

File Name: 970.pdf

UNESCO Region: EUROPE AND THE NORTH AMERICA

SITE NAME: **The Wachau Cultural Landscape**

DATE OF INSCRIPTION: 2nd December 2000

STATE PARTY: AUSTRIA

CRITERIA: C (ii) (iv)

DECISION OF THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE:

Criterion (ii): The Wachau is an outstanding example of a riverine landscape bordered by mountains in which material evidence of its long historical evolution has survived to a remarkable degree.

Criterion (iv): The architecture, the human settlements, and the agricultural use of the land in the Wachau vividly illustrate a basically medieval landscape that has evolved organically and harmoniously over time.

Several members of the Committee expressed their appreciation for this nomination including the Delegate of Canada who underlined the importance of the coordinating commission for the management of the site. She also inquired whether the new boundaries of the site protected its viewscape; this question was answered positively by ICOMOS.

BRIEF DESCRIPTIONS

The Wachau is a stretch of the Danube Valley between Melk and Krems of high visual landscape quality. It preserves intact and visible many traces, in terms of architecture, urban design, and agricultural use, principally for the cultivation of vines, of its continuous and organic evolution since prehistoric times.

1.b State, Province or Region: Towns of Krems and Melk, Lower Austria

1.d Exact location: 48° 13' N, 15° 17' E

REPUBLIC OF AUSTRIA

THE WORLD HERITAGE

**Documentation for the
nomination of**

WACHAU

CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

**The present study is based on various contributions
compiled by the Bundesdenkmalamt**

**A-1010 Vienna, Hofburg, Säulenstiege
Vienna 1999**

WACHAU CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

**The Wachau region including the abbeys of Melk and Göttweig
and the historic centre of Krems**

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I. Identification of the cultural/natural property

Republic of Austria

Federal province (land) of Lower Austria

Wachau cultural landscape (the Wachau region including the abbeys of Melk and Göttweig and the historic centre of Krems)

Exact location on map (plans 1–7):

Basically, the area called “Wachau cultural landscape“ is delimited by the hill ridges along the Danube, with parts of the towns of Krems and Melk and the slightly remote Göttweig Abbey being included as isolated properties. The boundary is largely identical with the borders of communities/municipalities or cadastral communities.

Area proposed for inscription (core zone)

The northern boundary starts in the west at the village of St. Georgen (Emmersdorf community), goes on via the Tachberg and towards the east via the Felbereck and the Bürstlingberg to the border of the community of Maria Laach/Aggsbach Markt. From here the boundary runs north via Hubhof, Hinterberg, Grubkogel, Jauerling, Dürreck, Thurnleiten and Hasenhof to the village of Ötz, with the characteristic Trenningkegel being included. North of Ranna castle, the boundary takes a north-east turn and runs via Doppeln to the border of the community of Mühldorf/Spitz. Windeckberg, Mosinggraben, Kuhberg, Seiber and Paffenmais are the boundary points along the border of the community of Weissenkirchen, whereas Sandl, Jägerberg and Rotes Kreuz are those along the border of the community of Dürnstein. Then the boundary goes on via the Braunsdorferberg (Danube lookout tower) and the Goldberg ridge to Stein. In the town area of Krems, the core zone is delimited by the hill-bottom street lines of Alauntalstrasse and Stadtgraben down to the Krems river where from it continues to the railway line (easternmost point). Along the Wachau railway track it runs to the border of the cadastral community of Stein and on to the middle of the Danube river (border between the municipalities of Krems and Mautern).

The southernmost boundary starts at the connecting line (obliquely crossing the Danube) from Luberegg castle to the western end of the Melk island and the Danube arm of Melk as far as the Brauhaus (brewery) where from it continues along the *Westbahn* railway line and covers the historic centre including the following streets: Hummelstrasse, Abt Karl-Strasse, Babenbergerstrasse, Zaglauergasse and Wienerstrasse plus the episcopal seminar building. Along the Salmannsgraben (excluding the expressway crossing) via the path to the Herrenmühle and through the Atzgraben, the boundary goes on via the hill ridges of Jonaskreuz, Eichholzhöhe, Berginger Kogel, Hochkogel, Klausberg, Weißes Kreuz, Polackenkopf and Langeggerberg to the pilgrimage place of Maria Langegg. Now the boundary continues along the border of the community Rossatz-Arndorf with the following hilltops and grabens: Kastlkreuz, Kreuzberg, Felberleiten, Seeleitengraben, Sieben Gräber, Gochelberg. From here it runs along the Hohe Wand, which drops steeply into the Danube and has the Archduke

Ferdinand lookout tower on its top, and includes the Mauternbach brook and the old town centre of Mautern. Over the Danube bridge near Mautern the boundary links up with its northern part midstream (border between the municipalities of Krems and Mautern).

The Göttweig hill with its westward-oriented foothill (called *Hals*, i.e. neck) and the important Benedictine abbey on its top is an isolated part of the property. Its boundary coincides with the border of the cadastral community of Göttweig.

The entire area that is proposed for inscription is surrounded by a buffer zone.

Buffer zones

At Melk

In the west, the remaining surfaces of the cadastral community of St. Georgen down to the Weitenbach brook (=border of the landscape conservation area) and the remaining surfaces of the cadastral community of Melk north of the *Westautobahn* motorway (A1) are marked as buffer zone.

At Krems

In the east, the core zone around the town of Krems is accompanied by a buffer zone throughout the entire area of the cadastral community of Egelsee and in the area of Krems's Kreuzberg and Wachtberg terraces down to the river Krems.

At Furth

South of the Danube, the remaining surfaces of the cadastral community of Mautern and the community of Furth (except for the Göttweig hill) are marked as buffer zones. They link the core zone (property) around the Göttweig abbey with the other parts of the property, i.e. the “Wachau cultural landscape”, and are to ensure that the long-distance view from all directions onto the prominently and saliently situated abbey remains as undisturbed as it is now.

In geographical terms, the property is located within the following coordinates to the nearest second:

Eastern longitude: 17° 2', 15°38'

Northern latitude: 48°26', 48° 13'

Total area: 21,329 hectares

Property + buffer zone: 18,387 hectares + 2,942 hectares

II. Justification for inscription

a) Statement on the significance of the cultural/natural property

The cultural landscape of the Wachau is of outstanding universal value with regard to its diverse landscape structures and its important artistic and cultural monuments and groups of buildings. Thanks to the fine balance of its historico-cultural, aesthetic and nature-spatial qualities, this area constitutes an extraordinarily harmonic and unique symbiosis of landscape and culture (ills. 1–9).

The salient components of this cultural landscape are first its visibly and inherently interlinked natural and anthropogeneous landscape elements; the former would include the narrow bends of the Danube valley, peninsulas, riverside forests, huge and imposing single trees on the river banks, relatively steep hill slopes, slopeside forests, dry grass, jagged rock formations, alluvial cones of the rivers flowing into the Danube; the latter would include the terrace landscape, drystone walls, vineyards with the historic keepers' huts, orchards, wine cellars, lines of winepress houses, fields and meadows following the historic structure, homogeneous villages with regionally typical forms of houses, railway line, embankment roads, ruins, abbeys, churches, small-size monuments, castles, vintage farmsteads, boat-operator houses, lookout towers and rope-and-pulley ferries.

The Wachau is a comparatively narrow, multiply bent valley section with some wider parts and also one of the rare river segments where the Danube still flows freely.

For a water gap, as is the Wachau, the Danube constitutes both a significant landscaping element and the spiritual point of departure for the evolution and development of this cultural landscape. The Danube produces the warm and dry pannonian climate, which penetrates far into the Wachau from the east. It enables viticulture which, for centuries, has continuously characterised large surfaces of the landscape and given it its Latin-type atmosphere.

Although only about 8 per cent of the surface are cultivated with vinestocks, viticulture is of utmost importance for the Wachau. Especially the vine terraces attract the attention of visitors. They are the “most widespread” feature, the design element of the Wachau cultural landscape on the more or less steep hills along the Danube. The drystone walls built from local stone since the High Middle Ages are witnesses to the long continuity of this cultural area and have become an integral part of the landscape providing structure and harmony (ill. 10).

The climatically favourable situation of the Danube valley and proper use of terrace-based viticulture have led to a plethora of special locations that did not exist in the formerly all-forest vegetation. This development has been encouraged by centuries of rivalry between vine growing and fruit farming and the ensuing shifts in land-use patterns. Therefore, the Wachau is characterised by coinciding but different historical levels of land use.

Land use as a surface-shaping phenomenon, which is of particular relevance to the fringe areas of vine growing, is a special feature of the Wachau. This,

in turn, has resulted in the development of habitats and species of nature conservation significance.

The Danube has generated several water gaps in Austria (Schlögener Schlinge, Strudengau), but only the Wachau boasts the specific kind of warmth that has always been and will continue to be the prerequisite for hillside viticulture. Vine growing (and thus the local distinctiveness of surface design) has been extinct for over 80 years along most of the other rivers of the alpine foothills. Hence, the Wachau also represents a unique type of landscape.

The Wachau's flora is characterised by the intersection of three large plant-geographic regions (Central European flora region in the west, pannonian flora region in the east, hercynian area on the hill ridges towards the rougher plateaus of the Waldviertel) and by smaller-scale changes caused by individual locational factors.

Of note, especially in the eastern part of the Wachau and in areas bordering on woodland, are half-dry, dry and steppe grass. Although these plants are of anthropogenic origin, they have evolved to such an extent that now they form stable communities of great regional specificity. They are characterised by very diverse heat and dryness-loving species and provide geologically important habitats to special wildlife (insects and small animals). The fauna of the Wachau is thus highly varied. Of special note is the Wachau's bird world including 150 species, three quarters of them hatching regularly in the area. This is why the Wachau has also been named an Important Bird Area. The biodiversity of the Wachau's flora and fauna thus constitutes a biological reservoir of international significance.

The Wachau boasts a great number of archaeologically, artistically and historically important buildings and monuments, good-quality village and town ensembles, which in themselves are of outstanding value.

The Wachau is a continuous settlement area; inside places and buildings, we find various layers of construction activity from Roman times to the most recent past, with the individual building phases intertwining into a harmonious whole.

Due to the narrow valley and the bends of the Danube, the Wachau as a whole cannot be overlooked from any single point, which is why in the course of its development significant structures were built on numerous higher vantage points, notably on the outer curves of river bends, but also on the valley bottom on the banks of the river. Their consciously chosen position on topographically well-suited places gives us a constantly changing pattern of sight lines, axes and views depending on the respective location. From each of these points, one can overlook a section (some 4 to 6 km long) of the Wachau. This intricate pattern of buildings "with a view" starts at Melk Abbey, continues via Schönbühel castle and monastery, the ruins of Aggstein, Dürnstein and Hinterhaus to Göttweig Abbey. Only Göttweig Abbey's location is such that the abbey can be seen from afar.

Intact and undisturbed to this very date, these sight lines are a special feature enhancing the significance of the Wachau cultural landscape.

Settlement structures and development patterns are characterised not only by painstaking utilisation of topographic conditions but also by their successful incorporation into the landscape. The link of villages with the land is still ensured in most cases by surrounding belts of orchards and/or vineyards and vine terraces. Since the late 18th century, people have been very sensitive towards the dichotomy of landscape beauty and construction needs. They have opted for a harmonious approach, an organically grown symbiosis between landscape and buildings.

Man has consistently optimised the use of the Wachau's limited space. This is how the intricately intertwined, mosaic-type cultural landscape has evolved. Natural and man-made landscape is interdependent and results in a harmonious whole. This harmony can still be felt today and constitutes one of the outstanding characteristics of the Wachau.

That the Wachau has always been of great importance, can be inferred from the above average number of Wachau references in travelogues and vedutas, notably of the 18th and 19th centuries. There is a conspicuous concentration of Wachau pictures in old books of Danube reproductions (see bibliography). The first and third volume of the *Österreichische Kunsttopographie (Die Denkmale der politischen Bezirke Krems bzw. Melk)*, published in 1907 and 1909 respectively) already include descriptions of the Wachau. This is due to the fact that, as early as at the beginning of our century, the cultural landscape of the Wachau was the focus of efforts to preserve the historic heritage.

However, this short section of the Danube – the river's length throughout the Wachau is just 36 km compared with a total length of 2,800 km – has, in contrast to other riverbank areas, not only an extraordinarily rich and important stock of building monuments, the importance of which is enhanced by the organically evolved cultivation of the landscape and the intact nature around the property, but also globally unique prehistoric finds, the most spectacular of them being the 26,000 year old Venus of Willendorf (ill. 13).

b) Comparative analysis

Based on its historic continuity, its specific landscape, its remarkable rural and urban ensembles and the stunning quality of individual objects, but also based on its special climate, its distinct wild flora and fauna and, last but not least, its people who are genuinely aware of the value of the cultural and natural property they live in, it is not easy to find similar properties for comparative purposes.

Most likely, the Wachau can be compared with the Italian cultural landscape of the Cinque terre already included in the World Heritage List. There is this harmonious interrelation between sea, mountain ranges and the characteristic views of places in the Cinque terre just as there is the unalienable unity between landscape and river and the intact settlements and individual monuments situated on both sides of the river Danube in the Wachau.

c) Authenticity/integrity

The entire Wachau with its historic and vernacular buildings, with the picturesquely interrupted hill ranges on either side, with the river in its midst, is a big and lively *Gesamtkunstwerk* which, unaffected by any industrialisation-induced modifications, boasts a high degree of authenticity.

Of note is the landscape pattern created by vine terraces, picturesque villages and fine individual monuments of global significance (such as the abbeys of Melk and Göttweig). Authenticity here is ensured by the homogeneous building material and fabric of villages and small towns and the no less homogeneous layers of building phases. Tradition is part of today's life. The conservation and preservation of architectural monuments is thus ensured not only by monument conservation authorities but also and in particular by generations of owners who accept the preservation of authenticity to be one of their tasks.

Integrity of the Wachau cultural landscape, too, is greatly ensured.

The area and boundaries of both the proposed property (core zone) and the buffer zone is dominated by forests (two thirds of the entire area). Especially in steep slopes and openings, there is such a substantial degree of authenticity and integrity that virgin forest-like formations have been preserved.

Due to the valley's morphology, riparian forests are restricted to just a few areas within the Wachau. A broad river forest area is found between the villages of Rossatz and Rührsdorf. Since the Danube enjoys one of its last free flow sections inside Austria in the Wachau, there is integrity of communication between water and environment in these riparian forests. Within the river forests of Venedigerau and Melker Au, we also find water-filled former arms of the Danube.

The bio-geographic situation on the fringes to the continental east of Austria is particularly evident in the typical fauna and flora of the dry biotopes (dry grass, drywood mosaics). For many demanding species the Wachau is the westernmost habitat.

d) Criteria under which inscription is proposed

Out of the criteria mentioned in UNESCO's operational guidelines, we propose inscription of the Wachau on the World Heritage List under criteria II, IV and V of Article 24 (monument, group of buildings or site) and under criteria II and III of Article 39 (cultural landscapes) for the following reasons:

Article 24, criterion II:

A cultural landscape, the Wachau has long coined the developments in town planning and construction, ecclesiastical and secular architecture, as well as landscape design in the Danube area.

Because of their architecture, their homogeneous development and their location within a landscape cultivated by man and surrounded by almost

untouched nature numerous towns, villages and groups of buildings are of outstanding universal value as combined works of nature and of man.

Article 24, criterion IV:

The Wachau exhibits a rare density of examples of the interaction between human economic and cultural activities within a given landscape.

