall as well as the city's architectural and civic history can be found in the digital overview of the Staatsarchiv Bremen's holdings under www.bremen.de/info/staatsarchiv.

The Bremen building authorities (Baubetrieb, formerly Hochbauamt) possess files (vouchers) on all construction measures carried out by the authorities since 1948. The Bremen Landesamt für Denkmalpflege has at its disposal seventeen files on the measures undertaken between 1960 and the present – to the extent that this office took a stance on the activities of the building authorities and supervised restoration work itself – as well as fourteen portfolios containing conservators' reports.

Plans

Among the records of the Bremen building authorities are 380 plans, of which 64 are appended to this nomination on CD-ROM and as a set of printed plans. The Landesamt für Denkmalpflege possesses 190 further plans. All structural elements of the town hall are accounted for in this inventory of plans.

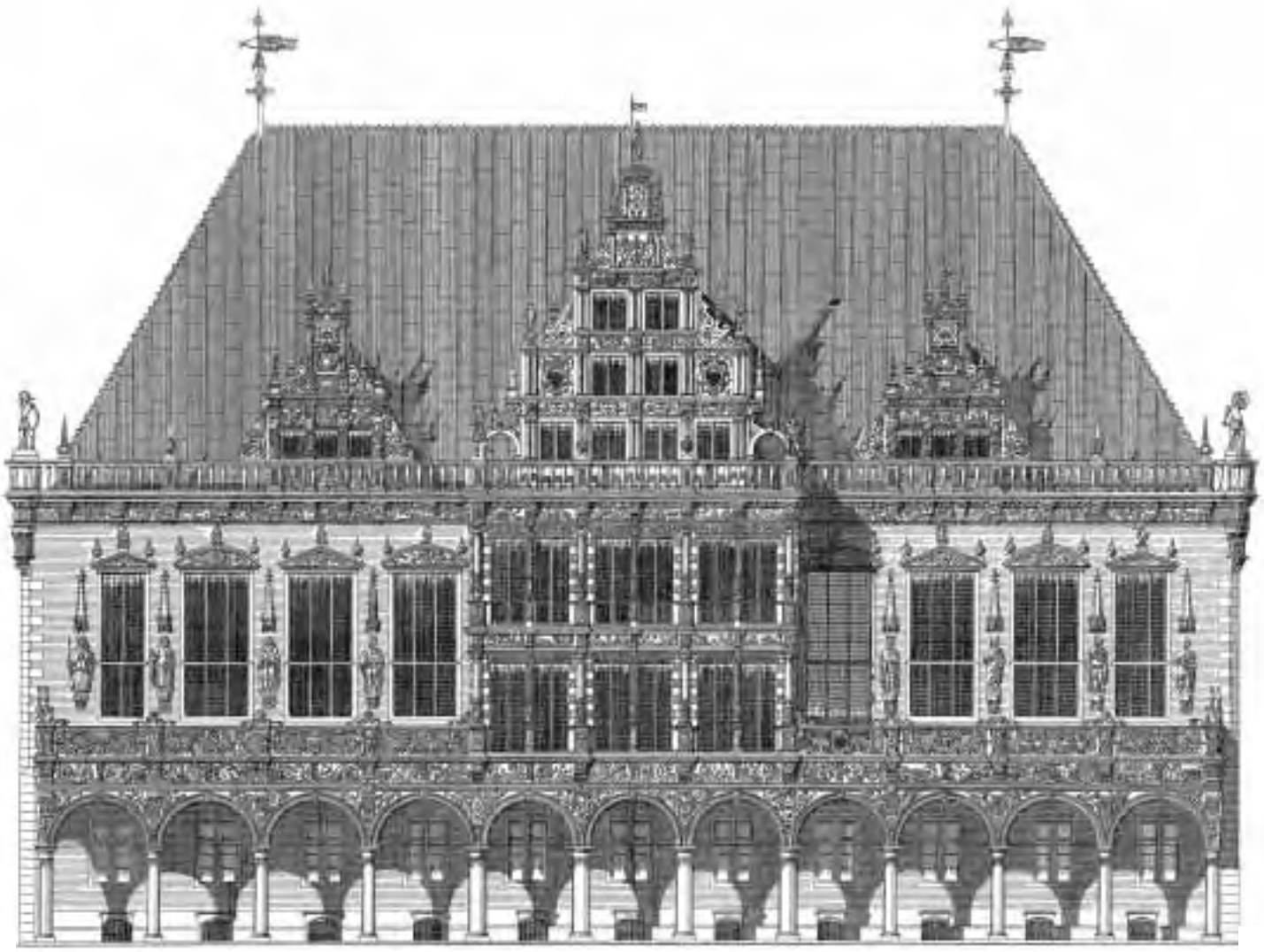
Photographic documentation

Aside from a few isolated photographic views of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century focusing primarily on the Old Town Hall, the first complete photographic documentation of the town hall is the one carried out ca 1910 and, in a second phase, in 1913 by the Preussische Messbild-Anstalt (Prussian photogrammetry institute, Maydenbauer Archive). At that time, 99 views of the Old Town Hall and 145 of the New Town Hall were taken. Both the Staatsarchiv as well as the Landesamt für Denkmalpflege possess complete sets of these two series.

The next extensive photographic series is the one commissioned by government architect Gustav Ulrich to accompany the restoration of 1928. The Landesamt für Denkmalpflege possesses approximately 290 of these views, of which 250 have been localised on a plan (Becker Photo Studio). A similar photographic documentation was carried out on the occasion of the 1965 facade restoration (Wiesner Photo Studio). On the occasion of the exchange of the original facade figures for copies, 60 photos were made of these statues (Stickelmann Photo Studio). Finally, within the framework of preventive observations, the entire south facade was photographically documented in small sections.

In addition to these more extensive photo series, there are countless photographic views of varying quality and date, in some cases documenting various states of the exterior and interior. In addition to the series made by the Preussische Messbildanstalt, the photographic inventory of the Landesamt für Denkmalpflege contains over one thousand views, naturally including many duplicates.

The overall stock of photographic documentation is rounded out by a collection of slides: approx. 350 35-mm and approx. 140 6 x 6 cm transparencies.



Town hall, photogrammetric depiction of the main front

3d *Present state of conservation*

Since its construction, the town hall has continually undergone maintenance and repair in a series of measures specifically documented at least since the mid nineteenth century. The middle gable was restabilised in 1928–1930, a comprehensive restoration of the Old Town Hall exterior and the Upper Hall carried out in 1964–1968. In a solicitous and precautionary measure, the statues of the main (southern) facade and western facade had already been copied (1959–1963).

Within the framework of the building's continual maintenance, the town hall facades are presently undergoing conservational treatment. This activity applies primarily to the web of brickwork joints and the conservation of the console stones and the balustrades. On the basis of thorough investigation it was decided that no further exchange of figures is necessary.

Since 2000, the copper roof has been undergoing restorative repair with the aim of preserving the naturally patinated copper.

The facades of the New Town Hall are dirty and show noticeable effects of exposure to the weather (Muschelkalk), but restoration measures are presently neither required nor planned.

Between 1985 and 1998 the representative rooms of the interior were restored or renovated, with the exception of the Upper Hall, which was restored in 1964–1968. No further measures will be required here in the decades to come. Independently of conservation considerations, a goods lift has been installed, by which means not only functional requirements are fulfilled, but the wear and tear of the rooms reduced.

The security precautions with regard to the danger of fire are in keeping with the latest developments in empirical knowledge and regulations – the last update having taken place ca 1990. The electrical system is regularly brought up to date with the most recent VDE (association of German electrical engineers) regulations.

In summary it can be maintained that the town hall is in good structural condition and is cared for within the framework of continual structural maintenance.

The Bremen Town Musicians, bronze sculpture by Gerhard Marcks on the west side of the town hall, 1953

3e ___ *Policies and programmes related to the presentation and promotion of the property*

Goals of publicity work

The town hall of Bremen and its surroundings are manifestations of the city's political, social, economic, cultural and architectural development, grouped in an ensemble of incomparable density. The town hall with the Roland in front of it has shaped Bremen's urban image like no other building. The ensemble possesses great appeal to visitors from all over the world. The various phases of history are particularly well articulated by the town hall and the Roland. The visual presence of the town hall and the symbolic character of the Roland ("freedom I reveal to you ...") are emphasised in all media. A likewise world-famous attraction: The Bremen Town Musicians, a bronze figure by one of twentieth-century Germany's most well-known sculptors, Gerhard Marcks, erected on the west side of the town hall in 1953. Since the nineteenth century, the story of the Bremen Town Musicians (Brothers Grimm) has been the world's best-known German fairy tale.

The publicity work targets both Bremen's own inhabitants as well its visitors from all over the world with the goal of heightening their awareness of the tradition of freedom many centuries old – and the continuity thereof – manifested in the marketplace of Bremen and its monuments.

The "open town hall" concept

In recent years, a so-called "open town hall" committee has supported the publicity work and accompanied the organisation of public event programmes.

The town hall is the seat of the officiating burgomaster, the senate and the senate chancellery with a staff of approximately ninety. In addition to everyday official and governmental business, the building accommodates numerous official public events, such as ministerial conferences, citizens' counselling, press conferences and closed meetings. Every year a number of representative events are carried out by the senate and other parties, the most important being:

- Traditional events – Schaffermahlzeit, one of Germany's most significant social events, celebrated since 1545; Kapitänstag; New Year's reception for the consular corps; citizens' reception on New Year's Day; Nacht der Jugend;
- Banquets – celebration of official visits; assumption of office by consuls and ambassadors;
- Ceremonies, award presentations – Bremer Literaturpreis (Rudolf Alexander Schröder Prize), one of the most important German literature prizes; Hannah Arendt Prize; Solidarity Prize; Film Prize; Youth Endowment Prize "Dem Haß keine Chance;" benefit concerts;
- Concerts, readings – benefits; concerts by ensembles from twin cities.

Within the framework of these and other events, the town hall welcomes approx. 75,000 visitors per year.

Art and crafts exhibitions as well as exhibitions on historical and political subjects and current topics of regional and supra-regional interest are presented in the Lower Hall. This space is also available for the sales exhibitions and "markets" of social and charitable organisations.

The town hall cellar houses a restaurant that can accommodate approx. 800 guests. German wines have been served here exclusively since 1405, the present selection comprising over 650 brands. For the sale and shipment of Bremen Town Hall Cellar wines, 1,200 vintages of different years are stored and offered. The oldest wine is several hundred years old.

The character of the open town hall is the explicit wish of the head of the house and clearly promotes contacts and communication in the everyday political process. The atmosphere provided by the historical setting fosters an impressive interrelationship between living democracy and the history of its emergence.

Information available to citizens and visitors on the town hall and the surrounding architectural monuments

In collaboration with the Bremer Touristik-Zentrale and the Bremen Marketing GmbH, the city issues a number of publications (in German, English and French) on the town hall and its surroundings. These publications are continually updated and for the most part free of charge. Additional books and brochures on the town hall, the Roland, the Dom, the Schütting, the Bremen Town Musicians and famous banquets such as the "Schaffermahlzeit" are available at the tourist information centre. As the seat of the Bremen senate, the town hall is a constant focal point of regional media coverage (Radio Bremen, press, regional television).

One popular means of acquiring information is via the Internet. Under www.bremen.de more detailed explanations and illustrations of the Bremen town hall, its various interior spaces and its events can be found, as well as information on the Schütting, the Dom, the Haus der Bürgerschaft, the Markt, etc.

Bremen regularly takes part in the European Heritage Days organised in Germany by the Deutsche Stiftung Denkmalschutz (German monument protection foundation). Within the overall framework of the event, which comprises exhibitions and lectures on specialised subjects, the monuments on the marketplace (among others) invite the general public to visit the rooms of their interiors otherwise accessible to only a small circle of persons. In the year 2000, the town hall once again registered a huge number of visitors, in 2001 the Haus der Bürgerschaft and the Schütting. In general, the visitor volume indicates an above-average interest in historical architectural substance and the work of monument preservation.

The Schaffermahlzeit in the Upper Hall of the town hall

The history of the city

The Bremer Landesmuseum für Kunst- und Kulturgeschichte (Focke Museum) houses a permanent exhibition on the history of the city with changing special exhibitions. In addition to detailed models and documents on the historical city, its development, early history and pre-history, original objects are also on display. The exhibitions are accompanied by a museum education programme that is co-ordinated with the curricula of the schools. The schools of Bremen and the surrounding areas of Lower Saxony therefore quite actively utilise the museum's programme.

Photographic views of several of the museum's exhibition objects have been made accessible on the Internet by Bremen's chief archaeologist. Visitors to the Web site will also find "Ein Streifzug durch die Jahrhunderte," an outline of Bremen history.

The town hall and Roland on German postage stamps

The development of the city centre

The development of the city centre is a primary topic of public discussion, in which all groups of the city's society participate intensively. The Senatorin für Bau und Umwelt (senator for construction and the environment) founded the initiative "Pro Innenstadt" (pro city centre). Subsequent to the realisation of the programme "Bremer Innenstadt" for urban planning, construction and action between the main station, the Wall (moat) and the Weser, the initiative is presently pursuing the continuation of the goals set in that urban renewal programme and the "Declaration of Bremen." In the thirteen theses of this document, statements are formulated concerning measures for the further improvement of the city centre's attractiveness and for its further development as an innovative cultural and economic urban nucleus. One of these theses places "the maintenance of historical unmistakability by means of originals" at the focus of a profile improvement strategy for the Bremen city centre. Numerous workshops, forums and so-called urban development talks have been carried out on the subjects of the city centre and "Bremen – City on the Water." In this way, Bremen's public – both the specialised professional and the general public – are involved in the process of restoring and giving distinction to the historical substance of the city centre. The municipal authorities contribute to these efforts by advertising urban planning competitions and commissioning expert reports as decision aids.

With the support of the chamber of architects, the regional newspaper periodically carries out "architectouren" of historical sites and other focal points of urban planning.

The EU project EDEN (Electronic Democracy European Network) presents a questionnaire entitled "Urban Planning via Internet" on the Web. Here the citizens of Bremen can voice their opinions on everyday topics of urban planning. This is intended as a means of expanding civil participation in the urban development process.

Cultural tourism in Bremen

The city of Bremen undertakes targeted efforts to increase public interest in Bremen, bring more visitors to the city and further develop its position on the urban tourism market. The tourism marketing strategy places primary emphasis on traditional sights and events concerning art and culture. A visitors' survey revealed that 82% have seen the Markt with the town hall and the Roland. With a gross turnover of 1.3 billion DM p.a., tourism represents an importance source of income for Bremen through the reflux of trade tax, etc. Not only the jobs associated with this industry (approx. 11,000 employees) but also the reinvestment of the funds for maintenance and restoration measures have a positive economic effect.

Large-scale tourism projects act as motors for the spectrum of offers. The Markt, the Schütting, the Dom and the town hall regularly accommodate large celebrations and events as well as excellent cultural programmes (e.g. the International Bremen Music Festival). These programmes attract several million inhabitants of the city and the surrounding regions every year.
The average length of stay is increased by the co-ordination of events and programmes. Attractive packages are put together for tourists interested in all-inclusive tours. Numerous guided tours for different target groups are a fixed factor in these offers. The following guided walking and bus tours include the town hall on their agenda: "Bremer Klassiker," tours of the town hall and cellar (four times daily), Dom tour, tour of the city centre (with town hall), Haus der Bürgerschaft, "Streifzug durch die Hansestadt," "Literarischer Spaziergang," Town Musician Rally, Fun&Run Rally.

The interests of the Federal Land of Bremen are represented by the Bremer Touristik-Zentrale in a number of national and international tourism associations. Through this involvement, some seventy-five offices world-wide are informed of Bremen's tourist highlights every month. One fruit of this collaboration is the bicycle route to the sights of the Weser Renaissance. At fairs such as the ITB Berlin and fourteen other similar European events, the city of Bremen presents itself and its sights – particularly the town hall and the Roland – in publications and other media.

Information activities connected with the World Heritage nomination

The Bremen public (regional press, regional television, Radio Bremen) has followed the process of nomination for inscription on the World Heritage List with great interest. In the various media there have been several interesting public discussions on the focuses of the nomination.

As the owners of the buildings on the Markt are to a certain extent involved in this process, they are regularly informed of the status of the nomination within the framework of meetings where they have the opportunity to ask questions.

The Bremen Town Musicians

★ Buildings within the inner buffer zone listed as historical monuments

4 Management

4a/b Ownership and legal status

Nominated property
The owner of the town hall and the Roland is the municipality of the Free Hanse City of Bremen. The municipality is a corporation under public law. The party to be addressed in all matters is the municipality, represented by

Bürgermeister und Präsident des Senats
Rathaus
Am Markt 21
28195 Bremen

4c Protective measures and means of implementing them

The town hall and the Roland (nominated property) are under the protection of the Denkmalschutzgesetz (abbr.: DSchG, law for the care and protection of cultural monuments) of the Federal Land of Bremen and are listed as historical monuments. The Lands of the Federal Republic of Germany act independently in educational and cultural matters, a principle which also applies to monument protection. All laws and regulations concerning the protection of cultural monuments are passed by the Bürgerschaft (Land parliament) of Bremen.

Almost all of the buildings within the inner buffer zone are under preservation order as individual monuments, while the ensemble protection section of the DSchG applies to the Markt in its entirety. The following buildings within the inner buffer zone enjoy individual protection: The Dom, the "Glocke," the Liebfrauenkirche, the buildings Unser Lieben Frauen Kirchhof 17 and 26/Obernstrasse 1, the Deutsches Haus, the Rathsapotheke, the Sparkasse on the Markt, the Schütting, the Bankhaus Neelmeyer, the Haus der Bürgerschaft, the Börse Annex and the Bremer Bank.

Legally binding protection provisions

— Law of May 27, 1975 for the care and protection of cultural monuments (Denkmalschutzgesetz – DSchG) in the amended version of June 13, 1989 (Statute book of the Free Hanse City of Bremen, No. 30, 1975, pp. 265–268 und No. 27, 1989, p. 230).
The law for the care and protection of cultural monuments regulates the classification of a cultural monument and its preservation for scientific, artistic, technical or regional-historical reasons in the interest of the public. The protection and preservation as well as maintenance and scientific investigation of cultural property is incumbent on the monument protection authorities. Measures subject to approval according to the DSchG, for example removal, restoration, repair, annexes and superstructures, can be carried out only with the permission of the monument protection authorities.

— Ordinance of March 26, 1991 concerning the listing of cultural monuments and the registration and cancellation procedures (Statute book of the Free Hanse City of Bremen, No. 13, 1991, p. 133f)
This ordinance regulates the listing procedure: participation, public inspection and registration on the monument list.

— Ordinance of March 26, 1991 concerning the composition and function of the monument council (Statute book of the Free Hanse City of Bremen, No. 13, 1991, p. 135f).
The monument council is responsible for advising and supporting the specialised monument authorities in their work. The council is composed of qualified experts, architects, historians and/or art historians, representatives of the culture and construction delegation, representatives of the churches as well as persons concerned with issues of monument protection and maintenance by virtue of their public functions.

The nominated property has been under preservation order since 1909 (Old Town Hall) / 1973 (New Town Hall). The present law for the care and protection of cultural monuments and the additional ordinances form the basis for the authorities involved in the authorisation procedure concerning the treatment of cultural monuments and thus ensure their protection, care and preservation. The DSchG is employed primarily within the framework of building permit procedures. Whether or not they are subject to approval according to the DSchG, all measures pertaining to the protection and preservation of the Bremen town hall and Roland have been processed and professionally accompanied by the Landesamt für Dankmalpflege.

The party to be addressed in these matters is:
Der Landeskonservator
Landesamt für Denkmalpflege
Sandstraße 3
28195 Bremen

Miscellaneous

The preparation of an article for the preservation of the extended spatial surroundings of the nominated property is presently being investigated by the Stadtplanungsamt (city planning office). Based on federal planning law, this local government law provides for the preservation of the urban development ensemble. All changes resulting from building measures or the manner of utilisation would thus be subject to approval by the Bauordnungsamt (building regulation office) in co-ordination with the monument protection authority.

Handling of infringements of the DSchG

Within the framework of a procedure pertaining (for example) to a building permit or change of utilisation, the monument protection authority has the power to impose conditions whose realisation it can also supervise. In the event that an alteration measure is carried out without a permit, the authority can insist upon the restoration of the cultural monument. In cases of infringement of individual protection regulations as well as in cases of measures carried out without permits, fines can be imposed. No such case has ever arisen with regard to any of the buildings on the Bremen marketplace. The owner of the monument is under obligation to inform the monument protection authority in the event of damage or defects which threaten the state of preservation. Violations are generally ascertained by means of inspections carried out by the construction inspection or monument protection authorities.

4d ___ *Administrative authorities*

In the city-state of Bremen, the Untere Denkmalschutzbehörde (subordinate monument protection authority: the Landesamt für Denkmalpflege) also functions as a Denkmalfachbehörde (specialised monument authority) and has the power of decision concerning applications submitted by monument owners in agreement with those owners. Once an agreement is reached, the Obere Denkmalschutzbehörde (superordinate monument protection authority: Senator für Inneres, Kultur und Sport – senator for internal affairs, culture and sport) makes the final decision. The monument protection authorities are under the control of the Bremen Land government and thus of the senate. The employer is the respective senator responsible for culture, presently the Senator für Inneres, Kultur und Sport (senator for internal affairs, culture and sports). According to the DSchG of the Land of Bremen, the individual authorities are responsible for the following primary functions:

Obere Denkmalschutzbehörde
Senator für Inneres, Kultur und Sport
Herdentorsteinweg 7
28195 Bremen
The authority of higher instance after the monument protection authorities and the owner have been heard in cases of disagreement.

Denkmalschutzbehörde/ Denkmalfachbehörde
Landesamt für Denkmalpflege
Der Landeskonservator
Sandstraße 3
28195 Bremen
General functions pursuant to Articles 4 and 5 of the DSchG as well as:
- registration of cultural monuments on the monument list by virtue of its office,
- handling the listing procedure,
- conducting the monument list,
- participation in building permit procedures,
- supervision of construction sites, technical advice,
- administration of budget appropriations and funds contributed by third parties;
- management of monument council business.

Denkmalfachbehörde
Der Landesarchäologe
Ronzelenstraße 51
28359 Bremen
General functions pursuant to Article 5 of the DSchG as well as:
- determination of excavation protection areas,
- registration of discovery sites and execution of archaeological excavations,
- granting permission for underground engineering in archaeologically sensitive areas,
- participation in building permit procedures,
- construction accompaniment in discovery areas,
- conservation, restoration, inventorying of finds,
- administration of funds.

4e ___ *Competent institutions and contact persons*

All alteration, repair and restoration work carried out on or in the town hall is realised in close collaboration between the specialised monument authorities and the senate chancellery housed in the town hall itself, with the aid and participation of the competent building regulation office and the affiliated authorities. The supervision of the respective project is assumed by the Bremer BauManagement GmbH, while the municipal corporation Bremer Bau Betrieb GmbH (former Hochbauamt) is primarily in charge of the planning and realisation. Similar constellations apply to other public architectural monuments under preservation order within the inner buffer zone. The competent authority for the conception and determination of city centre development in the general environs of the town hall is the Stadtplanungsamt which draws up binding statements regarding construction project petitions and processes construction plan schedules within the context of the approval procedure. One primary responsibility of this office is the organisation of public space.

4f ___*Agreed and adopted plans pertaining to the town hall with Roland and surroundings*

Land development plan
Overall concept for the prospective urban planning development of the entire city. This plan establishes the manner in which the ground space is utilised. It pertains not only to development through construction and various types of utilisation – i.e. residential, commercial, etc. – but also to traffic space and park areas.

Building plans
Building plans are in effect for all areas of the buffer zone. These plans primarily regulate the type and extent of the construction undertaken within this space (number of storeys, superstructures). The stipulations of a building plan are legally binding. The formulation of a building plan is carried out as provided by the federal building law in consideration of the superordinate land development plan; it is realised in adherence to the current construction utilisation ordinance. Building and land development plans are resolved by the Bremen senate and parliament.

Monument plan
A set of objectives for the preservation of the structural substance and construction measures (repair/restoration of the south facade by 2002), as well as a catalogue of measures, have been developed by the Landesamt für Denkmalpflege specifically for the town hall and the Roland.

Local government law pertaining to Unser Lieben Frauen
A statute governing the organisation of the Unser Lieben Frauen Kirchhof area.

Statute governing the organisation and commercial facilities of Obernstrasse (local government law)
This statute is presently being developed by the planning office and will provide for better protection of the western town hall facade from the surroundings.

Stadtentwicklungskonzept (urban development concept) '99
Key goals and prospects for the spatial development of the entire city. One goal is the placement of emphasis on Bremen's special historical, cultural and architectural features.

Bremer Innenstadt (Bremen city centre)
The theses and guidelines of the initiative "Pro Innenstadt" concerning the development of the city centre.

Management plan (MP)
Plan for the realisation of protection/preservation measures within the next ten years. This plan addresses, for example, additional planned protective measures and their financing as well as information on monitoring. The management plan has been submitted to the competent offices for inspection and action. It was drawn up within the context of the nomination procedure; all competent parties in the city and Land of Bremen are in agreement as to the desirability of realising its main priorities. (The complete German version of the MP is enclosed, as well as an English summary.)

4g ___ *Financial sources*

In the past, public funds have been employed for measures to restore and repair the town hall and the Roland. In addition, financing is provided by the "Stiftung Wohnliche Stadt" (a 100% municipal foundation financed by gambling establishment levies) and private third-party funds. The costs of the measures undertaken since 1991 amount to approx. 6.5 million DM. The financial prognosis for further preservation measures is favourable.

4h ___ *Sources of specialists' reports and training in conservation and administration methods*

In the offices of the respective Bremen authorities and institutions, trained specialists are in charge of the care and preservation of the town hall. All work orders are processed by the Landesamt für Denkmalpflege in close co-operation with the building regulations office, the office of city planning and the chief Land archaeologist. The work is supported by the Staatsarchiv Bremen and the Landesmuseum für Kunst- und Kulturgeschichte. The projects are carried out by professional art historians, city planners, architects, engineers, archaeologists, museologists and persons in other related fields. Further qualification and the deepening of specialised knowledge is possible at all times.

The monument council is appointed by the Landesamt für Denkmalpflege to support the work of monument preservation. The members of the monument council (composition of membership: see 4 c) submit recommendations on all questions pertaining to monument protection and offer consulting on specific projects. The Hochschule Bremen (university of applied sciences, with its departments of architecture and civil engineering), the Universität Bremen (university, with its department of history) and the Hochschule für Kunst (art academy) maintain close contacts with the authorities, many of whose executive staff members teach at these institutes of higher learning.

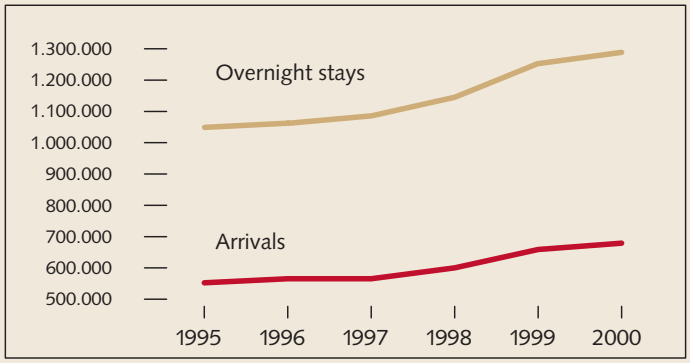
In the past, the Bremer Hochbauamt (today: Bremer Bau Betrieb GmbH) was continually involved with the planning and realisation of building, alteration and repair measures. Due to the reorganisation of the administration, contracts for planning and specialists' reports are being awarded externally to an increasing extent. The construction work is generally carried out by restorers in collaboration with local handicraft businesses specialised in the treatment of the structural substance of historical monuments. The chamber of handicrafts and the guilds provide consulting and support individual firms in their efforts to establish a reputation.

The Bremen marketplace in the summer

4i ___ *Tourist institutions and statistics*

Tourism volume, number of overnight stays
Bremen enjoys a steadily growing number of German and foreign tourists. In the year 2000, some 600,000 arrivals were recorded, the number of overnight stays is approximately twice that (see chart). These figures represent an increase of 13% over those of the previous year. According to a visitors' survey taken in 2000, 65% viewed the town hall from the outside and 16,417 participated in guided tours of this monument.

The Federal Land of Bremen



Source: Statistisches Bundesamt

Tourist institutions
The Bremer Touristik-Zentrale (BTZ) manages four tourist information centres. One of them is in the immediate vicinity of the town hall on the Liebfrauenkirchhof. All available information on a stay in Bremen – e.g. information on guided tours of the city, exploration routes, day trips, accommodations, restaurants, culture, recreation and sports events as well as brochures and illustrated books on the city's history and its individual monuments – is available at these centres, where the respective reservations can be made and tickets purchased. The information material is available at no charge. All current tourist information is also available on the Internet under www.bremen.de in German and English. Requests by telephone are transferred to the BTZ call centre via a hotline. In addition to guideposts in the city centre and information plaques on the individual monuments, the city is planning the creation of a public info terminal at which tickets, hotel reservations and the "ErlebnisCARDBremen" (discount ticket) can be obtained electronically.

Overnight accommodations, gastronomy, shops
The visitor to the city of Bremen has 57 hotels and guest houses in various categories to choose from. The large majority of the hotels are near the marketplace and the main station. The number of beds offered amounts to 7,122, of which 43.5% were utilised on the average in 2000.

There are numerous restaurants and pubs in the immediate vicinity of the marketplace and the town hall. The city centre's main shopping roads and passages begin a short distance from the monument.

Transportation access, parking system, public institutions
Large sections of the city centre and particularly the squares around the town hall enjoy strongly limited traffic use. Access is gained primarily by means of public transportation in the form of busses and trams, which have stops in the immediate vicinity of the town hall. The main station is about five minutes from the town hall by tram, the airport about fifteen minutes. Wholly in the spirit of "soft tourism," the long-distance bicycle path "Weserrenaissance" leads to the town hall itself. For private transportation vehicles there are car parks on the periphery of the city centre, to which access is gained with the aid of a parking guide system. The fire department emergency service can be called on a central emergency telephone number which is the same all over Germany. Hospitals and fire departments are located within a radius of three km.

4j ___ *Management plan*

The management plan (MP) was drawn up within the context of the nomination procedure; it comprises detailed entries on measures and projects which will ensure and guarantee the protection and preservation of the town hall in the coming ten years. The MP further contains monument preservation objectives and monitoring indicators.

The plan (in German) is appended to the nomination; an English summary is also enclosed.

4k ___ *Personnel*

All measures concerning monument protection are closely accompanied by the staff of the Landesamt für Denkmalpflege. The Landesamt für Denkmalpflege and the Landesarchäologie presently have a combined staff of fourteen (including six scientists). For the execution of planning and construction work, there is an external office of the Bremer Bau Betrieb (formerly Hochbauamt) directly in the town hall. The management of the town hall is closely co-ordinated with all factors related to the monument's preservation.

On the basis of past experience, the factors detracting from the town hall and the Roland can be classified as minor. No foreseeable scenarios presently pose a threat. All factors and measures affecting the monument and/or potentially detracting from it are listed below:

5a Developmental pressures

No basic changes in the utilisation of the town hall are planned. There is no need for structural expansion. From the point of view of the monument's preservation, the town hall is primarily encumbered by utilisation-related factors and external influences. The practice of carrying out events in the interior of the monument represents only a limited risk of damage to the furnishings and fixtures (the term "fixtures" referring here to original fixed parts of the interior such as floors, walls and ceilings, many of which exhibit elaborate ornamentation). For this reason, a regulation for the transfer of utilisation rights to users on a temporary rental-like basis has already been issued for the Lower Town Hall, and is planned for the other sections of the interior, to be combined with intensive inspection following events. At the same time, the further recording of the monument's inventory and dimensions is necessary as a means of protection against non-verifiable losses and as a working basis for repairs undertaken in accordance with the original condition. These measures are to be supplemented by a salvage plan, to be executed in the case of fire, and a fire safety regulation augmenting the fire safety measures presently in effect.

The tram tracks are parallel and quite close to the south facade of the town hall. In order to reduce the tremors to which the Old Town Hall is thus exposed, the track is to be laid in a new bed within the framework of a repaving measure in 2002.

5b Environmental problems

Like all other buildings, the monuments under preservation order are exposed to environmental influences. To the best of our knowledge, however, the town hall of Bremen is not subjected to any appreciable burden through environmental factors. An increased awareness of the environment has led to the improvement of many norms and the reduction of pollution thresholds in Germany and throughout the EU. This is particularly true with regard to air pollution.

Slight damages have recently been ascertained within the framework of repair work carried out on the facades and sculptures, work presently in the final phase. Due to the difficulty of differentiating between this damage and past repairs carried out in a manner inappropriate to the material, the effects of the environmental damage cannot be quantified.

5c Natural disasters

In the region of Bremen, floods and storms occur regularly in the winter months. The topographical position of the town hall and the Roland on the ridge of the Bremer Düne nevertheless guarantees a dry location. The copper roofing material of the town hall has repeatedly suffered damage from the wind. In the years 1998-2000 it was newly affixed, so that no major damage to it is to be expected in the coming years.

If the town hall were struck by an unforeseen fire disaster, the loss would be enormous, not only from the conservational point of view but also for all the citizens of Bremen. For this reason, the building's technical equipment includes a sensitive smoke alarm as well as a fire alarm system. In situations of increased hazard, such as on New Year's Eve, fire guards are also posted by the fire department. The reduction of existing and potential fire hazards has been achieved by means of compliance with preventive fire safety measures and the observance of VDI (German industrial production) standards. In order to attain a higher level of safety, the fire department is to undertake an inspection in co-operation with the monument protection authorities, with the aim of drawing up a fire safety regulation according to German Standard Specification (DIN). This fire safety regulation would comprise a precise salvage plan for the art treasures of the town hall.

5d ___ *Pressures brought about by visitor volume and users*

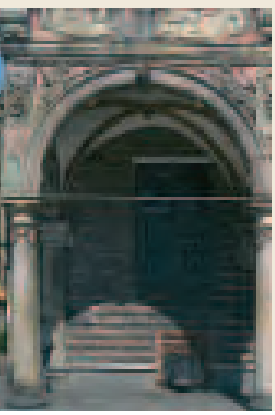
The annual visitor volume remains relatively constant at approx. 75,000. The reception capacity for the guests at official events is calculated beforehand. On these occasions and within the context of the everyday management of the town hall, furniture and objects are frequently moved. In order to protect the structural substance and fixtures, a goods lift was therefore installed in the year 2000. Due to the increase of group sizes for guided tours, certain rooms (e.g. the Güldenkammer) can be viewed only from the outside.

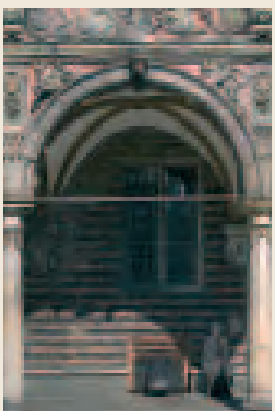
For the utilisation of the interior spaces, priority is given to official functions and related meetings; guided tours and events organised by third parties are thus limited to the dates and times remaining when the priority needs have been fulfilled. Every visitor to Bremen is welcome. The increase of visitor volume is desirable above all because of its economic significance. The town hall and the marketplace area do not ascertainably suffer from tourism.

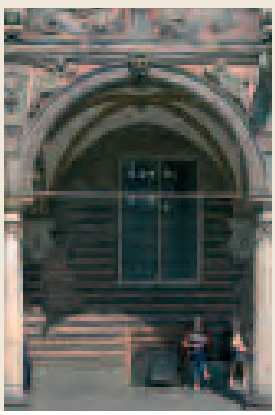
5e ___ *Number of persons residing within the:*

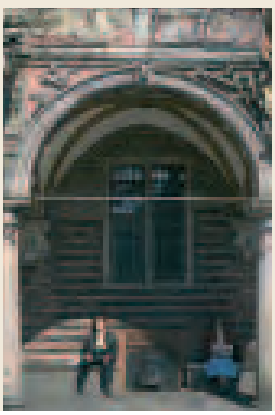
area of the nominated property: 2 residents
inner buffer zone: 30 residents
outer buffer zone: 1,205 residents

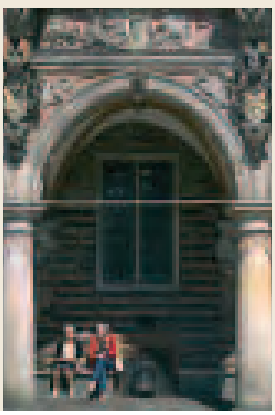
The town hall arcades, photogrammetric views

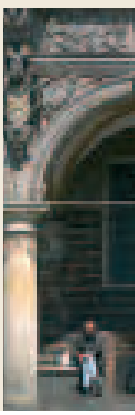












6 Monitoring

In order to ensure a state of affairs which is optimal for the town hall and the Roland from the conservational point of view, the establishment of an efficient monitoring system is planned. Carried out with suitable monitoring instruments, this system will guarantee that conservationally detrimental alterations of conditions relevant for the protection of the monuments are recognised at an early point in time, the causes of these alterations correctly analysed and suitable measures undertaken, likewise without delay, to counter any and all hazards or damages. All components of this system not listed among the indicators and control measures described below are included in the management plan.

6a *Components of the monitoring system*

The following measures are deemed necessary:
- an expert, recorded inspection following events representing higher damage risk,
- the annual inspection of selected fixtures, carried out by qualified restorers to ascertain relevant changes,
- the conclusion of maintenance contracts for the Güldenkammer, the senate hall and other heavily used areas,
- the systematic, close-up inspection of the town hall facades by a stone restorer annually.

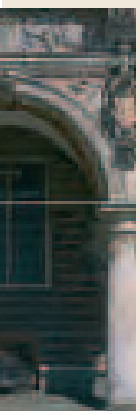
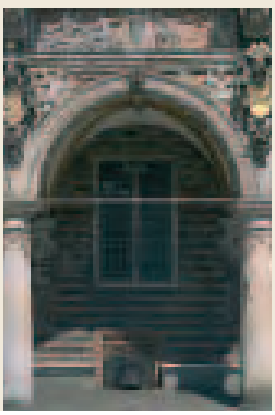
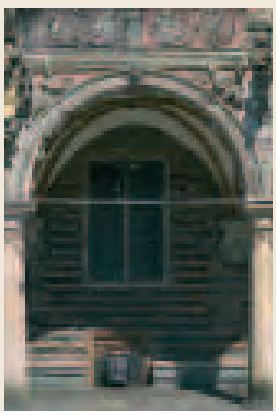
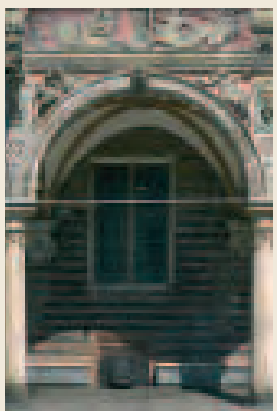
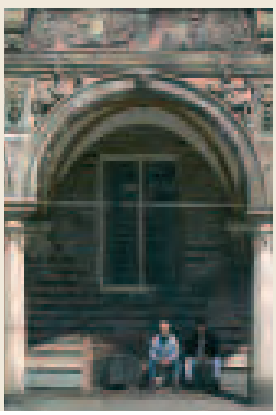
The first steps toward the financing and realisation of the measures are to be initiated as soon as possible.

6b *Administrative agreements for the monitoring of the monument*

The Landesamt für Denkmalpflege is responsible for the realisation and evaluation of the monitoring measures. An annual monument report on the findings and documented structural conditions is planned. This report will be submitted, along with recommendations concerning any action deemed necessary, to the competent administrative offices and political bodies for resolution.

6c *Results of past reports*

The outstanding conservational condition of the nominated property is indicated in the most important publications:
- Ulrich, Gustav: *Denkmalpflegebericht*, Bremen 1964. Monument protection report. Bericht über die Restaurierung der Giebelfront 1928/29. Report on the 1928-29 restoration of the gable facade.
- Hoffmann, Hans-Christoph and Peter Hahn: "Die Denkmalpflege in der Freien Hansestadt Bremen 1989-91." Report No. 6 of the Landesamt für Denkmalpflege, in: *Bremisches Jahrbuch* Vol. 71, 1992, p. 223-284, Bremen, 1992. Report on the restoration of the town hall, the Upper and Lower Güldenkammer, the Wittheitsstube, the Gobelinzimmer and the Upper Town Hall.
- Hoffmann, Hans-Christoph: *Erforschen. Pflegen. Schützen. Erhalten. Ein Vierteljahrhundert Denkmalpflege in der Freien Hansestadt Bremen. Ein Rückblick, Bremen 1998*. Reports on the restoration of the Güldenkammer, the Gobelinzimmer, the Kaminsaal and the coat-of-arms windows in the Upper Town Hall.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Alte Börse	old stock exchange
Apostelkeller	apostle cellar
Bacchuskeller	Bacchus cellar
Baumwollbörse	cotton exchange
Bauordnungsamt	building regulation office
Beinkeller	bone cellar
Börse	stock exchange
Bremen Marketing GmbH	municipal corporation concerned with marketing Bremen as a tourist attraction
Bremer Bau Betrieb GmbH	municipal construction corporation (formerly Hochbauamt)
Bremer Bau Management GmbH	municipal construction management corporation
Bremer Düne	Dune of Bremen
Bremer Landesmuseum (für Kunst- und Kulturgeschichte)	Bremen Land museum (for the history of art and culture), also called Focke Museum
Bremer Literaturpreis	Bremen literature prize
Bremer Touristik-Zentrale	abbr.: BTZ, office managing the tourist information centres of Bremen
Bürgerschaft	Land parliament of Bremen
Collectenkammer	tax office
Denkmalfachbehörde	specialised monument authority
Denkmalschutzbehörde	monument protection authority
Denkmalschutzgesetz	abbr.: DSchG, law for the care and protection of cultural monuments
Dom	cathedral
Domsheide	literally: cathedral heath; an open space within the cathedral precincts bordered by the residential quarters of the Curia officials and canons
Domshof	literally: cathedral yard; an open space between the archbishop's territory and the free town, often used for tournaments, later for parades, markets and other public events
Gobelinzimmer	tapestry room
Güldenkammer	literally: golden chamber; referred to as such because of the gilt leather wall decoration
Hansazimmer	Hanse room
Haus der Bürgerschaft	house of the parliament
Hochbauamt	former designation of the Bremen building authorities (now Bremer Bau Betrieb GmbH)
Kaiserzimmer	emperor's room
Kaminzimmer	fireplace room
Kämmerei	treasury
Kapitänstag	captains' day, an annual meeting
Landesamt für Denkmalpflege	Land office for monument protection
Landesarchäologe	chief archaeologist of the Land
Landesarchäologie	Land archaeological office
Liebfrauenkirche	(also called "Kirche Unser Lieben Frauen") St. Mary's Church
Liebfrauenkirchhof	churchyard of St. Mary's Church
Markt	marketplace

Nacht der Jugend	youth night
Neue Börse	new stock exchange
Neue Wittheitsstube	new "Wittheitsstube," a room in the 1545 annex between the town hall and the Palatium. This annex replaced the first north annex, torn down in ca 1530 (also see Wittheitsstube).
Niedergericht	petty sessions court
Obernstrasse	Bremen's main shopping avenue, a pedestrian zone open only to public transportation vehicles
Palatium	residential palace of the archbishop
"Pro Innenstadt"	"pro city centre," an urban renewal programme for the Bremen city centre
Räterepublik	republic governed by commissars
Ratskanzlei	council chancellery
Rosekeller	rose cellar
Schaffermahlzeit	Bremen's oldest traditional annual banquet
Schütting	house of the merchants' association
Senatszimmer	senate room
St. Petri Dom	St. Peter's cathedral
Staatsarchiv Bremen	Bremen state archive
Stadthaus	a new town hall which existed from 1819 to 1908
Stadtplanungsamt	city planning office
Stadtwaage	communal weigh-house
Stiftung Wohnliche Stadt	a 100% municipal foundation for the financing of urban renewal measures
Unser Lieben Frauen	(also called Liebfrauenkirche) St. Mary's Church
Unser Lieben Frauen Kirchhof	churchyard of St. Mary's Church
Wittheitsstube	room for meetings of the "Wittheit," i.e. the council in its entirety (24 members)

Signature of the representative of the Free Hanse City of Bremen

Dr. Henning Scherf
Burgomaster and President of the Senate of the
Free Hanse City of Bremen

Management Plan

1 Abridged version

Outline of the measures to date for the protection of the Town Hall and the statue of Roland. The status of the construction work and the planned measures for a period of approximately 10 years

The current state of preservation of the Old and New Town Hall as well as of the statue of Roland can be described as very good. Work on the structure and its preservation is carried out meticulously and with great care through the cooperation between the chancellery of the Senate (Bremen state government), the body responsible for the preservation of historical monuments, the planning authorities and the municipal enterprises of Bremen. Over the last 10 years approx. 6.5 million DM have been provided for structural maintenance and special measures.

In the inner buffer zone the majority of the buildings are also classified as historical monuments while Marktplatz itself is protected by law as an architectural ensemble. For the adjoining outer buffer zone there are comprehensive development plans and regulations that ensure planning security with regard to potentially disturbing new building projects in the area around Marktplatz. Based on past experience and on the review of the security measures for protection of the cultural monument that is related to the application, the following measures, presented in summary form, are recommended for implementation in the next 10 years:

a New bedding for tram tracks in order to reduce vibrations affecting the south gable (Old Town Hall).
Beginning of construction 2002.

b Administrative regulation to regulate special uses in the area surrounding the Town Hall. A draft of an administrative regulation has been submitted, and the government agencies and various bodies involved are making efforts to reach an agreement and coordinate the further procedure.

c Review of options offered by planning law within preservation statutes to ensure further control over the appearance of the inner buffer zone. The review has been agreed upon, adoption is expected in the year 2004 at the earliest.

d Updating and extension of current regulation on the relinquishment of rooms in the Town Hall to third parties, combined with checking on events. A new regulation on relinquishment is in the preparation phase at the time of the application.

e Continuation of a differentiated (computer-aided) procedure for taking stock, in particular, of the mobile furnishings. This measure can be implemented within the framework of the budgets as from 2002/3.

f Drawing up a fire protection regulation in accordance with DIN with a rescue plan, provision of additional fire watches. Expected application for budget funds as from 2004.

g Measurement of Old and New Town Hall with latest photographic technology to ensure true to the original repair and restoration measures and building research that must be completed. A sample calculation has already been prepared. Funds are to be solicited for this special project beginning in 2004 or earlier.

The Town Hall and Roland on the Marketplace of Bremen. Their Special Significance in Comparison to Other Town Halls

The Town Hall and Roland on the Marketplace of Bremen. Their Special Significance in Comparison to Other Town Halls

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Introduction

Dr. Konrad Elmshäuser | Dr. Hans-Christoph Hoffmann | Prof. Dr. Hans-Joachim Manske | Dr. Georg Skalecki

The Town Hall and Roland of Bremen are testimonies of outstanding historical, political and artistic significance whose inscription on the UNESCO list of humanity's world heritage is justified on the basis of the following UNESCO World Heritage Committee criteria: They

No. III: bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilisation which is living or which has disappeared,

No. IV: are an outstanding example or a type of building or architectural … ensemble … which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history, and

No. VI: are directly or tangibly associated with … living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs.

This assessment by the applicants has been confirmed and substantiated in the expert opinions, herewith submitted, by Prof. Dr. Jürgen Paul, Professor Emeritus of Art History (University of Dresden), Prof. Dr. Gerhard Dilcher, Professor Emeritus of Legal History (University of Frankfurt am Main and University of Trient, Italy), Prof. Dr. Dietmar Willoweit, Full Professor of German Legal History, Canon Law, Civil Law and Commercial Law (University of Würzburg) and Dr. Stephan Albrecht, Lecturer (Privatdozent) in Art History (University of Tübingen, presently at Bibliotheca Hertziana, Rome). The basis of the renewed evaluation and the expert opinions hereby submitted is the in-depth investigation of the Town Hall and Roland of Bremen within the framework of a comparative study of town halls as requested by the World Heritage Committee at its 27th session, held in Paris on June 30 to July 5, 2003 (27 COM 8C.26: ALLOW FOR THE HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL EVALUATION OF THE PROPERTY IN THE FRAMEWORK OF A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF TOWN HALLS).

As the result of the hereby submitted comparative study, the applicants' assessment of the singularity of the nominated property in comparison with other town halls is succinctly expressed in one of the expert opinions (Dilcher I.2.), according to which this uniqueness lies:

- in the high artistic value of the architecture, which has not only remained intact but undergone further development in adherence to a high standard of quality to the present day,

- in the continuity of the town hall as both a work of architecture and the seat of the government and administration of a civil commune which has continually defended its autonomy and self-government as a republican community,

- in the especially dense fabric of symbolic inter-relationships between the architecture of the town hall, the pictorial and figural iconography of its interior and exterior, the Roland and the market-place within the ensemble formed by the Schütting (guild hall of the merchants' association), the cathedral and St. Mary's Church.

Town Hall, south façade

In the following, the applicants have undertaken to summarise and highlight the arguments described and comparatively substantiated in the expert opinions:

- The cultural-historically significant type of the "town hall" is not once represented on the UNESCO list of humanity's world heritage with a specially designated monument. The Town Hall of Bremen is particularly well-suited to this purpose.

- The Gothic Town Hall of Bremen is a transverse rectangular Saalgeschossbau (literally: "hall-storey building") representative of the palas type (Aachen, Nuremberg, Cologne), which it preserves with greater distinctness and in a more original state than any other town hall in Germany. Within the genesis of the town hall as a European building type, the Bremen Town Hall furthermore represents an independent architectural type by virtue of its one-storey arcade along the eaves side of the building. In this respect it contrasts with other town hall constructions (Lübeck, Dortmund, Münster). It is the first ascertainable example of a town hall bearing this particular feature, which is found in a long succession of later examples in the Rhineland and Netherlands of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

- The facade of the Town Hall is decorated with figures of a Medieval sculptural cycle (depicting electors and prophets) which is typologically and iconographically typical of town hall constructions of the Late Medieval Ages (e.g. Aachen, Cologne, Bruges, Nuremberg) but is extant in the original only in Bremen.

- The alteration of the Gothic core structure through the refashioning of its fa-çade and the addition of the Güldenkammer (Golden Chamber) around 1612

Old Town Hall, statue on the main façade:
The emperor

Old Town Hall, statue on the main façade:
The prince elector of Brandenburg

resulted in an outstanding example of the architectural glorification of civic council supremacy. The council exercised its power of governance with an absolutist claim, using particularly the iconographical programme of the façade to this end in a manner not found elsewhere (cf. Nuremberg, Augsburg, Torun, Gdansk, etc.).

- The spatial organisation of the building's interior has been preserved unchanged over the centuries; what is more, even its original uses have re-mained the same. To meet the demand for additional space that arose around 1900, a new town hall was built adjacent to the old one. With regard to its artistic and urban-architectural qualities as well as the sensitive manner in which it merged with its Medieval predecessor, this annex is one of the most well-wrought solutions ever arrived at for an architectural undertaking of such ambition.

- The Bremen Town Hall built in 1405-08, complete with the above-mentioned refashioning of its exterior, represents the ideal image of a town hall (of Euro-pean character). It did not originate as a building with a different function, or as a doubly functioning merchants' hall / council house (as in Lübeck, for example) and was never a social meeting or dance hall (as in Lüneburg, for example), nor was it expanded to form a complex of buildings (Brescia, Verona, Venice). Instead, with its quotations of defence and palace architecture (of which corresponding examples are found on the Middle and Lower Rhine) it was always a likeness (abbreviation) of the well-fortified city (as in Florence and Siena).

- With its three levels – cellar, ground floor and upper hall – it was also a reflec-tion of the civil (social) order established by God. Like the nearby churches – the Cathedral of St. Peter and Church of St. Mary – it was a bulwark of faith.

Furthermore, in addition to its functions as a place of consultation for the council and a court, it was consistently a visible profession of loyalty to the highest secular authority, the emperor.
A condensation of these various aspects, it was the sum total of all that characterised the older town hall type, a type which emerged in response to a wide range of needs, demands and cultural currents, and which was preserved in Bremen in its pure form.

- The Town Hall of Bremen was conceived of within the framework of what can be described as a unique act of urban-architectural planning. As such it gave its planners the opportunity to concentrate on the representation of the higher mission of the council and the citizens' community, quite in the sense of Criteria III and VI. This is all the truer in view of the fact that all lower, service-related functions, chancelleries, the tax office and the like, were consistently housed elsewhere. This aspect is made tangible by the extant original building, the emperor/elector cycle on the south façade, the figures of the prophets and rose symbols on the narrow sides – the latter elements being conscious applications of religious motifs – and finally the plaque in the Upper Hall bearing a code of rules for good sovereignty. The Upper Hall was also the original location of the council stalls whose surviving side walls are now kept in the historical museum of Bremen.

- The mission to rule well and justly is even more distinctly expressed by the lavish programme of the facade created between the Late Renaissance and Early Baroque, and the correspondingly rich design of the Güldenkammer built in the same years. They are works of reformed Humanism, which formulated a programme of rather unusual eruditeness for the facade of the town hall, a programme which, in its entirety, represents a doctrine of government.

- The alteration of the Bremen Town Hall exterior in the early seventeenth century is representative of a stylistic current of the Renaissance to whose devel-opment the Dutch-born painter, engraver and architect Vredemann de Vries made a major contribution. He produced prints and pattern books to serve as models for architectural decoration. By way of Antwerp – at that time the chief centre of the international market for architectural tractates and pattern books – his works circulated in the Netherlands and Northern Germany, at the imperial court in Prague and in large commercial cities like Hamburg, Gdansk and Bremen. It is true that Vredemann de Vries was in Bremen in 1587 and that a detail of the Bremen Town Hall façade can be traced to one of his patterns. Nevertheless, the overall design of the façade adheres to an international stylistic current which cannot be traced back to a single national origin. In a manner unusual of the sixteenth and early seventeenth century, the Bremen Town Hall façade is the product of collaboration between the builders (among them Lüder von Bentheim) and the clients (i.e. the council). Patterns such as those produced by Vredemann de Vries naturally played a role in this process.

- The international circulation of pattern and design books – made possible by the existence of commercial routes and printing techniques – renders the is-sue of national styles superfluous. In the period in question, the utilisation and perfect command of tractates and patterns was indicative of advanced erudition and the best guarantee for artistic quality. In view of the fact that it was created on and for a civic territory, the architecture of the Bremen façade is – with regard to sophistication and quality – among the highest achievements attained in architecture at the courts and in the large cities of Europe in that period.

- Beginning in 1596, following sojourns in Wolfenbüttel, Brunswick and Gdansk, Vredemann de Vries was employed by the artistically assiduous Emperor Rudolf II to work at the royal court in Prague. His influence was also felt in the court art of Germany. Particularly in the era of Rudolf II and his successor Matthias (beg. in 1612), the German princes as well as the free cities – or those aspiring toward freedom – took the imperial court as their orientation in questions of style. They responded with works of their own, works that were self-confident and representative on the one hand, while on the other hand reflecting the influence of contemporary tendencies emanating from the imperial court as well as being informed by the architectural theory of the time. By retaining and incorporating the elector cycle of the Gothic façade, the Bremen façade design of 1612 comprises a subtle strain of imperial propaganda, with which the Medieval monument's core message was expressed in the formal vocabulary of the seventeenth century.

- Especial importance is attached to the Roland of Bremen as an early example of a freestanding monumental sculpture and the first such sculpture of the Middle Ages. With regard to age, size, artistic execution and beauty it is the most superb example of a Europe-wide type of monument and monumental sculpture. Its erection was carried out in 1404 in conjunction with the construction of the Town Hall.

- Whereas most other figures of Roland represent a mere messenger of the king conveying the royal grant of market soke and the market privilege, the Bremen Roland quite explicitly represents the status of freedom (reputedly) granted this town by Emperor Charlemagne in an unparalleled act.

- At the same time, the Roland of Bremen is the martyr who, as a paladin of the great emperor,

Hans Vredemann de Vries, Dorica-Ionica, 1565

The Town Hall of Leiden, Lieven de Key, 1594

Gdansk, Arsenal, Anthonius van Obbergen, 1602-05

Riga, Schwarzhäupterhaus, alterationed by Gert Freese 1581 - 1621

The Solomonic Judgement

lost his life in the struggle against the heathens. The Bremen figure is thus clearly interpretable as a bringer of tidings of freedom, freedom that is protected – where necessary – by force, an aspect distinctly symbolised by the Town Hall as well. Bremen differs from cities like Aachen, Reims or Cologne in that its Charlemagne tradition does not blossom on Romance / Frankish soil, but in a Carolingian town in Lower Saxony. The Roland statue served to place the council and citizenry of Bremen into one of the great traditions of Christian-Carolingian Europe. At the same time, it substantiated the town's civil autonomy as an offshoot from the same root as German and French monarchy, i.e. from Carolingian France, and bestowed the rank of imperial law upon this autonomy.

- The Town Hall of Bremen is a place where autonomous communal and state constitutions have been developed and practised continuously – and in the same building – over a period of six hundred years. In the context of this nomination, it is essential to point out the immense significance (Dilcher V.1) ultimately to be attached to the development of the communal constitution as intangible heritage. Specifically, we are referring here to its vast significance for the political theory and development of our present-day form of parliamentary democracy. In historical reality, it was above all in the cities of Europe that republicanism (the principle of the republic as a form of government fundamentally associated with freedom) and communalism were practiced.

Upper Hall, Güldenkammer exterior ▸

The heads of state of the European Community convene in the Town Hall of Bremen in 1978

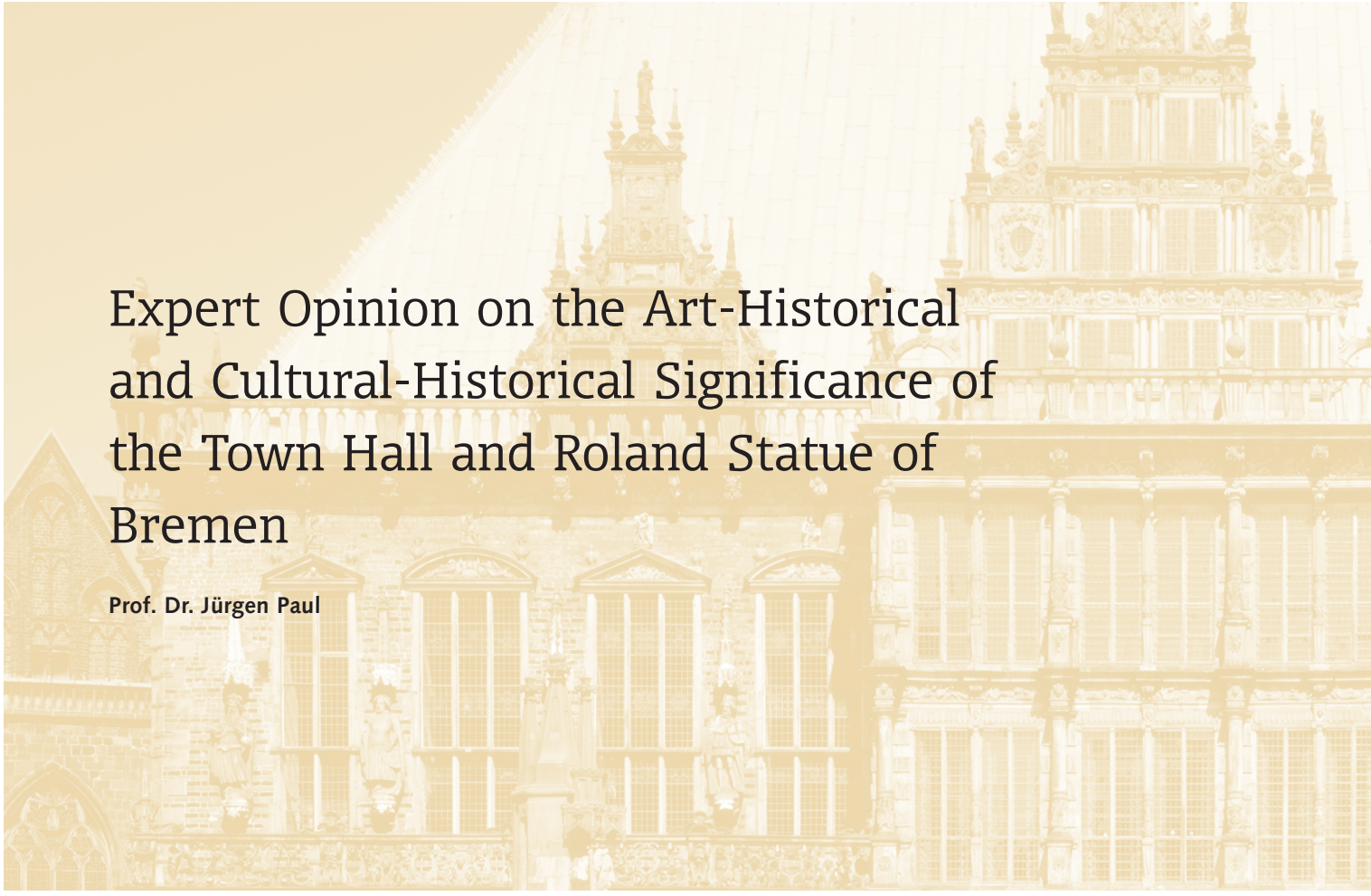
Attention should furthermore be called to the highly unique circumstance that, in Bremen, this tradition was never broken, neither in an abstract political sense nor with regard to actual physical location. On the contrary, Bremen – being the federal state most strongly rooted in this historical tradition – represents the communal principle in the federal constitution of the Federal Republic of Germany.

- This unusual preservation of a sovereignty developed continually under widely diverse state and constitutional systems lives on in an architectural monument whose high-quality structural substance has undergone refashioning only once in six hundred years, namely around 1600. No other government edifice in Germany is such a permanent manifestation of the principle of federalism, which was the contribution made by the Old German Reich to the constitutional structure of other peoples and nations. In this sense the Town Hall of Bremen still plays a role in the history of the Federal Republic of Germany in Europe. It was in that building, for example, that the European Council convened on June 6-7, 1978, and resolved to create the European Monetary System, thus preparing the ground for the Monetary Union and the Euro.

- Comparisons with the powerful city-states of Italy have also been drawn, not only with regard to the development of the town hall as an

architectural type, but also in connection with the constitutional development of the free cities of the Old Reich. The legal literature of the seventeenth century already refers to the imperial cities as genuine "republics." Citizens' republics played a central role in the development of democratic constitutions in the civil society, for they comprise the ideal of the politically self-confident citizen who defends his freedom himself. Both in the Reich and in Italy, however, nearly every one of them was mediatised. Like Nuremberg, Augsburg and Frankfurt, the cities of Genoa and even Venice now offer nothing more than an image of past grandeur when it comes to the history and development of constitutions. Only in Bremen can the Town Hall, in its urban-architectural setting, still be regarded as both an unusual architectural monument to and a living continuum of this proud pan-European tradition. In this respect it is unique.