There is a significant correlation between the typology of architectural monuments and the characteristics of the landscape.

Many periods of humankind's history are mirrored in the distinctive and good-quality sites dominated by churches, monasteries, castles and ruins, all of them monuments of first European order. They are located in the midst of a stunning natural setting where many spatial arrangements and single objects – representative of successive stages of their history – have remained unchanged.

Article 24, criterion V:

Within the existing pattern of European river landscapes, the Wachau has preserved a rare degree of historical integrity and authenticity unharmed by industrial and technological interventions or harmful impacts on its environment.

In a phase where Europe's traditional prospects of places and landscapes are threatened by irreversible change, the historic cultural landscape of the Wachau constitutes an outstanding example of the fruitful interaction between man-made creations and intact natural environment. It boasts an exemplary state of conservation in terms of cultural history, topography, natural space and ecology.

Article 39, criterion II:

The organic unity of cultural and natural dimensions in the Wachau continues to be part of the social structure and the current economic life.

Article 39, criterion III:

The Wachau also meets the requirements of an associative cultural landscape, as the historical, cultural and religious associations of the natural element are essential within the proposed property. In historical terms, the imprisonment of Richard the Lion-Heart in 1192/93 in Dürnstein castle is of relevance; cultural aspects would, for instance, include the *Nibelungenlied* written after 1200. Some of the scenes of this epic poem are set in the Wachau. When talking about religious associations, we immediately think of St. Severinus – the *Vita Severini* contains a description of the Wachau dating from the 5th century –, or of the Melk Reform of 1418 which resulted in major changes for medieval monastic life. All these events have remained vivid in the collective memories of the Wachau population to this very day.

III. Description

a) Description of natural/cultural property

"Wachau" is the customary name for the valley of the Danube between Melk and Krems, with the inclines and the adjoining high altitudes of the *Dunkelsteiner Wald* (Dunkelsteiner Forest) and of the southern *Waldviertel* being an essential part of the cultural landscape both visually and functionally.

The long-stretched-out water gap through the south fringe of the Bohemian Massif is entirely crystalline, while Tertiary and Quaternary deposits are found in places where the valley broadens out, as well as in the *Spitzer Graben*. Of these, the deposits of clay and loess in the regions of Weissenkirchen and the entrances to the Wachau are worthy of note, having a major impact on land configurations.

The *Spitzer Graben*, a left-bank tributary of the Danube, is a formation of the primeval Danube, which – in the Tertiary period – flowed around the west part of today's Wachau on its northern fringe, then followed the present-day course of the river from the region of Spitz onwards.

The course of the valley is determined to a large extent by the fault line system of the southern fringe of the Bohemian Massif. Not only the Danube, but also the relevant tributaries of this region make use of these geological "weak" points (Melk river, Pielachdurchbruch, Spitzerbach).

Depending on the genesis of the valley landscape, extensive levelled-off stretches of the peneplains of the Bohemian Massif alternate with craggy steep inclines, loess-covered gentle surface configurations in the wider parts of the valley, and fairly narrow valley floors. Each of these parts of the landscape reveals specific anthropogenic influences, which are much more intensive on the sunny than on the shady side, the latter being in a rather more original state.

The specific locational properties are the consequence of basic spatial conditions, the geological and edaphic environment, and a distinctly exposed position. Especially notable examples are the south-facing lays of the Danube valley and the *Spitzergraben*. The depth of the valley reinforces the favourable thermal conditions of large areas by effectively screening them against tempestuous west winds and particularly north winds.

The small-scale alternation of extremely different local conditions, caused mainly by the relief, has a high degree of ecological relevance. A further significant factor is a marked west-east gradient exerting a pannonian-ponitic influence in the Lower Wachau, whereas the west is characterised by a Central European transitional climate. In the levelled zones of the peneplain and of the upper valley inclines, the harsher plateau climate of the *Waldviertel* prevails. Another characteristic feature is the universal outflow of cold air, which is why, within the proposed zone, the annual mean temperature varies between 9 degrees (centigrade) in the region of Krems, and 5 degrees around the *Jauerling*.

Corresponding to climate and situation, the Wachau is the habitat of a spatially differentiated vegetation. Most species belong to the Central European geobotanical region, only the east has a direct connection with the

pannonian floral zone, which is exemplified by a multitude of xerothermic elements. Forests and cultivated areas are interspersed with pastures and dry grass with the character of rocky steppes, the habitat of the feather grasses (*Stipa pennata* and *Stipa capillata*). Tied into bunches as *Frauenhaar* or *Steinfedern*, they are a characteristic feature of men's traditional costumes. Other notable species are *Cleistogenes serotina*, *Artemisia austriaca*, *Allium flavum*, the old dyeing plant *Isatis tinctoria*, *Festuca valesiaca*, *Silene otites*, *Seseli osseum*, *Viola ambigua*, *Campanula sibirica*, *Jurinea mollis*, *Nonea pulla* and others. An especially striking plant, characteristic of the rocky parts of the Wachau, is rock alyssum (*Aurinia saxatilis*) with its bright yellow flowers.

In some places, we find remnants of an open wooded steppe, with *Quercus pubescens*, *Rosa gallica*, *Prunus fruticosa*, *Colutea arborescens*, and *Dictamnus albus*. In the immediate surroundings, the shady slopes feature *Pinus sylvestris* and *Calluna vulgaris*, a sort of junction of the south-east and the north-west of Europe.

The major part of the Wachau is wooded (over two thirds of the total area). Depending on the altitude, we find forest communities of downy oak (*Quercetum pubescentis*), oak and hornbeam (*Querco-carpinetum*), wild pine (*Pinetum sylvestris*) as wooded steppe and heath wood, European beech (*Fagetum sylvaticae*), and in the high elevations, beech–fir–spruce forest.

The valley floors in the region of Rossatz and Rührsdorf, as well as in the Melk region, are habitats of small-scale river forests with backwater – despite the narrowness of the valley. The major part of the terrain visible from the valley floor is covered by fruit plantations and vineyards. Apart from extensive hillside viticulture, large acreages are given over to apricots. From a zoological point of view, the Wachau is characterised by the concurrence of two different biogeographical regions. Larger populations of the typical thermophile species are found on the sunny slopes between Krems and Spitz. This concerns in particular the extremely exposed area around Dürnstein. Further upstream, these species can be found only in places with an especially favourable climate. A sub-mediterranean element of the reptilian fauna is the green lizard, the Wachau being habitat to one of their largest Central European populations. Among the invertebrates, the numerous examples of pannonian, sub-mediterranean and pontic wild fauna are worthy of note. A characteristic feature of the Wachau is an isolated population of the Carpathian scorpion near Krems and Stein.

Typical mountain wildlife is found on the shady side of the valley in the northern inclines of the *Dunkelsteiner Wald*, and on the plateaux north of the Danube. The *Jauerling* and its inclines are characterised by a hercynian-type mountain fauna.

The Wachau features a proliferation of artistic monuments spanning a vast period, beginning with Roman times up to the 20th century.

Recent finds show that rudiments of the structure and form of the lots characterising the Wachau towns on the left and right banks of the Danube date back to the 11th and 12th centuries. Mautern, one of the oldest settlements in Lower Austria and an example of the continuous development of settlements since Roman times, has emerged from a

castellum erected from the 2nd century onwards for the defence of the Roman Danubian Limes, giving rise during the 4th and 5th centuries to a fortified small town. Its core has been largely preserved. The forms of settlement that emerged as a result of the continuous expansion, mostly during the 16th and 18th centuries, remained widely unchanged up to the 19th and even early 20th century. The nuclei of some villages, e.g. St. Lorenzen and Bacharnsdorf, have their origins in late Roman “burgus” complexes.

The development of the settlements with their homogeneous character becomes evident in the town structures, both in the fabric and arrangement of the houses on mostly irregular lots and in the street alignment that has remained practically unchanged since the late Middle Ages. Some town centres have expanded to a small extent on their outer fringes by villas and small villas, single family houses and other residential buildings, mostly built from 1950 onwards, but these new developments have been going on only in minor fringe zones.

Characteristic of medieval market towns are the small fortresses and castellets fortified by towers. Weissenkirchen boasts some examples that were erected in the 13th and 14th centuries and are partly still noticeable in the building structure. They once served as road-blocks. Beyond the town borders there are fortifications and barrages dating from the late Middle Ages or the early Modern Times, e.g., in the *Kupfertal* valley above Spitz the so-called *Rotes Tor* (Red Gate) or near Rossatzbach (*Bachtor*, *Biritor*).

The building stock in the Wachau towns dates back to much more recent periods than the settlement structures. In the 15th and 16th centuries, stone construction began to replace the wooden structures of peasant and burgher houses. Traces of this development are noticeable to this day in the substantial number of houses erected from rubble stone masonry. In the narrow, winding, and partly steep streets, we find slightly projecting or receding buildings whose fabric, lot shape, structure and foundation mostly date back to the 15th and 16th centuries. The late-medieval/post-medieval material is matched by the local character of the houses, with the hipped and half-hipped roofs emphasising their cubic appearance. A variety of streetscapes offers changing sight lines, vistas and focal points.

The largely uniform typology of the houses ensures the homogeneous character of the old settlement areas. Most of the houses are two-storeyed, with a corresponding outer appearance, projecting and receding facades, gables and eaves facing the streets. The fabric of the vintners' farmsteads – some having oblong, U or L shapes or consist of two parallel buildings – dates back to the late Middle Ages and the 16th–17th centuries. It is only in some towns that the building material dates back mainly to the 19th and 20th centuries, such as Schönbühel, Aggsbach-Dorf, and Oberloiben. The one-storeyed farmsteads, with two to four units arranged around a courtyard (partly with arcades), have a two-storeyed appearance because of the raised basements that are characteristic of the Wachau (windowless or with small ventilation hatches, some of them adapted for residential purposes). The partly tiled hipped, saddleback, and half-hipped roofs with differing eaves and ridge heights, create a diversified pattern. This effect is intensified by several imposing vintage farmsteads that dominate the townscape,

imparting characteristic features, some of them with integrated chapels (e.g. *St. Pöltner* or *Prandtauer Hof* in Joching (ill. 26), *Kellerschlössl* in Dürnstein, *Erlahof* in Spitz), as well as by numerous historically significant complexes, such as castles, mostly dating from the 16th and 17th centuries (e.g., Rossatz, Spitz), or by ecclesiastical buildings.

The majority of these farmsteads, with lateral gate walls or integrated vaulted passages and service buildings, feature smooth facades that were for the most part altered from the 18th and 19th centuries onwards. In part, street fronts are accentuated by late-medieval/post-medieval oriels on sturdy brackets, statues in niches, wall paintings and sgraffito work, or remnants of paintwork (frequently from the late Renaissance or the Mannerist periods, a few from the late Middle Ages) or feature rich Baroque facades. The late-medieval and post-medieval configuration is still noticeable in many farmsteads and houses – in the strict simple facade design, the ground floor scantily equipped with windows, a designed residential floor, and the attic storey. Compared to other regions, the Wachau still features quite a large number of smoke kitchens with chimneys. The extremely steeply pitched, towering hipped roof occurs so frequently that it can be regarded as an architectural characteristic of the Wachau house; in many places, e.g. in the historic building complex of Markt Weissenkirchen, it can still – to some extent – be found in its original proportion.

In towns or market towns, such as Spitz, Dürnstein, Weissenkirchen, Krems, and Emmersdorf, the vintner house type is joined by quite a substantial stock of late-medieval and post-medieval stately homestead buildings, burgher houses, craftsmen's, and merchant-burghers' houses (particularly in Melk, Krems, Stein, Emmersdorf). Many houses have preserved their inner structure, mostly from the middle of the 16th century onwards.

Many late-medieval farmsteads, too, have kept their interior layout and configuration intact to a large extent (service rooms on the ground floor, living rooms on the upper floor, followed by the attic storey). On the ground floor, large gates open unto a vaulted passage and/or corridor, as well as the service rooms. Large press rooms are usually situated on the sides (sometimes with preserved wooden press and lever), usually connected from the courtyard side with the antecellar, located on the ground level or a little lower, which then leads down to the deep cellar. Weissenkirchen is noted for its extensive cellar systems, often encompassing several storeys (press room, antecellar, deep cellar). These rooms – partly stone- or brick-vaulted, partly hewn out of the bedrock, with many niches – are interconnected by steep staircases and have been expanded since the Middle Ages up to our times, due to the increasing need for space. Large cellars still exist today, e.g., in the *Kellerschlössl* in Dürnstein, or near the *Erlahof* in Spitz, in the so-called *Burgstock*.

The fabric of the 18th-century buildings which, still intact, serve trade and craft purposes and are partly integrated in the town structure, such as taverns/inns, changing stations for the draught horses, boat operators' and toll houses, mills, smithies, or salt storehouses, frequently goes back to the 15th and 16th centuries.

In 1827, one of the four barracks of the provincial estates, the former *Pionierkaserne* (Engineer Barracks) was erected in Krems, where a number of factories and commercial enterprises were also established in the 19th century. The landing stages and stations of the Danube ferry and passenger navigation, e.g. in Aggsbach-Dorf (1909), Spitz, and Rossatzbach, date from the early 20th century. The complex that dominates the townscape of Melk to this day, the Birago Barracks, was built from 1910–13 by Siegfried Theiss and Hans Jaksch.

On the outskirts of the towns of Krems and Melk we find largely unchanged homogeneous material from the 2nd half of the 19th century and the early 20th century. From the middle of the 19th century onwards, commercial enterprises, industrial, communal and utilitarian buildings were built in the course of the town expansion. Representative residential buildings, apartment blocks, and villas show Historicist and local-style forms (in part Secession-style ornamentation or framework); a villa quarter on the model of the *Wiener Cottage Verein* was created in Melk. Parallel building activities for recreational purposes began around 1880, caused, inter alia, by the gradual development of tourism.

The few late-Historicist or local-style villas built around 1880/1915 on the outskirts of towns like Dürnstein, Spitz, or Rossatz, as well as some residential buildings and hotels (the former *Nibelungenhof* in Rossatz, *Hotel Mariandl* in Spitz) were sometimes designed by famous architects (Franz Mayreder, Ferdinand Helmer, Carl Ritter von Borkowski, Josef Ple•nic). A fine example of building in harmony with the countryside is the railway line built in 1909 that was put under preservation order in 1998 (between Krems and Emmersdorf). Since the line was adapted and adjusted to the topographic conditions as far as possible, there is an organic link with the landscape.

Castles are towering high above the towns and the Danube valley, impressively situated and embedded in the topographic surroundings, their strategic positions well chosen. Continuously added on to, they had developed into "multi-section castles" before many of them began to fall into decay from the 15th century onwards. Apart from the ruins of Hinterhaus and Dürnstein, the Aggstein castle ruins are one of the most important structures of this type in Austria, owing to their size and historic significance, as well as their excellent state of preservation (ills. 63–65). Small knights' castles and fortified structures from the 13th and 14th centuries can still be found, e.g. in Weissenkirchen. The *Teisenhoferhof* in Weissenkirchen, built in 1439/68, is a castle-type four-wing assembly that forms a whole with the fortified church. The *Gozzoburg* in Krems is an example of a town castle that emerged from a "fortified house" from the second half of the 11th century.

Apart from secular objects, architecturally and artistically significant ecclesiastical buildings dominate both townscape and landscape. The numerous Gothic and Baroque churches and chapels with their magnificent

tower-crowning elements are partly featuring Romanesque wall cores or were built by incorporating the previous medieval building or older parts of the building (in some of them, excavations have revealed the foundations of the preceding building). The fortified churches of St. Michael and Weissenkirchen (ills. 22–25, 27–33) are among the outstanding buildings of this type to be found in Lower Austria. Many places of worship feature splendid Baroque interiors and furnishings (with a few late-Gothic pieces) or murals dating back to the 12th century.

The extensive complexes of the abbeys of Melk, Dürnstein, and Göttweig, in part dating back to the Middle Ages, are among the finest Baroque buildings in Austria. Towering high up on a rock, Melk Abbey, perfect exemplar of a Baroque synthesis of the arts, forms the "gate" to the Wachau in the west, while Göttweig Abbey, since its new creation in the 18th century, signals Baroque imperial demands beyond the monastic purposes (ills. 8, 55, 56, 67–72).

While the Church was the main patron of the arts, the second half of the 16th century was characterised by an increasing tendency of newly prosperous burghers to commission works of art, thus enabling artists to create a number of outstanding works in the fields of painting, sculpture, architecture, and arts and crafts. While artists around 1500 usually came from Augsburg, Regensburg, and Passau, the majority of those who came around 1700 were from Italy (e.g., Antonio Beduzzi, Cipriano Biasino, Antonio Galli Bibiena, Santino Bussi, Gaetani Fanti, Carlo Lurago). Important Austrian architects, painters of frescoes and pictures, and stuccoists who created their main works in this region were Martin Altomonte, Johann Wenzel Bergl, Daniel Gran, Lucas von Hildebrandt, Franz Anton Maulpertsch, Josef Munggenast, Jacob Prandtauer, Johann Michael Rottmayr, Johann Schmidt, Johann Georg Schmidt, Martin Johann Schmidt, Matthias Schwanthaler, Mathias Steinl, and Paul Troger. Together with many long-forgotten artists, they shaped the complex stratification of "official" culture and vernacular art in all their nuances.

The narrow valley and bends of the Danube prevent any overall view of the Wachau. In the course of the centuries, structures of special significance were created in many elevated places, in particular in the outer bends of the river, offering viewpoints from which a stretch of about 4–6 km is visible. The most important of these are Melk Abbey, Schönbühel (castle and monastery), the ruins of Aggstein, Dürnstein, and Hinterhaus, as well as the lookout towers *Weiglwarte*, *Ferdinandswarte* (Archduke Ferdinand lookout tower), and *Donauwarte*. As a rule, the sections that are visible from these special viewpoints overlap quite considerably, although not every viewpoint permits to catch a glimpse of the adjoining section. Especially the far-reaching interlacing vistas of Göttweig Abbey that penetrate deep into the Wachau region are worthy of note. From the plain of Tulln (*Tullner Ebene*), the abbey high up on the Göttweig Hill is visible from afar, magnificently soaring above the plain near Furth, opposite of Krems. Marking the eastern entrance to the Wachau, it dominates the vista far

upstream. Other striking viewpoints are Schönbühel Castle with its eye-catching position on a steep rock high above the town, and the early-Baroque, former Servite Monastery Schönbühel, towering on a rock, its calvary integrated into a sort of stage architecture, an impressive specimen of building in accord with the countryside (ills. 2, 57–62).

Between certain towns, too, there are numerous and significant interlacing views and vistas, e.g., the turn-of-the-century hotel in Rossatz which offers a splendid view of Dürnstein. From around Arnsdorf, there is a very fine view of the illuminated scenery of Spitz (Tausendeimerberg, ruins of Hinterhaus).

The following survey lists the architectural monuments, groups of buildings, and characteristics of the Wachau as a cultural landscape. (Only monuments of outstanding importance for the history of architecture are mentioned; individual objects in self-contained assemblies are only mentioned within the context.)

North of the Danube, from the west to the east:

Emmersdorf (ills. 11, 12)

Market and parish town, opposite Melk, with a particularly stunning view of the abbey.

Settled in the early Neolithic period and Bronze Age, earliest mention in a deed of 1130. Long-stretched market town, its centre widening into a square. Along the main street and the main square – well-preserved self-contained two-storeyed burghers' and vintners' houses, their cores from the 16th century (some even 15th century), with simple late-Baroque and Biedermeier facades.

St. Nicholas' parish church. Dominating position high above the market town, late-Gothic pier-type basilica with baroquefied tower, surrounded by a high late-medieval wall. In the area of the nave, excavations have revealed the foundations of a previous Romanesque building with round apse. High-quality room furnishings from the 17th-19th centuries.

Parsonage. North of the church, 1738, late-medieval core.

Aggsbach Markt

Market town since 1441, some vintners' houses with cores dating back to the 16th century. View of Aggsbach Dorf situated south of the Danube. View axis to the south-west, towards Schönbühel monastery. Late-Romanesque pier-type basilica with Gothic vault, west tower and baroquefied choir.

Willendorf (ill. 13)

Settlements from the Neolithic, middle Bronze, urnfield and La Tène periods with prehistoric fortifications. Finding place of an 11 cm tall female limestone figurine, dating back to c. 26,000 B.C., the so-called Venus of Willendorf (found in 1908), and of a second statuette (so-called Fanny from Galgenberg), carved from a mammoth tusk (found in 1926); both are fertility idols.

Schwallenbach (ill. 14)

Village on both sides of the *Schwallenbach* brook along a thoroughfare running parallel to the Danube, widening to a square in front of the church. Homogenous building structure 15th/16th centuries, about 10 houses; particularly remarkable are the former castle and the so-called *Raunahof*, both from the 16th century.

St. Sigismund's filial church

Late Gothic single-space type structure, south tower, situated above the village. Three-bay interior, with net vault and south-facing gallery, murals c.1480. Furnishings 17th/18th centuries.

Finds from the Neolithic and early Bronze periods.

Spitz (ills. 15–21)

Market town, dating back to the 9th century as an important vine-growing settlement. Parish town, loosely arranged around the castle hill (= *Tausendeimerberg* / thousand bucket hill). Absolutely delightful townscape. Time and again, the flourishing economic activities of the three former manorial estates (castle, Hinterhaus castle, Erlahof) were a factor of considerable dynamism in the history of the town. Mostly arranged around the market square and along the main street, largely homogeneous two-storeyed structures – vintners' farmsteads and burgher houses. Mills dating back to the 16th century.

St. Mauritius' parish church. Late-Gothic hall church with a long choir sharply deviating from the axis and an axially projecting west tower, medieval fortified enclosure wall. Inside, richly articulated late-Gothic main building, 14th–16th centuries, furnishings mainly 17th/18th centuries. At the parapet of the gallery wooden statues of Christ and the Twelve Apostles, last quarter of the 14th century, 2 stone statues c. 1500 in niches at the gallery piers. – In the chapel, monumental crucifix, c.1520. –Stoup from the 16th century.

St. Michael (ills. 22–25)

The important late-Gothic church (built 1500–1523) arises in the midst of a slightly elevated well-preserved fortification (partly erected on an artificial terrace), visible from both banks of the Danube. Its rich furnishings date from the 14th–18th centuries. To the west, an imposing fortified tower; to the south-east, the free-standing charnel house from the early 14th century.

St. Michael's parish is considered one of the oldest in the Danube valley.

Wösendorf

Market town with vintners' farmsteads and former vintage farmsteads in densely built-up area, core mostly 16th/17th centuries.

St. Florian's parish church. Built 1784–91, late Gothic single-space type church.

Joching (ill. 26)

The old town centre, parallel to the road running along the Danube, features rows of houses, closed from both sides, behind them terraced vineyards with characteristic keepers' huts.

In the west of the village – the *St. Pöltnerhof* with chapel, built in 1696 by Jakob Prandtauer as a two-storeyed four-wing complex.

Weissenkirchen (ills. 27–33)

First mentioned in 830, parish town with the castle quarter in the west, dominated by the parish church in the east. Here, the embankment strip is wider, giving the market town a very characteristic position. A brook graben runs down from the northern hills, branching out into rivulets, with the rows of the settlement following the bends of the watercourses in a very picturesque manner. The townscape and streetscape are exceptionally well preserved and have a number of outstanding monuments.

Parish church of the Assumption of the Virgin. A covered staircase leads up to the soaring church with powerful fortifications. Massive multipartite structure, 13th–18th centuries, with late Gothic choir and imposing west tower. Most important fortified church of Lower Austria, furnishings mostly 18th century.

Dürnstein (ills. 34–46)

A town with an imposing skyline, situated at the foot of a precipitous rock cone dropping down to the Danube; dominated by the ruins of the castle high above and the Baroque former Augustinian canon's abbey on a terrace above the bank of the Danube. – Settled from the Neolithic until the Hallstatt period. – 1002 deed of donation of Emperor Henry II to the Tegernsee monastery. From the middle of the 11th century the town was under the jurisdiction of Kuenring landvogts who erected the castle around the middle of the 12th century. In 1192, the English king Richard the Lion-Heart was imprisoned here. – Planned development of a town in the 13th century; in 1289, foundation of St. Clare's Convent by Leopold I of Kuenring; mention of the town in a deed 1347; upon the death of the last Kuenring in 1355 it passed into the possession of the sovereign. In 1410 foundation of the canons' abbey; by emperor Frederick III. in 1491 confirmation of the status of a town. In 1645 pillaged by the Swedes, destruction of the castle. In 1663, all property changes into the possession of the Starhembergs. From 1715 onwards large-scale renovation of the canons' abbey. Today, Dürnstein is not only an important vine-growing town but has also become a major tourist attraction of the Wachau region.

The castle town is linked to the high-lying castle ruins by a largely preserved extensive town wall from the end of the 14th–first half of the 16th century; it has remained almost unchanged in its expansion. – Approximately triangular ground plan of the settlement changing into a rectangle in the south, in a narrow gusset on slightly ascending ground between the steep vineyard terraces and the bank of the Danube.

Systematic development of the town with large rectangular square from the middle of the 13th century. The thoroughfare, running from north-west to south-east, divides the town into two sectors, one with the former homestead buildings and vintners' houses facing the incline and the other with the monasteries and lordly mansions facing the Danube. Prominent feature is the abbey complex with its magnificent Baroque tower. In the north-west, the 17th-century castle, on a rocky declivity above the Danube, to

the south – former St. Clare' s Convent with the ruins of the Gothic church.
– Along the main street, the mainly narrow lots of the former vintners' houses, facing the incline. – To a large extent, the core of the structures dates back to the 16th century; the two outstanding buildings of that period are the town hall and the *Kuenringer Taverne*, situated at the south-east corner of the former town square.

Castle ruins. Complex with gatehouse and outer defence in the south, and elevated castle with state rooms and former chapel, lying to the north on a precipitous rock, visible from afar. – The curtain walls are an extension of and a connection with the town walls, in their eastern sector battlements and merlons from the 14th century, fortified in the 16th century.

Former chapel. Roughly square room with non-protruding semicircular apse, symmetrical Romanesque squared-stone masonry; on apse and nave remains of murals, standing saints, c.1300.

Former Augustinian canons' abbey and collegiate church of the Assumption of the Virgin (now parish church). Baroque complex with older parts, consisting of 4 high-Baroque facaded tracts arranged around rectangular courtyard, the adjacent church to the south with cloister and simply facaded L-shaped tract to the north-west. The south-west front is elevated above the Danube, dominated by the high-Baroque tower in front of the church, visible from afar as an imposing landmark.

In 1378 endowment of a chapel, 1410 foundation charter of the abbey, entry of the Augustinian canons. 1742 parish rights transferred to the collegiate church. 1788 dissolution of the abbey.

Between 1715 and 1733, Baroque alterations of the whole complex under provost Hieronymus Übelbacher (1710–1740), according to the provost's overall plan; homogeneous programmatic furnishing, largely in imitation of Thomas von Kempen's *Imitatio Christi*. Architect-in-charge is Josef Munggenast, with designs by and possible participation of Matthias Steinkl and Jakob Prandtauer. – Restoration works: church interior and furnishings in 1956/57, outside of tower and abbey building, and inner rooms in 1966–1977; outdoor structures from 1985 onwards, restoration and painting of the tower in 1986.

Collegiate church. Baroque pilastered church with medieval and early-Baroque core, west tower, porch, vestry, prelate's oratory. Homogenous, completely preserved Baroque furnishings.

Near the church gate and in the south-east corner of the cloister – entrance to the crypt, consisting of lower church and tombs below the choir and the vestry rooms. The ground plan form is of a Gothic complex shortly after 1400.

Cloister. 3-wing complex arranged around small courtyard, south of the church. The chapels situated in the south-east and south-west corners are in line with the facade that faces the Danube, with the chapel of the Nativity as a centre risalite. Baroque conversions since 1700, Baroque redesigning of the corner chapels whose stonework is from the Gothic period. C. 1720 the entire floor level is lowered by 1.10 m; 1722–1735 extensive Baroque conversions according to the plans of J.Munggenast: erection of the outer east wing, new vaulting of the south and west tracts, construction of the Nativity chapel. Homogenous Baroque furnishings and equipment.

Abbey and abbey courtyard. Compact, roughly square complex surrounded by four two-storeyed tracts, evolved through adding on to existing medieval and post-medieval sectors: new construction of the east wing from 1716 onwards, of the south wing with church portal 1724, as well as uniform facading. Baroque interior.

Old monastery. Situated to the west of the abbey complex, converted as from 1676 into a chapter house and heightened, incorporating medieval and post-medieval parts.

Kunigundenkirche, former parish church. In the east part of the town, surrounded by the graveyard, forming a group together with the 14th-century charnel house situated in the east.

Former St. Clare's convent and church. South-west part of the town. Four-wing complex around rectangular courtyard with church in the north-east. Built c.1330 – first half of 14th century, converted into a granary in the late 16th century, today demolished in the vault area.

Former monastic building. Today's Hotel Richard Löwenherz. Two- to three-storeyed complex with three tracts arranged around the courtyard, incorporating the remains of the monastery that was partly pulled down in 1693. It has been an inn since 1841.

Castle. Long complex above steep rock precipice, 1622–1634, flanked by two towers facing the Danube.

Kellerschlössl. East of the town, in the vineyards.

Oberloiben / Unterloiben

Homogenous structures, gables facing the street, mainly vintners' farmsteads. Finds from the Neolithic and urnfield periods.

St. Guirin's parish church. Surrounded by medieval enclosure wall and graveyard. Two-aisle Gothic single-space type church with Gothic choir and west tower from the 15th century.

Krems and Stein (ills. 47–54)

Twin town on the north bank of the Danube where it leaves the Wachau.

Krems, first mentioned in a deed in 995, and Stein, first mentioned 1072/91, both owe their development and historic significance to their function as a point of reloading from river to land traffic, the cultivation of grapevine and the resulting trade.

Parallel to the gradual expansion during the 11th – 14th centuries, the long main street (*Obere and Untere Landstrasse*) emerged to exert a decisive influence on the town structure by connecting the former eastern town gate (*Wiener Tor*) with the *Steiner Tor*, still an impressive landmark to the west. Lined by tightly packed rows of mostly Renaissance burghers' and craftsmen's houses built on a medieval lot structure, with the representative buildings of the burghers, town hall and Burghers' Hospice Church, this strip divides the town into two sections.