The statue of Roland



Expert Opinion on the Art-Historical and Cultural-Historical Significance of the Town Hall and Roland Statue of Bremen

Prof. Dr. Jürgen Paul

Introduction

Due to its architectural-historical significance, its artistic quality and excellent state of preservation, as well as its vividness as a testimony to the living continuity of history, the town hall of Bremen ranks high among the town halls of Germany. The Gothic construction of the early fifteenth century represents the basic type of the Medieval town hall – the two-storey hall structure – in pure form and is thus an outstanding example of Medieval architectural typology. Begun in 1595, the alterations by Lüder von Bentheim resulted in a façade that is among the outstanding architectural monuments of the Northern German Renaissance. The pictorial decoration of the exterior and interior – preserved in near entirety – render the town hall of Bremen an important example for the study of the political iconography of the Late Middle Ages and the Renaissance. The famous Roland statue and the town hall together form a pictorial entity that is deeply rooted in the historical conception of culture. The new town hall, finally, is one of the architecturally finest examples of new town hall construction / expansion in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Due in part to the fact that they survived World War II without being destroyed, both the old and the new town halls of Bremen are presently in a superb state of preservation as concerns their historical authenticity. All of these factors render the town hall of Bremen an architectural monument of European rank. The urban-architectural ensemble comprising the cathedral, market church, town hall and marketplace further offers a splendid example of the emergence of a city in the manner characteristic of Northern Germany in the High Middle Ages. The functions now accommodated by this area of the city bear testimony to the continuation of the centuries-old political tradition of the Medieval free civic commune in a modern city-state: the Free Hanse City – the federal state – of Bremen.

The Town Hall of Bremen before its alteration, after the copper engraving of 1603 by Dilich (after a drawing of 1596)

Origin

The town hall of 1405-1410 replaced a "DOMUS TEATRALIS" or "domus consulum" (referred to in sources of 1229 and 1251) located at a different site, namely at the edge of the churchyard of St. Mary's and the entrance to Obernstrasse. In correspondence with the manner in which Northern German town halls typically originated, the older town hall was associated with a cloth hall. The town halls of Lübeck and Lüneburg, for example, developed as successive expansions of their small, modest beginnings as combination cloth halls / council houses.[1]

Quite in contrast to that tradition, the council of Bremen commissioned the construction of an entirely new building that was unusual in terms of both size and the high standard of its architectural decoration. The construction was an integral element of the new urban-architectural situation created by a larger marketplace to the south of St. Mary's Church. The town hall occupied the dominant position on the new square.

Structure and Functions

The spatial organisation of the old town hall of Bremen has survived in almost completely unchanged form, so that the building's original functions can be clearly discerned, functions which have remained essentially the same to the present day.

The broadly spread out rectangular structure of the historical town hall of Bremen comprises two large

1 K. Gruber, *Das deutsche Rathaus*, Munich, 1943

halls on two levels. The lower hall is divided into three aisles by two rows of ten massive, squared oaken pillars each. Accessible through a pointed-arch portal on each of the building's narrow sides, this lower level served as a merchants' hall. It furthermore accommodated the basic facilities required for the operation of the market: It was here that the standard weights and measures were kept, and here that the Low Court convened – the court for culpability and market disputes as well as minor criminal offences. The tax office and war office were located here for a time, and there was space enough for the money changers as well. What is more, wandering musicians and actors performed and dances were organised in the lower hall for the amusement of the townsfolk.

The considerably higher and brighter hall on the upper level – perhaps originally likewise divided by pillars or covered by a wooden barrel vault – served first and foremost as the setting for the city's political life. It was originally reached by way of an exterior staircase on the back side of the building. Presided over by the burgomaster, the council convened in the upper hall to deliberate on and reach political decisions and administer justice. Representative events such as large banquets and receptions of diplomatic missions also took place in the large hall.

As is still the case today, wine and beer was stored and served in the spacious vaulted cellars located below the ground-floor hall. The roof truss also provided storage space, for example for provisions, feed for the council horses and commercial wares.

There are few town halls in Germany in which the original functions are still as clearly discernible as in the town hall of Bremen. It was a place of political and legal life as well as a multifunctional building and the chief centre of public life. For a long period at any rate, it was the only secular, public, representative building in the Medieval city.

Architectural Typology

More clearly than any other historical town hall in Germany, the example of Bremen exhibits the fundamental typological form of the Medieval town hall: the type of the so-called "Saalgeschossbau" (literally: "hall-storey building"), defined as a multi-storey stone building with a large hall on its first upper level. Its basic structure is transverse-rectangular in form; it comprises two storeys beneath a continuous saddleback roof. The actual raison d'être of this building type is the large hall occupying the entire upper storey.

This type first appears in the eleventh century as the form employed for the main hall of royal, ducal or episcopal palaces, and soon as the residential building of castle complexes as well.[2] In the large upper hall, the king or sovereign held assemblies with his vassals or administered justice – i.e. the very same activities later carried out by the council and burgomaster in the town halls. The lower level of the palas structure could be spatially divided in various ways and was used primarily for practical purposes. Its chief function was to provide a base for the elevated large hall. Surviving examples are the so-called KAISERHAUS, the palas of the imperial palace in Goslar, built in the second half of the eleventh century and altered in the twelfth, and the palas of Henry the Lion of the Dankwarderode Castle in Braunschweig, restored in the nineteenth century.[3]

In Northern Italy, where the free, democratic, self-governed civic commune first emerged as a political form, this building type was adopted and further developed for the new functions of the town hall from the late twelfth century on.[4] The town halls, the "PALATII COMUNIS" were assigned locations on the chief marketplace and were an integral element of market functions. The lower, ground-floor hall now developed likewise as an unpartitioned hall and

2 K. M. Swoboda, *Römische und romanische Paläste*, Vienna, 1919
3 W. Holz, *Pfalzen und Burgen der Stauferzeit. Geschichte und Gestalt*, Darmstadt, 1981
4 J. Paul, *Die mittelalterlichen Kommunalpaläste in Italien*, Cologne, 1965

served as a covered space for the sale of preferential goods and a location for the chief control facilities of the market. In these Italian town halls, the ground-floor hall either opened out on all sides through arches or, like the later town hall of Bremen, closed to the outside. Significant examples of this simple type of town hall in Italy are to be found in Milan (Broletto Nuovo), Como (Broletto) and Padua (Palazzo della Ragione) – all built around 1200 – though none of these examples has survived unchanged to the present day.

The rapid increase of public institutions soon led to expansion from a single building to a group of buildings of the same type, often arranged in a rectangle around a courtyard. The earliest examples of this form of complex are the Palazzo Comunale in Brescia and the Palazzo della Ragione in Verona, both dating from the period around 1200; the most famous is the Doge's Palace in Venice. Beginning around 1300, town halls with two hall storeys above the ground-level – often expanded through the addition of further structural elements – were built in the large Central Italian commercial cities. The Palazzo Pubblico in Siena and the so-called Palazzo Vecchio, the Palazzo dei Priori or former town hall of the city-republic of Florence, are the most well-known examples.

Among town halls of the region corresponding to present-day Germany, the hall building principle is frequently found in a further regional building type: that of the narrow rectangular residential house. The best-known instance is the town hall of Münster in Westphalia whose splendid Gothic gable of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries was reconstructed following its destruction during World War II.

The palas type as a transverse-rectangular hall structure is found in the town hall of Aachen (c. 1300-1349; incidentally, the contours of this structure were dictated by its insertion into the

The Town Hall of Siena

former throne hall of the Carolingian palace complex), the core structure of the town hall of Nuremberg (1332-40; incorporated into the new construction of the seventeenth century, reconstructed in simplified form following destruction during World War II), the town hall of Cologne (1360; incorporated into later expansions; reconstructed in altered form following destruction during World War II) and the Gothic town hall of Bremen, where it has survived unchanged to the present day.

The Structural Design of the Gothic Town Hall of Bremen

The Gothic town hall of Bremen already met high standards with regard to its architectural design. The exterior of the walls consists of alternating layers of red and black glazed bricks. In contrast to the town hall of Lübeck, which was later furnished with a large representative façade placed before the gables of the building's two parallel wings, the

The Town Hall of Münster

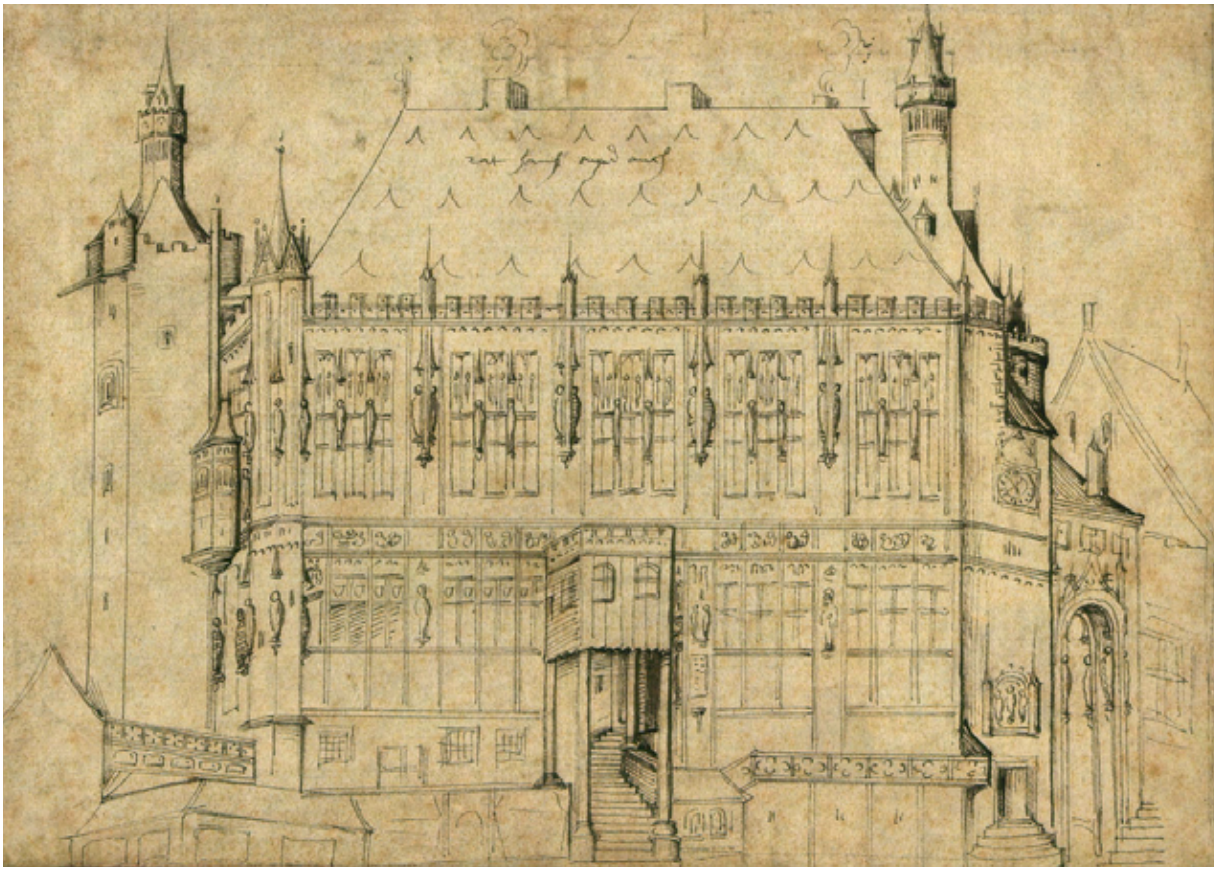
architectural design of the Gothic town hall of Bremen developed entirely from the cubic form of its basic structure. The architecture was lent a representative character through symbolic imagery, using forms stemming to equal degrees from fortification architecture and sacred architecture. Slender round turrets, extending upward from the base of the upper storey to reinforce the corners, merged with the crenelation along the coping to form an image that will have reminded contemporaries of defensive city walls. The town hall thus appeared as a pictorial abbreviation of the town itself. There was also an element like a covered defence passage atop the arcade along the ground-floor level. On the other hand, the large, intricately subdivided pointed-arch tracery windows as well as the figures placed between them under high baldachins were elements of sacred architecture. They conveyed an impression of solemn grandeur. The design of the narrow sides with their pointed-arch portals topped by groups of three tracery windows, each group culminating in its respective middle, is reminiscent of a church façade.

Although the Gothic town hall of Bremen is built of brick, its form bears a close relation to the stone-block architecture of the Rhineland. The motif of the corner turrets rising up from consoles to join the imagery of the crenelation finds its correlation in secular architecture of Cologne and the Lower Rhine region. The figures, which are of high artistic quality, are fine examples of the strong, realistic style that originated with the Parlers – a family of master builders and sculptors from Schwäbisch Gmünd – around the middle of the fourteenth century, a style which spread to Prague, Vienna, Cologne and beyond before being superseded around 1420 by the so-called "Soft Style."

The Renaissance Alteration

Directed by the stone merchant and sculptor Lüder von Bentheim, the major alteration of the town hall got under way in 1595 and was completed in 1616. The measures comprised the artistic refashioning of the originally Gothic exterior in the style of the Renaissance, the modern style of the time. The new design adhered to the specific form which had been developed since the end of the sixteenth century in present-day Northern Germany – particularly in the Weser region – and what is now Holland, and which spread along the Baltic Sea coast as far as Gdansk. It lent the outward appearance of the town hall a new symbolic character: that of a rich palace.

Once the market-side windows of the large hall had been enlarged and refashioned in secular representative style as rectangles crowned with aedicule gables, all remaining defence-architectural elements were removed, being replaced by elements of palace architecture. The balustrade of the balcony above the round-arch portico received lavish ornamen-



The Town Hall of Aachen after a fifteenth-century drawing

tation. A triple-axis projection interrupts this balcony and soars upward, culminating in a richly decorated gable. Along with the two smaller dormer gables flanking it, the central gable forms a dignified vertical composition in front of the high green copper roof and behind the balustrade surrounding it.

The marketplace façade of the Bremen town hall thus became one of the most impressive images of Northern German Renaissance architecture. The motifs of the reliefs and decorative elements were taken from widely circulated pattern-books of architectural elements and ornaments and other printed graphics, as was common practise in the cohesive culture area constituted by what are now Northwestern Germany and the Netherlands. Every last detail of the Bremen town hall façade decoration can be traced back to the engraved image that served as its model.

One of the showpieces and chief works of ornamental and pictorial carving in the style of the Northern German Renaissance is the Güldenkammer (Golden Chamber) inserted into the large council hall in the interior of the above-mentioned projecting bay of the facade, a work of the Bremen council's master carpenter Reineke Stolling. The interior of the Güldenkammer was newly decorated in 1905 according to a design by Heinrich Vogeler, a painter and member of the Worpswede artists' colony, and represents a masterpiece of interior decoration in the style of Art Nouveau.

Iconography

The town hall of Bremen has retained a great abundance of its elaborate pictorial decoration to the present day and thus represents one of the primary objects for the study of town hall iconography and its political and religious themes and allegories. This applies to the figural programme on the façade of the Gothic town hall and the sixteenth-century wall paintings in the large council hall as well as the figures and scenic reliefs of the Renaissance façade, the pictorial decoration on the exterior of the Güldenkammer and the painting of the hall ceiling. It would exceed the scope of this discussion to go into these elements in detail.

Let us nevertheless briefly examine the cycle of Gothic statues depicting the emperor and seven electors and placed between the large windows of the façade. (Today the figures on the façade are copies, the originals being preserved in the museum.) This symbolic-political homage to the emperor testifies to Bremen's self-confidence in its status as an imperial city. Cities within principalities offered pictorial tribute of this kind to their respective sovereigns. Dating from 1455-68, the statues of the Liudolfine and Guelfic rulers on the town hall in the Old City of Brunswick are an example. They are predated by similar figures on the Schöner Brunnen in Nuremberg (1385-96). The figures created by Hans Multscher in 1427-30 to decorate the splendid window of the town hall of Ulm are the artistically most significant example.

Old Town Hall, main façade, gable above the Güldenkammer

Also worthy of special attention are the two wall paintings on the north wall of the council hall, dating from 1532 and attributed to Bartholomäus Bruyn. Hung above an inscription concerning Bremen citizens' participation in the crusades, the depiction of Charlemagne and Bishop Willehad with the cathedral of Bremen between them makes reference to the foundation of the city and the political privileges claimed to have been granted it by Charlemagne. This work represents the pictorial tradition of allegorically abbreviated historical themes, numerous examples of which are known from Medieval sources pertaining to imperial residences and town halls, while few have survived. The second of the two paintings, depicting the Solomonic Judgement, is a particularly well-rendered example of a biblical allegory of justice frequently found in town halls.

The Statue of Roland

The statue of Roland belongs to the town hall of Bremen. The figure in front of the town hall façade is one of the most frequently reproduced illustrations of the history of the Medieval town in Germany.

Roland figures on marketplaces and in conjunction with town halls are a feature peculiar to Northern German cities, but are also found in cities of Bohemia even as far as Dubrovnik. These figures are undoubtedly allegorical symbols of market and trade privileges or the privileges of civic freedom in

Old Town Hall, east side

general, and presumably served in particular as references to the imperial order historically associated with Charlemagne. The question of iconological significance, i.e. as to why the legendary-historical figure of Roland stands for these rights, has never been fully answered.[5]

Of the approximately forty extant figures of Roland (e.g. in Brandenburg, Halberstadt, Stendal, Quedlinburg and Zerbst), that of Bremen is the most beautiful, artistically significant and famous. The present-day statue had a predecessor. According to the sources, a wooden Roland statue – presumably already very old – was destroyed in 1366 by bondsmen of the bishop during a raid. This event serves as proof of the symbolic significance borne by the statue with regard to civic freedom. It has nothing to do with the Hanse, the commercial league that developed in the course of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries among self-governed cities, having emerged from associations of merchants who carried out trade abroad. Bremen did not join the Hanse until 1358, i.e. a relatively late stage.

The new statue, depicting a young warrior with a raised sword, wearing armour and a cloak, was erected in 1404 – shortly before the construction of the new town hall got under way. It exhibits the same style as the town hall figures. The imperial eagle and the inscription on the shield, a later addition, are explicit confirmations of the statue's symbolic significance for the self-confidence of the free city.

The stylised form of the Roland of Bremen held special fascination for artists around 1900. The sculptor Hugo Lederer used it as a model for his Bismarck monument in Hamburg (1901-1906).

The Urban-Architectural Situation

Even today, the town hall's surroundings still bear vivid testimony to Bremen's emergence and the centuries-long continuity of its political life. Bremen's urban evolution took place in the manner typical of most Northwest German cities.[6] The city of Bremen emerged as a market settlement outside the gates of a Carolingian episcopal court. First mentioned in 782, the court had been made a bishopric in 787, the bishopric an archbishopric in 845. A market is first mentioned in 965. A civic community is first ascertainable in 1167, was recognised by Emperor Frederick Barbarossa in 1186 and existed from that time on as a de facto free city.

The pattern of urban-architectural development can be described as follows: Market activity, initially itinerant, developed before the main gates of the episcopal court and along the road that originated there. Merchants and craftspeople gradually settled and built their houses on the edges of the market. The parish church – in Bremen the Church of St.

5 H. Rempel, *Die Rolandstatuen*, Darmstadt, 1989
6 C. Meckseper: *Kleine Kunstgeschichte der deutschen Stadt im Mittelalter*, Darmstadt, 2nd edition, 1991

Mary, founded in the first quarter of the eleventh century and originally dedicated to St. Vitus – was built alongside the marketplace. The buildings of the chief economic and political institutions – the town hall and the cloth hall, as well as, in Bremen, a "SCRIPTORIUM" or chancellery, first mentioned in 1229 – soon emerged nearby. The Bremen marketplace was later moved to a site south of the parish church, the present-day marketplace, on whose north side the large town hall was built in 1405.

Apart from Hamburg, Bremen is the only town in Germany to have preserved its political status as a free city, as a citizenry organised according to the democratic-parliamentary principle – today as the Federal State of Bremen within the Federal Republic of Germany – from the Middle Ages to the present. The historical past of this status and its living continuity is discernible on and in the preserved buildings, in their functions and in their urban-architectural relationship to one another.

The New Town Hall

The considerable institutional growth of civic self-government in the nineteenth century made the construction of new town halls in all the larger cities of the German Empire after 1871 necessary.[7] In many cases the historical town hall was given up in the process, a large, ambitiously representative new facility being built at a different site. This was the course of events that took place, for example, in Munich, Hanover and Leipzig. These new town hall constructions were all modelled on the late Medieval town hall type as a means of symbolically documenting the relationship between the city's modern self-government and the free civic commune of the Medieval and Early Modern periods. Cities with a special awareness of local history retained their historical town halls and expanded them by means of new construction. Examples are Nuremberg, Frankfurt am Main and – Bremen.

Statues of the prophets

With regard to its artistic and urban-architectural qualities as well as the sensitive manner in which it merged with its Medieval predecessor, the new town hall of Bremen is one of the most well-wrought of these annexes. It was erected on the site of the former bishop's palace, an edifice built in 1293, taken over by the town in 1803 and altered to serve as a town hall annex in 1819. The new structure was built in 1909-13 according to designs by the Munich architect Gabriel von Seidl, one of the most important representatives of the stylistic reform movement around 1900.

Adjoining the historical town hall at the back, the annex subtly adapts to the brick building material, but without denying its status as a work of architecture in its own right. Where the two are seen side by side, the new structure echoes the Renaissance forms of the old one. The main façade of the annex

7 E. Mai, J. Paul, St. Waetzoldt, *Das Rathaus im Kaiserreich, Berlin*, 1982 (*Kunst, Kultur und Politik im Deutschen Kaiserreich*, Vol. 4)

Rolandi Bildniß so am Neuenthore stehet

New Town Hall, main façade facing the cathedral and view from Domshof

faces the cathedral, thus adopting the orientation of the former episcopal palace. Its appearance here is plainer, being dominated by the rhythm of a rigorous series of window axes. Like the design of the interior, the protruding façade bay on the side facing the Domshof exhibits a liberal approach to the employment of historical forms.

Conclusion

The marketplace of Bremen is an urban-architectural artwork of high rank. It culminates in the unit formed by the town hall and statue of Roland. The town hall of Bremen bears art-historical and cultural-historical significance within the town hall architecture of the Late Medieval and Early Modern periods of German architectural history as well as within the broader spectrum of the history of European secular architecture. This significance stands out all the more distinctly against the background of the fate suffered by most of Germany's large historical town halls during World War II: The town halls of Cologne, Lübeck, Augsburg, Nuremberg, Rothenburg, Ulm, Heilbronn, Frankfurt am Main, Münster, Wesel and Osnabrück were destroyed. Even if these edifices have been reconstructed in the meantime, they no longer possess the physical genuineness of their historicity which fortune has bestowed upon the town hall of Bremen.

The Town Hall of Frankfurt

◂ The Roland in the seventeenth century (Koster-Chronik)

Expert Opinion on the Nomination Submitted by the Federal Republik of Germany to the UNESCO for Recognition of the Old Town Hall and Roland of Bremen as World Cultural Heritage

Prof. Dr. Gerhard Dilcher

I. Theses

1. The criteria

The town hall and Roland of Bremen, along with the marketplace, fulfil the criteria for inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage List

1. because they represent a unique testimony to the political and cultural tradition of the European city in a special German, Northern German and specifically Bremen constellation (Criterion 3),

2. because, in an art-historically outstanding manner, the town hall and the Roland, surrounded by the Markt (marketplace), the Schütting (house of the merchants' association), the Dom (cathedral) and other churches, symbolize the historical synergies between the three primary forces of society – the emperor / empire, the church / religious culture and the merchantry / commerce – in the development of the city's civic autonomy and liberty from the time of Charlemagne (and the city's founding) to the Late Middle Ages (development of its civic constitution), the end of the Holy Roman Empire (1806) and, finally, the present (Criterion 4),

3. because they link the chief principles of the lawfully governed community, legal autonomy and civic, political self-government as an idea and way of life with the principle of the state as a protector of liberty, of gainful activity in the market economy and of the mutual recognition and legal distinction between society / politics and church / religion (Criterion 6).

2. The uniqueness of Bremen

The uniqueness of Bremen among the cities of Germany and Europe lies

a. in the artistic value of its architecture, which has not only remained intact but has been further developed in adherence to a high standard of quality to the very present,

b. in the continuity of the town hall as a work of architecture and as the seat of government and administration of a civic commune which has continuously enjoyed autonomy and self-government as a republican community,

c. in the particularly dense fabric of symbolic interrelationships between the town hall architecture, the pictorial and figural iconography of its interior and exterior, the Roland and the Markt within the ensemble formed by the Schütting, the Dom and the Liebfrauenkirche (St. Mary's Church), a fabric reflecting the entire urban and constitutional history of Bremen in concise form.

II. The historical background: Bremen as a city, commune and res publica

1. The city between individuality and typicality

A city that has grown in the course of centuries is an individual, distinct from other cities with regard to location, architecture, population, economy, mentality and self-conception. Before the age of the standardisation of law by the state, the legal status of cities was based on different privileges, self-imposed statutes and constitutions and legal customs. In Bremen, as in other old cities, the urban topography and architectural forms are both a reflection and a self-depiction of the municipal history, laws and constitution. In order to grasp the significance of the major works of architecture that are of interest here, we must begin with a look at the history of the town.

Yet not only must the city's individuality be taken into account. To gain an understanding of what is characteristic about the historical facts, it is also quite helpful to classify Bremen in terms of the typology of Old European cities. In this sense,

Bremen can be classified as a GRÜNDUNGSSTADT (an officially founded city), a cathedral city, and market, (maritime) commercial and mercantile city, and a city with a well-developed citizenry possessing autonomy and self-government (the occidental city type as defined by Max Weber). As such, Bremen developed a very specific position between its archiepiscopal rulers on the one hand and the emperor and empire on the other, a position that would eventually evolve into recognition as a Free Imperial City. Because of the fact that, like Hamburg, Lübeck and Frankfurt, Bremen retained its status even after the Napoleonic era, it acquired full state sovereignty within the German Confederation. Hamburg and Bremen are the only two cities to have further retained this sovereignty throughout the German Reich (in which they were constituent states) and in the Federal Republic of Germany, where to this day they are federal states.

2. Bremen's early history

The city's founding during the Carolingian era – in 787– by Willehad, an Anglo-Saxon missionary and the first bishop of Bremen, served the Christianisation of the Saxons and the economic development of their land, which was incorporated into the Frankish Empire and thus into Christian and Latin Europe.[1] Charlemagne, who presumably granted the town initial privileges, thus became its storied founder. In a controversial measure, the diocese of Bremen was soon separated out from the Archdiocese of Cologne and consolidated with Hamburg to form the Archdiocese of the North. The construction of the cathedral St. Petri Dom on the summit of the Weser dune determined the location of the city's centre once and for all at an early point in time. As a consequence of the bishop's metropolitan status, the Bremen church gained far-reaching missionary influence, not only on the North Sea coast but also eastward to the Slavic regions on the far side of the River Elbe and northward to the vast regions of Scandinavia.

The medieval annals of the Bremen church thus not only contain reports on regional and imperial events, but also the earliest accounts of the circumstances of life in the North, an area that was slow to receive the attention of the occidental culture. The most noteworthy source after the vita of Bishop Ansgar (under whom the first stone cathedral was built in ca. 860) is the history of the Bremen-Hamburg church written by the cathedral canon Adam of Bremen in 1072-1081. This document contains the biography of Adalbert, the archbishop of Bremen (1043-1072) who played a major role in the city's structural development as well as its imperial politics. What is more, it provides a description of the Scandinavian islands and their inhabitants in what is undeniably a supreme achievement of medieval historiography, as it represents a substantial expansion of the occidental conception of the world. Under Adalbert's rule the new construction of the cathedral was continued (after the examples of Cologne as well as Benevent in Southern Italy). The two crypts in the present-day cathedral date back to this construction phase; they provide visitors with vivid insights into the town's early history.

From the very beginning, a market was held in the direct vicinity of the cathedral precincts; until the tenth century, however, it was under the authority of the royal court. Through a privilege granted by the Carolingian emperor Arnulf in 888 and a concession by the German King Otto I in 937, the market was placed under the jurisdiction and privilege of the archbishop. As usual, the market right was associated with the rights to coinage and the levying of duties. Already then, the market was held to the west of the cathedral near the site of the market and merchants' church St. Veit / Liebfrauen, initially built in ca. 1000, possibly in the place of a Carolingian chapel. The Liebfrauenkirche has remained a distinctive feature of the city centre to the very present. The topography of the city as we

1 A history of the city is to be found passim in Elmshäuser et al., *World Heritage Nomination*, (see Bibl.). Also bibliography of that publication, pp. 130 f. (page nos. here and below refer to the version of the nomination submitted to the UNESCO). Summary in Schwarzwälder, "Bremen," in: *LexMA* Vol. 2, Cols. 603-606. A good overview of the emergence of the city and its constitution with regard to the issues of interest here is provided by *Schwarzwälder, Bremen* (1963).

The wall painting of Charlemagne and Willehad

know it today was thus already beginning to take shape. There are clearer indications of merchants' settlements and the presence of non-local merchants in the Ottonian and Salian era (tenth/eleventh centuries), when the harbour on the Balge, a side arm of the Weser, also began to gain significance. A large number of the city's royal privileges date from the Ottonian and Salian era, privileges to which reference would be made again and again in the course of Bremen's later history.

3. The development of the communal constitution

As a bishopric, Bremen bore the old Roman designation CIVITAS. But it was not until the twelfth century, when commercial traffic and the settlement of the land had reached more substantial dimensions, that it gained municipal significance with regard to size and the relative complexity of its population and economy. The citizenry had united in a corporate body (UNIVERSITAS CIVIUM), as implied, for example, by the diploma issued by Frederick Barbarossa in 1186. Represented by a committee of sixteen citizens, this corporate body participated in the administration carried out by the archbishop (in his role as local ruler) and his secular representative, the VOGT. In 1225 – i.e. at a relatively early point in time for German standards – there is reference to a city council whose members called themselves CONSULES according to the custom practiced in Upper Italian and Southern French cities after the example of the Roman republic. In the course of the thirteenth century, following a period in which the city was represented jointly by the VOGT, the council and the citizens' community, the council advanced to the fore as the sole governing body. On certain important issues, it still obtained the approval of the citizen's community. The archiepiscopal VOGT still officially held supreme jurisdiction but nevertheless gradually receded into the background, giving way to the citizens' self-administration and the jurisdiction of the council.

In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries an organic civic constitution developed, describable as communal and republican in form. Since the Late Middle Ages, the status of the archbishop had been limited to a more or less formal supremacy. Until well into the seventeenth century his authority continued to be recognised, however, by reciprocal acts - the homage of the citizens on the one hand, and the archbishop's confirmation of the city's privileges on the other. The observance of these formalities can be regarded as extensions of the "constitutional contract," reminiscent of the Europe-wide practice according to which the estates concluded sovereignty contracts with their rulers. These privileges also defined Bremen's relationship to the emperor and the empire. It was a relationship based upon the act of foundation by Charlemagne and the later series of royal privileges, of which that granted by Emperor Frederick Barbarossa in 1186 is the most significant. This legal status found pictorial expression particularly in the figure of Roland, and could be – and was – frequently used as a counter-weight to archiepiscopal authority. Apart from a

small number of conflicts, among them violent ones, the archbishop's retreat to the role of clergyman, territorial ruler and holder of loose formal supremacy over the town took place peacefully in a process that mirrored the strength of the civic community. It was not until the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, however, that the parliament considered it politically expedient to push for Bremen's full recognition as a Free Imperial City – and thus as a member of the Imperial Diet of the Holy Roman Empire –, the delay being due in part to the tax burden that would ensue with the new status. In comparison to the constitutional circumstances of Cologne – similar in many ways to those of Bremen – we see here a clear indication of Bremen's peripheral position in relation to the centre of the empire and the Rhineland. As a city located in the region between Hamburg and the Netherlands, Bremen enjoyed a special status.

It was thus possible for the communal constitution to develop with little interference from the outside.[2] The council succeeded in acquiring nearly full jurisdiction over the affairs of the town. The civic law was determined by old royal privileges, arbitrary elements, statutes and legal customs as well as by the influences of the Hamburg and Saxon codes. Here Bremen's longstanding ties with the centre of commerce on the Elbe and with Saxon tribal tradition are evident. On behalf of the council, Bremen civic law was recorded in a series of codes. The 1303/1304 version, drawn up by a committee of sixteen, remained the basis that was supplemented several times in the period that followed. This code was considered the law of the people rather than a dictate of the council and was therefore changed only with the approval of the citizenry, to whom it was read out from the town hall. It remained rooted in tradition and, in contrast to the so-called "civic law reformations" carried out in many Western German cities, was never codified by jurists in the form of Roman law. Along with its supplements it remained in force until the early nineteenth century.[3] Bremen civic law is thus reflective of the traditionalism that is an important characteristic of the town in general.