In the northern section, gently rising towards the west but steeply towards the north-east, parish church and *Frauenberg* church dominate the skyline with their towers, built in line along the central axis. The *Frauenbergkirche*, founded on the hill as St. Stephen's Church, reminds of the first parish settlement, which in the 11th century formed an integrated whole together

with the paved square situated on the eastern fringe of the town terrace (today: *Auf der Burg*), and the market lying below around a triangular square (*Hoher Markt*). On the southern fringe of this upper town, the former second town castle, linked to the house of Gozzo the town magistrate in the 13th century and enlarged later on, is towering on a ledge of the terrain above the *Untere Landstrasse*. This "*Gozzoburg*", as well as imposing merchant-burghers' houses along the streets ascending towards the *Hoher Markt* (*Wegscheid, Margarethenstrasse, Althangasse*), testify to the market's function as a centre of urban life, which shifted to the lower town in the late Middle Ages. The eastern fringe of the town terrace, as well as the northern (around *Frauenbergkirche* and the building complex of the former Jesuit college, is characterised by plain former homestead buildings.

The area to the west is distinctly different from the upper town, dominated by the *Pfarrplatz*, the extensive site of the former *Passauerhof* and of the Dominican monastery set in a row, dating back to the 12th and 13th centuries, and by their buildings, today's St. Veit's parish church, now free-standing, surrounded by the graveyard up to the late 18th century, the parsonage, and the monastic buildings. This area is lined by small squares in front of the monastic church (*Dominikanerplatz, Körnermarkt*) and, to the northwest, by a street following the course of the town wall, and linked to the *Obere Landstrasse* by narrow sidestreets. Access to the quarter south of the *Landstrasse*, whose flat territory formerly skirted an arm of the Danube, is through a street branching off the *Untere Landstrasse* (*Göglstrasse, Herzogstrasse*) and a central north-south axis (*Täglicher Markt, Dreifaltigkeitsplatz*); it is linked to the *Ringstrasse* area by streets built in the 19th century and a few historic buildings. Here, the late medieval and Renaissance structures are concentrated around the small street square, *Täglicher Markt*, with several representative burgher houses, while beyond the market, simple houses from the 17th and 18th centuries prevail, but also new structures and wasteland.

An important east-west axis, the *Ringstrasse* dominates the expansion area of the *Gründerzeit* (boom time), punctuated by a few late-Historicist residential and office buildings. Housing developments of the *Tabakwerke* (Tobacco Works) and a law court from the time between the wars (in front of the Steiner Gate) are important architectural landmarks.

St. Veit's parish church. In the centre of the *Pfarrplatz*. Free-standing early-Baroque single-space type church with partly Gothic south tower. One of the earliest Baroque churches north of the Alps. – In 1616 demolition of the medieval building with the exception of the tower, and new construction until c.1630 by one of the "maestri comacini" or "Comasken", Cypriano Biasino, assisted by his compatriot, Johann Baptist Spazio. – Renovations in 1861, 1899, 1961–66. Early Baroque interior, redesigned in 1787.

Furnishings homogeneous early Baroque.

Former Ursulakapelle. Tall early-Baroque structure on rectangular ground plan, with steep-pitched saddle roof, early 14th century. Restored in 1974.

Burghers' hospice church of St. Philipp and St. Jacob. Obere Landstrasse No.5, late-Gothic single-space type structure with roof spire. Northern side designed as a representative front, articulated by triangular lesenes with baldachins on statues, interspersed with two- and three-piece pointed-arch

windows with flamboyant tracery and ramiform ornamentation. Cabled crocketed pointed arch portal, the lateral blind niches richly decorated with crockets and blind pinnacles, shouldered arch gate with the inscription AEIOU, 1470. Internally one-nave, four-bay hall with wall pillars.

Former Dominican church and monastery. (Today's History Museum and Krems Town Museum of Viticulture), *Körnermarkt/Dominkanerplatz.* – Secularised early-Gothic mendicant order church followed in the north by Baroque-converted monastic buildings around trapezoidal courtyard with remains of an early Gothic cloister. Secularised during the Reformation period, newly installed in 1569 (and 1586), dissolved in 1785.

Former monastic church of St. Peter and St. Paul. Commencement of work 1240, Baroque conversion in the 18th century.

1891 town museum.. Since 1961, rehabilitation of the Gothic building. 1969–71 restoration, has served museum purposes and cultural events since that time.

Tall basilican main building with equally tall, long-stretched-out choir with 5/8-termination. On the west front Romanesque stepped portal with integrated columns with bud capitals, lateral buttresses. – In the south wall of the main building a Romanesque stepped portal topped by a circular window, pointed-arch Gothic jamb. Gothic pointed-arch windows; choir with stepped buttresses above high profiled base and with continuous hood-moulding; tall two-piece tracery windows in deep jamb. – Late Gothic roof spire on the juncture of main building and choir, 6-sided masonry pyramidion and pointed gable, narrow double windows with moulded stone jamb, 15th century. The lofty nave opens towards the side aisles through pointed arch arcades carried on square piers. In main building and choir original Gothic polychrome colouring from the building period. Remains of Gothic and Baroque wall paintings in choir and main building.

Monastic building. Two- and three-storeyed tracts north of the church around trapezoidal courtyard; built at the same time as the church c.1240–65 by incorporating (north tract) a granary from the second half of the 12th century; in the late 17th century the Gothic cloister was walled up, and the upper floor widened. C. 1740 remodeling of the facades. – In 1970/71, parts of the medieval cloister were found, exposed and restored.

Piarist church of Our Blessed Lady, Frauenbergplatz. High up above the town centre. Late Gothic hall church, west tower with Romanesque core. Reconstruction from the middle of the 15th century onwards, stylistic connection with the Vienna Cathedral Stonemasons' Lodge. 1457 consecration of the choir, 1508 overall consecration; restored 1984. Rich Baroque furnishings.

Former Piarist College. On the north side of Piaristengasse. Built 1636–41 according to plans of Cypriano Biasino. – 3-storeyed U-shaped complex with three wings.

District STEIN:

The long-stretched-out area of the medieval town, rectangular delimitation in the east, acute-angled in the west, includes vineyard terraces in the north and is traversed on the narrow embankment strip by one single settlement axis, i.e., the *Landstrasse* connecting the two town gates. Lined by rows of

tightly packed medieval and Renaissance burgher houses with adjoining squares, it opens up rhythmically towards the river. A few narrow streets ascend to a motor road in the rear and towards the *Frauenberg* (partly via a flight of stairs), while the Minorite monastery in the east and the *Göttweigerhof* fit between *Landstrasse* and the northern town wall, accompanied on its outside by a lane of wine cellars (*Kellergasse*). Towards the east and west, its soaring tower-like town gates are an imposing landmark, while the central town structure is punctuated by the two churches, parish church and *Frauenbergkirche*; in alignment with each other, they dominate the townscape with their towers, in particular the mighty tower up on the hill.

The overall character of Stein is appreciably influenced by the near-complete stock of burgher houses from the late medieval or Renaissance periods, the heyday of the merchant town. The smooth facades of the building period prevail, in some places enlivened by late-Gothic window jambs, oriels, or cantilevered upper storeys, and partly with traces of former sgraffito articulation, or, mainly in the squares, adorned with late-Baroque and Josephine facades in accordance with new standards of representation set in the 18th century.

Part of the former town fortification has been conserved.

St. Nicholas' parish church. Situated in the centre of the town where the *Steiner Landstrasse* widens near the flight of stairs leading up to Frauenberg Church. – Late Gothic pseudo-basilica church, second half of 15th century, with Gothic choir 2nd half of 14th century, and late Gothic west tower.

St. Matthew's filial church. In the hamlet *Förthof* upstream outside the town wall.

Early Gothic single-space type building with gable lantern, late 13th century, Baroque furnishings.

Former Frauenbergkirche of the Assumption of the Virgin. On a rock terrace above the parish church. Gothic single-space type building with dominant west tower, visible from afar. – Excavations have revealed late Roman remains of buildings (former bridgehead?)

Former Capuchin Monastery and St. Catherine's Church. Situated in the district *Und* between Krems and Stein (*Undstrasse* No.6). Steeply pitched main building with saddleback roof (former nave); in the west lower chapel annex; to the east, linked to the church, one- and two-storeyed former monastic tracts, masonry core from the second half of the 17th century.

Former Minorite Monastery of St. Ulrich and Monastery. Minoritenplatz No.4 to 5. Late-Romanesque/early-Gothic basilica with higher one-nave Gothic long choir and south tower. Restored 1950/51, since then used as an exhibition room. Wall and vault paintings (c. 1400, after the middle of the 14th century, late 16th century). Vestry chapel, early 14th century.

South of the Danube from the west to the east:

Melk

The “Medelike” featuring in the Nibelungenlied. Old settlement since Roman times on the rock south of the towering abbey complex with systematically laid out long streets and squares in good condition.

Parish church of the Assumption of the Virgin. Large late-Gothic church with raised nave, 1868 renewal of facades. Well-conserved interior from the 15th century.

Calvary. Late Gothic complex north of the church, one of the most beautiful in Lower Austria, after 1500.

Benedictine abbey (ills. 55, 56)

Under Leopold II., Benedictines were called in from Lambach in 1098. The abbey was enlarged to become a 14th century monastic fortress. (1418 Melk Reform). After 1400 construction of a large Gothic collegiate church. 1700–1736 rebuilding of the entire abbey complex by Jakob Prandtauer until his death in 1726, completion by Josef Munggenast.

From the east to the west, the castle-type homogeneous Baroque complex unfolds over a length of 320 m on a mountain headland, and it is just as splendid seen from the west, marvellously fitting into the riverscape.

Generously dimensioned *forecourt* with a breathtaking view of the main front of the abbey. To the left of the *prelate’s court* access to the *stair well*. On the upper floor *imperial rooms* (today partly museum) leading to the great *marble hall*. A large horseshoe-shaped *balcony* before the Koloman Court is situated in front of the church facade.

Magnificent *library*. Architectural counterpart of the marble hall, with a very precious collection, also of miniature manuscripts dating from the 12th century onwards. The *collegiate church*, harmoniously fitted into the monastic complex, is one of the finest buildings of the country. Spacious lofty hall with atmospheric colour effect. Important church treasury and splendid abbey collection (e.g., the Melk Cross, a major work of medieval goldsmithery), attractive *garden pavilion* by Franz Munggenast, built 1747/48. The extensive *gardens* are currently being restored.

Schönbühel (ills. 57–62)

Imposing situation of castle and former monastery, each high up on a steep promontory jutting out above the Danube, separated by an inlet of the Danube; at the entrance to the Wachau, a highlight of the Danube landscape.

Former Servite Monastery. In 1674 construction of the early Baroque monastic complex with church, chapel of the Holy Sepulchre, Bethlehem grotto, Calvary and two monastic tracts. The parish (former monastic) church of St. Rosalia is a plain early Baroque structure with a narrow and very elongated main building. Sumptuous Baroque furnishings. In the lower church a notable example (the only one in Austria) of a replica of the Bethlehem Grotto of the Nativity, dated 1670. Behind the church choir above the rock a three-quarter-circular lookout terrace with access from the choir, affording a marvellous view of the Danube and Melk abbey.

Castle. On a level terrace above a steep granite rock, directly on the Danube north of the settlement below the castle; the dominating landmark of the

south entrance to the Wachau. Main building with ancillary tracts and fortifications, the core of the masonry dating back to the Middle Ages, major reconstruction works carried out 1819 – 21 and in the 20th century.

Aggsbach-Dorf

Long-stretched winding, slightly ascending graben village, reaching until the former charterhouse. On both sides of the brook open arrangement of buildings.

Former charterhouse. Complex surrounded by a fortified ring work c.1373/76, spacious long-stretched-out charterhouse (today's parish church of the Assumption of the Virgin), built c. 1380–1390. From a bridge leading to the church, there is a picturesque view of the abundantly stepped complex of the charterhouse, a group of buildings with a medieval core (former chapter tract, remains of the cloister, former monastic tracts; in the west Gothic archives tract, southern transverse tract of the prelaty, in the south-eastern tract the so-called "*Schloss*" (castle) from the 19th century). Southern gardens from the 18th century on three terraces.

Aggstein (ills. 63–65)

In a breathtaking position on a clifftop, towering at a height of 300 m high above the river, visible from afar, the Aggstein castle ruins are an impressive landmark. In past times splendidly fortified, still an imposing complex, the major part of the building stock dates back to 1429–1438, while only the southern additions in the courtyard (so-called Chancellery Tract) were erected in the 17th century. Beyond a moat, the compact forward gate tower with exceedingly thick walls. Also worthy of note are the dungeons, central courtyard, kitchen, cistern and keep. High castle, chapel and bowers can be reached only via a flight of stairs. Historically, this building is one of the most important castles in Austria.

Hofarnsdorf (ill. 66)

Hamlet with parish church and castle on the Danube opposite Spitz. Along a narrow doubly-bent street, open arrangement of buildings that appear stepped, with vintners' farmsteads (most gables facing the street) and irregular U-shaped farmsteads linked by gardens and gate walls.

St. Rupert's parish church. Surrounded by a medieval churchyard wall. Late Gothic pseudo-basilica church, middle/end of 15th century, Romanesque core of west tower.

Mitterarnsdorf

Village with small central triangular green and structures with a uniform and homogeneous character, mostly vintners' farmsteads with clay-tiled roofs and large entrance gates. They have a two-storeyed appearance because of the raised basements that are characteristic of the Wachau.

St. Catherine's filial church, situated on the northern fringe of the village, on the Danube. Small Gothic single-space type church, interior furnishings made Baroque, about middle of the 14th century.

Rossatz

Market town on an embankment terrace in a loop of the Danube, vis-à-vis and affording a wonderful vista of Dürnstein. Vine-growing town since the early middle ages.

This is a market town with two squares: Today's town centre is the triangular square, probably dating back to the 12th and 13th centuries, on ascending terrain with a dominating free-standing church in the centre and the former castle on the east side. To the north, a little lower down and linked to the *Kirchplatz* (church square) by a street, is the older part of the settlement called "In der Waid", dating back to the early Middle Ages. The farmsteads are arranged around a sort of square in a completely irregular fashion, projecting and receding. Some of them, situated at the back, can be approached only through short narrow blind alleys. Compact and uniform character of the settlement which can be described as a historic building complex owing to its homogeneous effect and building stock. From the foot of wooded hills, the town slopes down gently towards the river forest along the Danube.

Parish church of St. Jacob the Elder. Basilica in a dominant position, late Romanesque core, with rectangular choir and west tower.

Mautern

One of the oldest settlements in Lower Austria, it is an outstanding example of a direct and continuous local development of a settlement begun during the Roman period. A Roman castellum evolved into a fortified small town during the 4th and 5th centuries. In its core, the Roman castellum type has survived very well until our times as a 2:3 rectangle. Today's historic centre consists of two sectors, structurally very different, in the Middle Ages probably separated from each other by a wall: in the north, part of the terrain is built up loosely, while large sites have remained vacant; the monumental castle with its service buildings at the former northern boundary of the Roman castellum is the dominating landmark, followed by the adjacent parish church, surrounded by a wall, and the parsonage. On the other hand, the south part of the town has a compact and tightly packed character, the rectangular layout of the narrow streets follows the course of the Roman castellum walls. Since the rectangular square (1:2) between *Rathausplatz* and *Braunhofgasse*, originally created in the high Middle Ages, was built up from the 17th century onwards, there is no real centre. Numerous Roman and early Christian buildings, such as the foundations of the monastery established by St. Severinus.

The centre of the town features homestead buildings from the 16th/17th centuries, mostly with a late medieval nucleus, the main part of the facades altered during the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries. The rest are mainly vintners' farmsteads.

St. Stephen's parish church. Gothic pseudo-basilica, Baroque alterations of the interior, with rectangular choir and Baroque south tower.

Former chapel of St. Margaret. Romanesque core, before 1300, oldest parts from the 9th–10th centuries.