The council based its power upon continual cooperation with civil associations, for example the Wittheit (i.e. the "wisest" members of the citizens' community) which evolved into the Grosser Rat,[4] the above-mentioned committee of sixteen, the merchants' corporation (the Kaufmannschaft zu Bremen) and the craftspeople, who – due to the predominance of commerce for the city's economy – never succeeded in attaining the status of a guild with its own constitution and participation in the council. The ultimate basis for the legitimisation of the civic constitution and with it the council government was the citizens' community as a whole, the actual recipient of the privileges.[5] Even in a period marked by various civil conflicts during the fourteenth century, the council succeeded in maintaining its authority. As in the majority of commercial towns in Germany and communal Europe, the constitution of Bremen served in the sense of Aristotle's political doctrine as a "good" aristocratic-democratic mixed constitution.[6]

4. The government and the town hall from the Late Middle Ages to the present

It was this municipal council that – in 1404/1405 – resolved the construction of a new town hall and the erection of the Roland on the marketplace. The self-confidence of a well-established civil community is expressed in this act. The form of the municipal

2 The emergence as well as the structure of the medieval communal town between the citizenry and council constitution as well as the singularity of the civic law is discussed in detail in Dilcher, "Rechtsgeschichte der Stadt," in Bader/Dilcher, 1999.

3 Bremen civic law is the subject of an exhibition of the Bremen State Archive, in progress from November 2003 to January 2004 and accompanied by the catalogue *700 Jahre Bremer Recht*. Incidentally, schlolarly law was present in Bremen in an early (thirteenth-century) manuscript of the *Decretum Gratiani* as the foundation of all canonical law.

4 "*Großer Rat*" - Large Council - was the name of the council in its entirety, which was divided into three groups of eight councillors. These groups attended to the daily affairs of the council alternately, in annual "shifts.". The group serving this function was referred to as the "*sitzender Rat*" - the "sitting" or "session-holding" council. The "*Großer Rat*" convened when important decisions were to be made.

5 For general background, see Dilcher in Bader/Dilcher, esp. pp. 426f. ("Die Bürgerschaft als Rechtsträger") and pp. 540f. ("Die Ratsverfassung als politische Ordnung")

6 Meier, Mensch and Bürger (1999); Dilcher, *Politische Idee* (1993)

government had consolidated inwardly; the town's privileges and legal status were recognised. The status of the archbishop as a secular ruler had been deflected to apply to the surrounding territories of the archdiocese; like the Archbishop of Cologne, he himself resided outside the city in Bremervörde. The cathedral and the archiepiscopal palace remained under the protection of immunity.

The town itself had purchased various territories and castles in the immediate vicinity and on the Lower Weser as a means of securing access to the sea. By assuming a kind of limited membership in the Hanseatic League, it had found a solution for its conflict-laden relationship with that association, which controlled the Baltic Sea trade so important for Bremen's economy. The city on the Weser thus maintained a distinguished status, below that of Lübeck and Cologne in the Hanseatic hierarchy but side by side Hamburg and above many other towns.

Bremen's independent regional status again became evident during the Reformation. Recent historical research has aptly referred to the Reformation as "an urban event"[7] in view of the fact that the religious-social movements of the townsfolk themselves essentially determined the decisions of the councils of autonomous and Free Imperial Cities with regard to religion. Within the framework of the imperial constitution, the Reformation granted the citizenry the summepiscopate, or ecclesiastical supremacy, thus substantially strengthening its legal status. Whereas most of the Southern German imperial towns, along with Hamburg and Lübeck, dedicated themselves to the Lutheran Reformation and Cologne remained Catholic, Bremen and Emden – due to their proximity to the Netherlands – adopted the Calvinist faith. It was a step that would leave its mark on the spirit and mentality of the city (and its leading stratum) for centuries to come.

This was the phase in which the alteration of the town hall and the addition of its magnificent Renaissance-style facade took place (1608-1612). The headquarters of the merchants' association, the Schütting, had already been erected in its present-day form (1536-1538). Another consequence of the Reformation was the secularisation of the archbishopric, which came under Swedish control as a duchy at the close of the Thirty Years' War (1648). Yet even vis-à-vis this powerful neighbour, as against Braunschweig and Hanover, the council and citizens of Bremen maintained their independence. In view of the threat thus presented, however, the town's immediate legal relationship to the empire – symbolised, as it was, by the town hall façades and the Roland – advanced to the status of formal recognition as a Free Imperial City by imperial privilege (1646). The "father of German legal history" Hermann Conring[8] had supplied an advisory opinion on this legal issue, taking recourse to as far back in history as Charlemagne and the medieval imperial and civic constitution and coming to a finely discriminating conclusion – a sign of the importance attached to this subject at the time.

This constitution characterised Bremen until the end of the Holy Roman Empire in 1806. Like the few remaining imperial cities of Hamburg, Lübeck and Frankfurt am Main, the town then acquired full sovereignty as a member of the German Confederation. The town's internal constitution now increasingly combined older structures with the elements of modern constitutionalism and democracy. As a member of the German Empire of 1871, the Weimar Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany, it is the only city aside from Hamburg to have retained its character as an independent state (now possessing the status of a German federal Land) to the very present, a distinction it lost only temporarily under the National Socialist regime.

7 Cf. Dilcher in Bader/Dilcher, p. 698 ("Die Reformation als städtisches Ereignis") with reference to the Reformation historians B. Moeller and A G. Dickens

8 For further discussion of Hermann Conring's (1606-1681) role in the recognition of the civic constitution cf. Dilcher in Bader/Dilcher p. 785f. On Bremen's status, see Conring's "Bericht von der Landes-Fürstl. Erzbischöfl. Hoch- und Gerechtigkeit über die Stadt Bremen" in his *Exercitatio de urbibus germanicis*, Opera Vol. 1, pp. 844- 983

III. The town hall as the representation of the civic community

1. The form of the town hall

The oldest known town hall of Bremen is referred to in the sources as a DOMUS CONSULUM OR THEATRALIS.[9] Its present-day counterpart is thus the city's second such "house of consultation." Unlike many other town halls, including its predecessor, the town hall of Bremen did not emerge as a structurally altered merchants' guild hall or residential house. On the contrary, it was designed and constructed according to a council resolution in an area of the town centre cleared especially for that purpose, directly in front of the still-existing archiepiscopal palace and the cathedral precincts. At the same time, in an act of political urban planning, a certain topographical reorientation of the town centre was undertaken: The cathedral and ecclesiastical buildings were relegated into the background by the town hall placed before them on the main thoroughfare, while the newly created marketplace was rendered the centre of the people's town, framed by the town hall and the likewise newly constructed Schütting, the seat of the merchants' association, and crowned by the Roland whose gaze is directed along the trade route Hamburger Strasse, and whose position dominated the street's original course.

This town hall of 1405/10 was built in the form of a palas, i.e. a solid, well-fortified structure representative of its resident's power, an aspect further emphasised by the crenelation originally skirting the gable in an allusion to the walled enclosure of the city itself. This rather squat, citadel-like form distinguishes the town hall of Bremen from the "upward-striving" Gothic town halls found frequently in Northern Germany and the Netherlands.[10] At the same time, the building possesses much more intricate detail of design and greater sophistication than the castle-type town halls of cities like Goslar,

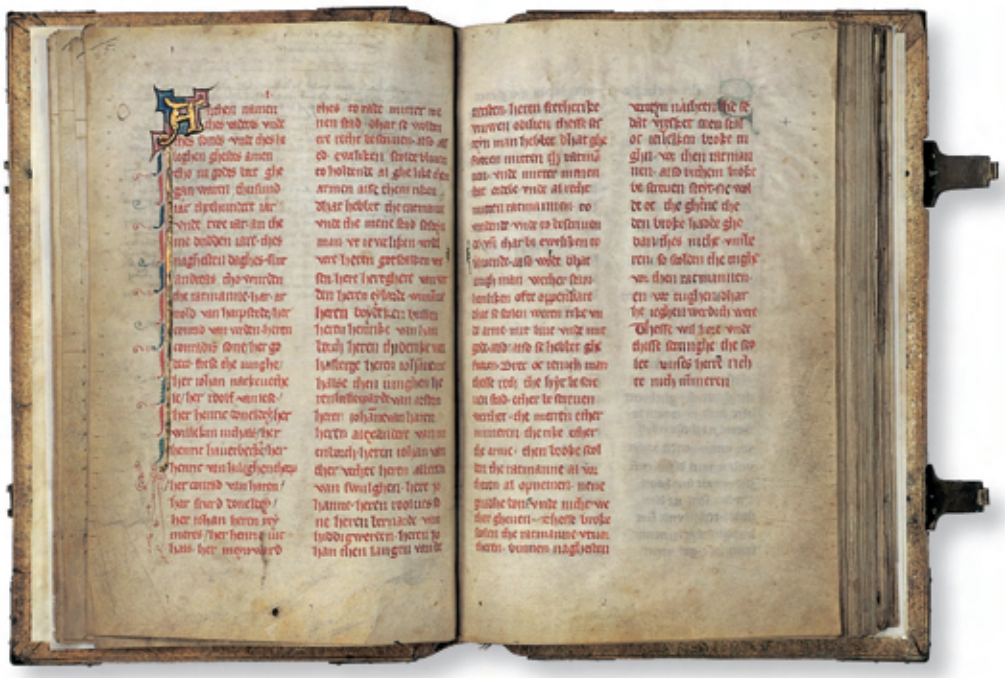
The second Bremen town seal of 1336: St. Peter and the emperor as the patrons of Bremen

Göttingen and Osnabrück.[11] This original character was preserved even behind the later Renaissance facade, which lends the town hall lightness and fluency. The palas form serves as a symbolic defence against the bishop's claim to authority over the town, a claim likewise expressed architecturally – in the massive cathedral and the archiepiscopal palace.

2. The representation of a doctrine of government

Originating in the period of well-established council supremacy in ca. 1400, the spatial organisation of the town hall is expressive of a form of medieval town government derived from the political doctrine of Aristotle, comprising the government forms monarchy, aristocracy and polity (democracy). Mixed forms of government, leading to a division of power, were considered "good." Cities – as

9 Cf. chiefly the information in the Bremen *World Heritage Nomination*. Also see *Mittelalterliche Rathäuser* (2003), which provides a good basis for comparison with Lower Saxony.
10 Cf. for example the town halls of Stralsund, Lüneburg and Bruges, *World Heritage Nomination*, p. 21
11 See *Mittelalterliche Rathäuser*, 2003, with illustrations



"Dhes stades boke van Bremen":
The Bremen civic code of 1303. From the original manuscript of the Bremen council

republican (i.e. non-monarchical) communities – ideally combined aristocratic and democratic elements.[12]

In keeping with this principle, the basis of the building – the lower level and the town hall cellar – belonged to the people. The market halls on the ground-floor level were devoted to trade and the merchantry, i.e. to the leading economic stratum and its function, economic exchange. All of these functions, however, were under the actual and legal power of disposition held by the council, the landlord of the seat of government. The upper level thus served the purposes of the official activities of the council, an aristocratic oligarchy enhanced by cooptation. At the same time, the council was a body that legitimised its rule (still encompassing administration, jurisdiction and legislation in a single unit) on the basis of the citizenry. Its explicit goal was to practice good, virtuous, Christian government in the public interest as well as divine and worldly justice. To a large extent, the architecture and iconography of the town hall serve as a representation of that goal – both as a confirmation of the legitimacy of the council's authority and the exhortation not to forfeit it.

The connection between the government and the people was represented by the accessibility of the council level, originally by way of an exterior staircase on the north side of the building. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, however, following a people's revolt, that stairway was torn down and replaced by the interior spiral staircase still in existence today – a sign that the council now laid claim to stronger authoritativeness.[13] By way of this staircase, the citizen had access to the council in the great council hall, where he could bring forward various concerns having to do with legal matters, motions, petitions, etc. The council, for its part, possessed a connection to the citizenry by way of platforms integrated in the structure of the medieval town hall and representing its opening to the outside: From one such platform, located in the

12 See Meier and Dilcher, as in Note 7
13 Cf. Dilcher in Bader/Dilcher, pp. 721f. ("Die Stadt zwischen Mittelalter und Moderne. Rat und Bürgerschaft."). The fact that the citizenry retained its basic legal status during this period - and the city thus remained an aristocratic-democratic republican community - is established with a look at a conflict taking place in Lübeck, see Dilcher, *Bürgerrecht und Bürgereid* (2002), esp. pp. 85-89.

middle of the original façade, the council communicated with the people on the marketplace through speeches, promulgations of the law and oath-taking ceremonies; another such platform was located above an old court location on the building's west side – more specifically, above the entrance to the town hall cellar – this one primarily serving the purpose of law promulgation. In this way, the town hall architecture paid tribute to the public character of medieval jurisdiction and exercise of authority. This medieval "principle of publicity" has been recognised in recent historiography as a constitutive element of "information, communication and self-representation in medieval communities."[14]

It is no coincidence that these structural elements disappeared at the time of the Renaissance alterations. Relics of them nevertheless remain visible. The GÜLDENKAMMER (Golden Chamber), the council's new conference room (seventeenth century) that took the place of the "proclamation balcony," overlooked the marketplace as the site of commercial transactions and public life, which were thus to remain in the council consciousness as it deliberated its resolutions. The immediate publicity of the exercise of control that had characterised the older building was also replaced by pictorial allegories of good and virtuous rule, artistically enhancing the town hall to the present day and conveying to us the doctrine of the civil community.

The original council stalls in the large council hall provided a setting for the public practice of jurisdiction by the council, founded on the citizens' oath and accessible to the people. (Council jurisdiction contrasted to traditional jurisdiction, which was still generally practiced outdoors; cf. the civic court held beneath the figure of Charlemagne on the main facade.) It was for this reason that the council court could not be held in the small conference room. As supremacy symbols associated with the Ancien Règime, the council stalls were removed and demolished during the Napoleonic period. The few surviving elements – artistically valuable side walls bearing depictions of Charlemagne and Bishop Willehad – are preserved in Bremen's historical museum. On the wall above the council stalls, perhaps in place of an older work, there hung a large 1532 depiction of the Solomonic Judgement attributed to the Westphalian school of Bartholomäus Bruyn. Earlier town hall pictures of corresponding function often depict the Last Judgement, with Christ at the centre of attention, as a direct medieval-Christian reminder of the judges' responsibility.[15] In contrast, the "modern" depiction of the Old Testament scene makes reference to the divinely inspired wisdom of the Solomonic Judgement, which corresponds more closely with the Humanist and Reformationist conceptions of the world. The picture in the town hall of Bremen maintains its rank as one of the leading examples of European images of justice.[16] Inscriptions at the side elucidate the exhortations to virtue implied by the picture. Similar meaning is conveyed on the eastern and western exteriors of the town hall by the figures of the Old Testament prophets which took on the identities of Greek philosophers during the Humanist period. They are accompanied by the New Testament figure of St. Peter gazing toward the cathedral of which he is the patron. Thus the town hall construction, while it represents emancipation from clerical town rule, nevertheless incorporates religion into its imagery.

An important and weighty exhortation to good government and administration of justice is still to be found today in a plaque of the year 1491 over a door in the north wall of the large council hall, possibly once a passageway to the council conference room. The inscription warmly recommends that the RECTOR URBIS maintain the citizenry in unity (UNUM FAC POPULUM), preserve the commonweal of the town (COMMUNEM URBIS, which also means the civic community!), be a friend to his neighbour (an

14 The title of an extensive volume by Haverkamp (1998). *Haverkamp* (1996) undertakes a closer examination of Habermas' concept of the civil public sphere in modern times.
15 Cf. for example Goslar, large council hall with the extensively restored late-fifteenth-century depiction of the Last Judgement, in: *Mittelalterliche Rathäuser* (2003) pp. 103f. Cf. also the Last Judgement depiction in the council chamber (known as the "Gerichtslaube") of the town hall of Lüneburg, ibid., pp. 43 and 153
16 Cf. Pleister/Schild, *Recht und Gerechtigkeit* (1988), pp. 150f. with interpretation

evocation of the citizens' close brotherly relationship to one another), protect the law in equal manner for rich and poor, maintain good statutes and reject bad ones, and always hear the other side (ALTERAM PARTE AUDITE).[17] It would be difficult to find a clearer confession to "republican" civil virtues and justice. This plaque is highly expressive of the relationship between the council and the citizenry.

Only brief reference need be made here to the numerous similar allegorical depictions, particularly those decorating the new council chamber of the seventeenth century – the GÜLDENKAMMER overlooking the marketplace.[18]

The town hall and its imagery thus present the councillors and townsfolk alike with the entire republican political doctrine of virtue and government in an iconographical programme which stands comparison to the FÜRSTENSPIEGEL genre (manuals for the proper education of a sovereign).

3. The relationship to the emperor and the empire

Another aspect frequently emphasised in the symbolic elements of the town hall is the historical legal basis of the civic constitution – the city's foundation by Charlemagne, from which its imperial immediacy and freedom are derived. The manner in which the figure of Roland relates to this aspect will be discussed in Part IV below, while the actual historical background of this tradition has already been examined in Part II above.

Following a period in which Ottonian and Salian privileges were of prime importance for the city, the famous Barbarossa Diploma of 1186 represents an important reference back to Emperor Charlemagne.[19] This imperial diploma, of which the original was kept in the archives of Bremen until the end of World War II, confirms the legal status granted by Charlemagne to the citizens of the City of Bremen and to the city itself at the request of its first bishop, Willehad. More specifically, it grants personal freedom under the name of the Saxon WEICHBILDRECHT (municipal borough law), although it must be added that, in this form, it corresponds to the twelfth-century state of affairs. Charlemagne is thus identified as the founder of the new civic liberty that served as the basis of the communal constitution. In this context, attention must be drawn to the significance of the emperor as the personification of secular power which, in consistency with the "two swords" theory following the investiture controversy, was contrasted to and distinguished from clerical power. The immediate reference to the emperor in the Barbarossa Diploma serves as a means of countering the archbishop's claim to supremacy: In the city, secular supremacy was now conceivable as something detached from the Church.[20] And the council derived this secular power from its supreme holder, Charlemagne, the founder of the Western empire.

A long series of iconographic references to Emperor Charlemagne now emerged in the vicinity of the town hall and beyond, of which only the most important can receive mention here.[21] Charlemagne and Bishop Willehad are depicted with their respective insignia of secular and clerical power on the oldest city seal. On the second seal of Bremen, Bishop Willehad has been replaced by the more institutional symbol of St. Peter as the patron of the cathedral. An important reference to Emperor Charlemagne was thus established for the legitimation of the Bremen's civic privileges, since the seal served everywhere as an expression of the town's specific legal personality. The Charlemagne tradition was evidently developed into an extremely effective and long influential political theory by the councillor and burgomaster who played a decisive

17 The complete Latin text, accompanied by a stylistically elegant translation into German, is found in Albrecht, *Das Bremer Rathaus* (1993) pp. 63f.
18 Detailed discussion, with illustrations, in: ibid.
19 Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Dipl. of Frederick I, IV; No. 955. Even if this diploma reflects the city's legal status of the twelfth century, there must have been a genuine Charlemagne diploma, in view of the fact that such a diploma is mentioned in the genuine diploma of King Arnulf of 888, s. Hägermann, p. 50
20 See Dilcher, "Geistliches und Weltliches," (1999). Cf. also for Bremen Hägermann, p. 54
21 These references are comprehensively discussed in Hägermann, *Karl der Große* (1983)

role in the construction of the town hall and the erection of the Roland, namely Johann Hemeling the Younger (ca. 1360-1428). Hemeling and his contemporaries – it should be added – did not shy away from the popular medieval means of disclosing the "truth" through the forging of documents.[22] The Charlemagne tradition henceforth found multifarious iconographic representation. Charlemagne was depicted as a sword-bearer and holder of the power of jurisdiction in a statue on the western exterior of the town hall, the location of an old civic court, i.e. of the original "ordinary" jurisdiction. This circumstance is documented by a sixteenth-century Merian engraving of the town hall. As this court was superseded by council jurisdiction, the figure was removed, while in the council hall references to Emperor Charlemagne increased: Along with Willehad, he decorated the side walls of the council stalls (see above); even more importantly, he appeared – again accompanied by Willehad – as the founder of the bishopric and the town in a large-scale painting. The latter work and the rendering of the Solomonic Judgement were commissioned, carried out and incorporated into the iconographical programme of the large council hall together. The cathedral also follows suit, displaying the classical depiction of Charlemagne and Willehad as its founders in the relief that decorates its western gallery.[23] Emphasis is thus placed upon the continuous connection between Church and State, a relationship which would, however, undergo fundamental change during the Reformation.

The "original" imperial freedom – i.e. that derived directly from Emperor Charlemagne – also served Bremen as a means of supporting its refusal to share the fiscal burden of the empire with the other free and imperial towns. It was for this reason, among others, that Bremen did not acquire the status of Free Imperial City by imperial privilege until the year 1646, when the threat posed by the strong territorial rulers – Sweden and Hanover in the place of the archbishop – became immediate for the city.

A more "up-to-date" symbol of the direct relationship between the city on the one hand and the emperor and empire on the other is the row of figures on the marketplace façade of the town hall, which was left unchanged by the Renaissance alterations. Depicting the emperor and the seven electors, it is apparently influenced by the figural programme of the Aachen town hall, although the latter is approximately one hundred years older. As has recently been established by the constitutional historian Armin Wolf,[24] the Aachen figures represent the oldest testimony to the seven electors as the Kollegium, the committee entrusted with the election of the emperor. While the Aachen depiction was created half a century prior to the official establishment of the role of the princes as imperial electors by the Golden Bull issued by Emperor Charles IV in 1356, the figures of Bremen appeared half a century after it. They thus cite not only the figural depiction in Aachen – the residence of Charlemagne and imperial coronation city – but also the constitutionality of the imperial election system, which had been fortified in the meantime by the oldest "Basic Imperial Law" of the Holy Roman Empire, the Golden Bull: Together the emperor and the electors represent the empire; they "are" the empire. On the other hand, the Imperial Diet was not yet an established institution at the time of the town hall construction; the Free Imperial Cities and Estates of the Empire had consequently not yet been definitively determined. The references to Emperor Charlemagne's foundation act borne by the Roland, the pictorial depictions within the town hall and the figures of the emperor and the electors on its exterior were thus sufficient expressions of the claim to liberty, autonomy and the status of imperial immediacy in the "open constitution" of the Late Middle Ages. In foresighted anticipation of the town's future needs, the town hall architecture, the Roland and their symbolic programmes comprised a

22 For an authoritative discussion on this subject, see Hägermann.
23 Before 1520, *World Heritage Nomination*, p. 83
24 Wolf, *Von den Königswählern* (1990)

wealth of diversely employable arguments for the recognition of Bremen's formal status as a Free Imperial City by imperial privilege in 1646.

4. The civic associations

The citizenry (UNIVERSITAS CIVIUM) and the mechants' association as a corporation (DIE KAUFMANNSCHAFT ZU BREMEN – the merchantry of Bremen – under the leadership of elders and corresponding formally to a guild) have their symbolic place not only in the structural organisation of the town hall but also in the ensemble formed with the marketplace and the Schütting. The Schütting is the guildhall of the merchants in what was at the time of its construction a new location on the marketplace; by virtue of its location and façade, the building is representative of the status of the merchantry in the commercial town. The merchants' corporation comprised a second elite with a claim to leadership in the city, with regard to authority only slightly below the oligarchy of the council dynasties. In times of civil unrest, representatives of this elite often led the rebellious craftsmen. As the representative edifice of the KAUFMANNSCHAFT ZU BREMEN, the Schütting expresses the claim to participation in the government of the town, thus associating itself with the Old European corporate form of civic community and not yet with its modern egalitarian form. The elaborate sixteenth-century refashioning of the Schütting façade soon triggered a response by the council – the seventeenth-century construction of the town hall's Renaissance façade, a work intended to leave no doubt about the council's natural right to the political leadership of the citizens' community. At the same time, the new town hall façade was expressive of the new spirit of the times and the council's claim to power.

A further relic of the old civic associations has survived to the very present – the SCHAFFERMAHL or Schaffer Banquet celebrated annually in the town hall of Bremen under the limelight of public attention and thus to be regarded as part of the building's living tradition. It is a fraternal banquet of the HAUS SEEFAHRT, a pension foundation organised by seafaring captains for their surviving dependents; at the same time it marks the foundation's annual rendering of accounts.[25] The Schaffermahl thus represents the core of what constituted the cooperative social form of the "guild" that had become popular primarily in Northern Germany, the Netherlands, England and Scandinavia since the days of Charlemagne:[26] an association founded as a means of protecting its members against certain dangers, a brotherhood serving as a kind of expanded kinship, possessing its own funds, extending its protective function to apply to the wives of its members and regularly reinforcing the fellowship by the holding of a festive banquet. The guild itself therefore represents one of the origins of the communal fellowship of citizens, particularly in the Northern European region referred to above. And the tradition of the Schaffermahl is thus legitimately associated with the civil town hall.

It should also be mentioned here that the old name of the WITTHEIT (explained in Part II.3. above) has lived on in Bremen tradition. It now no longer designates a political body but – quite in keeping with its literal meaning – the umbrella organisation of Bremen's scholarly and scientific associations.[27]

The ensemble consisting of the town hall, Schütting, cathedral, archiepiscopal palace and council church of St. Mary thus serves as a representation of the plural and dynamically evolving constitution of Bremen as a civic community.

Side wall of the old council stalls ▸

25 See World Heritage Nomination, pp. 48f.
26 Article "Gilde" (O.G. Oexle), *LexMA* IV, 1452f.; Bader/Dilcher, *Deutsche Rechtsgeschichte* (1999), Register s. Gilde
27 The essay by Hägermann, *Karl der Große*, frequently cited in this expert opinion, appeared in the publication series of the present-day "Wittheit."

IV. The Bremen Roland as a symbol of privilege / The relationship to Charlemagne

1. Figures of Roland

Figures of Roland, usually made of stone and originating in the late medieval and early modern period, are to be found in numerous cities, above all in Northern and Eastern Germany, e.g. in Brandenburg, Halle, Quedlinburg and Stendal, but also in Prague and on the Adriatic Sea in Ragusa/ Dubrovnik. Their significance was long a topic of scholarly controversy, partially due to the fact that the majority of their wooden predecessors were destroyed and only quite imprecisely documented. According to one interpretation, for example, the Roland figure is presumed to have originated in the ancestral post or market cross, its name to have been derived from "DAT ROTE LAND" (the red land), from the Westphalian "ROTE ERDE" (red earth). The interpretation of its symbolic content was correspondingly varied (e.g. market freedom, blood jurisdiction). Following the in-depth study by Gathen,[28] the legal historian Winfried Trusen made a clear case against all other theories,[29] proving that the figure consistently represents Roland, Charlemagne's storied paladin.

2. The symbolism of the Bremen Roland

After the Roland figure of Halle and the approximately contemporary (and no longer existing) one of Hamburg, the Bremen Roland is not only one of the oldest Roland figures but also – due to its status as the first free-standing large-scale statue of the Middle Ages and its high artistic quality – the most impressive example of that genre. Its position on the marketplace, directly in front of the town hall, as well as – on the basis of a city council resolution – the concurrency of its erection with the construction of the town hall are clear indications of its high rank as a civic symbol.[30] As elsewhere, the erection of the figure of Roland in Bremen carried on an older tradition: As early as 1366, a struggle with the citizenry had led to the destruction of a wooden Roland whose age is unknown. Already this event alone is indicative of the manner in which the figure was seen as a symbol of civil liberty in opposition to episcopal town rule. According to the chronicle, the archiepiscopal party had destroyed the statue because "... they begrudged the city its freedom."

The symbolism and significance of Roland is much more clearly expressed in the Bremen statue than elsewhere. The Bremen Roland thus played a major role in the clarification of the relationship of the Roland figures to the historical Roland. Demonstratively directed towards the viewer, his shield bears an inscription testifying to "... the freedom ... which Charlemagne and many a prince truly gave to this place ...".[31] Both the reference to Charlemagne as well as the statue's significance as a symbol of freedom are thus clear. In the Middle Ages, freedom always has a specific content, related to certain places and persons. Here, in any case, in view of the figure's topographical location on the marketplace, the freedom referred to is market freedom, i.e. the liberty and special right to exchange goods, a privilege of central importance for the economically active citizenry and thus for the self-conception of a mercantile town. It can, however, be added "that the Roland, as a symbol of 'freedom' was the symbol of the overall freedom of the civil community – not of an individual right but of the totality of the privileges granted by the emperor and the concessions made by the town sovereigns, all of which together constituted the town's legal status."[32] The mighty sword of the Bremen Roland – Durendal, the sword of the Roland

28 Gathen, Rolande (1960), with a comprehensive listing of Roland columns and a history of the Roland research
29 Initially in Festschrift Grass (1986), summary in the article "Rolandssäulen" HRG IV Cols. 1102-1106 and article "Roland. B. Recht," LexMA VII Cols. 953f.
30 Comprehensively discussed in Gathen, esp. pp. 83f.
31 Illustration in World Heritage Nomination, p. 72, full text of inscription, with interpretation, p. 73
32 Gathen, p. 87

sagas, whose over-proportionately large hilt is supposed to have contained relics – signifies the armed defence of this freedom in the name of the emperor by a citizenry capable of military force.

In the case of Bremen, the reference to Charlemagne and thus to the historical Count Roland is unequivocal. In view of the figure's re-erection in conjunction with the town hall construction, it is to be regarded in the context of the councillor and burgomaster Johann Hemeling's Charlemagne-based "theory of privileges."[33] Hemeling's purpose was to link the city, its legal status and its freedom firmly with "imperial law," thus providing them with the strongest legitimation known to the Middle Ages. At the same time, the city thus placed itself in the Roland tradition connected with popular devotion to Charlemagne. (As is well known, Charlemagne had been beatified by an antipope at the instigation of Frederick Barbarossa.) With the reference to Charlemagne, Bremen was joining ranks with Aachen, Cologne, Frankfurt and Reims, cities of significance to the empire and familiar with the veneration of Charlemagne. Yet whereas these cities were located on Frankish soil, Bremen was a city on Saxon territory, purposely positioning itself in the tradition of Charlemagne on account of its specific history.

3. The veneration of Roland in Carolingian Europe

Various historical sources, among them Einhard's Vita Caroli Magni, testify to the death of Roland, Margrave of Brittany, in the year 778 in the Pyrenean Roncesvalle during a battle with the Basques / Moors.[34] Roland was soon celebrated as a prime example of a Christian knight and a martyr in the struggle against the heathens. The rose and the figure of an angel next to the left hand of the Bremen Roland are symbolic of this martyrdom. Yet an allusion will certainly also have been intended to Bremen's role as a missionary diocese in the conversion of the Saxons and peoples of the North, a topic frequently mentioned in the chronicles with reference to martyrs who gave their lives.

With its strong reference to Charlemagne's historic paladin and knight, the Bremen Roland – to a greater extent than most other Roland figures – clearly aligns itself with the great European tradition of devotion to Roland. Evidence of this tradition is found in pictorial and literary works alike,[35] even in popular puppet shows still performed today in places as divergently located as Sicily and Wallonia. Pious depictions of Roland are located along the pilgrim route to Santiago di Compostella (which also passes Roncesvalle) and at the meeting point of the German troops for the procession to the imperial coronation in Rome (i.e. at the cathedral and Piazza San Zeno in Verona), at the crusaders' harbour of Brindisi and many other sites. Tales of Roland (the Chansons de Roland) and his friend Olivier are found not only throughout the Romance literature of the Middle Ages (even in the Italian national epos Orlando Furioso by Ludovico Ariosto) but also in the German, English and Scandinavian literature of that period. In the last-named, Roland is associated with the Saxon War and Charlemagne's conversion of the Saxons, a theme with a clear allusion to Bremen. In nearby Aachen, Emperor Frederick Barbarossa had Roland depicted on the golden shrine of Charlemagne, while the renovatio imperii Caroli Magni of Philip II of France (twelfth century) was accompanied by depictions of Roland on the stained-glass windows of Chartres. The erection of the wooden and later the stone figure of Roland in Bremen is thus to be understood within the context of a major European Roland renaissance beginning in the twelfth century.

4. The message borne by the Bremen Roland

With their Roland and its strongly expressive symbolism, the council and citizenry of Bremen considered themselves firmly anchored in the great tradition of Christian-Carolingian Europe. Whereas

The statue of Roland: Shield and belt ▸

33 Cf. Hägermann, *Karl der Große* (1983), pp. 59f.
34 Cf. article "Roland. A. Verehrung." *LexMA* VII Cols. 952f.
35 Article "Roland. C. Literarische Gestaltung" *LexMA* VII Cols. 954f.

figures of Roland frequently served primarily to legitimise authority and Christian knighthood, those erected in towns represented the legitimacy of market freedom and the civic law. Their presence was thus a gesture of resistance to the bishop's supremacy over the town, limiting his power to the clerical sphere. At the same time they substantiated civil autonomy as an offshoot from the same root as German and French monarchy, i.e. from Carolingian France, and bestowed the rank of imperial law upon this autonomy. Because of the fact that artistic and literary depictions had created a public awareness of the name of Charlemagne's paladin, the council and citizenry could rest assured that the Roland figure's pictorial symbolism – elucidated as it was by the inscription on the shield – would be clearly understood by the royalty and nobility, church and people alike. In the case of Bremen, a town in the process of developing into a Free Imperial City, the symbolism alluded to the highest form of liberty possible under the emperor and empire.

V. The ideas and principles of the civic community in their historical context

1. The constitutional principles of the communal city

For the process of rationalisation resulting in modern statehood, a society ordered by law, and an administration founded on law, the written form and the concept of public office, Max Weber attributes great importance to the occidental city in its development as an antique Graeco-Roman polis and a medieval commune.[36] Modern research, which has experienced an international "Weber renaissance" in the past decades,[37] fully endorses this point of view. More recently, stronger emphasis has been placed on the principle of the cooperatively united citizenry as a political community and thus a basis for the development of modern democracy. These principles are now associated with the generalising concepts of 'communalism' and 'republicanism.'

Developed by the historian Peter Blickle of Bern, the concept of communalism as a European constitutional principle adheres to Max Weber to the extent that it comprises "urban and rural communes as essentially analogously structured functional and institutional organisations, distinguished by the right of the communes or its representative bodies to make laws, by administration within the framework of the sphere of competence covered by the statutes, and by the administration of justice within the framework of statutory law."[38] The contribution of this principle to the process of state-building – effective by way of resistance and participation alike – was the subject of a European research project.[39]

Helmut G. Koenigsberger, constitutional historian residing in London, points out furthermore that the liberty-oriented principle of the republic – in contrast to monarchy – played a role in European political theory even before the French Revolution, from Aristotle to Machiavelli and well into the eighteenth century. He goes on to show that in historical reality, however, this principle was represented above all by the cities of Europe.[40]

In the period between 1100 and 1250, the citizenries of the Middle Ages struggled for and won political and legal recognition vis-à-vis the sovereignty system of the higher aristocracy, which also comprised the rulers of towns (bishops, nobility, monarch).[41] It was in this period that the formation and recognition of the citizens' association of Bremen as a commune took place. Cities enjoying a high degree of freedom and autonomy elected a city council to act as the organ of self-government, adopting the title of "consulate" and with it the concept of public office associated with the

36 See for example the essays in Bruhns/Nippel (eds.), *Max Weber* (2000)
37 On the subject of the city, reference should be made here to Molho/Raaflaub/Emlen (eds.), *City-States* (1991), Meier (ed.), *Die okzidentale Stadt* (1994) and Bruhns/Nippel, *Max Weber* (1998)
38 Blickle, *Kommunalismus* Vol.v2 (2000) p. 1
39 Blickle (ed.), *Resistance, Representation* (1998)
40 Cf. the essays and in particular the concluding observations by that author in: Koenigsberger (ed.), *Republiken* (1988)
41 Ennen, *Europäische Stadt* (1987); Schulz, "*Denn sie lieben die Freiheit*" (1992); Dilcher in Bader/Dilcher (1999), esp pp. 327-404 ("Die Entstehung der kommunalen Stadt"); Blickle (ed.), *Resistance, Representation* (1997), esp. Part V: "The urban belt and the emerging modern state," pp. 217-334

magistrates of the Roman Republic. This step was taken by the citizenry of Bremen in the first half of the thirteenth century, leading to the rejection of archiepiscopal town rule in favour of civil self-government (autocephaly as defined by Max Weber).

In the process, the citizens' leaders made clever use of the city's foundation by Charlemagne as well as various other imperial privileges as legal arguments, even if those privileges were not originally intended to help create a self-governing citizenry. They nevertheless already encompassed the idea that "town air liberates," which formed the basis for the autonomous community. The council did not shy away from legitimising the further development of these rights with a series of forged privileges. As expressed by Max Weber, the autonomous citizens' community and the council government represented a revolutionary novelty as compared to the early medieval aristocratic and hierarchical system of rule, and this concept applied in Bremen as well. The citizenry, like the antique polis, forms a SOCIETAS CIVILIS, a well-ordered civil society based on equality.[42] It was recognised that this form of community represented the democratic element of the civic constitution called for by the political doctrine of Aristotle. The Italian jurists of the Middle Ages, particularly their most well-known representative Bartolus of Sassoferrato (?-1356), equated the autonomous city – as a sovereign entity – with a prince (CIVITAS SIBI PRINCEPS). These doctrines became known in Germany in the Late Middle Ages. At the same time, Aristotle supplied the justification for the aristocratic elements of council rule in the sense of the "good" mixed form of government. In cases of communal conflict, however, the tenet was upheld that it was the citizenry (CIVITAS, UNIVERSITAS CIVIUM, COMMUNE) – and not the council – that was the bearer of the civic law, liberty and privileges that substantiated the special status of the city in relation to the rural regions.

2. Their representation in the town hall and Roland of Bremen

It is precisely this set of principles – those upon which the constitution of the Old European city is founded – that is represented by the town hall, its iconography, the Roland and the marketplace in a form conceived of by the council itself as a response to the ensemble comprising the cathedral and other ecclesiastical buildings from the time of the city's founding. Archiepiscopal supremacy over the town is thus countered by the republican form of constitution, which at the same time is placed under the protection of the highest authority of the emperor and the empire. In the process, reference is made to the titles granting the city its freedom. This separation signifies the emancipation and secularisation of political sovereignty vis-à-vis clerical supremacy over the town long before the Enlightenment, an achievement of which the monarchy – due to its strong orientation towards the concept of divine right – is not capable.[43] Long before the state, it was the city which consummated the step of such central importance for European legal thought: the separation of the religious and the secular in the area of politics. And it is precisely this separation that is represented consciously and expressively in the urban ensemble in question here, the central ensemble of Bremen.

3. Architecture and art as conveyors of meaning: The argumentation of imagery

Like the discussion revolving around the significance of the figure of Roland, the subject of architecture and the townscape as 'conveyors of meaning' (Bandmann) has been a concern of the study of urban history for quite some time. On the other hand, the significance of plastic figures and wall paintings for the political self-conception and political theory of the city has only received scholarly attention more recently, in collaborations taking place in the past decades between art historians, political scientists and historians. Among

42 Meier, Mensch and Bürger (1994); Dilcher, *Rechtsgeschichte* (1999), esp. p. 481 ("Zum Begriff einer städtischen Gesellschaft")
43 Dilcher, "Geistliches und Weltliches," (1999)

Overall view of the Town Hall complex

the first such studies was that of the famous Lorenzetti frescoes of c. 1340 in the Sienese Palazzo Pubblico;[44] the approach has more recently expanded to include the town and guild halls north of the Alps.[45] The "argumentation of the imagery"[46] has thus been given a voice. The special and presumably unique feature of Bremen is the dense intertwinement of symbolic relationships between different elements – the town hall architecture, the exterior figural decoration (emperor, princes, prophets, St. Peter and, formerly, Emperor Charlemagne as a judge) and the interior design (council stalls, wall paintings of the city's foundation and the Solomonic Judgement, etc.) – and finally and above all the Roland along with the marketplace, Schütting and cathedral. The general point of view represented by this complex can be summarised as: the historical-political substantiation of civic liberty, and a doctrine of good government, carried out in the field of tension between the council, the merchantry and the citizenry with the goals of justice and the common weal.

In general, the civil-republican form of the Old European city government only indirectly influenced the development of the modern democratic constitutional state founded upon the principle of citizenship, particularly by way of the upheavals and paradigm changes that accompanied the revolutionary epoch of 1789-1815. Even large, significant city republics were absorbed by modern nation states. Bremen, on the other hand – thanks to its history, its geographical location and good fortune, as well to the political skill of its leading strata – succeeded in transforming a medieval civil community not only into a modern communal constitution, but also into a modern body politic within the framework of the type of federal state developed by Germany, in a single unbroken process. The medieval city centre, with the town hall and the Roland and its organically incorporated later additions, represents this tradition.

44 See the pathbreaking study by Rubinstein, *Political Ideas* (1968); an overview in Belting/Blume (ed.), *Malerei und Stadtkultur* (1989)
45 Fröschl, "Selbstdarstellung" (1988); Heckert, "Ausstattung" and Meier, U., "Vom Mythos" (1998); *Mittelalterliche Rathäuser* (2003)
46 The sub-title of Belting/Blume (1989)

VI. Summary

The principles, ideas and traditions addressed here were created by the urban citizenry of Europe: Within the medieval framework of the feudally organised monarchical-aristocratic society of the eleventh to the sixteenth centuries, cities developed the republican community in the form of self-government (autocephaly), with its own systems of jurisdiction, legislation and administration (autonomy) and on the basis of a community of citizens (UNIVERSITAS CIVIUM, CIVITAS, COMMUNE). Since the American and French revolutions, these principles have been fundamental for the modern constitutional, democratic state and communal self-government alike. In the history of Bremen they are represented in unusual continuity and, to this very day, distinguish the self-conception of the citizenry[47] as well as the constitution of the city both as a commune and a state unit, i.e. as a state of the Federal Republic of Germany.

By way of its central civic monuments – the town hall, Roland and marketplace – Bremen represents these principles of European urban communal culture in a specific, unique form and at the same time as the expression of a certain regional constellation within which the influences do not remain constant. This regional constellation is determined on the one hand through the city's affiliation with the Holy Roman Empire, whose constitution is non-governmental and pluralistic and thus guarantees liberty. On the other hand it is determined by its location in the north-western region of the empire – a peripheral location with regard to imperial power – as well as its location on the River Weser and its proximity to the Lower Rhine and North Sea, by its economic and cultural connections with Saxon tribal territory and Westphalia, to the regions of the Rhine and the Weser, to the Netherlands, England and Hamburg as well as the entire Baltic region, including Scandinavia.

Bremen is not among the European towns of Roman origin such as Cologne and the other Rhenish cathedral cities. The Carolingian act of foundation is thus of special importance for Bremen's actual history as well as for its self-conception and its collective memory. This is recalled by the Roland and the long series of later references to Charlemagne. The cathedral city's first church was built on the dune rising up above the river meadowlands, the site of the present-day cathedral. The oldest harbour facility was located on the Balge, a side arm of the Weser, to the west of the cathedral, the marketplace and the market church. The city centre, in which the monuments discussed above are located, was already described by the foundation act. Following the development of the citizens' community and the council government in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the town hall – both a symbol and the functional seat of the civil self-government – was placed in the midst of this centre in an act of conscious political urban planning. It has retained its dominant position in the city centre to the very present. The early-twentieth-century annex in the style of tasteful historicism ensured the further functionality of the town hall for the modern government of the City-State of Bremen.

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47 The town hall annex, designed and constructed in at the beginning of the twentieth century in a style of subdued historicism, testifies to this awareness of the city's traditions. Further evidence of it is found in the historically well-informed tour "Rund ums Rathaus" (around the town hall) written in 1925 by the poet, architect and citizen of Bremen Rudolf Alexander Schröder.

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Expert Opinion on the Nomination Submitted by the Federal Republik of Germany to the UNESCO for Recognition of the Old Town Hall and Roland of Bremen as World Cultural Heritage

Prof. Dr. Dietmar Willoweit

A. Results

With regard to the guidelines on the implementation of the World Heritage Convention, three of the criteria listed there are fulfilled:

1. Criterion 3: The town hall and Roland of Bremen bear a "unique testimony" to civic autonomy and sovereignty within the framework of a state.
2. Criterion 4: The town hall and Roland of Bremen form an "outstanding example" of a "type" of town hall and its symbolism with regard to the theme of liberty.
3. Criterion 6: The town hall and Roland of Bremen are directly associated with political ideas "of outstanding universal significance": the idea of civil self-government combined with the autonomous regulation of the legal and economic circumstances of the citizenry.

The expert opinion on hand focuses on proving the statement formulated under No. 1 above, i.e. the fulfilment of Criterion 3 of the World Heritage guidelines. In the process, Criteria 4 and 6 (corresponding to Nos. 2. and 3. above) cannot be disregarded. As we will see, Bremen is characterised by a special situation in the sense that the above-mentioned criteria mutually enhance and confirm one another.

The unique symbolic content of the Bremen town hall ensemble is to be elucidated below with regard to three aspects:

- its connection with the road taken by a citizens' community toward the status of imperial freedom and sovereignty in a period spanning the Late Middle Ages and Early Modern times,
- as an outstanding example of imperial freedom – formally recognised in 1646 – and political autonomy in the late phase of the ancien régime,
- as a symbol of the continuity of republican sovereignty within the framework of a constitutionally organised state during the periods of the German Confederation, the Bismarck Empire, the Weimar Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany and to the very present.

The Linz diploma of June 1, 1646: Emperor Ferdinand III installs Bremen as a free and self-governing city of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation

B. Justification

I. Bremen's Road to Imperial Freedom and Sovereignty

Founded under Charlemagne, the diocese of Bremen soon became an archdiocese, providing a protective setting within which a citizens' community could develop. Beginning in the tenth century, and particularly during the reign of the Hohenstaufen emperor Frederick I Barbarossa, the growing town was granted a number of royal privileges. By the thirteenth century it was well on its way to becoming a corporation capable of political action. This was due in great part to the fact that Bremen – originally located on the periphery of Christian Europe – had become the point of departure for far-reaching efforts to perform missionary work in Scandinavia, while its commercial relationships spanned a similarly vast area, encompassing not only the Netherlands and Flanders but also England and Norway. The city did not join the Hanseatic League until a relatively late stage in history, and its relationship to that association was always a tense one. A town surrounded by a large hinterland while being far removed from the imperial power centres in Western and Southern Germany, Bremen was characterised by a geographical and political situation that provided particularly favourable conditions for the development of a largely independent sovereignty with civil character. The archbishop had no choice but to reconcile himself with this political dynamic and, even before the Middle Ages had come to a close, he moved his residence outside the city. Civic law was codified as early as the beginning of the fourteenth century and repeatedly supplemented and revised as time went on. The citizenry lived according to its own law. In the course of the fifteenth century, Humanism reached the upper classes of the large German cities and Roman law received increasing attention, leading to a renewed, now Early Modern conception of republican statehood and civil autonomy. The

Italian city-republics served as the chief models for the large free imperial cities of Germany. "Freedom" under the occidental empire was thus an important theme in fifteenth-century Bremen – as elsewhere –, even finding expression in literary testimonies. According to the point of view prevalent at the time, liberty was ultimately derived from the empire. At the same time, for that very reason, its holders were capable of autonomous political action independent of the princely dynasties in the surrounding countryside. It was in this epoch – more specifically, in 1433 – that the council and citizens of Bremen agreed upon a new civic government order that would remain in effect until 1848, the year of the revolutions.

In the years 1405-1407, as an expression of the self-confidence it had gained, the Bremen city council had a new, representative town hall built, an edifice that has survived to the present day and to which a more modern, Renaissance-style façade was added in the years 1609-12. The council had the Gothic town hall decorated with an iconographical programme that would serve as a permanent, future-oriented visual testimony to the immediate relationship between the City of Bremen and the empire: with statues of the emperor and the imperial princes as electors, who now joined the Roland – an old symbol of the town's legal status – to guarantee the city's liberty and autonomy. This political programme soon proved all the more successful when the archiepiscopal principality fell a victim to the secularisation that emerged from the Reformation. From this time on, the council could wave off any and all claims brought forward by the secular administrators of the neighbouring principalities. As was the case in several other cathedral cities in the empire, the political autonomy of what was now a "free city" had been attained through the efforts of the citizens themselves and secured by negotiations. Free cities were under the protection of the empire, yet without being integrated in its organisational structures. Such integration would not take place until the seventeenth century.

II. The Recognition of Imperial Freedom in 1646 and the Contemporary Understanding of Political Autonomy

By the advent of the Early Modern period, Bremen had developed into a de facto free city – i.e. not subject to any princely authority – recognising only the emperor as a higher power. Its status in relation to the imperial constitution had nevertheless not yet been conclusively determined. Cities with the status of imperial immediacy and thus answerable only to the emperor paid taxes directly to the empire and had seat and vote in the Imperial Diet, as established once and for all by the imperial reform of King Maximilian I in 1495. Bremen received this status through a privilege granted by Emperor Ferdinand III in 1646. This document confirms that Bremen had been a free city of the Holy Roman Empire enjoying imperial immediacy from time immemorial. It was now once again explicitly recognised as such by the emperor, who declared that the burgomaster and council of the City of Bremen were to be summoned to the future sessions of the Imperial Diet, where they would now have a seat and vote. The imperial diploma thus interprets Bremen's historical road to imperial freedom and sovereignty as an already long-existing constitutional circumstance. This formal confirmation would prove to be of great significance for Bremen's legal status in the eras that followed. The city's freedom from the authority of neighbouring sovereigns had now been established once and for all. In 1741, in his capacity as the Elector of Hanover, King George II of England also recognised Bremen's imperial freedom.

The legal and political-scientific – i.e. neo-Aristotelian – literature of the seventeenth century compared the German imperial cities with the

Italian city-states. For many of the small Southern German imperial cities of merely local or regional significance, this comparison was clearly too flattering. But the large commercial and industrial metropolises among the imperial cities – Augsburg, Nuremberg, Frankfurt and Bremen, for example – not only maintained Europe-wide trade relationships from Poland to Flanders and Italy to Scandinavia, but were also capable of exercising largely independent governmental power domestically, vis-à-vis their citizens. This competence was traditionally based upon a number of factors: the possession of jurisdiction and legislative power, the appointment and supervision of government officials, the organisation of defence and sole responsibility for domestic security, fiscal sovereignty over the citizens in conjunction with the right to collect taxes and levy customs duties, a largely independent trade and economic policy connected with the right of coinage, the right to order the sale of arriving goods (staple right), etc. With the emperor residing far away in Vienna, it was to the city council that the citizens were required to swear the oath of allegiance. In the scholarly literature of the Early Modern period, the large imperial cities are conceived of as actual "republics," and clearly distinguished from the principalities of the time. Scholarly study was guided by Aristotle's Politics, a doctrine of governmental forms that had enjoyed considerable influence in Europe since the Late Middle Ages. The equation of the city-state with the republic was made all the easier by the fact that the Latin term civitas means both "city" and "state." From the perspective of legal and political science, the difference between the city-states of Germany and the much more powerful ones in Italy – Venice or Genoa, for example – was perceived to be merely quantitative. What is more, there were instances of this form of republican statehood outside Germany and Italy as well, particularly in Eastern Europe. Gdansk and Toru_ in the Kingdom of Poland, along with Tallinn and Riga in the Russian Baltic provinces, offered further examples of this type of city-republic in the midst of the monarchically dominated European continent. Ultimately, the example of the citizens' republic – tested, as it were, within the confines of cities – paved the way for the emergence of a civil society and democratic constitutionalism in Europe.

On the one hand, the large imperial cities – and with them Bremen – were hardly limited in their independent development by their affiliation with the empire; on the other hand it widened their scope for political self-representation and the capacity to take action with regard to foreign affairs. The right to seat and vote in the Imperial Diet – referred to as "Reichsstandschaft" – implied the participation of the imperial cities in grand politics, for their representatives took part in the sessions of the Diet which convened in Regensburg from 1663 on. As in any highly stratified society, the state's highest body of representation consisted of several curiae which convened separately, each submitting a vote at the conclusion of its respective deliberations. The curiae in the Imperial Diet were the Council of Electors, the Council of Princes and the Council of Cities. In keeping with the terms of the Peace of Westphalia concluded in 1648, the imperial cities possessed a "votum decisivum," i.e. the right to co-decision. The assertion of this right in constitutional practise, vis-à-vis the electors and princes, was difficult. Only the largest imperial cities, of which Bremen was one, were capable of exercising political influence through their representatives: It was they who set the tone in the Council of Cities.

III. The Continuity of Republican Sovereignty in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries

Most of the imperial cities did not survive the political end of the Holy Roman Empire in 1806. Like Venice, nearly all of them were absorbed by and

subordinated to the neighbouring principalities. In the brief period of Napoleonic hegemony in Germany, there were no longer any free cities; every city was subject to the government of a prince. During the negotiations carried out at the Congress of Vienna, however, the traditional idea of the "free city" once again met with acceptance. By 1813, Bremen's former constitutional structures had already been restored. The Act of the German Confederation passed on June 8, 1815 drastically reduced the number of independent city-republics, but fully recognised the status of the four that remained: Lübeck, Frankfurt, Bremen and Hamburg did not belong to any of the German monarchies, and in the Diet of the German Confederation, the highest policy-making body, they each had one vote. The political principle of the independent citizens' town had proved so viable that, at the Congress of Vienna, not even the representatives of the monarchies ruled out the recognition of a limited number of such cities. It was particularly overseas trade that proved a convincing political and above all economic basis for securing these cities' independence. Frankfurt was mediatised by Prussia in 1866. Thanks to clever politics, the free cities of Bremen, Hamburg and Lübeck succeeded in maintaining their autonomy even in the face of Prussia's hegemonic aspirations. They remained independent alongside the twenty-two German monarchies in the North German Confederation founded in 1866 and again in the German Reich founded in 1871, possessing the same powers of legislation enjoyed by the larger German states.

Bremen's internal constitutional circumstances had to be adapted to each respective political development in Germany. The year 1848 brought about the downfall of the council constitution which had been in effect for centuries. "Radical" democrats ruled the city until 1854, when – under considerable political pressure from the German Confederation – Bremen was compelled to institute a basic law that comprised elements of the constitutionalism practised in the German states. The city's economic development took its course, largely undisturbed by the various changes in the political system. It had already founded its own seaport in 1830 – Bremerhaven, which along with Hamburg would become one of Germany's leading overseas ports. Economic success also strengthened the civil self-confidence and political culture of the republican community.

The 1919 Weimar constitution of the German Reich recognised the existing German lands and city-states, Section Two of this constitution stating that: "The territory of the Reich consists of the areas of the territories of the German lands." Thus Bremen continued to form not merely a communal corporation, but a state with precisely the same sovereign powers as those possessed by the larger German states. The 1920 "Constitution of the Free Hanse City of Bremen" designated Bremen as a "free state" whose parliament and government bore the traditional names "Bürgerschaft" and "Senat." This democratic-parliamentary constitution was in effect until Hitler seized power in 1933. The National Socialists did away with Bremen's governmental independence, which was restored, however, shortly after the Second World War. Already on January 23, 1947, the American military authorities – the occupying power and as such the bearer of sovereignty over Germany – issued a proclamation restoring the State of Bremen. In the year 1949, Bremen accordingly participated in the foundation of the Federal Republic of Germany, of which it is a federal state to this day. In keeping with this status, it possesses the same competences and rights as all the other federal states of Germany, both on the state level as well as in the Bundesrat (Upper House of Parliament), in which the states are represented in the federal government.

To this day, the official name of the federal state of

Bremen contains the attribute "Free Hanse City." Hamburg is the only city apart from Bremen to look back upon a similarly long history of political independence. Yet while Bremen had already succeeded in definitively asserting its political freedom with regard to the regional sovereign in the sixteenth century, Hamburg was compelled to ward off the supremacy claims of a powerful neighbouring sovereign, the King of Denmark, for a much longer period. The latter did not recognise Hamburg's imperial freedom until 1768. Unlike Bremen, Hamburg possesses no ensemble of buildings that have survived since the Late Middle Ages to symbolise the independent sovereignty of a civic community. In other cities of Europe, particularly of Italy, great works of architecture still testify to the heyday and power of autonomous city-republics – but in doing so they testify to a political culture of days long past. Everywhere else in Europe, extensive principalities and nation-states put an end to the political independence of citizens' communities, reducing it to mere communal self-administration. Bremen, on the other hand, offers the only example of the continuity of an existing and living city-state whose centre is still formed by the same buildings that formed it several hundred years ago. This unity of architecture, history and political presence is unique. At the same time it is the expression of a great political idea which has shaped the cultural history of Europe since the time of the Greek polis: the idea of the politically self-confident citizen capable of shaping his own fortune through the representative of his choice, and thus of securing his liberty.

The nomination of the Free Hanse City of Bremen and the Federal Republic of Germany for the inscription of the town hall and Roland of Bremen on the UNESCO World Cultural Heritage List is well justified.

The critical evaluation drawn up by ICOMOS not only addresses the architecture and structural history of the town hall of Bremen but also makes repeated reference to the ideological background considered decisive for the interpretation of the Bremen town hall ensemble. It states that the town hall of Germany and the Netherlands, with its assembly rooms and conference rooms for the burgomaster and council, symbolises civic pride. It furthermore observes that the town halls of Northern Germany and the Baltic states are an expression of the autonomous civic communities and free cities that formed the Hanseatic League from the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries. It points out that Hanse cities are already well represented on the World Heritage List, cities whose buildings it says are in a much better state of preservation than Bremen's. For Northern Germany it cites the examples of Lübeck, Stralsund and Wismar. ICOMOS repeatedly emphasises Bremen's affiliation with the Hanse. Seen from this point of view, it is logical that the evaluation should question the necessity of inscribing a further Hanse city on the World Heritage List.

The nomination is based, however, not on the former membership of the City of Bremen in the Hanseatic League, but on the almost completely uninterrupted consistency of its political independence, which has been inextricably associated with the town hall, the seat of Bremen's government for the past several centuries. The Hanseatic league of cities served in the Late Middle Ages as a means of protecting foreign trade and had no direct relationship to the constitutional status of its individual member cities within the context of the empire or other states. There were Hanseatic merchants and bureaus in many towns that were politically subordinate to the political regimen of a neighbouring sovereign. The fact that Bremen succeeded in attaining the status of a free city in the Late Middle Ages – and maintaining it – may be indirectly attributable to the advantages it enjoyed due to its membership in the Hanse. The truly

decisive factors, however, were the recognition of the city's imperial immediacy by the emperor and its receipt of the right to seat and vote in the Imperial Diet. It was solely through this legal act that Bremen's political freedom – a good it had already possessed for a long time – could be constitutionally anchored. And this outstanding status within the framework of the constitution of the Holy Roman Empire that existed until 1806 is in turn the sole basis for the recognition of the City of Bremen as a state in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and to this day.

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The Art-Historical Standing of the Town Hall of Bremen with Special Consideration of its Early Modern Façade

Prof. Dr. Stephan Albrecht

The town hall of Bremen is one of the best-preserved Medieval and Early Modern town halls in Germany. Contrary to the circumstances of the corresponding communal buildings in cities such as Augsburg or Nuremberg, changing utilisation requirements in the course of history have tended to lead in Bremen to annexes rather than structural alterations. For the most part, the town hall of Bremen was also spared war-related destruction and other external effects. Conservation-related intervention was necessary above all with regard to the sandstone reliefs of the marketplace façade, several of which were repaired or replaced in the 1920s. The two most important construction phases of the early fifteenth and early seventeenth centuries are thus clearly legible on the preserved substance.
As will be shown below, the important art-historical standing of the town hall of Bremen is based on its incorporation into the urban-architectural surroundings, its typological forms, Medieval pictorial programme and Early Modern iconography.

1. In the ensemble that frames the marketplace – including the town hall, the Schütting and the cathedral located off to one side – the early fifteenth-century endeavours to reshape the urban centre with the town hall as the primary focus are discernible. The resulting spatial/structural situation illustrates a politically motivated process which in most towns can only be reconstructed archaeologically.

2. Despite the alterations carried out in the Early Modern period, the town hall of Bremen – with its one-storey arcade that stretches along the entire eaves façade on ground-floor level – furthermore represents a specific architectural type frequently emulated in the Rhineland and Netherlands of the fifteenth century.

3. With the large sandstone figures on the façade, a pictorial cycle characteristic of late Medieval town halls with regard to both typology and iconography has been preserved. Comparable contemporary examples in other towns have come down to us only in the form of drawings or nineteenth-century reconstructions.

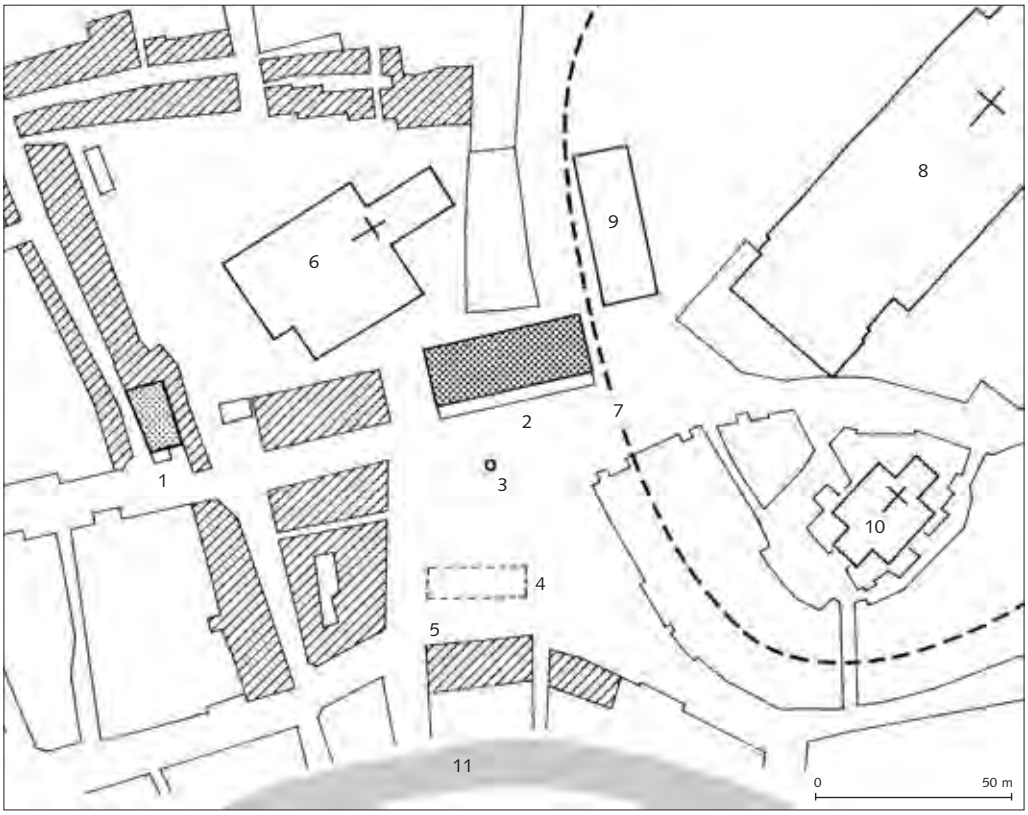
4. In a particularly distinct manner, the iconography of the marketplace façade realised in the early seventeenth century reflects the council's absolute claim to supremacy before the reshuffling of power that took place in most other cities during and after the Thirty Years' War.