Castle. Four tracts from different periods. Masonry core 10th–11th–13th centuries. Attached to the town wall erected over the Roman castellum wall.

Nikolaihof. Complex with chapel constructed around spacious courtyard, built between 9th–17th century. Roman and high medieval masonry.

Benedictine abbey Göttweig (ills. 67–72)

With its dominating position (427 m above sea level) on a plateau south of Krems, where the Wachau passes into the *Kremser Becken* (Krems basin), it is a splendid fusion of architecture and landscape. Visible from afar, its commanding effect and presence are unique. The extensive complex, partly dating back to the Middle Ages, is characterised by the ambitious 18-th century expansion carried out only in part according to the ideal plans of Johann Lucas von Hildebrandt; beyond monastic purposes, it also served Baroque imperial pretensions. The wings with the three corner towers, conceived almost uniformly towards the east, north and south, create a monumental and compact effect, almost like a castellum. The collegiate and parish church of the Assumption of the Virgin is the centre of the complex, dominating the courtyard with its western twin-tower facade. The late Gothic choir above a ground level crypt is linked to an early-Baroque main building as well as the Baroque-classicist twin-tower facade.

The square in front of the collegiate church opens up the following vista :

Porter's lodge at the back to the left (former monastic castle also with inner circular tower, Gothic double windows and stone frames); on the left side: the former Sebastian's Chapel (the oldest surviving remains, late Romanesque, 12th/13th centuries); in front to the left, below: the lower semi-circular front section with west porch, dated 1725. Centre front: the imperial wing, before it on the square the Baroque fountain pyramid, 1742. Adjoining to the right, an exceedingly attractive unit that serves as a link with the church.

Inside the abbey, the imperial staircase, completed in 1738, is one of the most beautiful Baroque staircases in Austria. It also leads to the left, to the great *Altmann hall*, then to the four *imperial rooms*. The *library* with its sumptuous ceiling stuccowork was built in 1728 and features very precious manuscripts, incunables etc.

b) History and development

Forests constituted the original vegetation of the Wachau, differentiated with regard to sites. Only small areas, like rock heads, rock faces, and domes had no vegetation or were covered by mosaics of dry grass. Since some parts of today's Wachau were settled at a very early time, the forest began to be pushed back to some extent already in the Neolithic period, due to anthropogenic activities. However, far-reaching changes of the landscape did not take place until about 800 AD

Bavarian and Salzburg monasteries began to cultivate the inclines of the Wachau, creating today's basic landscape patterns, with vine terraces, new "statics" of the inclines caused by a sophisticated stone wall and development system and maximised land use, measures that went far beyond the limits of ecologically optimal vine growing. In the following centuries, the acreages under cultivation were adjusted a number of times.

This was also necessitated by changes of climate and of the marketing conditions for wine, the acute shortage of labour, and the ensuing wage increases in the 17th century.

As a result of the reduction of the acreage under cultivation, the fallow areas increased and the forest began to grow back at the upper boundaries of the vine-growing terrain; besides, vine-growing in the valleys was abandoned, to be replaced by other agricultural activities. The soils of the fallow areas, degraded by the failed attempts at cultivation, have not recovered to this day, which explains the distinctive types of special vegetation found in these habitats (dry grass, dry meadows, dry rock grass and heat-tinged shrubbery, dry woodland).

In the 18th century, hillside viticulture was actively promoted and restricted to ecologically optimal regions. Vacated areas were given over to grassland and pastures, with the ensuing economic consequences: some enterprises had to close down while others were being enlarged. At that time vine-growing was at last completely abandoned in the upper stretches of the Wachau.

19th century developments of the countryside had particularly far-reaching consequences for the Wachau. The appearance of the vine louse (phylloxera), the ravages of war and the increasing inner-Austrian (Burgenland) and international (Italian) competition necessitated adaptations both with regard to business structures and the development of areas, types of cultures, and acreages. At that time, apricot cultures, typical of the Wachau ever since, began to take over the valleys and lower inclines. To this day, the ratio of fruit-growing acreage and vine-growing acreage is closely linked to the perpetual fluctuations of sales prospects for fruit and wine. These recurring changes of land use give the Wachau its characteristic appearance. Unlike other "old" cultural landscapes, several historical levels of use intertwine and overlap. In hillside viticulture, the terrain reveals former uses even after centuries. Excessive use with soil degradation are still discernible in the gaps of forest growth, and the farmland distribution is determined by the relief, largely independent of the current type of use.

The development of the Wachau landscape has not yet come to a standstill. Although changes of soil use now express themselves increasingly in larger acreage units and are more generalised than in the past, the site differences with regard to exposure to the sun, the differing altitudes and edaphic conditions still cause highly differentiated landscapes despite equalised use.

The Wachau is a very ancient settlement region, proved most impressively by the finds of the so-called Fanny from Galgenberg (approx. 32,000 years old) and the Venus of Willendorf (approx. 26,000 years old). Many pottery finds, especially in the region of Krems and Melk, indicate that this area was densely populated as early as the Neolithic period (4500–1800 BC). The Bronze Age (1800–800 BC) has also yielded numerous finds. The Illyrian Hallstatt culture (800–400 BC) was gradually superseded by the influx of the la Tène culture from the west. To the south of the Danube, the Celtic kingdom of Noricum evolved as a larger political association. When the

Romans occupied Noricum in the year 15 BC, the Danube became for a long time a frontier against the Germanic peoples pressing down from the north. This is corroborated by remains of watchtowers ("burgus") in St. Lorenzen, Bacharnsdorf, Rossatz/Windstallgraben and Mautern. Mautern, the Roman Favianis, turned into an important garrison town on the Danubian border, where a Danubian fleet was stationed. Under Emperor Diocletian, the Wachau was allocated to the province of Noricum (until 488). The Limes organisation collapsed at the end of the 4th century, leaving Noricum to become a region of passage for the European migration of peoples.

This period comes to life above all in the biography of St. Severinus, the so-called "apostle of Noricum". In the "Vita Severini", one of the most important historic manuscripts from the migration period, Eugippius describes how Severinus met the Germanic leader of the Heruli, Odoacer, in Mautern, and already refers to a place in the Wachau "ad vineas" (at the vineyards). Having arrived at the Danube from the east in 453, Severinus founded the first monastic institution in the province outside the gates of Mautern, i.e. a monastery that belongs to the oldest known early Christian buildings in Austria (its foundations were excavated in 1958, then the site was filled up again). Owing to Severinus' activities, Mautern developed into an important spiritual and religious centre, moving into the focus of political events by providing the Romance population with a place where they assembled and departed for Italy.

In the year 830, the name "Wachau" is first mentioned in a deed of Louis the German, being referred to as "locus Wahowa". In 995, Krems appears as "Urbs Chremisa" in a deed of exchange issued in Magdeburg, thus becoming the oldest Austrian town to be mentioned in a deed.

As from December 1192, the English king Richard the Lion-Heart is imprisoned at Dürnstein castle, to be released only in March of the following year for an enormous ransom. The Wachau is also the scene of the Nibelungenlied, the greatest German heroic epic, which was written after the year 1200 and depicts the political circumstances of that period. The Wachau towns of Pöchlarn (Bechelaren), Melk (Medelike) and Mautern (Mutoren) are mentioned in this highly poetical rhymed chronicle.

In 976, the Wachau came under the rule of the Babenberg margraves beginning with Leopold I. In 1156, the Austrian march was erected into a dukedom and bestowed upon the Babenberg Henry II. Jasomirgott, who renounced Bavaria at the same time.

The great knights' dynasty of the Wachau, the Kuenrings, came to the Babenberg march in the 11th century and gained great power. When they became extinct, the major part of their possessions passed into the hands of Duke Albrecht V (King Albrecht II) in 1430.

Due to the splintering of possessions and the absence of large unified ruling structures, the burghers of the Wachau enjoyed more liberties already in the Middle Ages, also in connection with the "ius montanum de vinea". The four towns of St. Michael, Wösendorf, Joching and Weissenkirchen formed an independent community from about 1150 to 1839, and were reunited in 1972 as "Wachau" or "Tal Wachau".

Even after the power of the Habsburgs had been strengthened, the Wachau was repeatedly the arena of armed conflicts. In the course of the Hungarian expeditions at the end of the 15th century, Krems and Stein were besieged in 1477 in the fight against Matthias Corvinus, who surrounded Krems with 14,000 men.

The epoch of the counter-reformation between 1530 and 1620 made itself felt in the Wachau, too, until Protestantism was finally repressed under the Göttweig abbot Georg II Falb (1612–31). He supported the congregation from eleven Austrian Benedictine abbeys, thus helping to lay an important foundation for the importance of the Austrian abbeys in the Baroque period, in particular of Göttweig. The victory over the Protestants also found its expression in the construction of churches, chapels and small monuments.

From 1700 onwards, Catholicism unfolded its regained power in the Wachau in the creation of artistic and architectural monuments of the highest order that number amongst the most important examples of Austrian Baroque: the rebuilding of Melk abbey (begun in 1702), structural conversion of the Canons' abbey in Dürnstein from 1715–33, large-scale rebuilding of Göttweig abbey from 1719 onwards. During the War of Austro-Bavarian Succession in 1741, Dürnstein had to be defended against the Franco-Bavarian army. The largest direct action was the battle of Loiben on November 11, 1805, when the united Austrian and Russian troops gained the victory over the Napoleonic army.

By the end of the 18th/beginning of the 19th century the Wachau began to lose its historic importance. The closures of monasteries in Austria and the secularisation of Bavaria destroyed age-old ties. Transit on the waterways was increasingly superseded by the competition of road transport, from 1909 onwards also by the railway. The late 19th century gave rise to a new concept of Wachau, in order to compensate for the failure to make the economic connection to modern times. This new image is the "Golden Wachau", a blend of history and legend, art and folklore, wine and hospitality.

In this connection, an action committee was founded in 1904 for economic promotion of the Wachau, with the participation of all local communities between Krems and Melk.

In recent times, a return to the historical roots can be observed, the result being an intensive promotion of "sustainable" tourism, with the vine-growing surfaces protected by law.

The borders of past sovereignty areas and possessions go back far, sometimes even to Carolingian times, yet they are often discernible to this day and sometimes even coincide with current borders of communities or cadastral communities. These border lines, dating back more than a thousand years but still reflected in the administrative structures of the region, are a unique and rare feature of the Wachau.

c) Form and date of most recent records of natural/cultural property

Ohnmacht, Schramayr, Zwicker, *Landschaftsentwicklungsmodell Wachau*. Study commissioned by the Amt der NÖ Landesregierung, Abteilung Naturschutz, St. Pölten 1999.

Stadler Ch., *Die Landschaftsveränderungen der Wachau im Spiegel der Vegetation – Ein Beitrag zur Landschaftscharakteristik*, diploma thesis of the University of Agricultural Sciences, Vienna 1997.

Annual Reports 1995–1998, European Diploma Area Wachau.

Niederösterreich nördlich der Donau, Dehio-Handbuch, Die Kunstdenkmäler Österreichs, topographic monument inventory, edited by the Bundesdenkmalamt, Vienna 1990.

Niederösterreich südlich der Donau, in the press.

Before going to press:

Studie zur Kulturlandschaft Wachau aus der Sicht der Denkmalpflege, commissioned by the Bundesdenkmalamt, by S. Grün and A. Zbiral, Vienna 1998.

In preparation:

Congress report on the EU Presidency Symposium "Monument–Ensemble–Cultural Landscape Exemplified by the Wachau", Dürnstein Abbey, Wachau, October 12 –15, 1998.

d) Present state of conservation

The Wachau presents itself as an intact cultural landscape whose essential determining factors are stable to a large extent.

Apart from the state of conservation, which ranges from structurally good (valley floors) to excellent (hillside vineyards) status, it can also boast a very high degree of ecological functionality as a heat-tinged, small-structured open countryside.

Irreversible, visually very aggressive uses, such as quarries, have been abandoned; their sites are being reintegrated into the texture of the cultural landscape in the course of recultivation.

In the last years, conservation and restoration works were carried out on 45 % of architectural monuments and 55 % of the objects listed for preservation in order to preserve the fabric, the traditional appearance and the artistic effect. Rehabilitation measures were initiated or are being prepared on more than 50 further buildings.

These measures ensure continuous care of the monuments.

Each year, federal and *laender* authorities co-operate in about a dozen large-scale projects for the rehabilitation and restoration of historic monuments.

e) Policies and programmes related to the presentation and promotion of the property

The province of Lower Austria has already taken large-scale measures to create proper political framework that does justice to the unique position of the Wachau: tourist measures, programme for the promotion of viticulture, recognition of nature conservation status, Landscape Fund of Lower Austria, EU funding (under objective 5B: promotion and conservation of stone terraces), regional planning programme, "Lower Austrian Central Area" (*NÖ Zentralraum*), foundation of the Danube University Krems, European Diploma, increased financial support for the conservation of objects listed as historic monuments.

IV. Management of the cultural/natural property

a) Ownership

The open countryside of the Wachau is largely privately owned and consists of small lots.

Much of the forest is owned by farmers, the rest is held by farmers' associations, the Austrian Federal Forests, or is owned by the church or local communities.

The historic cultural landscape of the Wachau in the proposed zone comprises some 5000 monuments.

The major part of these monuments is privately owned, mostly by families who have been residents of this region for many generations. Their awareness of traditional values ensures the perfect preservation of these buildings. This is also true of numerous buildings owned by the Republic of Austria, the province of Lower Austria, as well as by other corporations under public law and the recognised churches.

b) Legal status

The scheme for the preservation of the historic cultural landscape of the Wachau encompasses a number of overlapping levels of protection:

1. Federal laws:

The first level of protection is afforded by the Monument Protection Act (DMSG) of 1923 (text enclosed). It focuses on outstanding historic monuments (currently some 1000 monuments in the zone). Protection encompasses the full dimension of the building material and the traditional appearance, i.e., this federal law (Federal Law Gazette No. 533/1923) as amended in 1978 (Federal Law Gazette No.167/1978) and 1990 (Federal Law Gazette No.473/1990) regulates the protection of monuments as an all-government (federal) affair. The historic, artistic or other cultural significance of an object, as well as the public interest in its conservation, is determined in the first instance by the Bundesdenkmalamt as the authority responsible for the protection of monuments. Under this law, movable and immovable man-made objects

(including remains and traces of human creation and artistically erected or man-made ground formations) are protected if their historic, artistic or other cultural significance justify their preservation in the public interest. This significance can be inherent in the objects, or it can stem from their relation or position with regard to other objects. The provisions for individual monuments are also valid for groups of immovable objects (complexes) and collections of movable objects, provided that these groups and collections form an integrated whole owing to their historic, artistic or other cultural context, including their position, and that their conservation is in the public interest because of this context. The Bundesdenkmalamt must decide, taking into account the results of scientific research, if there is a public interest in the conservation of an individual monument, group of buildings, or collection.

For monuments owned by the federal or a provincial government or some other corporations under public law, institutions, funds or legally recognised churches or religious communities, public interest in their conservation is taken for granted (i.e., they are listed for preservation) for so long as the Bundesdenkmalamt does not find otherwise, either at the owner's request, or ex officio. This means that in the Wachau cultural landscape, all important monumental buildings and other monuments are in public ownership, and all ecclesiastical monuments (churches, monasteries etc.) are listed for preservation, i.e., currently 180 monuments, 41 of them owned by the church, 86 in public ownership, and 53 owned by others (bodies corporate, funds, institutions etc.).

Monuments in private ownership, however, are not listed for preservation by virtue of legal presumption. A public interest in their conservation is not assumed as a fact unless it is declared as such by notice of the Bundesdenkmalamt.