The Medieval Town Hall

The Urban-Architectural Context

The structural history of the Medieval town hall is unusually well documented, thanks to the survival of the construction account books of the years 1405-1407.[1] The relatively late construction is explained by the fact that this was already the city's second town hall. The first building to have been occupied by the council served primarily as a cloth hall and is known to have existed as early as the thirteenth century, as was the case in most large cities of Northern Germany.[2] That edifice was altered for residential use in 1586, and therefore nothing is known about the appearance of the first town hall. It was located further to the west, on one edge of the old market-place at the intersection of Obernstrasse and Sögestrasse (Ill.).

Bremen is characterised by the relocation of its town hall at an unusually early point in time: during the Medieval period. This circumstance can be explained by the characterisation of the new town hall construction as an element and the primary focus of a major urban planning project. Where the episcopal immunity wall had once stood, there now emerged a representative square, bordered to the south by the Schütting – the guild hall of the merchantry – and to the north by the new town hall. For the first time, a representative, secular centre was thus formed, one that pushed the cathedral and particularly the archiepiscopal Palatium more or less into the sidelines. Thus, in direct connection with the town hall, the urban ensemble of Bremen is a particularly graphic illustration of the urban-architectural process by which the city centre was formed. A topic which has



1 Erstes Rathaus
2 Neues Rathaus
3 Roland
4 Erster Schütting
5 Neuer Schütting
6 Parrkirche Unser Lieben Frauen
7 Grenze Domimmunität
8 Erzbischöfl. Dom
9 Erzbischöfl. Palatium
10 St. Wilhadi
11 Ehem. Weserarm (Balge)

Map of the town showing the location of the first town hall according to Meckseper

1 Reprinted in: Ehmck, D.R. and H.A. Schuhmacher: "Das Rathaus zu Bremen." In: *Bremisches Jahrbuch* 2 (1866), pp. 254-443
2 The first reference to a domus theatralis (merchants' hall) dates from the year 1229; *Bremisches Urkundenbuch* ed. by Dietrich R. Ehmck, 7 Vols., 1863f., here Vol. 1 (1873), p.171, No. 150

hitherto received little scholarly attention, this process is characteristic of many cities of the Late Middle Ages, but usually not as clearly reconstructible as in Bremen.

The new square not only provided new space for the economic activities taking place on the council-controlled marketplace, but also a forum for the council's public political and legal functions such as the proclamation of resolutions and election results to the citizens' community which assembled there.

The Architecture of the Medieval Town Hall

The focus of the new urban centre was formed by the new town hall. This Medieval building has been preserved at the core of the present-day edifice and can be almost entirely reconstructed with the aid of pictorial sources. Only the appearance of the façade on the back (northern side) and its representative stairway to the upper level remains uncertain. As we know from the two early seventeenth-century copper engravings by Wilhelm Dilich (Ills.), the longitudinal, two-storey structure displayed a row of circular blind ornaments below its eaves, which were topped by a crenelation. Traces of the circular blind ornaments are still discernible today in the masonry of the east side. The corners were reinforced by delicate polygonal corner towers, of which the one on the northwestern corner has – in essence – survived. Behind the merlons a hipped roof rose up at an angle somewhat less steep than that of the present-day roof. The three-aisled hall of the ground floor is entered on each of its narrow sides by a wide, richly ornamental pointed-arch portal. The large, unpartitioned hall on the high upper level is lit by a group of three pointed-arch tracery windows on each narrow side (reconstructed in 1857), the centre window in each group exceeding the other two with regard to artistic embellishment as well as size. In comparison to the narrow sides, the marketplace façade underwent more major alteration in the early seventeenth century, and we are thus compelled to form an impression of its original appearance on the basis of historical pictorial sources. A one-storey, eleven-axis arcade topped by a heraldic frieze and a crenelation extended along the entire length of the marketplace façade at ground-floor level. The crenelation formed a platform in the middle of which a baldachin was located. The arcade took on a Renaissance-style appearance during the alterations of 1608-1615, but its Gothic form can be reliably reconstructed on the basis of the two depictions by Wilhelm Dilich (Ills.).[3] The upper level of the market façade originally displayed eleven high windows whose shape is uncertain in view of the fact that the pictorial sources are contradictory in this respect. It is unclear whether the market-façade fenestration was furnished with pointed arches, as on the narrow sides, or consisted of rectangular cross-bar windows. Both possibilities are to be found in contemporary works of architecture, e.g. in Aachen (Ill.) and Cologne (Ill.).

While the individual motifs are closely related to local forms, the basis for the overall conception of the marketplace façade is less obvious. A factor of major significance for the form is the arcade, an obligatory feature for all North German town halls without exception. Nevertheless, the type seen in Bremen proves unusual. It neither emulates the two-storey arcade, of which the prime example is found in Lübeck (from where it spread to become characteristic of the entire Baltic region), nor does it adhere to the Westphalian type – known from Dortmund, Minden and Münster – of a ground-level arcade with a superstructure forming an enclosed hall. The little-known Gothic arcade of the town hall of Cologne, mentioned in a reference of 1351, may have served as a model: That structure consisted likewise of a stone-built arcade on the ground floor supporting a wooden construction on the upper level. In view of the lack of knowledge concerning

3 The saddleback roof depicted by Dilich is certain not to have been part of the original arcade. It will have been added later as a protective covering, perhaps as a means of avoiding water damage.

the Gothic arcade of Cologne, however, the influence is merely speculative. Bremen provides the first example of an arcade type imitated by many late fifteenth and early-sixteenth-century town halls of the Rhineland and Netherlands.

The Functions of the Medieval Town Hall

We possess a certain amount of information – reliable in view of its substantiation by written sources – pertaining to the various functions of the town hall, particularly the administration of justice: Until the eighteenth century, the archiepiscopal court (and its successors in post-archiepiscopal times) was held beneath the arcade on ground-floor level – the so-called ECHTERDING, which was furnished for this purpose with a "small wooden house," presumably a wooden beam bearing a reliquary by which the participants swore. The penal court, presided over by lay judges, was held before the narrow western side of the town hall. An element bearing a portrait of Charlemagne, illustrated in Merian's TOPOGRAPHIA SAXONIAE INFERIORIS, may have been a side wall of the stalls located there.[4] Finally, we know of the existence of a room partitioned off from the ground-floor hall in 1506 to serve – until the seventeenth century at the latest – as the location of the imperial Low Court, which was considered the civic court proper.

From the beginning, the cellar accommodated a public house licensed to serve wine as well as the assembly room of the tanners, who had convened in a corresponding space in the predecessor building.

Concerning the use of the ground floor, we possess no information stemming from the period of the town hall construction. This level will initially have been devoted to the purposes of mercantile trade; it was in the early sixteenth century that the space first accommodated official functions, which gradually replaced the economic ones in the course of that and the next century.

The hall on the upper level provided the representative setting for the public sessions in the council stalls – a set of furniture which did not survive but is well-known from descriptions. On important occasions, festivities were celebrated and banquets of legal significance carried out there. The only side room of the Medieval great hall will have adjoined it to the north: the WITTHEITSSTUBE, to which the council retreated for secret consultation and which will certainly have been heatable. Although not confirmed by the sources, the platform atop the arcade – particularly the space beneath the baldachin – will presumably have been used for public proclamations and the public appearance of the council on official occasions such as the installation of the councillors in office and the payment of tribute.[5]

The Iconography of the Medieval Town Hall

The town hall's Medieval builder placed altogether sixteen larger-than-life-size sandstone figures on the exterior, between the windows of the upper level, providing them with baldachins. The majority of these figures have survived to the present day. The town hall of Aachen (Ill.), built in 1334-8, will have served as a model, perhaps the Bruges town hall of 1376-80 as well. It is only in Bremen, however, that the original Medieval figures are extant today. From the point of view of iconography, the Bremen cycle is not related to the imperial series of the Aachen town hall, but rather to that of Bruges and other monuments.

The iconography of the statues exhibits a programme characteristic of the urban context of the period around 1400: The marketplace façade accommodates the figures of the emperor and the seven electors, clearly identifiable by way of the escutcheons and attributes with which they are furnished. These

4 Mänz, H.J.: *Bremen und seine Bauten*, Bremen, 1900, p. 132. A similar element bearing a portrait of Charlemagne survived in front of the entrance to the town hall of Lübeck. As seen in the Merian illustration, the Bremen figure of Charlemagne appears to have been inspired by Albrecht Dürer's Nuremberg depiction, a circumstance which would establish it as a work of the sixteenth century.

5 Here one would surmise the reading out of council ordinances from the "*Kundigen Rolle*." By 1506 at the latest, however, another location will have been established for this purpose, on the separate platform above the entrance to the town hall cellar on the west side. Cf. Stein, Rudolf: Romanische, gotische und Renaissance-Baukunst in Bremen, Bremen, 1962, p. 532

The Town Hall of Bremen before its alteration, after the copper engraving of 1603 by Dilich (after a drawing of 1596)

dignitaries virtually formed the visual setting for the public appearance of the council on official occasions. The narrow sides of the building display the city's patron St. Peter along with seven further figures bearing banners, the content of whose Medieval inscriptions is no longer known. With the aid of the depictions on the consoles, only two of these figures can be identified more or less reliably as David and Isaiah. In view of pictorial traditions it is quite likely, however, that these statues form a series of depictions of the prophets.

The iconography of the electoral college along with the emperor holding his insignia is seen in depictions dating as far back as the early fourteenth century, i.e. even pre-dating the Golden Bull, and found in contexts directly related to the emperor or the electors. As is seen on the merlons of the Kaufhaus (merchants' hall) of Mainz (1311-17), the Schöner Brunnen of Nuremberg (1361/62) and the door knocker of the town hall of Lübeck (c. 1375), this constellation occurs in the urban context at quite an early point in time. Particularly in later commentaries, the emperor and electors are described as the pillars of the empire, as protectors of an order that accords with the will of God. Depictions of prophets as admonishers of justice are also characteristic of the figural programmes of town halls beginning in the fourteenth century. As we know from pictorial and written sources, they were present on the interior walls of the council halls of the Cologne and Erfurt town halls dating from the second half of the fourteenth century, and the town hall of Nuremberg may even have possessed such a cycle as early as the first half of that century.[6]

The Alteration of the Town Hall in the Early Modern Period

Along with the town halls of Nuremberg and Augsburg, that of Bremen is representative of the group of town halls to have undergone alterations before the outbreak of the Thirty Years' War. It is thus among the last examples of independent,

6 In his astute investigation of the council hall of Nuremberg, Walter Haas points out the contemporary existence of a large cycle of monumental figures: Cf. Haas, Walter. "Neue Forschungen am Alten Rathaus in Nürnberg," in *Jahrbuch der Bayerischen Denkmalpflege* 35 (1981), pp. 49-82

large-scale urban projects to have been achieved by a largely autonomous council within Germany. The alterations of the Bremen town hall once again reflect the self-conception of the council, which was now in its prime.

The Architecture of the Early Modern Town Hall

The alterations of the Medieval town hall left the building's original core untouched, and the large sandstone figures were also incorporated into the new exterior, if in a slightly modified arrangement. Although the council had a considerable demand for

The façade of the Town Hall of Cologne

space by this time, the measures undertaken on the market façade were of a purely representative character and added nothing in the way of new rooms. The construction work of 1607-1615 is sufficiently documented in the account books.[7] The main façade was furnished with a new arcade which took the Medieval arcade as its orientation, a protruding façade bay two storeys high and richly fenestrated, a heightened roof and a central gable flanked by two smaller ones. These measures were executed under the direction of the stonemason Lüder von Bentheim, who organised the work at the construction site in the manner of a contractor. He had assumed a similar role several years earlier for the construction of the town hall of Leiden, whose entire façade had been produced in Bremen according to plans and then transported to their destination in the Netherlands. In the case of the alterations now carried out in Bremen, various stonemasons were responsible for the execution of the various stone reliefs, and no direct influence of the Leiden façade or its preparatory drawings can be discerned.

In keeping with the usual procedure of the time, nearly all of the details of the town hall were made after models in German and Dutch prints of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. In the case of the Bremen town hall façade, the employment of this practise can be reconstructed particularly clearly and almost completely. The designer, whose identity is unknown, was responsible for combining a large number of individual reliefs in an overall architectural concept.

The Iconography of the Early Modern Town Hall

The art-historical / cultural-historical interest taken in the alterations of the town hall of Bremen is directed primarily towards the extensive iconography. Depictions of the virtues of rulers, of psychomachias, of the liberal arts, of the senses, elements and seasons, evangelists and fabulous creatures are combined additively in an encyclopaedic view of the world hardly equalled in this diversity on any other façade of the period (Ill.). The pictorial programme marks a turning point in town hall iconography, consummated almost concurrently

7 Cf. the listing of written sources in Albrecht, Stephan: *Das Bremer Rathaus im Zeichen städtischer Selbstdarstellung vor dem 30-jährigen Krieg*, Marburg, 1993, pp. 80-82

– if with different thematic focuses – in the town halls of Lüneburg, Nuremberg, Augsburg, Torun and Gdansk. The even more complex pictorial programmes in the places cited differed from that of Bremen in that they were to be found in the town hall interiors; unfortunately the examples in Nuremberg and Augsburg were destroyed during the Second World War. While the iconography of the Medieval town halls had employed allegories and historical prototypes concentrating primarily on forms of just rule, not a single reference to this theme is to be found on the Early Modern façade of Bremen.

The iconographic type of the Bremen town hall façade and its regional context

The motif upon which the programme of the Bremen town hall façade is based is a secular conception of the world already established in this form in Classical Antiquity and propagated in various form and detail in large encyclopaedias such as Pliny the Elder's Historia Naturalis and those of his Late Antique and Medieval successors such as Isidor of Sevilla, Hrabanus Maurus, Honorius Augustodunensis and Vincent of Beauvais. Since the time of Classical Antiquity, this conception of the world had supplied a widespread pictorial motif for the decoration of public and private works of architecture alike. Secular imagery formed the framework for sacred decorative programmes such as the famous twelfth-century mosaic floor of Saint Rémi in Reims, known only from written sources, or the seven-branch candelabra in the cathedral of Milan. In like manner, extensive programmes were designed for secular contexts in Italy at a relatively early stage, examples being the decoration of the communal palaces in Perugia and Padua in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. In these cases, under the influence of increasing scholarly interest in astrology, the planetary gods were included in the pictorial cycles. Finally, the secular view of the world provided the setting for a large number of decorative programmes in private palaces and festive processions of fifteenth and sixteenth-century Italy. Usually, however, in a manner much clearer than on the Bremen town hall façade, the importance of the respective landlord, saint, sovereign or council to the cosmos is the actual focus of the iconography. It is he who ensures the order of the world, the unity and harmony of the cosmos. This foremost task of the ruler is also described in numerous Fürstenspiegel (manuals for the proper education of a sovereign), particularly of the Early Modern period.[8] Unlike the rich decorative programmes of Italy, the Bremen façade is largely additive and non-specific. Only in the spandrels of the arcade – the element closest to the viewer – is there reference to the qualities of the council that qualify it as a protector. As called for by the contemporary codes for the education of rulers, they consist of moral qualities, virtues and wisdom: philosophia (philosophy), veritas (truth), vigilantia (watchfulness), custodia (guardianship), labor (labour), diligentia (diligence), liberalitas (liberality), fortitudo (fortitude), magnanimitas (magnanimity), concordia (concord), patientia (patience), castitas (chastity), sobrietas (sobriety), memoria (memory), fides (faith), spes (hope), caritas (charity), iustitia (justice), temperantia (moderation), prudentia (prudence), pax (peace) and fama (lasting renown).

Italian influence can hardly be claimed for the iconography of the town hall of Bremen. The encyclopaedic conception of the world had already become established as a pictorial theme in the late sixteenth century, particularly in Humanist circles. Especially the studies and cabinets of curiosities of monarchs and princes were decorated with such pictorial cycles in widely varying forms. The Humanist context served as a point of departure for the growing popularity of the encyclopaedic secular programme in middle-class circles as well. Evidence of the latter development is found on a number of residential house façades in the greater environs of Bremen, as in Einbeck and Hildesheim, though only

8 Cf. also the examples cited in Albrecht, as in Note 7, pp. 232-235

a few such examples survived the Second World War. These middle-class residences possessed more or less extensive pictorial cycles, often of modest sculptural quality, also produced after engravings. Their foremost purpose was presumably to identify their owners as particularly erudite persons.
A certain degree of arbitrariness in the choice of the allegories and depictions of gods cannot be overlooked. The iconography of many façades apparently depended upon the availability of suitable graphic models. Within this context, the town hall of Bremen occupies an outstanding position, and may well have served as a model for many residential house façades and ceiling decorations.

The Bremen town hall façade in the context of contemporary town hall decorations

The Early Modern façade of the town hall of Bremen can be placed into a context with several high-quality town hall decorations dating from shortly before and shortly after 1600 and thus within a few years of the Bremen example.[9] The ways in which the councillors' good government affects the RES PUBLICA are described in all of these pictorial programmes, which nevertheless differ with regard to thematic focus. The pictorial programme of the WINTERRATSSTUBE of Lüneburg, created in 1573-8, is clearly influenced by confessional conceptions of good government. The images point out how the councillors lead the community as agents of God. Religious issues also play a role in the paintings of c. 1600 decorating the council chamber of the historical town hall of Torun, works known only from written sources. In a very discriminating manner, the various responsibilities of the government are illustrated, along with the moral qualities and ethical characteristics required to fulfil them. The pictorial programme in the council chamber of the town hall in the Old City of Gdansk, dating from 1608/9, was presumably created in direct competition with Torun. The depiction revolves around Gdansk as a chosen community of Christians in which the councillors serve as vicars of Christ. A cycle largely destroyed during World War II, the decorative programme added to the Nuremberg town hall within the context of alterations carried out in 1619-21 exhibited a comprehensive catalogue of virtues while also bearing testimony to the city's close relationship with the emperor. The ceiling in the Golden Hall of the town hall of Augsburg (1615-24; destroyed in 1944 and since reconstructed) is devoted to the effects and triumph of wisdom.

These Early Modern pictorial programmes differ fundamentally from earlier iconographic decorations, which had revolved since the Middle Ages primarily around the theme of justice. In Bremen, as in all of the other examples cited, the council portrayed itself as an almighty authority whose outstanding qualities, virtue and wisdom lend it a NOBILITAS that justifies its elevated position. These Early Modern examples are clear indications of the discrepancy between our present-day conceptions of citizenship and democracy and the Medieval / Early Modern understanding of the council. From the very beginning, the council was an exclusive, oligarchic association of the wealthiest, whose powers of command, force and sentence were recognised by the citizens through oath.[10] The social distance between the council and the citizens is already expressed in the originally aristocratic title "Herr" (lord, DOMINUS) that had increasingly come into use for the members of council since the thirteenth and particularly in the course of the fourteenth century. The council conceived of itself as an authority vis-à-vis the rest of the citizenry, who as subjects were obligated to loyalty. The difference in status was vividly reflected in various media. In many towns, for example, the members of council endeavoured to achieve the aristocratic right to wear gold and colours so that the social disparity would already be evident in the dress code. In Bremen, as in many other cities, the relationship

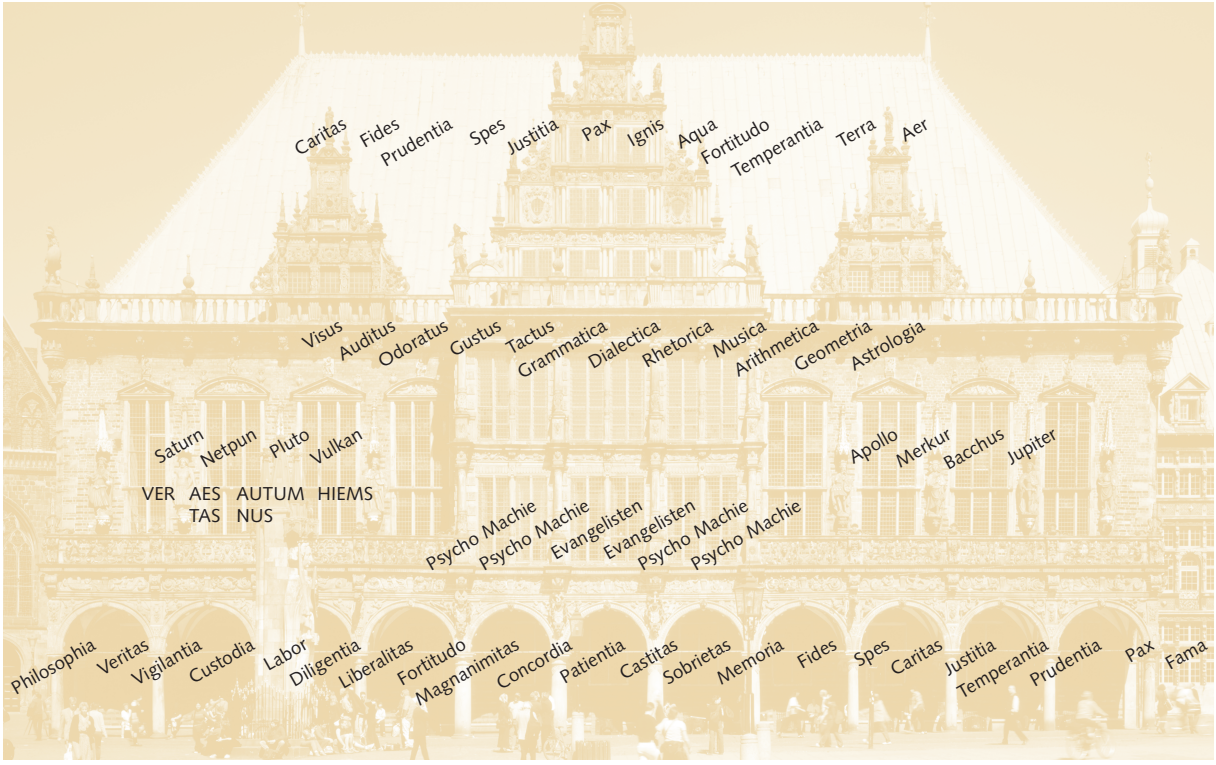
9 On the iconography of the town halls cited, see the investigation by Tipton, Susan: Res publica bene ordinata: Regentenspiegel und Bilder vom guten Regiment; Rathausdekorationen in der Frühen Neuzeit, (Studien zur Kunstgeschichte, 104), Hildesheim, Zürich, New York, 1996. Here also the related literature.

10 Isenmann, Eberhard: Die deutsche Stadt im Spätmittelalter: 1250 - 1500; Stadtgestalt, Recht, Stadtregiment, Kirche, Gesellschaft, Wirtschaft, Stuttgart, 1988, pp. 131f.

between the council and the citizens took on increasingly absolute forms. At the end of the sixteenth century the council of Bremen controlled all public activities in the cities: All citizens' assemblies had to be approved by the council, which even held the power of decision on issues concerning religion and education. Beginning in the late sixteenth century, this absolute status of civic authority likewise finds expression in pictorial programmes. Bremen, however, is a special case. In comparison to the contemporary examples cited, the Bremen town hall façade not only carries on a different iconographic tradition; it also pursues a different intention. The town hall decorations of Lüneburg, Torun, Gdansk, Nuremberg and Augsburg revolve primarily around the subject of GOVERNMENT IN AND OF ITSELF, sometimes with a more theoretical focus, as in Lüneburg, sometimes with a comprehensive description of the practical activities and their consequences for the community, as in Torun. As has already been indicated, the councillors' role as vicars of God is emphasised in the process. These decorations can be described as condensed, pictorial versions of codes of conduct for sovereigns.

The Bremen façade bears no reference to these various aspects of supremacy. Aside from a much generalised catalogue of virtues, not the slightest allusion to the art of government – or even to the specific local communal situation – is to be found. The façade of Bremen is devoted not to GOVERNMENT but to the RULERS. It serves solely to glorify the council and emphasise its supremacy. The images add up to form a eulogy which could appear in precisely the same form on the façade of a palace.

The Early Modern façade of the town hall of Bremen thus bears particularly lucid testimony to the self-conception and claims of the town's leading strata at a point in time preceding the absorption of most other communes by absolutist territorial states.



Bremen, Town Hall, diagram of the iconography of the Early Modern façade

L'Hôtel de ville et le Roland sur la place du marché à Brême. Leur signification particulière en comparaison avec d'autres hôtels de ville

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L'Hôtel de ville et le Roland à Brême apportent un témoignage investi d'une grande signification sur le plan historique, politique et artistique. Les critères suivants, émanant du Comité du Patrimoine Mondial, justifient leur inscription au Patrimoine Mondial:

N° III: [ils constituent un témoignage unique ou du moins exceptionnel pour une tradition culturelle ou une civilisation vivante ou disparue]

N° IV: [ils sont le paradigme d'un type de construction ou d'un ensemble architectural ou de paysage illustrant une ou plusieurs période(s) significative(s) de l'histoire]

N° VI: [ils sont directement ou matériellement associés à (...) des traditions vivantes, à des croyances (...)]

Dans le cadre des expertises présentées ci-dessous, réalisées par les historiens de l'art et du droit Jürgen Paul, professeur émérite de l'histoire de l'art (Université de Dresde), Gerhard Dilcher, professeur émérite de l'histoire du droit (Université de Francfort sur le Main et Université de Trente, Italie), Dietmar Willoweit, Ordinarius/professeur titulaire de l'histoire du droit allemand, du droit canonique, du droit civil et du droit commercial (Université de Würzburg), et Stephan Albrecht, maître de conférence pour l'histoire de l'art (Université Tübingen, actuellement bibliothèque Hertziana, Rome), la conviction des requérants peut être étayée et justifiée. Cette évaluation répétée ainsi que toutes les expertises présentées ici prennent leur départ dans la revendication avancée lors de la 27ème réunion du Comité du Patrimoine Mondial qui a eu lieu du 30 juin au 5 juillet à Paris, cette revendication ayant pour objet une évaluation plus précise de l'Hôtel de Ville et du Roland de Brême dans le cadre d'une étude comparative ayant pour objet des hôtels de ville. (27 COM 8C.26: ALLOW FOR THE HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL EVALUATION OF THE PROPERTY IN THE FRAMEWORK OF A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF TOWN HALLS).

Dans la présente étude comparative, les requérants procèdent à une évaluation des particularités des éléments de la candidature de Brême comparée à d'autres hôtels de ville. Les résultats correspondent à ceux qui figurent dans l'expertise de Dilcher (1.2):

- valeur éminente de l'architecture, qui non seulement est restée intacte malgré la guerre mais dont le développement s'est poursuivi à un très haut niveau jusqu'à nos jours,

- continuité de l'Hôtel de ville en tant que bâtiment et en tant que siège du gouvernement et de l'administration d'une commune de citoyens, qui a toujours défendu son autonomie en tant que collectivité républicaine.

- Dans le réseau particulièrement dense de relations de sens entre l'architecture de l'Hôtel de ville, son iconographie intérieure et extérieure au niveau pictural et sculptural, et entre Roland et la place du marché dans l'ensemble architectural du bâtiment dit «Schütting», du Dôme et de l'église Liebfrauenkirche.

Les requérants ont dans la suite résumé et mis en relief les arguments suivants, qui sont décrits et justifiés par comparaison dans les différentes expertises:

- dans la liste UNESCO du Patrimoine Mondial, le type de construction «hôtel de ville», qui est hautement significatif sur le plan historico-culturel, n'est représenté par aucun bâtiment; en revanche, l'Hôtel de ville de Brême se prête parfaitement à une telle illustration.

- L'Hôtel de Ville de Brême représente le type de construction «palais», caractérisé par un bâtiment rectangulaire-transversale et une salle qui occupe l'intégralité du premier étage (Aix-la-Chapelle, Nuremberg, Cologne), de manière plus claire et plus fidèlement conservée que tous les autres hôtels de ville en Allemagne. En outre, dans la genèse du type de construction européen «Hôtel de Ville», il représente un type d'architecture autonome en raison de ses arcades, situées du côté marché, qui occupent le rez-de-chaussée. C'est à Brême que le développement de ce type architectural a pu être démontré pour la première fois. Il se distingue des autres constructions du type «hôtel de ville» (Lübeck, Dortmund, Münster). Au cours du 15ème et du 16ème siècle, en Rhénanie et dans les Pays-Bas, ce style a été très souvent repris.

- La façade de l'Hôtel de Brême est décorée d'une ornementation sculptée représentant un cycle d'images médiévales (Kurfürsten/princes électeurs, prophètes), caractéristique pour les bâtiments d'hôtels de ville du Moyen Age tardif, et ce aussi bien sur le plan de la typologie historique que sur celui de l'iconographie (entre autres à Aix-la-chapelle, Cologne, Bruges, Nuremberg). Mais c'est seulement à Brême que ce style a été conservé fidèlement à l'original.

- La transformation du bâtiment de noyau de cœur de style gothique selon une nouvelle conception de la façade et de la Güldenkammer (chambre d'or), la transformation ayant commencé en 1612, constitue un exemple éminent de l'exaltation par l'architecture du gouvernement des sénateurs, qui exerçaient leur pouvoir de manière absolue. A cet effet, et contrairement à ce qui se faisait dans d'autres villes, on utilisait le programme représenté sur la façade.

- La structure du bâtiment n'a pas subi de modifications depuis des siècles, même le mode d'utilisation est resté le même. Un bâtiment annexe, dont la construction s'est avérée nécessaire vers 1900, compte parmi les solutions les plus satisfaisantes possibles dans le cadre

d'une mission architecturale aussi ambitieuse.

- L'Hôtel de ville, construit entre 1405 et 1408, et l'annexe mentionnée ci-dessus, représente l'idéal-type d'un hôtel de ville (à caractère européen). Il n'a jamais été un bâtiment inutilisé et il n'a jamais été investi de la double fonction magasin et hôtel de ville (comme, entre autres, celui de Lübeck). Il n'a pas davantage été une maison de bal et de société (comme, entre autres, celui de Lüneburg), et n'a jamais été élargi à la manière d'un regroupement de bâtiments (Brescia, Vérone, Venise). Les citations émanant de l'architecture de défense et de palais (l'on trouve des équivalences dans l'architecture profane dans les région du moyen et du bas Rhin) indiquent qu'il a toujours été l'image d'une ville valide (tel qu'à Florence et à Sienne).

- En raison des trois niveaux – la cave des conseillers, le rez-de-chaussée et le hall supérieur, il a toujours également reflété l'ordre civil que l'on considérait voulu par Dieu. Avec les églises qui l'entouraient, il était un havre de foi. En dehors de ses fonctions de lieu de consultation pour le conseil municipal et de palais de justice, il incarnait également une profession de foi en faveur de l'empereur. En résumé, il constitue un type ancien d'hôtel de ville, l'aboutissement de différents besoins, des éléments culturels et des ambitions. A Brême, ce type d'hôtel de ville s'est maintenu dans sa forme pure.

- Conformément aux critères III et IV, la construction de l'Hôtel de ville de Brême, planifiée dans le cadre d'une opération unique, a pu se concentrer sur la mise en relief de la mission supérieure du conseil municipal et de la commune des citoyens, et ce d'autant plus que les fonctions inférieures, le greffe et l'autorité fiscale, étaient installées ailleurs. Concrètement, cela se reflète dans l'édifice conservé dans son état d'origine, dans le cycle pictural représentant le Kurfürst/prince électeur et l'empereur sur la façade sud et, sur les petits côtés, dans les statuettes représentant des prophètes et des roses, qui se réfèrent intentionnellement à des symboles sacraux. Cette «mission supérieure» est également représentée par le « tableau des commandements pour le bon souverain » dans le hall supérieur et par les jouées des sièges des sénateurs, qui sont conservées aux musée.

- La mission du bon et juste gouvernement est exprimée de manière encore plus prononcée par le programme très riche de la façade, construite entre la renaissance tardive et le premier baroque et, à la même époque, par la Güldenkammer (chambre d'or). Ils sont le produit d'un humanisme réformé, qui a mis en avant le projet d'un programme qui surprend par l'ampleur de son érudition et qui, dans son ensemble, représente les dogmes, la science du gouvernement.