Other federal laws for the protection of the Wachau are listed below:

Act on Water Law 1959, Federal Law Gazette No.215/1959, as amended in the promulgation of the Federal Law Gazette I No. 85/1997
Shipping Act, Federal Law Gazette I No. 62/1997

Privatisation of the waterways board and establishment of a public limited company called "Österreichische.Donau-Betriebs-Aktiengesellschaft", Federal Law Gazette No.11/1992

Hydraulic Construction Promotion Act 1985, Federal Law Gazette No. 148/1985

Hydrography Act, Federal Law Gazette No. 58/1979

Forestry Act 1975, Federal Law Gazette No. 440/1975 as amended in the promulgation of the Federal Law Gazette No. 532/1995

Environmental Impact Assessment Act, Federal Law Gazette No. 697/1993, as amended in the promulgation of the Federal Law Gazette No. 773/1996.

2. Federal regulations

Waterways Regulation, Federal Law Gazette No. 274/85

Regulation of the Federal Minister of Public Economics and Transport concerning traffic regulations for waterways, Federal Law Gazette No. 265/1993

3. International agreements

Convention on the Regulation of Navigation on the Danube, Federal Law Gazette No. 40/1960

Inland Navigation Memorandum of the Federal Government 1992 (on occasion of Eastern opening and the completion of the Main-Danube-Canal)

4. Provincial laws

Lower Austrian Nature Conservation Act, Provincial Law Gazette 5500-5
Lower Austrian Environmental Planning Law 1976, Provincial Law Gazette 8000-11

Lower Austrian Building Code 1996, Provincial Law Gazette 8200-0

Lower Austrian Provincial Roads Act, Provincial Law Gazette 8500-3

Act on Affairs of Power Supply in Lower Austria, Provincial Law Gazette 7800-1

Lower Austrian Hunting Law 1974, Provincial Law Gazette 6500-14

Lower Austrian Fishing Law 1988, Provincial Law Gazette 6550-1

Lower Austrian Camping and Youth Camps Act, Provincial Law Gazette 5750-0

5. Regulations of the Lower Austrian Provincial Government

Regulation on Natural Preserves, Provincial Law Gazette 5500/35-8

Regulation on a regional environmental planning programme Lower Austrian

Central Area, Provincial Law Gazette 8000/76-0

6. Local regulations

Land use and subdivision plans

c) Protective measures and means of implementing them

The following additional protective measures currently apply to the Wachau:

Conservation areas:

Nature conservation area Wachau and surroundings (approx. 46,300 ha)

(para.17 of section 2 of the Regulation of the Lower Austrian Provincial Government on Natural Preserves, Provincial Law Gazette 5500/35-8)

Nature conservation area Göttweig hill and surroundings (approx. 225 ha)

(para. 5 of section 2 of the Regulation of the Lower Austrian Provincial Government on Natural Preserves, Provincial Law Gazette 5500/35-8)

Nature Reserve Jauerling-Wachau (approx. 3600 ha)

(para. 13 of section 2 of the Regulation of the Lower Austrian Provincial Government on Nature Reserves, Provincial Law Gazette 5500/50-7)

Apart from nature conservation areas, a large number of natural monuments is specifically protected by notice of the regional administrative authority.

European Diploma Wachau (see enclosed maps)

Awarded on 5-9-1994

Nomination of the Wachau within the scope of the "Natura 2000" network of European sites initiated by the European Union.

According to the provisions of the Austrian Monument Protection Act, protected monuments are subject to various restrictions, and thus to the monitoring of the Bundesdenkmalamt (Federal Office of Historic Monuments): Their destruction and any alteration that might impair the building stock (fabric), the traditional appearance or artistic effect, are subject to the written authorisation, or – in the case of private ownership – the notification of the Bundesdenkmalamt. In case of danger that a monument might be destroyed or impaired in its fabric or appearance through alterations of its environment, the Bundesdenkmalamt is entitled to request protective measures. Violations of the Monument Protection Act are subject to penalties or administrative fines.

Within the limits of financial legislation, the Bundesdenkmalamt can grant subsidies towards the costs resulting from the conservation, protection or examination of the monuments.

d) Agency/agencies with management authority

Competence for protected areas (nature conservation areas, nature reserves, natural monuments): Amt der NÖ Landesregierung (Office of the Lower Austrian Provincial Government), Abteilung Naturschutz, St. Pölten

Competence for European Diploma Area:

Authority at a higher level:

Amt der NÖ Landesregierung, Abteilung Naturschutz, St. Pölten

local authority:

Chairman of the *Arbeitskreis zum Schutz der Wachau* (working party for the protection of the Wachau), 3601 Dürnstein

Competence for the conservation of the historic cultural landscape of the Wachau (with experts like architects, art historians, town planners, archaeologists):

Bundesdenkmalamt (Federal Office of Historic Monuments)

Hofburg, Säulenstiege, A-1010 Vienna

Landeskonservatorat für Niederösterreich, Bundesdenkmalamt

Hofburg, Säulenstiege, A-1010 Vienna

A complete inventory of historic monuments, compiled by the Bundesdenkmalamt, is available.

e) Level at which management is exercised

Individual management measures based on regular care of nature conservation areas (responsible authority: *Amt der NÖ Landesregierung, Abteilung Naturschutz*, St. Pölten).

There is co-ordination between the *land* of Lower Austria and the local authorities in matters of regional planning, whereby the *land* (province) is responsible for development programmes and the local authorities for local planning programmes and zoning plans.

Proper communication is ensured by the constant dialogue between local representatives and by co-ordination meetings between federal, provincial and local authorities. This is how the changes of the cultural landscape are kept within a compatible limit despite the exploitation of many resources.

A well-functioning platform for management purposes also is the *Arbeitskreis zum Schutz der Wachau* (working party for the protection of the Wachau) of which all the communities/municipalities have become members following the award of the European Diploma to the Wachau.

Within this framework, experts of various disciplines pinpoint any changes occurring in the cultural landscape and draft regular reports.

f) Agreed plans related to the cultural/natural property

Currently, there are no management plans regarding the natural property (although some are being prepared in conjunction with the LIFE nature project on “Lower Austrian dry landscapes” submitted in 1999).

By dovetailing already existing plans, we have initiated measures:

1. To co-ordinate settlement development in communities and municipalities by harmonising policies and placing special emphasis on restricted access to secondary residences.
2. To maintain the traditional building structure (close and homogeneous).
3. To permit infrastructure facilities only when they do not occupy much space and do not require any rededication of land.
4. In case of absolutely necessary rededication of land, to accord utilisation contracts only to inhabitants having their principal residence in the area.
5. To ensure compliance with settlement borders.
6. To continue the village renewal project in existence since 1984 (pilot project: St. Michael).

Conservation of the characteristic landscape is also ensured by the Wachau’s nomination for “Natura 2000”, the European network of natural sites.

g) Sources and levels of finance

There are the subsidies provided by the Bundesdenkmalamt (Federal Office of Historic Monuments) and the Federal Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs under the Monument Protection Act, and those of the Cultural Department of Lower Austria and the Lower Austrian Landscape Fund (*NÖ Landschaftsfond*) for the management of individual surfaces; cofinancing by Lower Austria and EU funds (LIFE nature project).

h) Sources of expertise and training in conservation and management techniques

Experts of such disciplines as art history, architecture, archaeology, restoration, urban planning and industry are available for conserving and managing the property. For special training in conservation and restoration the Bundesdenkmalamt has established two central restoration workshops (for monument and art conservation) which offer, *inter alia*, also ICCROM training courses.

This policy is in line with the tasks conferred upon the Bundesdenkmalamt by legislation: aside from protecting, preserving and conserving the cultural heritage and organising special training courses in building conservation, legislators talk of the “public interest” under which the Bundesdenkmalamt is also responsible for practical tasks of conservation and restoration. Moreover, it is a scientific institution as its work is based on documentation, inventarisation and research regarding existing monuments.

On the part of Lower Austria, expertise and training is provided by the Danube University of Krems, the International Center Krems Ges.m.b.H. (polytechnic college for tourism management and leisure business) and the *Wein- und Obstbauschule Krems* (vine and fruit tree school).

i) Visitor facilities and statistics

Visitor facilities

The abbeys of Melk, Dürnstein and Göttweig

In Krems: *Kunsthalle*

Dominican Church/Town Museum of Viticulture

In Mautern: Roman museum in the *Schüttkasten* (granary)

In Weissenkirchen: *Teisenhoferhof*/Vintner and Wachau Museum

and the *NÖ Weinakademie*

fortified church of St. Michael

In Spitz: *Erlahof*/Shipping Museum

In Melk: Town Museum

Along the left side of the Danube, there is a well-kept cycling path away from the Wachau main road.

On the Danube segment between Melk and Krems, there is scheduled operation of sightseeing boats during the summer months (*DDSG-Blue Danube Schiffahrt GmbH* and *Brandner Schiffahrt GmbH*). The main

villages and towns of the Wachau have landing stages, e.g. Dürnstein, Weissenkirchen, Spitz, Aggsbach.
Tourism has focused on measures of quality improvement for many years.

j) Cultural/natural property management plan and statement of objectives

Report on management approaches on the occasion of the Natura 2000 nomination and the European Diploma award.

A natural space management plan is currently being devised within the LIFE nature project “Lower Austrian dry landscapes”.

(See also chapters III d, e and IV c).

k) Staffing levels

Lower Austrian provincial government, St. Pölten, *Abteilung Naturschutz* (nature conservation department) in co-operation with experts of natural science

Tourismusregion Wachau-Nibelungengau headquartered in Krems

The abbeys of Melk and Göttweig have owned tourism officers (see also chapter IVe)

V. Factors affecting the cultural/natural property

a) Development pressures

Wachau is a cultural landscape that has been subject to constant changes in shape, degree of utilisation and mix of cultures. These changes contributed to a consistent updating of biodiversity and structural variety until the turn of the century.

Their intensity and spatial differentiation thus determine whether the landscape changes are of a characteristic or harmful nature for the Wachau. The mechanisms that have a major landscape changing effect and may thus be of risk for the continuation of the cultural landscape are:

Intensifying of viticulture

(improving access,
reorganising vine terraces,
enlarging viticulture surfaces,
intensifying existing vine cultures)

Fallowing of land

(limited periods of fallowing,
fallowing of residual surfaces,
fallowing of farmland
fallowing of collective surfaces,
fallowing of pastures)

Forests invading formerly open landscape segments

(forests growing into the sunny and shady sides of valley rifts,
forests invading runnels,
forestry use of surfaces as a means of last resort)

Walls and footpaths falling into decay

Within settlement and fringe areas, additional changes would be
Urbanisation of the farm-type fringes of settlements and
enlargement of settlements.

b) Environmental pressures

Aside from vine terraces and rock passages, the largest portion of the Wachau is covered in forest. This is particularly true of the valley slopes. According to the various levels of vegetation, we find different forest communities, such as: downy oak forests, oak and hornbeam forests, wild pine forests, European beech forests and small areas of riparian forests along the valley bottoms. In higher altitudes there are spruce/fir/beech forests.

For forestry management, the ageing protective forests on the steep declivities along the Danube pose major problems. For instance, in the area of the *Gerichtsgaben* there have been recurrent landslides following torrential rains. A protective forest rehabilitation project is now being planned, which will combat top soil (a-horizon) erosion in these areas by reforestation and rejuvenation measures. In addition, there have been attempts in recent years to reduce hoofed game to secure forest rejuvenation.

c) Natural disasters and preparedness

Millennia of erosions of the Danube and geological conditions have generated the Wachau landscape. The Danube determines this river landscape and its variety in vegetation, wildlife and land use.

Efforts to make flood drainage safe, live up to the high standards of this waterway, preserve the landscape as a cultural landscape and maintain the ecological functioning of the waters will almost invariably lead to a collision of interests. However, the Lower Austrian provincial government regards landscape conservation as a means of safeguarding the population's basis of existence, i.e. as a wider cultural issue that requires a holistic approach under which the entrusted landscape is handled with care and sensitivity and a balance is struck between conflicting interests.

Management of water resources under conservation and its problems:

Suitable hydraulic engineering measures of surface drainage regulation and design to protect people's living, settlement, cultural and economic space and conserve and protect the waters including those of the flood drainage areas are necessary to minimise the damage caused by numerous "floods of the century". Floods are not only due to heavy rainfall (summer and

autumn) but also to thaw in winter and spring (also in combination with rain-induced inundation) or to shifting ice layers. This requires constant adjustment, maintenance and/or renewal of regulation structures. As far as possible, every effort is made to ensure compatibility of such operations with nature and ecological framework conditions by introducing ballast structures in closely built-up river bank areas, linking old river arms with the main river, etc.

Management of waterway and its problems:

To guarantee free shipping and implement the objectives of the Convention on Regulating Navigation on the Danube, the Danube Commission has devised guidelines to serve as “recommendations” for waterway conditions and hydraulic or other structures on the Danube. These recommendations concern the depth, width and curve radii of the navigable channel for ships and define standards for low-water training. Another recommendation for the Austrian part of the Danube waterway is the 1992 shipping memorandum of the federal government. First, various river construction measures such as low-water and mean-water training works, dredging, etc., and later a number of upgrading measures are to be taken for enabling large ships to navigate the Danube at deeper shipping channels. For the general project of Wachau 2000, the Danube waterway at low water is to be made ready for boats having an immersion depth of 2.7 m. This is to be achieved by the following measures: enhanced low-water training, river bottom stabilisation, structuring of river banks, linkage to old river arms.

d) Visitor/tourism pressures

Since the beginning of the 19th century, there has been tourism in the Wachau, and to this very day the focus has been on marketing tourism on a very moderate level in terms of "soft" or sustainable tourism.

e) Number of inhabitants within cultural/natural property, buffer zone

Property (core zone)	18,514 inhabitants
Buffer zone	8,479 inhabitants
Total:	26,993 inhabitants

VI. Monitoring

a) Key indicators for measuring state of conservation

The following indicators are suited (from a nature conservation viewpoint) to illustrate the functional aspects of the Wachau cultural landscape:

Areas of woodland (reforestation, advanced successions of woody plants)

Areas of dry biotopes (dry grass, dry rock grass, dry fallow land with few or no woody plants)

State of stone walls (drystone walls)

Patterns of land use (mix of cultures, intermediate structures in viticulture, distribution of fruit/vine growing)

Mix of tree varieties (slope forests, segments of riparian forests)

b) Administrative arrangements for monitoring the cultural/natural property

The *Arbeitskreis zum Schutz der Wachau* (working party for the protection of the Wachau), which has been set up by the Lower Austrian provincial government, conducts periodic inspections of the European Diploma area. The results of these inspections are published in the annual reports to the Council of Europe.

VII. Documentation

a-b) Plans and illustrations in the annex

c) Bibliography

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d) Addresses where inventory, records and archives are held

Amt der NÖ Landesregierung: Abteilung Naturschutz
Abteilung Kultur- und Wissenschaft
(Naturwissenschaftliche Sammlungen)
Abteilung NÖ Landesarchiv
Abteilung NÖ Landesbibliothek
Alle: A-3100 St. Pölten, Landhaus

Bundesdenkmalamt
Hofburg, Säulenstiege, A-1010 Wien

Bundesdenkmalamt, Landeskonservatorat für Niederösterreich
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Acknowledgement for photographs, maps, etc. is made to:

Folding maps:

Dipl.Ing. A.Zbiral, Klosterneuburg: I, II

Amt der niederösterreichischen Landesregierung, Abteilung Naturschutz:
II-IV, VI, VII

Photographs:

Austrian Federal Army, Bundesamt für Zivilluftfahrt (Federal Office for Civil Aviation), Aerial Reconnaissance Command, Langenlebarn (released under GZ 13.086/4-1.4/99)

J. Kitlitschka, Klosterneuburg:

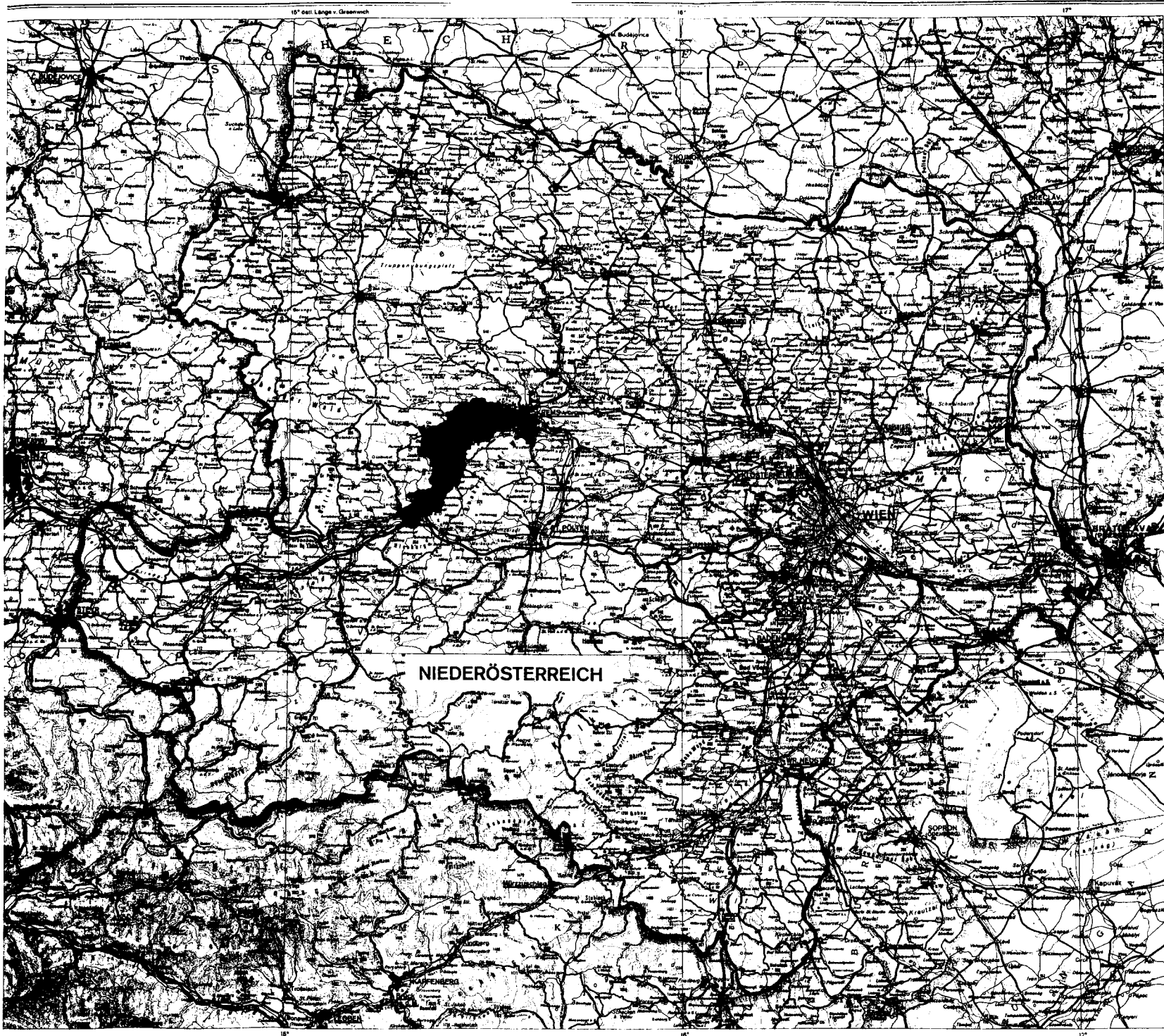
Abb. 4, 6, 8–10, 14, 20, 23, 25–27, 31, 43, 46, 49, 66

Bundesdenkmalamt, Wien:

Abb. 11, 12, 15, 16, 19, 21, 22, 24, 28–30, 36–42, 44, 45, 47, 48, 50–52, 54,
56, 58–63, 65, 67, 68

Naturhistorisches Museum, Wien, A. Schumacher:

Abb. 13



CULTURAL LANDSCAPE WACHAU

Contents
General map

Scale 	Date April 1999
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Made at Bundesdenkmalamt Wien	Drawn by Andreas Zbiraj
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Legend	North
Provincial border 	
Core zone 	
Buffer zone 	



NIEDERÖSTERREICH


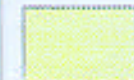
CULTURAL LANDSCAPE WACHAU

Date: 99-05-05
 Coordinated by: D.I. Wurzian
 Department: RU5, BD5/NÖGIS
 Computer editing: D.I. Bodl

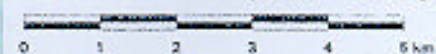
Amt der NÖ Landesregierung

Legend:

Area of property proposed for inscription

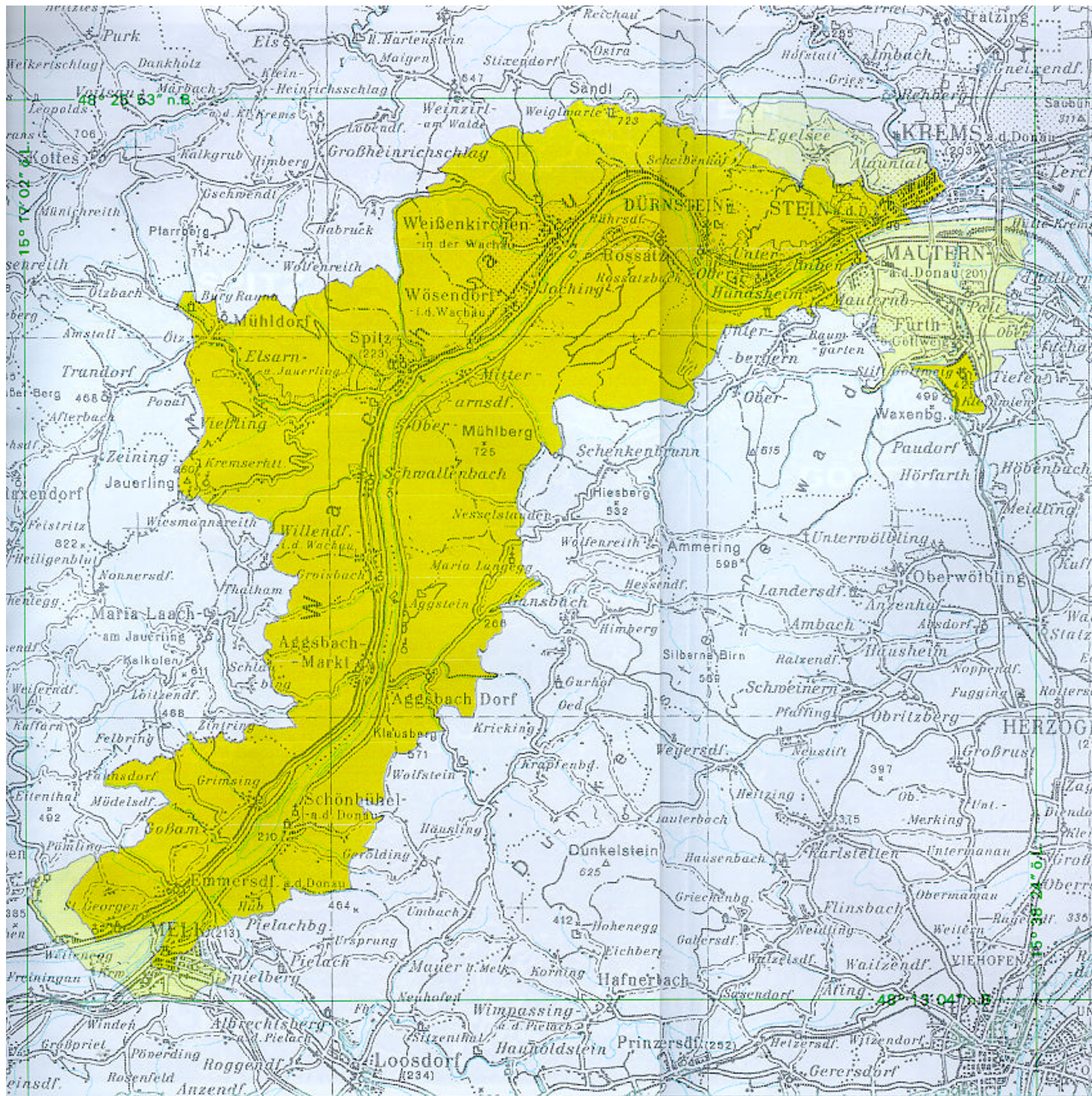
-  Core zone (area = 18.387 ha)
-  Buffer zone (area = 2.942 ha)

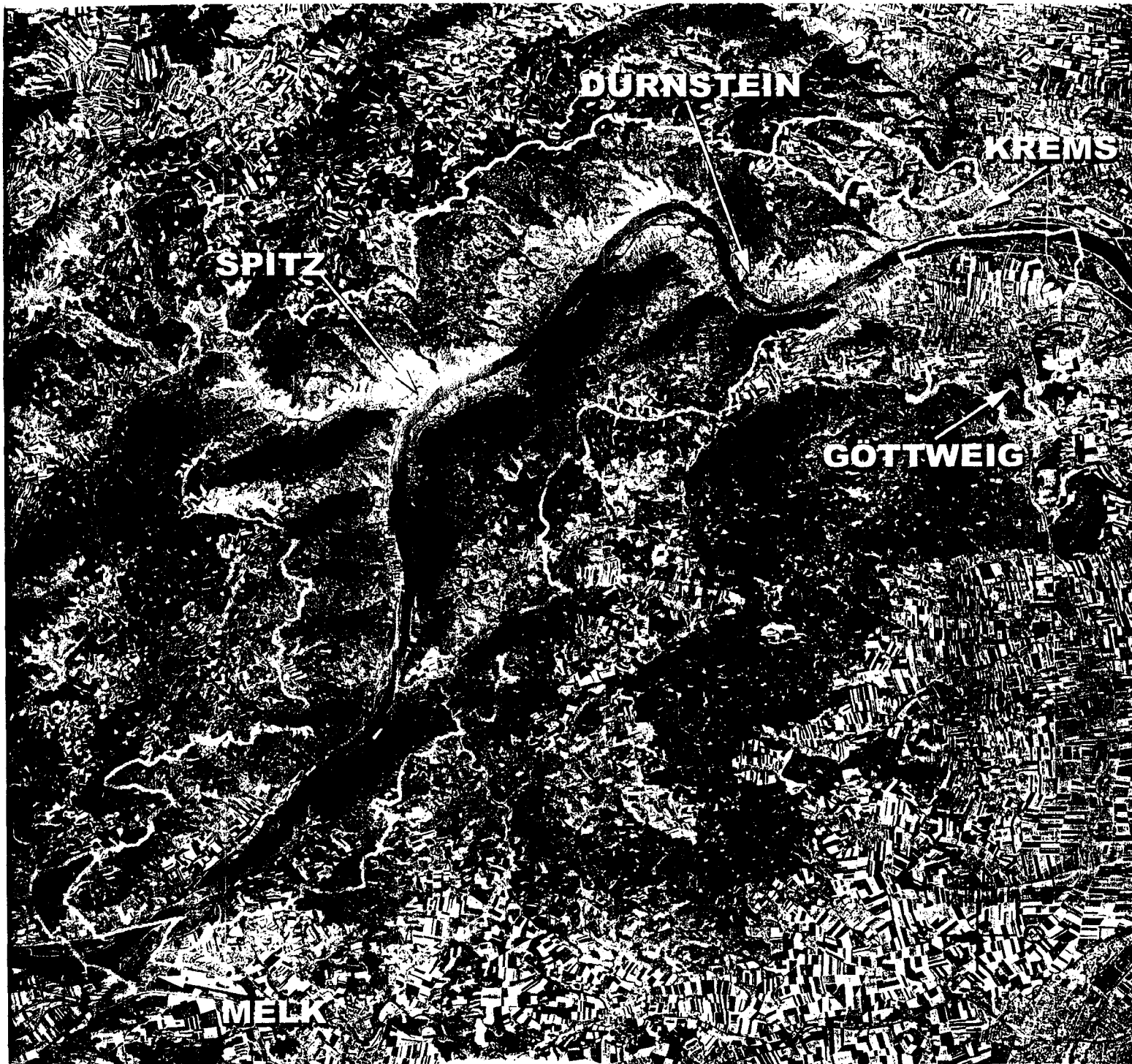
Scale = 1 : 100.000 (1 cm = 1000 m)



Sources:

Boundary definition: Amt der NÖ LRReg, Abt. Naturschutz, 3109 St. Pölten
 ÖK200: BEV, Gr. I, 1080 Wien





CULTURAL LANDSCAPE WACHAU

Contents

General view of world cultural heritage

Scale

1 : 100.000

Date

April 1999

Made at

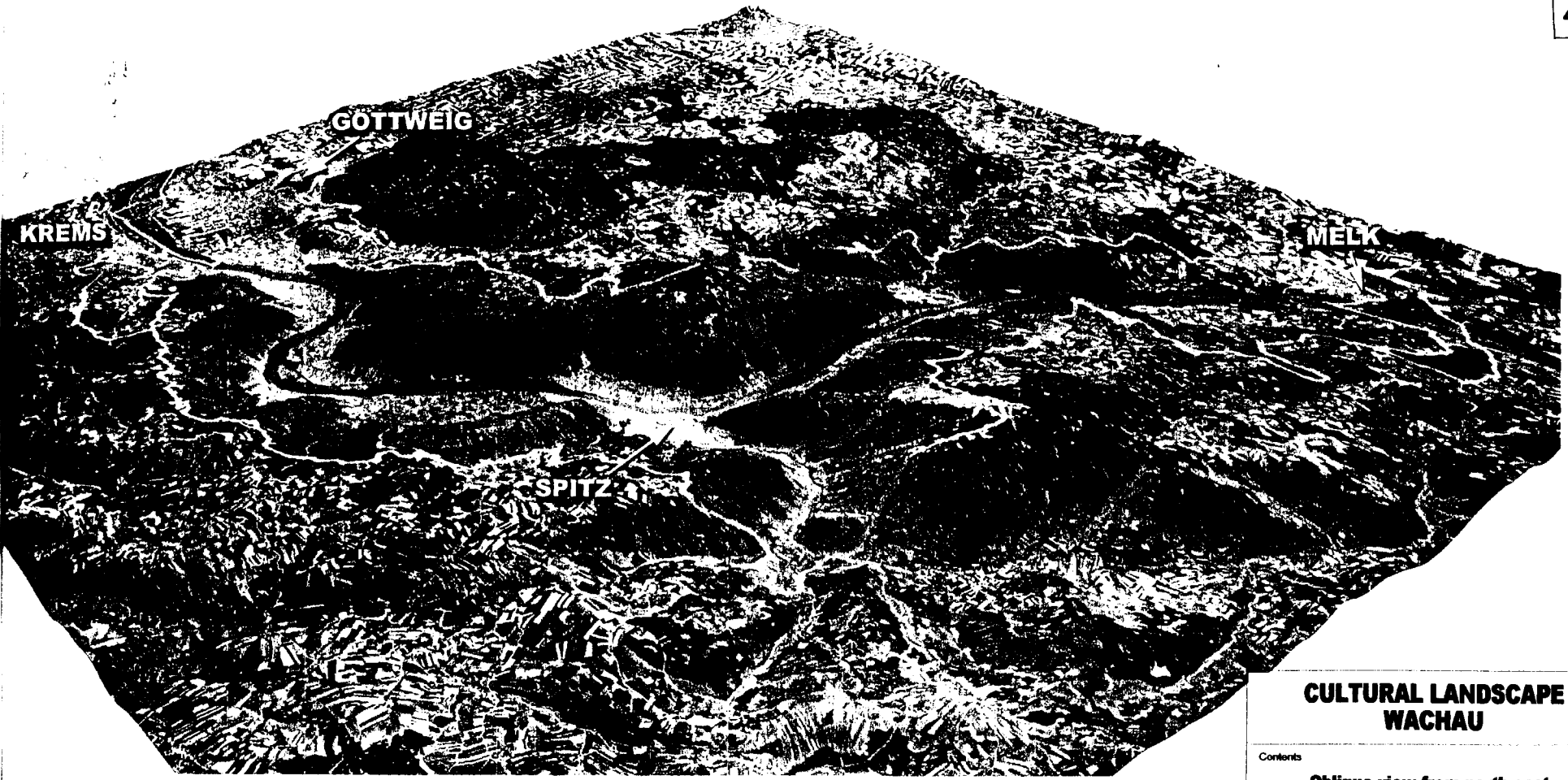
Abteilung Naturschutz
Amt der N.Ö. Landesregierung