- La restauration de l'Hôtel de ville au début du 17ème siècle correspond à une tendance stylistique de la Renaissance. C'est le peintre, graveur et architecte Vredemann de Vries, né aux Pays-Bas, qui a joué un rôle déterminant dans ces travaux de restauration. Ses modèles et cartes d'échantillons ont été diffusés depuis Anvers, le centre du commerce international de l'époque, vers les Pays-Bas, l'Allemagne du Nord, auprès de la cour de l'empereur à Prague, ainsi que dans les grandes villes commerciales Hambourg, Dantzig et Brême. S'il est vrai que Vredemann de Vries est venu à Brême en 1587 et qu'un détail de la façade de l'Hôtel de Ville de Brême fait référence à l'un de ses modèles, l'ensemble conceptuel de la façade obéit cependant à une tendance de style internationale que l'on ne saurait réduire à une origine nationale. Ainsi que cela fut relativement courant au cours du 16ème et au début du 17ème siècle, la façade de l'Hôtel de Ville de Brême est issue d'une

coopération entre les réalisateurs de l'ouvrage (parmi eux Lüder von Bentheim) et les donneurs d'ordre. Des livres à modèles, tels ceux de Vredemann de Vries, y ont également contribué.

- La question des styles nationaux devient obsolète en raison de la diffusion internationale, due au commerce et aux nouveaux procédés d'impression, de cartes d'échantillons. L'utilisation et la parfaite maîtrise des traités et des feuilles modèles est, à cette époque, l'expression d'une très grande érudition et la meilleure garantie pour la qualité artistique. Dans le contexte de l'environnement urbain et comparée aux constructions transformées et aux nouvelles constructions auprès des cours et dans les grandes villes européennes, l'architecture de la façade de Brême compte parmi les meilleures réalisations.

- Après des séjours à Wolfenbüttel, Brunswick et Dantzig et grâce à ses activités à la cour de l'empereur et amateur d'art Rodolphe II, Vredemann de Vries exerce également une influence sur l'art à la cour d'Allemagne. Surtout sous le règne de Rodolphe II et de son successeur Mathias (à partir de 1612) , tous les princes, toutes les villes libres et toutes les villes qui aspiraient à la liberté ont été influencés par cette cour. Ils ont conçu leurs œuvres représentatives de manière fière et individuelle, mais ils s'étaient inspirés des courants représentés à la cour, ceux-ci prenant appui sur la théorie architecturale de l'époque. Vu dans cette perspective, même le plan de la façade de 1612, qui a comporté le cycle gothique du prince héritier, présente des éléments de propagande du royaume. Grâce à celle-ci, la thèse-clé du bâtiment a été traduite dans le langage des formes du 17ème siècle.

- En tant que première statue indépendante et première sculpture monumentale érigée d'une manière distincte, le Roland revêt une signification particulière. En raison de son âge, de ses dimensions, de son élaboration sur le plan de l'histoire de l'art et de sa beauté, il est le meilleur exemple d'un type de monument et de statue monumentale qui était présent dans toute l'Europe. Il fut érigé en 1404 dans le contexte de la construction de l'Hôtel de ville.

- Il n'est pas, comme dans la plupart des autres villes, un simple messager du roi, autorisant ou interdisant à certaines personnes des activités commerciales, mais il est également le représentant des droits de liberté qui auraient été accordés à la ville de Brême par Charlemagne à titre exceptionnel.

- En même temps, le chevalier Roland est aussi un martyre, qui, en tant que paladin du grand empereur, a laissé sa vie dans la lutte pour la foi. Cette qualité de la statue du Roland en tant que représentant de la liberté préservée par des fortifications, qui fait sans aucun doute également partie du «message» intrinsèque de l'Hôtel de ville, apparaît clairement. Contrairement aux autres villes telles qu'Aix-la-Chapelle, Reims ou Cologne, la tradition charlemagnienne ne s'épanouit pas à partir de la culture romaine/franconienne, mais à partir d'un lieu de fondation carolingien situé en Basse-Saxe. Le Roland inscrit le conseil municipal et la Bürgerschaft (l'assemblée législative) dans l'une des grandes traditions de l'Europe chrétienne-carolingienne. En même temps, il fait découler l'autonomie urbaine/citoyenne de la même origine que la royauté allemande et française, donc du royaume carolingien des francs, et il lui a conféré le rang du droit de l'empereur.

- L'Hôtel de ville de Brême est un lieu où s'est développé sur une période de 600 ans une constitution s'appuyant sur l'autonomie municipale et étatique, cette constitution étant

appliquée jusqu'à nos jours dans le même bâtiment. Il convient d'attirer l'attention sur la grande signification (Dilcher 1.2) qui doit être accordée en dernière analyse au développement de la constitution municipale en tant qu'héritage intellectuel (intangible heritage) pour la théorie politique et le développement de la forme moderne et actuelle de la démocratie parlementaire. Le républicanisme (le principe de la république fondé sur la liberté) et le «communalisme» dans le sens d'une autonomie administrative étaient dans la réalité historique surtout vécus dans les villes de l'Europe. Force est de constater que cette tradition n'a jamais été interrompue à Brême, ni dans un sens politique abstrait, ni dans un sens concret local. Ainsi la ville de Brême, profondément enracinée dans cette tradition, présente-t-elle le principe communal de la constitution fédérale de la République Fédérale d'Allemagne.

- Cette préservation peu ordinaire du principe de l'autonomie étatique sous différents systèmes étatiques et constitutionnels s'incarne dans un bâtiment à caractère de monument historique qui n'a subi qu'une seule transformation. Dans aucun autre siège de gouvernement, le principe du fédéralisme se manifeste d'une manière aussi durable, ce principe étant un don fait par l'ancien empire allemand pour la structure constitutionnelle à d'autres peuples et d'autres nations. Ainsi, le bâtiment participe encore à l'histoire de la République Fédérale d'Allemagne en Europe. Tel que cela fut le cas du 6 au 7 juin 1978, lorsque le Conseil européen, siégeant dans ce bâtiment, a décidé de jeter les bases du système monétaire européen et a, de cette manière, ouvert la voie à l'union monétaire et à l'Euro.

- Le développement du type de construction de l'hôtel de ville ainsi que celui des villes libres de l'ancien empire allemand justifie une comparaison avec les puissantes villes-États italiennes. Déjà au 17ième siècle, la littérature juridique qualifie les villes de l'empire de véritables «républiques». Ces républiques citoyennes ont joué un rôle central dans le développement de constitutions démocratiques dans la société civile. C'est dans ces républiques que s'incarnait l'idéal du citoyen responsable sur le plan politique, qui défend lui-même sa liberté. Toutefois, presque sans exception, elles ont été médiatisées dans l'ancien empire allemand et en Italie – en termes de droit constitutionnel, Gênes et même Venise ainsi que Nuremberg, Augsbourg et Francfort ne sont aujourd'hui que le reflet d'une grandeur passée. Brême est la seule ville qui dispose encore aujourd'hui d'un Hôtel de ville qui est à la fois, dans son environnement urbain, un monument hors du commun et un continuum de cette fière tradition européenne. Ainsi il est unique dans son genre.

El Ayuntamiento y el Roland de la Plaza del Mercado de Bremen. Su especial significado en comparación con otros Ayuntamientos.

Dr. Konrad Elmshäuser | Dr. Hans-Christoph Hoffmann | Prof. Dr. Hans-Joachim Manske | Dr. Georg Skalecki

El Ayuntamiento y el Roland (Roldán) de Bremen son un testimonio de un significado histórico, político y artístico sobresaliente, cuya inclusión en la lista del Patrimonio Universal de la Humanidad de la UNESCO está justificada, en virtud de los siguientes criterios del comité del Patrimonio Universal:

Nº III: [un testimonio de una tradición cultural, o de una cultura existente o desaparecida, único, o de carácter excepcional,]

Nº IV: [un ejemplo destacable de un tipo de edificio o de...conjunto...arquitectónico que sean representativos de uno o varios periodos de la historia,]

Nº VI: [que se vincule de una forma inmediata o reconocible con... formas de vida tradicionales, ideas o confesiones religiosas,]

La valoración de los solicitantes está basada y documentada en los dictámenes científicos emitidos por el Prof. Dr. Jürgen Paul, profesor emérito de Historia del Arte (Universidad de Dresde), el Prof. Dr. Gerhard Dilcher, profesor emérito de Historia del Derecho (Universidad de Francfort am Main y Universidad de Trento, Italia), el Prof. Dr. Dietmar Willoweit, profesor ordinario de Historia del Derecho Alemán, Derecho Eclesiástico, Derecho Civil y Derecho Mercantil (Universidad de Würzburg) y el Dr. Stephan Albrecht, Privat Dozent de Historia del Arte (Universidad de Tubinga, actualmente en la Biblioteca Hertziana, Roma). Esta nueva evaluación y todos los nuevos dictámenes se presentan en respuesta a la petición -hecha por el comité del Patrimonio Universal en su vigesimoséptima (27ª) asamblea, en París, del 30.6 al 5-7 del 2003- de un análisis más preciso del Ayuntamiento de Bremen y del Roland dentro del marco de un estudio comparativo entre ayuntamientos. (27 COM 8C.26: ALLOW FOR THE HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL EVALUATION OF THE PROPERTY IN THE FRAMEWORK OF A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF TOWN HALLS).

Como resultado del estudio comparativo presentado, los solicitantes valoran la singularidad de los objetos de Bremen propuestos, en comparación con otros Ayuntamientos, tal como queda formulado en uno de los dictámenes (Dilcher I.2.):

- en el alto valor artístico de la arquitectura, que no sólo permanece intacta, sino que no ha dejado de desarrollarse con elevada calidad hasta la actualidad,

- en la continuidad del ayuntamiento, como construcción y como sede administrativa y de gobierno de una comunidad civil, que defendió su autonomía y autogobierno como comunidad republicana,

- en el entrelazamiento, singularmente compuesto, de relaciones significativas entre la arquitectura del Ayuntamiento, sus iconografías -interiores y exteriores- pintadas y representadas, y entre el Roland y la Plaza del Mercado en el conjunto de Schütting, la Catedral y la Liebfrauenkirche (Iglesia de la Amada Señora).

Por parte de los solicitantes se han reunido y resaltado al detalle los siguientes argumentos, que han sido justificados descriptiva y comparativamente en el dictamen pormenorizado:

- En la lista de la UNESCO del Patrimonio Universal de la Humanidad no está representado ningún edificio identificativo del relevante -histórica y culturalmente- tipo de construcción "Rathaus" (Casa Consistorial). El Ayuntamiento de Bremen resulta idóneo para esto en grado sumo.

- El Ayuntamiento gótico de Bremen representa, en un estado tan nítido y original, el tipo de palacio de edificación de planta salón de rectángulo transversal (Aquisgrán, Nuremberg, Colonia) como ningún otro Ayuntamiento en Alemania. Representa además un tipo de arquitectura singular, con su galería intercalada, que difiere de otros edificios consistoriales (Lübeck, Dortmund, Münster); lo aquí documentado encontró una rica sucesión en Renania y Baja Sajonia en los siglos XV y XVI.

- La fachada del Ayuntamiento de Bremen está decorada con las figuras de un ciclo de imágenes medieval (Príncipes electores y Profetas) cuyo modelo histórico e iconográfico es característico de los edificios consistoriales de la tardía Edad Media (Aquisgrán, Colonia, Brujas y Nuremberg, entre otros), pero únicamente en Bremen se conserva en su estado original.

- La transformación del núcleo gótico del edificio con una nueva fachada y la Güldenkammer (Cámara de gremios) en 1612 produjo un ejemplo sobresaliente de la glorificación arquitectónica del consejo de gobierno de la ciudad, que con reivindicación absoluta desempeñó su autoridad gubernamental, y, en Bremen, aprovechó para esto -sobre todo- la composición de la fachada, a diferencia de otros lugares (Nuremberg, Augsburgo, Thorn, Danzig).

- La estructura espacial del edificio ha permanecido inalterada a través de los siglos, e incluso permanecen los mismos usos originales. Un (nuevo) anexo que fue preciso elevar en 1900 figura entre las soluciones artísticas, urbanísticas y preservadoras más logradas en un edificio funcional tan colmado de exigencias.

- El Ayuntamiento de Bremen, edificado en 1405-08, representa -inclusive con las modificaciones referidas- la imagen ideal de un Ayuntamiento (de cuño europeo). Nunca fue destinado a otra actividad ni se hizo un uso compartido de Ayuntamiento y centro de comercio (como Lübeck, entre otros); tampoco fue nunca salón de baile de

la ciudadanía ni sede social (como Lüneburg, entre otros), ni fue expandido a un conjunto de edificios (Brescia, Verona, Venecia). Por sus referencias de arquitectura palaciega y defensiva (correspondiente a la arquitectura profana del Bajo y Medio Rin), fue siempre representación de ciudades fortificadas (como en Florencia y Siena)

- Con sus tres niveles, - sótano, planta baja y ala superior- fue también reflejo del orden estamental (social) establecido por Dios; esto es, un depósito de la fe conjuntamente con las iglesias circundantes: la Catedral de San Pedro y la Liebfrauenkirche (Iglesia de la Amada Señora). Adicionalmente a su función de lugar de deliberación del Consejo y audiencia judicial, fue asimismo lugar de profesión manifiesta al poder terrenal superior, el Emperador (Kaiser). En esta conjunción reside la suma de diversas necesidades, lazos culturales y exigencias del modelo de Ayuntamiento antiguo y desarrollado, que - en su estado original - tiene su asiento en Bremen.

- El Ayuntamiento de Bremen, planificado de una sola vez, pudo concentrar, de acuerdo con los criterios III y IV, en la simbolización de los altos cometidos del Consejo y la comunidad civil, lo que antes estaba disgregado como funciones bajas y de servicio, oficina y administración de impuestos. Todo esto está disponible en el edificio conservado originalmente, a saber, en los ciclos del Emperador y los Príncipes electores de la fachada sur, y en las figuras de profetas y símbolos de rosas en las fachadas menores -que refieren con absoluta consciencia a motivos sacros-, y finalmente en los mandamientos para los buenos regentes en el ala superior, al que pertenecen también los costados de las sillas del Consejo, perseveradas en el museo.

- Aun con más claridad queda expresado el cometido de la regencia buena y justa en el prolijo programa de la fachada - creada entre el Renacimiento tardío y el Barroco temprano- y la coetánea edificación de la Cámara de Gremios (Güldenkammer) Éstas son la obra de un humanismo reformista que, en su erudición, ha formulado una insólita -para un ayuntamiento- medida programática, y que es en conjunto una descripción de la ciencia del gobierno.

- La transformación del Ayuntamiento de Bremen, en los comienzos del siglo XVII, forma parte de una tendencia estilística del Renacimiento, en cuyo desarrollo tomó parte determinante Vredemann de Vries, pintor, grabador y arquitecto nacido en los Países Bajos. Sus patrones y libros de modelos fueron divulgados en Amberes - en aquella época el principal centro de actividad del mercado internacional de tratados de arquitectura y libros de modelos- , en los Países Bajos, en el norte de Alemania, en la corte del Emperador en Praga así como en las grandes ciudades comerciales como Hamburgo, Danzig y Bremen. Aun cuando Vredemann de Vries estuvo en Bremen en 1587, y un detalle de la fachada del Ayuntamiento de Bremen puede ser atribuido a uno de sus modelos, el proyecto total de la fachada sigue una tendencia estilística internacional, que no se puede identificar con un único origen nacional. Como no era inusual en el siglo XVI y principios del XVII, la fachada del Ayuntamiento de Bremen ha surgido de la colaboración entre los maestros de obras (Lüder von Bentheim, entre otros) y los autores del encargo. En esto han jugado un papel, evidentemente, trabajos de diseño como los de Vredemann de Vries.

- La difusión internacional de libros de modelos y patrones, dada merced al comercio y a las nuevos procedimientos de impresión, convierte en obsoleta la cuestión acerca de un estilo nacional. La utilización y perfecto dominio de tratados y

pliegos de modelos es, en esta época, expresión de una alta instrucción y garantía superior de la calidad artística. Calibrada en el entorno del territorio urbano, la exigencia y la calidad de la arquitectura de la fachada en Bremen la hace formar parte de los logros más soberbios, entre las construcciones nuevas y reformadas de la misma época en las cortes y en las ciudades más grandes de Europa.

- Tras su estancia en Wolfenbüttel, Brunswick y Danzig, Vredemann de Vries marca también -a partir de 1596- el arte cortesano alemán, gracias a su colocación en la corte de Praga bajo el emperador Rudolf II, apasionado del arte. Precisamente bajo Rudolf II y su sucesor Matthias (a partir de 1612), todos los príncipes alemanes y las ciudades libres o aspirantes a su autonomía miran hacia la corte imperial y son influidas por ella. Levantan sus obras auto conscientes y representativas en contrapunto a aquella, pero orientadas a las corrientes contemporáneas de allá y aprovechando la teoría arquitectónica de su tiempo. En ese sentido el proyecto de la fachada de Bremen de 1612, que incluyó el ciclo de príncipes electores, contiene una sutil pieza de propaganda imperial, con el que el significado del edificio fue traducido en el lenguaje de formas del siglo XVII.

- Al Roland de Bremen le corresponde una particular importancia, como temprana escultura libre monumental y primera gran escultura emancipada de la Edad Media. Por antigüedad, tamaño, elaboración artistico-histórica y belleza es el ejemplo más excelente de un tipo de monumento y estatua monumental extendido por toda Europa. Su erección tuvo lugar en 1404, junto con el edificio del Ayuntamiento.

- No es, como en otras ciudades por lo general, un simple emisario del Rey que impone la libertad o la proscripción del mercado, sino el representante especial (según dicen) del derecho a la libertad otorgado de modo particular a Bremen por el Emperador Carlomagno.

- Al mismo tiempo el Roland de Bremen es también el mártir, que como paladín del Gran Emperador ha entregado su vida en la lucha por la fe. Se muestra claramente esta cualidad especial de la estatua del Roland, como portador del mensaje de la libertad dispuesta a su propia defensa, que es también parte inequívoca del Ayuntamiento. En contraposición a otras ciudades como Aquisgrán, Reims o Colonia, en Bremen florece la tradición de Carlomagno, ya no en suelo románico/franco, sino en un establecimiento original carolingio en Baja Sajonia. El Roland colocó al consejo y la ciudadanía de Bremen en una de las grandes tradiciones cristiano-carolingias de Europa- al mismo tiempo que fundó la autonomía municipal y ciudadana sobre las mismas raíces que la monarquía alemana y francesa -esto es, la Francia carolingia-, y le otorgó el rango de derecho imperial.

- El Ayuntamiento de Bremen es un lugar en el que, durante más de 600 años, se ha desarrollado y vivido la constitución comunal y estatal, y hoy día se vive aún en el mismo edificio. Hay que resaltar el gran significado (Dilcher, Art.V, 1), que tiene el desarrollo de la constitución comunal como patrimonio cultural y herencia espiritual (intangible heritage); al fin y al cabo corresponde a nuestra forma moderna actual de democracia parlamentaria. El republicanismo (el principio de la República en conexión con la libertad) y el comunalismo fueron vividos, en la realidad histórica, de modo principal en las ciudades de Europa. Es por esta circunstancia particular que en Bremen esta tradición ni ha perdido su sentido político abstracto ni ha dejado de practicarse nunca en el lugar; al contrario, Bremen representa el principio comunal en la constitución de la República Federal de Alemania desde las más sólidas raíces históricas.

- Esta inusual conservación de una continua estatalidad propia entre diferentes sistemas constitucionales y estatales pervive en una edificación monumental, de la que el núcleo edificado sólo ha experimentado una modificación una vez en 600 años, en el 1600. En ningún otro edificio de gobierno en Alemania se manifiesta tan duraderamente el principio del federalismo, que fue un don del Antiguo Imperio Alemán a la estructura constitucional de gobierno de otros pueblos y naciones. Como tal, todavía hoy toma parte en la historia de la República Federal de Alemania en Europa. Como en el 6-7 de Junio de 1978, cuando el Consejo Europeo decidió en él las bases del sistema monetario europeo y con ello hizo posible la Unión Monetaria y el Euro.

- Como con el desarrollo del tipo de construcción "Rathaus" (Ayuntamiento), de la misma manera el desarrollo constitucional de la ciudad-libre del Antiguo Imperio sólo puede ser puesto en comparación con las más poderosas ciudades-estado italianas. Ya la literatura jurídica del siglo XVII nombra en este conjunto a las ciudades del Antiguo Imperio Alemán como auténticas "Repúblicas". Estas repúblicas ciudadanas desempeñan un papel central en el nacimiento de la constitución democrática en la sociedad civil: en ellas reside el ideal del ciudadano políticamente adulto, que defiende personalmente su libertad. Casi sin excepción fueron absorbidas en el Reich y en Italia, y hoy día Nuremberg, Augsburgo y Francfort, como Génova e incluso Venecia, ofrecen solamente la imagen de un grandioso pasado de derechos constitucionales. Únicamente en Bremen se puede encontrar todavía hoy el Ayuntamiento en su entorno urbanístico como un extraordinario edificio monumental y al mismo tiempo como un continuum viviente de esta orgullosa línea de tradición paneuropea. Por esto es único.

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December 2003

Bremen (Germany)

No 1087

1. BASIC DATA

State Party: Federal Republic of Germany

Name of property: The town hall and Roland on the marketplace of Bremen

Location: The City of Bremen

Date received: 22 January 2002

Category of property:

In terms of the categories of cultural property set out in Article 1 of the 1972 World Heritage Convention, this is a *monument*. It is a combination of architectural work and monumental sculpture.

Brief description:

The Town Hall and Roland on the marketplace of Bremen are an outstanding representation of the civic autonomy and market rights as they developed in the Holy Roman Empire in Europe. The old town hall was built as a Gothic hall structure in the early 15th century, and renovated in the so-called Weser Renaissance style in the early 17th century. A new town hall was built next to the old one in the early 20th century as part of an ensemble that survived the bombardments during the Second World War.

2. THE PROPERTY

Description

The city of Bremen is an autonomous Federal Land, situated in north-western Germany, on the river Weser. The site of the medieval town has a oblong form, limited by the river on the south side and the *Stadtgraben*, the water moat of the ancient defence system, on the north side. Apart from the immediate surroundings of the Town Hall, most of the area has been reconstructed after the Second World War.

The town hall is situated in the centre of the eastern part of the old city area, separating the market in the south from the *Domshof*, the cathedral square in the north. The statue of Roland is located in the centre of the market place. The town hall is placed between two churches. The *Dom*, the cathedral church of St. Peter (built from 12th to 19th centuries), is located on the east side, and the *Liebfrauenkirche* (the church of Our Lady, built in the 12th and 14th centuries) on the west. Across the market, there is the *Schütting*, the seat of the ancient merchant guilds (built in the 16th century, restored in the 19th century). On the east side of the market is the modernist building for the municipal institutions, the *Haus der Bürgerschaft*, built in the 1960s.

The nominated property consists of the town hall and the Roland statue (0.3ha). The buffer zone encloses the above mentioned market and the cathedral square with the main buildings (36ha), surrounded by an outer protection zone (376ha). The town hall has two parts: the Old Town Hall initially built in 1409 on the north side of the market place, renovated in the early 17th century, and the New Town Hall that was built in the early 20th century as an addition facing the cathedral square.

The Old Town Hall is a two-storey hall building with a rectangular floor plan, 41.5 x 15.8m. It is described as a transverse rectangular *Saalgeschossbau* (i.e. a multi-storey construction built to contain a large hall). It has brick walls and wooden floors structures. The exterior is in exposed brick with alternating dark and light layers; the decorative elements and fittings are in stone. The roof is covered by green copper. The ground floor is formed of one large hall with oak pillars; it served for merchants and theatrical performances. The upper floor has the main festivity hall of the same dimensions. Between the windows, there are stone statues representing the emperor and prince electors, which date from the original Gothic phase, integrated with late-Renaissance sculptural decoration symbolising civic autonomy. On the market side there is an open arcade with stone columns. Underground, the town hall has a large wine cellar, later extended to the west, and now used as a restaurant.

In the 17th century, the town hall was renovated, and the middle three of the eleven axes of the colonnade were accentuated by a bay construction with large rectangular windows and a high gable, an example of the so-called Weser Renaissance. The bay has two levels, occupying a part of the festivity hall in an elaborate carved wooden structure. The lower part of the bay contains a panelled council room (*Güldenkammer*). Smaller roof gables were placed on both sides of the central gable. An elaborate sculptural decoration in sandstone was added to the façade, representing allegorical and emblematic depictions. The medieval arcade was rebuilt with round arches (instead of pointed arches of the Gothic period) and 'Tuscan columns'; it now forms an open balcony. In the interior, the large festivity hall has one wide span with heavy oak beams; the lower part of the walls is panelled, and the doorways (of different dates) have sculptured polychrome frames.

The New Town Hall was the result of an architectural competition, and it was built in 1909-1913, designed by Gabriel von Seidl from Munich. The building has three main floors, and it was intended for representation and chancellery. The elevations are covered in tiles (clinker); windows and details are built in south-German limestone.

The stone statue of Roland stands in the middle of the market place, in front of the town hall, facing the cathedral church. The statue is ca. 5.5m tall, and it was initially erected in 1404 in representation of the rights and privileges of the free and imperial city of Bremen. Such statues have been common in German towns and townships, representing a martyr who died in the struggle against heathens. The statue of Bremen is associated with the Margrave of Brittany, a paladin of Charlemagne.

History

The origins of Bremen go back to the 8th and 9th centuries, when it became a seat for a bishop. Its foundation is referred to Bishop Willehad and Emperor Charlemagne who supposedly granted the initial privileges. In 965, Bremen was given the rights to raise customs and to mint. The citizenry was united in a corporate body, *universitas civium*, as recognized in a diploma in 1186. There is reference to a city council whose members are called *consules*, in 1225. The City Council prepared a civic code as a law of the people, of which the 1303-04 version became the principal reference. The town entered the Hanseatic League in 1358. Though having already obtained privileges of civic autonomy, it was formally recognized as *Freie Reichstadt* (free imperial town) in 1646. From 1947, it is one of the Lands of the Federal Republic of Germany.

The Roland statue in stone was erected in 1404, replacing an earlier wooden statue, and is considered the oldest Roland statue still in place in Germany. The statue used to have a shelter, which was removed in 1885. In 1938, the statue was subject to a major repair, and other restorations followed in 1959 and 1969. In 1983-84, the Roland was again provided by a protective fence as originally; the head was replaced with a copy. Over the years, the statue has had various colour schemes.

The first Rathaus of Bremen existed in the 14th century. The current Old Town Hall was built in 1405-1409, and renovated in 1595–1612. The master builder was Lüder von Bentheim (ca. 1555–1612), who already had other projects in Bremen, as well as reconstructing the exterior of the Gothic town hall of Leiden (Netherlands) beginning in 1585. The new architectural elements were designed following the plans by Hans Vredeman de Vries, Hendrik Goltzius, Jacob Floris and other masters of the Dutch Renaissance. The New Town Hall was added in 1909-1913.

The town of Bremen was heavily bombed during the Second World War, and some 62% of the buildings were lost. However, the area of the town hall survived relatively well.

Management regime

Legal provision:

The owner of the town hall and the Roland is the municipality of the Free Hanseatic City of Bremen. The town hall and the Roland are under the protection of the *Denkmalschutzgesetz* (DSchG, 1975/ 1989, law for the care and protection of cultural monuments) of the Federal Land of Bremen, and are listed as historical monuments. The Lands of the Federal Republic of Germany act independently in educational and cultural matters, a principle which also applies to monument protection. All laws and regulations concerning the protection of cultural monuments are passed by the *Bürgerschaft* (Land parliament) of Bremen. Almost all buildings within the inner buffer zone are under preservation order individually, and the DSchG law applies to the Markt as a whole.

Management structure:

In the city-state of Bremen, the lower authority, *Landesamt für Denkmalpflege*, also functions as a specialised monument authority and has the power of decision concerning applications submitted by monument owners in agreement with those owners. Once an agreement is reached, the higher authority: *Senator für Inneres, Kultur und Sport* (Senator for Internal Affairs, Culture and Sport) makes the final decision. The protection authorities are under the control of the Bremen Land government and thus of the senate. The employer is the respective senator responsible for culture.

Any alteration, repair and restoration work carried out in the town hall is done in close collaboration between the specialised monument authorities and the senate chancellery, with the participation of the competent building regulation office and the affiliated authorities. The supervision of the respective project is assumed by the *Bremer Bau-Management GmbH*, while the municipal corporation *Bremer Bau Betrieb GmbH* is primarily in charge of the planning and realisation. The competent authority for the conception and determination of city centre development in the general environs of the town hall is the *Stadtplanungsamt* which draws up binding statements regarding construction project petitions and processes construction plan schedules within the context of the approval procedure. One primary responsibility of this office is the organization of public space.

The area of the nominated property and buffer zone is subject to the regulations of the urban master. All listed buildings have their own conservation plans, established by the *Landesamt für Denkmalpflege*. The nominated property also has a ten-year management plan, which has been prepared together with the World Heritage file, and submitted for approval by competent authorities.

Resources:

The finance of all maintenance and conservation work on the property comes from the public funds. During the past ten years this has amounted to 6.5 million DM.

Justification by the State Party (summary)

Criterion iii: The Town Hall and Roland of Bremen bear a 'unique testimony' to civic autonomy and sovereignty within the framework of a state.

Criterion iv: The town hall and Roland of Bremen form an 'outstanding example' of a 'type' of town hall and its symbolism with regard to the theme of liberty.

Criterion vi: The town hall and Roland of Bremen are directly associated with political ideas 'of outstanding universal significance'; the idea of civil self-government combined with the autonomous regulation of the legal and economic circumstances of the citizenry.

3. ICOMOS EVALUATION

Actions by ICOMOS

An ICOMOS expert mission visited Bremen in August 2002. ICOMOS has also consulted architectural historians in Central Europe and the Netherlands, as well as its

International Scientific Committee on Historic Towns and Villages.

The World Heritage Committee in its 27th session, decided to defer this nomination subject to a comparative study, which has since been provided by the State Party. The new information also offers a revised justification of the inscription, on the basis of which ICOMOS has revised its evaluation.

Conservation

Conservation history:

The nominated property has been under preservation order since 1909 (Old Town Hall) and 1973 (New Town Hall).

Since its construction, the town hall has undergone repair and maintenance. The main gable was stabilised in 1928–1930. The statues of the south and west façades were replaced with copies in 1959–1963. There was a comprehensive restoration of the exterior and the Upper Hall in 1964–1968. The representative rooms were restored or renovated in 1985-98. Modern lifts were also installed. Maintenance work is currently going on in the façades, including re-pointing the joints and consolidating the stone parts. The copper roof is currently under repair.

State of conservation:

At the conclusion of the repair work, the Old Town Hall is expected to be in a good state of conservation. The facades of the New Town Hall show effects of exposure to weather, but restoration is not considered necessary.

Management:

The management and care of the property is well organized.

Risk analysis:

There are no risks foreseen.

Authenticity and integrity

Authenticity:

The town hall of Bremen has had various phases in its history, starting with the first construction in Gothic style, in the early 15th century, and the substantial renovation in the Baroque period in the early 17th century. Furthermore, there have been various transformations and additions in the subsequent centuries, including the construction of the new town hall in the early 20th century. Taking into account this historic evolution, the town hall can be conceived as having historical authenticity in its form and material in respect to the various periods. It has also retained its historically established spatial relationship with the neighbouring historic buildings and market squares.

The Bremen Roland is considered to be one of the oldest and most representative still standing of such statues. It has been repaired and restored numerous times, and some of the original material has been replaced, therefore loosing part of its authenticity.

Integrity:

While the immediate surroundings of the town hall have survived reasonably well, the rest of the historic town of Bremen suffered serious destruction during the Second World War, and was rebuilt in new forms after the war.

Comparative evaluation

The new information prepared by the State Party provides an in-depth analysis of the historical-cultural context of the Town Hall and Roland, allowing a more specific definition of the qualities of the nominated property. The new analyses clarify the architectural typology and its background, as well as the art-historical, architectural and social-political meaning of the property. While previously mainly referred to the Hanseatic League and the Low Lands, the present comparison analyses the town hall in the more general European context.

Typology of architecture: the building type of the medieval town hall of Bremen, i.e. a hall construction for representative and public use, developed in northern Italy in the 13th century. The variation adopted in Bremen has its roots in the Rhineland and the Low Lands. Of this type, the Bremen town hall is considered a particularly pure example, having preserved its structural and spatial organisation intact. The arcade along the market side represents a typical feature of many town halls, but the Bremen arcade is considered the oldest and most representative of its type. Numerous German town halls were destroyed during the Second World War, and many have been modified. The Bremen town hall remains a rare example of its type to retain its authenticity.

F*unction of the town hall*: the Bremen town hall was expressly built by the municipal authority, the City Council, as a town hall. The upper floor was reserved for representation, and the ground floor was intended for use by the market people, thus joining the population with the authority. These original functions have been retained until today. Other uses have been located elsewhere. In its historical context, Bremen is exceptional, also considering that many town halls have accommodated different uses.

Stylistic and artistic values: the current appearance of the Bremen town hall results from the renovation in the early 17th century, representing the so-called 'Weser Renaissance'. This style refers to developments in the cultural region formed around the Weser Valley, in northern Germany, in late 16th and early 17th centuries. The sources of this style are in Italian Renaissance treatises, e.g. Sebastiano Serlio, in the work of the Flemish artist, Hans Vredeman de Vries, as well as in local artistic and building traditions. The impact of the graphic work and the treatises of de Vries was felt in many parts of Europe, from the Low Lands to Prague, but few of his architectural works survive. In this context, the Bremen town hall is considered a highly representative example.

Political and cultural values: the symbolism of the Town Hall and Roland of Bremen carries strong references especially to Emperor Charlemagne, the bishopric, and the City Council, the founders and the principal authority of the city. This symbolism reflects the autonomous status of the Bremen city state, a status that it has retained up till today. Of the numerous imperial cities only Hamburg and

Bremen remain, both having retained their autonomy within the Federal Republic of Germany. Hamburg, however, has no medieval fabric left. Roland statues, symbolising market rights and freedom, were common in European marketplaces; today some 40 still remain. The Bremen Roland is distinguished in having a proven historic reference: Count Roland, a paladin of Charlemagne. It is also one of the oldest and the most representative.

The Free Imperial City (German: *Freie Reichsstadt)* referred to the cities and towns of the Holy Roman Empire that were subject only to the authority of the emperor. Initially the position was assigned to a small number which had won independence from ecclesiastical lords (in particular: Basel, Strasbourg, Speyer, Worms, Mainz, Cologne, and Regensburg). Later, this recognition was assigned to further cities, increasing the number to over eighty in the 16th century. These cities had considerable political impact through their position and their alliances. Subsequently, the number was reduced due to changing political situations. After the Napoleonic period, only four remained, and from the end of the Second World War only two: Hamburg and Bremen.

Outstanding universal value

General statement:

Referring to the revised justification, ICOMOS considers that the Town Hall and Roland on the marketplace of Bremen are an outstanding representation of the civic autonomy and market rights in the Holy Roman Empire. The nominated property is an exceptionally well preserved example of a medieval town hall, a typical Western European model. It is also an outstanding representation of the late Renaissance architecture of northern Germany, the so-called Weser Renaissance, reflecting European-wide trends at the end of the 16th and early 17th centuries. Bremen is a city of imperial foundation, maintaining its status as a 'free city state' in the modern political framework of the Federal Republic of Germany.

Criterion iii: the autonomy and sovereignty of cities in Europe arose in the 10th and 12th centuries, starting from Northern Italy and the Low Lands. Bremen, in Northern Germany and close to the Low Lands, was one of the cities to refer their foundation to Emperor Charlemagne. Its civic autonomy developed from the 12th century, though formally recognized as a free imperial city only in the 17th century. It had the designation as '*civitas'* (city), in reference to ancient Rome and the early-medieval development of Episcopal cities. Apart from Hamburg, it is today the only city to have retained its status as one of the lands of the Federal Republic of Germany. The town hall was built to represent the civic authority, the City Council, with clear reference to the imperial foundation and the bishopric. The statue of Roland at the marketplace again recalls the Emperor. The town hall and Roland of Bremen can thus be considered to bear an exceptional testimony to civic autonomy and sovereignty as these developed in Europe over the centuries.

Criterion iv: the town hall of Bremen is an exceptionally well preserved example of a type of medieval town hall, so-called *Saalgeschossbau*, which developed in German lands from north-Italian origins. Most of the other town halls of the same type have been either modified or destroyed. In the renovation around 1600, while retaining its medieval attributes and strengthening the symbolism of communal autonomy and imperial foundations, the town hall acquired a new appearance. It became an outstanding example of the north-German Weser Renaissance style. It is also a rare example of the direct contribution to architecture by Hans Vredeman de Vries, whose influence was felt in many parts of Europe through his graphic work and paintings. The statue of Roland represents a typical feature in marketplaces, particularly in Central Europe, symbolising market freedom. The Bremen Roland is considered the most representative and one of the oldest extant today.

Criterion vi: The title of a Free Imperial City recognized a status of self-government, legal and economic autonomy, and were only subject to the authority of the emperor. The government was in the hands of the City Council, representing the citizenship, which developed from the earlier Episcopal council. The Bremen town hall was specifically built for the use by the City Council, who occupied the upper floor; the ground floor was related to marketplace functions. The architecture and sculptural decoration of the building symbolise relationship with the imperial and Episcopal foundations of the city, as well as the politics of self-government guided by the City Council. The Roland statue refers to a paladin of Emperor Charlemagne and symbolises market freedom. The statue refers to Roland, the subject of *La Chanson de Roland* (c. 1100), the earliest and most significant French '*chanson de geste'*, a significant influence to European epic poetry (e.g., German, English, Scandinavian, Italian). These include *Orlando Furioso* by Ludovico Ariosto (1516), the most significant epos of the Italian Renaissance. Roland statues were erected in market places particularly in Central Europe, symbolising market rights and freedom. The Bremen Roland carries a clear reference to historical Roland, and underlines Charlemagne as the founder of the city and the privileges granted to the city by the emperor.

4. ICOMOS RECOMMENDATIONS:

Recommendation with respect to inscription

That this property be inscribed on the World Heritage List on the basis of ***criteria iii, iv and vi***:

> ***Criterion iii****:* the Bremen Town Hall and Roland bear an exceptional testimony to the civic autonomy and sovereignty, as these developed in the Holy Roman Empire.
>
> ***Criterion iv****:* The Bremen Town Hall and Roland are an outstanding ensemble representing civic autonomy and market freedom. The town hall represents the medieval Saalgeschossbau-type of hall construction, as well as being an outstanding example of the so-called Weser Renaissance in Northern Germany. The Bremen Roland is the most representative and one of the oldest of Roland statues erected as a symbol of market rights and freedom.
>
> ***Criterion vi***: the ensemble of the town hall and Roland of Bremen with its symbolism is directly associated with the development of the ideas of

civic autonomy and market freedom in the Holy Roman Empire. The Bremen Roland is referred to a historical figure, paladin of Charlemagne, who became the source for the French '*chanson de geste'* and other medieval and Renaissance epic poetry.

ICOMOS, June 2004

Brême (Allemagne)

No 1087

1. IDENTIFICATION

État partie : République Fédérale d'Allemagne

Nom du bien : L'hôtel de ville et la statue de Roland sur la place du marché de Brême

Lieu : La ville de Brême

Date de réception : 22 janvier 2002

Catégorie de bien :

En termes de catégories de biens culturels telles qu'elles sont définies à l'article premier de la Convention du patrimoine mondial de 1972, il s'agit d'un *monument*. Il associe une œuvre architecturale et une sculpture monumentale.

Brève description :

L'hôtel de ville et la statue de Roland sur la place du marché de Brême sont des représentations remarquables de l'autonomie civique et des droits de marché tels qu'ils se sont développés dans le Saint Empire romain germanique. L'ancien hôtel de ville fut construit comme une structure gothique de type halle au début du XVe siècle, puis restauré au début du XVIIe siècle dans le style dit Renaissance de la Weser. Au début du XXe siècle, un nouvel hôtel de ville fut construit à côté de l'ancien comme faisant partie d'un ensemble qui a survécu aux bombardements de la Seconde Guerre mondiale.

2. LE BIEN

Description

La ville de Brême est un Land fédéral autonome, elle est située dans le nord-ouest de l'Allemagne, sur la Weser. Le site de la ville médiévale est de forme oblongue, limité au sud par la rivière et au nord par le *Stadtgraben*, le fossé rempli d'eau de l'ancien système de défense. À part les environs immédiats de l'hôtel de ville, la plus grande partie de cette zone fut reconstruite après la Seconde Guerre mondiale.

L'hôtel de ville est situé au centre de la partie orientale de la vieille ville, séparant la place du marché au sud, du *Domshof*, la place de la cathédrale, au nord. La statue de Roland se dresse au milieu de la place du marché. L'hôtel de ville est placé entre deux églises ; le *Dom*, la cathédrale Saint-Pierre, construite entre le XIIe et le XIXe siècle, située à l'est, et la *Liebfrauenkirche*, l'église Notre-Dame, bâtie aux XIIe et XIVe siècles, à l'ouest. De l'autre côté du marché se trouve le *Schütting*, maison de l'ancienne guilde des marchands construite au XVIe siècle et restaurée au XIXe siècle. À l'est du marché se trouve le bâtiment moderniste des institutions municipales, le *Haus der Bürgerschaft*, construit dans les années 1960.

Le bien proposé pour inscription comprend l'hôtel de ville et la statue de Roland (0,3 ha.). La zone tampon, qui comprend la place du marché, la place de la cathédrale et leurs principaux bâtiments (36 ha), est elle-même entourée d'une zone de protection supplémentaire (376 ha). L'hôtel de ville est composé de deux parties : l'ancien hôtel de ville, construit à partir de 1409 au nord de la place du marché et rénové au début du XVIIe siècle, et le nouvel hôtel de ville construit au début du XXe siècle, en face de la place de la cathédrale.

L'ancien hôtel de ville est un bâtiment à deux niveaux, de plan rectangulaire (41,5 m x 15,8 m). On le décrit comme un *Saalgeschossbau* rectangulaire et transversal (c'est-à-dire un édifice à plusieurs étages construit pour abriter un grand hall). Les murs sont en briques et les planchers en bois. Les façades en briques font apparaître un motif de bandes claires et foncées disposées en alternance ; les éléments décoratifs et les structures sont en pierre. La toiture est recouverte de cuivre vert. Le rez-de-chaussée abrite un grand hall à colonnade de chêne qui servait aux marchands et aux représentations théâtrales. L'étage supérieur comporte la salle des fêtes, de dimensions identiques à celle du rez-de-chaussée. Entre les fenêtres, des statues de pierre, datant de la première période gothique, intégrées à des éléments décoratifs sculptés de la fin de la Renaissance symbolisant l'autonomie civique, représentent l'empereur et les princes électeurs. La façade de l'hôtel de ville du côté du marché comporte des arcades ouvertes à colonnes en pierre. Dans les sous-sols de l'hôtel de ville, un grand cellier, autrefois agrandi vers l'ouest, est actuellement aménagé en restaurant.

Au XVIIe siècle, l'hôtel de ville fut rénové et les trois arcades du milieu de la colonnade qui au total en compte onze, furent surmontées d'une baie constituée de grandes fenêtres vitrées rectangulaires et d'un gâble élancé, de style Renaissance de la Weser. La baie comporte deux niveaux, encadrant une partie de la salle des fêtes par une structure raffinée de bois sculpté. La partie inférieure de la baie abrite une chambre de conseil à lambris de bois (*Güldenkammer*). Deux gâbles plus petits sont disposés en toiture de part et d'autre du gâble central. Des éléments décoratifs sculptés en grès furent ajoutés à la façade, représentant des sujets allégoriques et emblématiques. Les arcades médiévales furent reconstruites avec des arches arrondies (et non plus en ogive comme à la période gothique) et des colonnes toscanes : elles soutiennent actuellement un balcon ouvert. À l'intérieur, la grande salle des fêtes possède un plafond de poutres de chêne d'une seule portée ; la partie inférieure des murs est lambrissée de bois et les linteaux et encadrements des portes (de différentes époques) sont en bois sculpté polychrome.

Le nouvel hôtel de ville, fut construit en 1909-1913 selon les plans de Gabriel von Seidl de Munich qui remporta le concours d'architecture lancé pour ce bâtiment. Ce dernier comporte trois niveaux ; il fut conçu pour abriter des salles de réunion et la chancellerie. Les murs sont couverts de

tuiles vitrifiées ; les encadrements des fenêtres et les détails architectoniques sont en grès provenant d'Allemagne du Sud.

La statue de Roland en pierre s'élève au milieu de la place du marché, devant l'ancien hôtel de ville et en face de la cathédrale. La statue est d'environ 5,5 m de hauteur ; elle fut initialement érigée en 1404 pour représenter les droits et les privilèges de la ville de Brême, impériale et libre. Ce type de statue était courant dans les villes et les villages allemands ; elles représentaient le martyr Roland, comte de la marche de Bretagne, neveu de Charlemagne, mort en combattant pour la foi et contre les païens.

Histoire

Les origines de Brême remontent aux VIIIe et IXe siècles, lorsque la ville devint un siège épiscopal. Sa fondation est associée à l'évêque Willehad et à l'empereur Charlemagne qui est censé avoir accordé les premiers privilèges. En 965, Brême obtint le privilège de lever des droits de douane et de battre monnaie. La communauté fut unifiée en un corps administratif, appelé *universitas civium*, et reconnu par un diplôme en 1186. On trouve une référence faite au conseil municipal dont les membres sont appelés *consules* en 1225. Le conseil municipal prépara un code civil conçu comme loi du peuple dont la version de 1303-1304 devint la référence principale. En 1358, la ville devint membre de la Ligue hanséatique. Bien qu'ayant déjà obtenu des privilèges liés à l'autonomie civile, elle fut officiellement reconnue comme *Freie Reichstadt* (ville libre impériale) en 1646. À partir de 1947, elle devint l'un des Länder de la République fédérale d'Allemagne.

La statue en pierre de Roland fut érigée en 1404, pour remplacer une statue de bois plus ancienne. Elle est aujourd'hui considérée comme la représentation de Roland la plus ancienne en Allemagne. Avant 1885, elle était entourée d'une barrière de protection. Elle fut restaurée successivement en 1938, en 1959 et en 1969. En 1983-1984, la statue de Roland fut de nouveau pourvue d'une barrière de protection, comme à l'origine ; la tête fut remplacée par une copie. Au fil des ans, la statue fut repeinte de diverses couleurs.

Le premier Rathaus de Brême fut fondé au XIVe siècle. L'actuel ancien hôtel de ville fut construit en 1405-1409, et rénové en 1595–1612. Le maître bâtisseur, Lüder von Bentheim (vers 1555–1612), avait déjà réalisé d'autres projets dans Brême, ainsi que la reconstruction de la façade extérieure de l'hôtel de ville gothique de Leiden (Pays-Bas) à partir de 1585. Les nouveaux éléments architecturaux suivaient les plans de Hans Vredeman de Vries, Hendrik Goltzius, Jacob Floris et d'autres maîtres de la Renaissance néerlandaise. Le nouvel hôtel de ville fut ajouté en 1909-1913.

La ville de Brême subit de graves bombardements pendant la Seconde Guerre mondiale et perdit 62% de ses bâtiments. Toutefois, la zone de l'hôtel de ville a été relativement épargnée.

Politique de gestion

Dispositions légales :

L'hôtel de ville et la statue de Roland sont la propriété de la ville libre et hanséatique de Brême. Les deux monuments sont placés sous la protection de la *Denkmalschutzgesetz* (DSchG, 1975/1989, loi pour l'entretien et la protection des monuments culturels) du Land fédéral de Brême ; ils sont classés monuments historiques. Les Länder de la République fédérale d'Allemagne ont une autonomie de gestion en matière éducative et culturelle, principe qui s'applique également à la protection des monuments. Toutes les lois et les réglementations concernant la protection des monuments culturels de Brême sont votées par le *Bürgerschaft* (le Parlement du Land). Presque tous les bâtiments à l'intérieur de la zone tampon sont protégés individuellement et la loi DSchG s'applique à la totalité du marché.

Structure de la gestion :

Dans la ville-État de Brême, le *Landesamt für Denkmalpflege*, institution de base, assume aussi les fonctions d'autorité spécialisée pour le monument et instruit les demandes de construction ou de modification soumises par les propriétaires. L'autorité supérieure est représentée par le *Senator für Inneres, Kultur und Sport* (sénateur pour les affaires internes, la culture et le sport) qui prend la décision finale. Les services de protection des bâtiments historiques sont placés sous le contrôle du gouvernement du Land de Brême et donc du sénat. Le supérieur hiérarchique est le sénateur responsable de la culture.

Tous les travaux de modification, réparation ou restauration effectués sur l'hôtel de ville sont réalisés en étroite collaboration avec la chancellerie du sénat et les services responsables du monument, avec la participation du bureau chargé de la réglementation des constructions et les autorités affiliées. La supervision des projets est assumée par le *Bremer Bau-Management GmbH*, tandis que l'entreprise municipale *Bremer Bau Betrieb GmbH* est essentiellement en charge de la planification et de la réalisation des travaux. L'autorité compétente en matière de conception, chargée de la politique de développement du centre-ville, et donc de la zone intéressant l'hôtel de ville, est le *Stadtplanungsamt* qui prévoit les réglementations et accorde les permis de construire. L'une des premières responsabilités de ce bureau est l'organisation de l'espace public.

La zone du bien proposé pour inscription et la zone tampon sont soumises à la réglementation du plan d'urbanisme. Tous les bâtiments classés possèdent leur propre plan de conservation établi par le *Landesamt für Denkmalpflege*. Le bien proposé pour inscription est également géré par un plan décennal qui tient compte du cahier des charges fixé par le patrimoine mondial et a été soumis à l'approbation des autorités compétentes.

Ressources :

L'entretien et les travaux de conservation du bien proposé pour inscription sont financés sur le budget public. Au

cours des dix dernières années, les montants consacrés se sont élevés à 6,5 millions de DM.

Justification émanant de l'État partie (résumé)

Critère iii : L'hôtel de ville et la statue de Roland de Brême sont un témoignage unique de l'autonomie civique et de la souveraineté dans le cadre d'un état.

Critère iv : L'hôtel de ville et la statue de Roland de Brême forment un exemple exceptionnel d'un type d'hôtel de ville et de son symbolisme lié au thème de la liberté.

Critère vi : L'hôtel de ville et la statue de Roland de Brême sont directement associés aux idées politiques de « signification universelle exceptionnelle », l'idée d'autonomie civile associée à la libre réglementation des aspects juridiques et économiques de la communauté.

3. ÉVALUATION DE L'ICOMOS

Actions de l'ICOMOS

Une mission d'expertise de l'ICOMOS a visité Brême en août 2002. L'ICOMOS a également consulté son comité scientifique international sur les villes et villages historiques.

Au cours de sa 27ème session, le Comité du patrimoine mondial a décidé de différer l'examen de la proposition d'inscription en raison de l'étude comparative, laquelle a depuis été fournie par l'État partie. Les nouvelles informations présentent également une justification révisée de l'inscription sur la base de laquelle l'ICOMOS a modifié son évaluation.

Conservation

Historique de la conservation :

Le bien proposé pour inscription est protégé depuis 1909 (ancien hôtel de ville) et 1973 (nouvel hôtel de ville).

Depuis sa construction, l'hôtel de ville a été l'objet de travaux d'entretien et de réparation. Le gâble central a été conforté en 1928–1930. Les statues des façades sud et ouest ont été remplacées par des copies en 1959–1963. Une restauration complète des façades et de la salle du deuxième niveau a été réalisée en 1964–1968. Les salles de représentation ont été restaurées et rénovées en 1985-1998. Des ascenseurs modernes ont été installés. Des travaux d'entretien sont en cours sur les façades, notamment la réfection des joints et la consolidation des parties en pierre. Le toit de cuivre est en restauration.

État de conservation :

À la fin des travaux de réparation, l'ancien hôtel de ville devrait être dans un état de conservation satisfaisant. Les façades du nouvel hôtel de ville montrent les conséquences de l'exposition aux intempéries, mais on ne considère pas leur restauration comme une nécessité.

Gestion :

La gestion et l'entretien du bien sont bien organisés.

Analyse des risques :

Il n'existe pas de risques prévisibles.

Authenticité et integrité

Authenticité :

L'hôtel de ville de Brême a connu plusieurs phases au cours de son histoire, en particulier sa construction en style gothique au début du XVe siècle et l'important remaniement à l'époque baroque au début du XVIIe siècle. Il y eut par la suite diverses modifications et ajouts, notamment la construction du nouvel hôtel de ville au début du XXe siècle. Certes, du point de vue de cette évolution historique, l'hôtel de ville peut prétendre à une authenticité historique par sa forme et les matériaux de construction utilisés en fonction des différentes périodes. Il conserve aussi sa relation dans l'espace établie de façon historique avec les bâtiments historiques construits aux alentours et la place du marché.

La statue de Roland de Brême est l'une des plus anciennes et des plus représentatives parmi les statues de ce type encore existantes. Elle a été restaurée et réparée en de nombreuses occasions et une grande partie du matériau d'origine a été remplacée, perdant ainsi son caractère d'authenticité.

Intégrité :

Tandis que les abords immédiats de l'hôtel de ville ont relativement bien traversé les siècles, le reste de la ville historique de Brême a souffert de destruction massive pendant la Seconde Guerre mondiale et a été reconstruit après la guerre.

Évaluation comparative

Les nouvelles informations préparées par l'État partie constituent une analyse détaillée du contexte historique et culturel de l'hôtel de ville et de la statue de Roland, permettant une définition plus précise des caractéristiques du bien proposé pour inscription. Les nouvelles analyses clarifient la typologie architecturale et son contexte, ainsi que l'importance artistique, historique, architecturale et socio-politique du bien. Si l'analyse comparative précédente faisait essentiellement référence à la Ligue hanséatique et aux Pays-Bas, l'étude comparative actuelle analyse l'hôtel de ville à la lumière d'un contexte européen plus vaste.

Typologie de l'architecture : Le type d'édifice de l'hôtel de ville médiéval de Brême, c'est-à-dire une construction de type halle destinée à un usage public et à l'accueil de représentants de la ville, s'est développé en Italie du Nord au XIIIe siècle. La variante adoptée à Brême puise son inspiration en Rhénanie et dans les Pays-Bas. L'hôtel de ville de Brême est considéré comme un exemple particulièrement pur de ce type, car son organisation

structurelle et spatiale est demeurée intacte. L'arcade du côté du marché est un trait typique des hôtels de ville, mais celle de Brême est réputée être la plus ancienne et la plus représentative. Beaucoup d'hôtels de ville allemands ont en effet été détruits pendant la Seconde Guerre mondiale, et beaucoup d'autres modifiés. L'hôtel de ville de Brême reste un des rares exemples du genre à avoir conservé son authenticité.

Fonction de l'hôtel de ville : L'hôtel de ville de Brême a été spécialement construit par l'autorité municipale, le conseil municipal, en tant que tel. Le premier étage était réservé à la représentation, le rez-de-chaussée au marché, afin de mettre en contact la population et les autorités. Il conserve aujourd'hui ces fonctions d'origine, les autres usages ayant été placés ailleurs. Dans son contexte historique, Brême est exceptionnel, si l'on considère également que la plupart des hôtels de ville ont servi à d'autres fins.

Valeurs stylistiques et artistiques : l'aspect actuel de l'hôtel de ville de Brême résulte d'une rénovation au début du XVIIe siècle, illustrant le style dit « Renaissance de la Weser », en référence aux développements intervenus dans la région culturelle autour de la vallée de la Weser, dans le nord de l'Allemagne, à la fin du XVIe et au début du XVIIe siècle. Ce style trouve sa source dans les traités de la Renaissance italienne, Sebastiano Serlio par exemple, dans les oeuvres de l'artiste flamand Hans Vredeman de Vries, ainsi que dans les traditions artistiques et architecturales locales. L'influence de l'œuvre graphique et des traités de Vries s'est fait sentir dans de nombreuses régions d'Europe, des Pays-Bas à Prague, mais peu de ses oeuvres architecturales subsistent à ce jour. À cet égard, l'hôtel de ville de Brême est considéré comme un exemple très représentatif.

Valeurs politiques et culturelles : le symbolisme de l'hôtel de ville et de la statue de Roland de Brême est porteur de références fortes, notamment à l'empereur Charlemagne, à l'épiscopat et au conseil municipal, les fondateurs et la principale autorité de la ville. Ce symbolisme reflète l'autonomie de la ville-État de Brême, un statut qu'elle a conservé jusqu'à ce jour. Des nombreuses villes impériales, seules Hambourg et Brême demeurent, et ont toutes deux conservé leur autonomie au sein de la République fédérale d'Allemagne. Cependant, il ne reste à Hambourg aucun tissu médiéval. Les statues de Roland, symbolisant les droits et la liberté de marché, ornaient fréquemment les places de marché d'Europe ; aujourd'hui, il en reste encore une quarantaine. Le Roland de Brême se distingue par sa référence historique avérée : le comte Roland, un paladin de Charlemagne. C'est aussi l'une des illustrations les plus anciennes et les plus représentatives de ce type de statue.

Le terme de Freie Reichsstad (ville libre impériale) faisait référence aux villes du Saint Empire romain germanique qui n'étaient soumises qu'à l'autorité de l'empereur. À l'origine, ce statut était réservé au petit nombre d'entre elles qui s'étaient libérées des seigneurs ecclésiastiques (notamment Bâle, Strasbourg, Spire, Worms, Mayence, Cologne et Ratisbonne). Plus tard, d'autres en bénéficièrent également, jusqu'à représenter plus de 80 villes au XVIe siècle, cités jouissant par leur position et leurs alliances d'une considérable influence politique. Par la suite, elles virent leur nombre diminuer, du fait des bouleversements politiques. Après la période napoléonienne, il n'en restait plus que quatre, et après la fin de la Seconde Guerre mondiale, plus que deux : Hambourg et Brême.

Valeur universelle exceptionnelle

Déclaration générale :

En référence à la justification révisée, l'ICOMOS considère que l'hôtel de ville et la statue de Roland sur la place du marché de Brême sont des représentations exceptionnelles de l'autonomie civique et des droits de marché dans le Saint Empire romain germanique. Le bien proposé pour inscription est un exemple exceptionnellement bien préservé d'hôtel de ville médiéval bâti sur un modèle typique de l'Europe occidentale. C'est aussi une illustration remarquable de l'architecture de la fin de la Renaissance dans le nord de l'Allemagne, dite Renaissance de la Weser, reflet des tendances que l'on pouvait observer partout en Europe à la fin du XVIe et au début du XVIIe siècle. Brême est à l'origine une ville impériale, qui a conservé son statut de « ville-État libre » dans le cadre politique moderne de la République fédérale d'Allemagne.

Critère iii : Les villes d'Europe ont gagné en autonomie et en souveraineté aux Xe et XIIe siècles, en commençant par le nord de l'Italie et les Pays-Bas. Brême, dans le nord de l'Allemagne, à proximité des Pays-Bas, comptait parmi les villes faisant remonter leur fondation à l'Empereur Charlemagne. Son autonomie civique se développa à partir du XIIe siècle, bien qu'on ne la reconnut comme ville libre impériale qu'au XVIIe siècle. Elle était nommée *civitas* (ville), en référence à la Rome antique et à l'apparition, au début du Moyen Âge, de villes épiscopales. À l'exception de Hambourg, c'est aujourd'hui la seule ville à avoir conservé ce statut et elle constitue l'un des Länder de la République fédérale d'Allemagne. L'hôtel de ville a été construit pour représenter l'autorité civique, le conseil municipal, avec une référence claire à la fondation impériale et à l'évêché. La statue de Roland sur la place du marché renvoie une fois encore à l'Empereur. L'hôtel de ville et la statue de Roland de Brême peuvent donc être considérés comme un témoignage exceptionnel de l'autonomie civique et de la souveraineté qui se sont développées en Europe au fil des siècles.

Critère iv : L'hôtel de ville de Brême est un exemple exceptionnellement bien préservé d'hôtel de ville médiéval de type *Saalgeschossbau*, apparu dans les terres allemandes avec des influences venues d'Italie du Nord. La plupart des autres hôtels de ville du même type ont été modifiés ou détruits. La rénovation des années 1600, bien qu'ayant conservé les attributs médiévaux de l'hôtel de ville et renforcé le symbolisme de l'autonomie communale et des fondations impériales, a conféré à l'édifice un nouvel aspect. Il est devenu un exemple remarquable du style Renaissance de la Weser du nord de l'Allemagne. C'est l'une des rares contributions directes à l'architecture de Hans Vredeman de Vries, dont l'influence s'est faite sentir dans de nombreuses régions d'Europe, mais par l'entremise de ses œuvres graphiques et de ses peintures. La statue de Roland est un trait caractéristique des places

de marché, particulièrement en Europe centrale, symbole de la liberté de marché. Le Roland de Brême est considéré comme l'une des statues du genre les plus représentatives et les plus anciennes encore debout aujourd'hui.

Critère vi : Le titre de ville libre impériale a conféré à Brême le statut d'autonomie politique, juridique et économique, uniquement soumise à l'autorité de l'empereur. Le gouvernement était donc aux mains du conseil municipal, représentant les citoyens, successeur du conseil épiscopal antérieur. L'hôtel de ville de Brême a été spécialement construit pour cet usage ; le conseil municipal occupait le premier étage, le marché le rez-de-chaussée. L'architecture et le décor sculpté de l'édifice symbolisent la relation avec les fondations impériales et épiscopales de la ville, ainsi que la vie politique d'auto-gouvernement conduite par le conseil municipal. La statue de Roland, symbole de la liberté de marché, fait référence à un paladin de l'empereur Charlemagne, objet de *La Chanson de Roland* (vers 1100), la plus ancienne et la plus connue des *chansons de geste* française, qui marqua considérablement la poésie épique européenne (allemande, anglaise, scandinave, italienne par exemple), notamment *Orlando Furioso* de Ludovico Ariosto (1516), la plus importante épopée de la Renaissance italienne. On érigea des statues de Roland sur les places de marché d'Europe centrale, en particulier, en symbole des droits et de la liberté de marché. Le Roland de Brême fait clairement référence au Roland historique, et rappelle avec insistance la fondation de la ville par Charlemagne et les privilèges que lui conféra l'empereur.

4. RECOMMANDATIONS DE L'ICOMOS

Recommandation concernant l'inscription

Que ce bien soit inscrit sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial sur la base des ***critères iii, iv et vi*** :

> ***Critère iii :*** L'hôtel de ville de Brême et la statue de Roland sont un témoignage exceptionnel de l'autonomie civique et de la souveraineté qui se sont développées dans le Saint Empire romain germanique.
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> ***Critère iv :*** l'hôtel de ville et la statue de Roland de Brême constituent un ensemble exceptionnel symbolisant l'autonomie civique et la liberté de marché. L'hôtel de ville illustre le type halle médiéval de construction dit *Saalgeschossbau*, mais c'est aussi un remarquable exemple du style Renaissance de la Weser du nord de l'Allemagne. Le Roland de Brême est la plus représentative et l'une des plus anciennes des statues de Roland, emblématiques des droits et de la liberté de marché.
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> ***Critère vi :*** L'ensemble de l'hôtel de ville et de la statue de Roland de Brême, et son symbolisme, sont directement liés au développement des concepts d'autonomie civique et de liberté de marché dans le Saint Empire romain germanique. Le Roland de Brême fait référence à une figure historique, le paladin de Charlemagne inspirateur de la *chanson de geste* française et d'autres types de poésie épique du Moyen Âge et de la Renaissance.

ICOMOS, juin 2004