Drawn by

F. Vondruska
Büro LACON

Based on material from

Bundesamt für Eich und Vermessungswesen, Vienna
Amt der N.Ö. Landesregierung, NÖGIS



**CULTURAL LANDSCAPE
WACHAU**

Contents
Oblique view from north-east

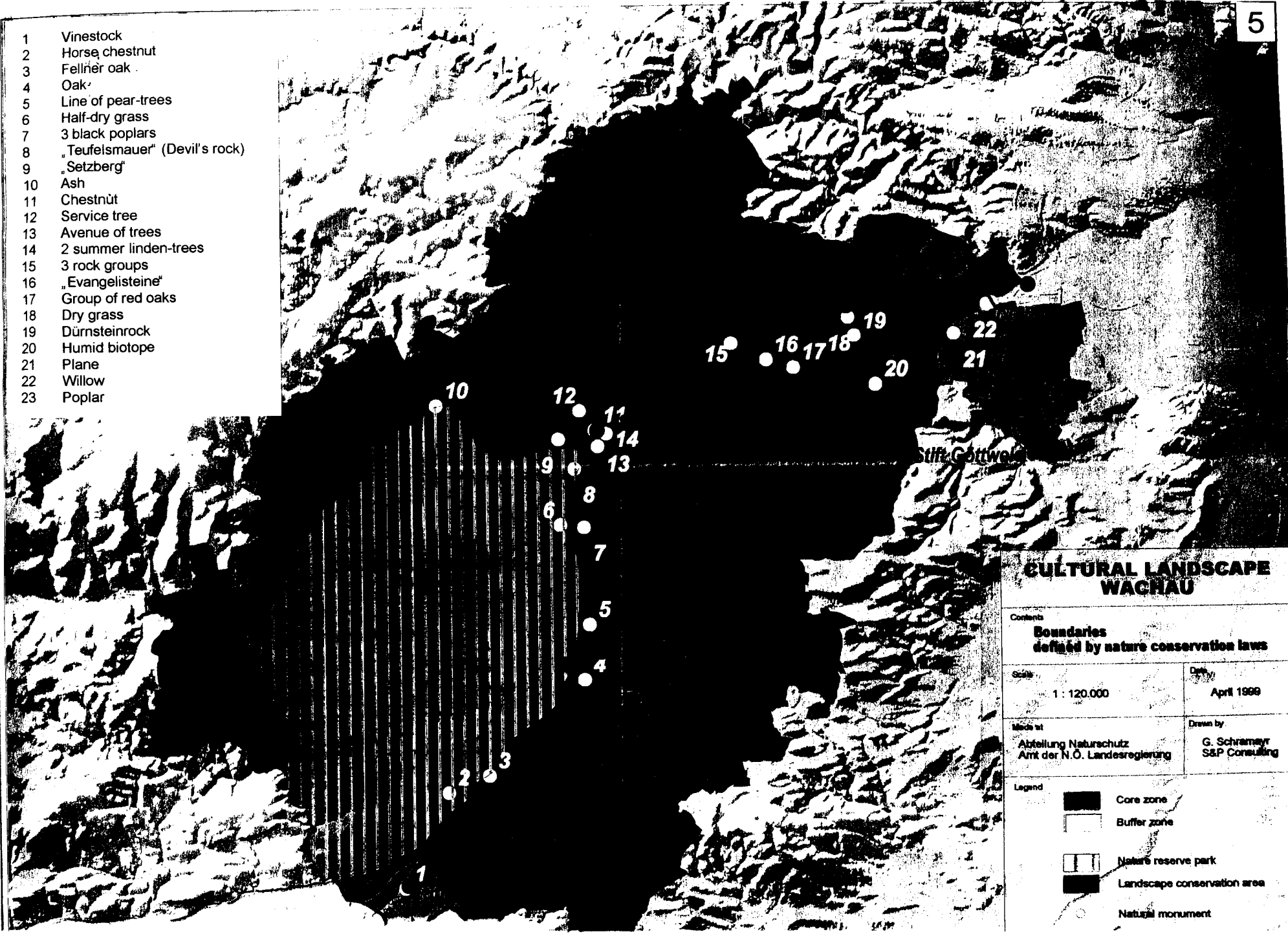
Date	April 1999
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Made at Abteilung Naturschutz Amt der N.Ö. Landesregierung	Drawn by F. Vondruska Büro LACON
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Based on material from

Bundesamt für Eich und Vermessungswesen, Vienna
Amt der N.Ö. Landesregierung, NÖGIS

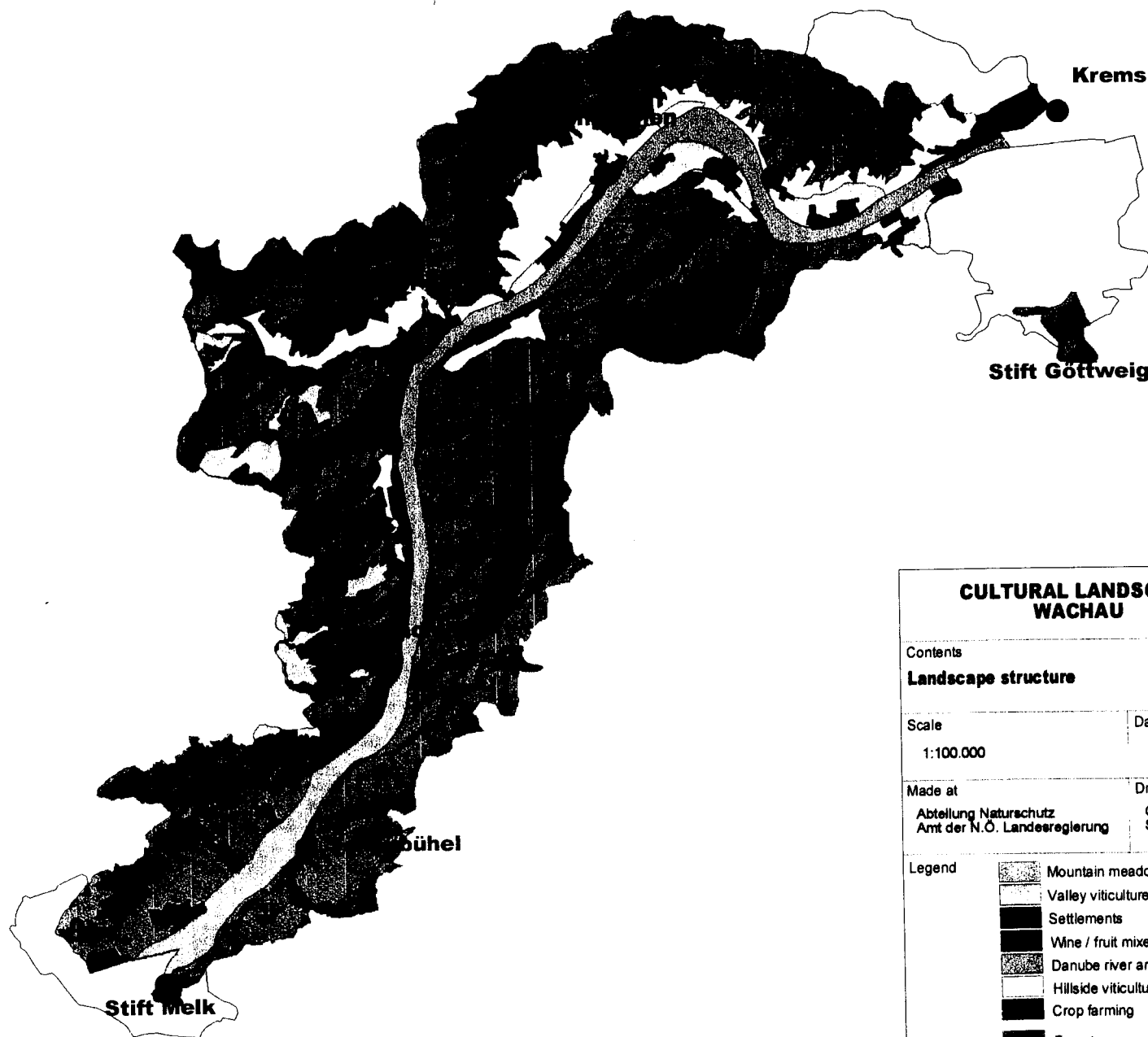
- 1 Vinestock
- 2 Horse chestnut
- 3 Fellnier oak
- 4 Oak
- 5 Line of pear-trees
- 6 Half-dry grass
- 7 3 black poplars
- 8 „Teufelsmauer“ (Devil's rock)
- 9 „Setzberg“
- 10 Ash
- 11 Chestnut
- 12 Service tree
- 13 Avenue of trees
- 14 2 summer linden-trees
- 15 3 rock groups
- 16 „Evangelisteine“
- 17 Group of red oaks
- 18 Dry grass
- 19 Dürnsteinrock
- 20 Humid biotope
- 21 Plane
- 22 Willow
- 23 Poplar



**CULTURAL LANDSCAPE
WACHAU**

Contents	
Boundaries defined by nature conservation laws	
Scale	Date
1 : 120.000	April 1999
Made at	Drawn by
Abteilung Naturschutz Amt der N.Ö. Landesregierung	G. Schramayr S&P Consulting

Legend	
	Core zone
	Buffer zone
	Nature reserve park
	Landscape conservation area
	Natural monument



CULTURAL LANDSCAPE WACHAU

Contents

Landscape structure









Scale
1:100.000

Date
April 1999

Made at
Abteilung Naturschutz
Amt der N.Ö. Landesregierung

Drawn by
G. Schramayr
S&P Consulting

Legend

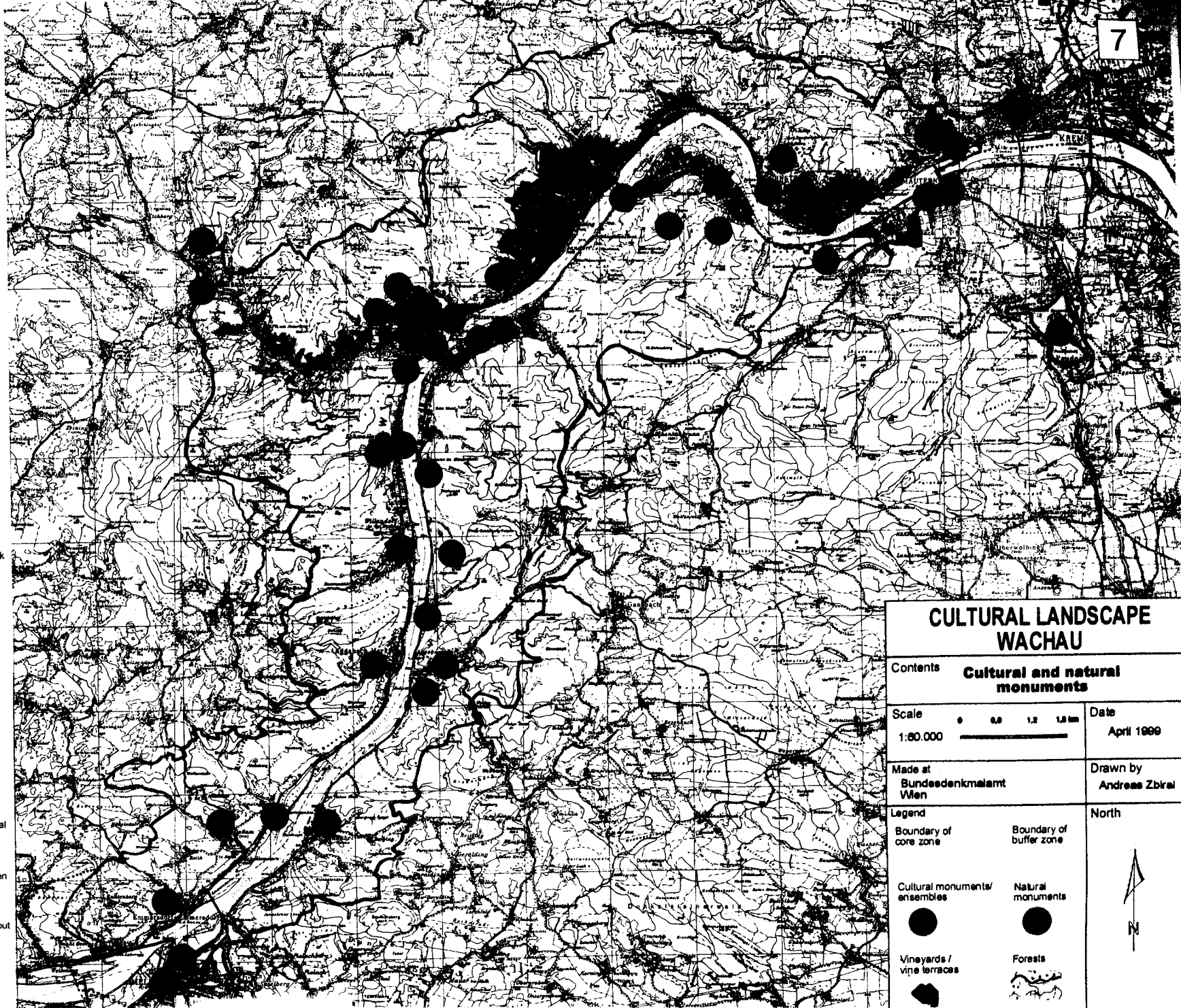
-  Mountain meadows
-  Valley viticulture
-  Settlements
-  Wine / fruit mixed cultivation
-  Danube river and riverside forest
-  Hillside viticulture
-  Crop farming
-  Forest

MONUMENTS, ENSEMBLES

- 1 Melk: old town and abbey
- 2 Emmersdorf
- 3 Schönbühel: castle and monastery
- 4 Aggsbach market
- 5 Aggsbach village and charterhouse
- 6 Aggsstein castle ruins
- 7 Willendorf
- 8 Schwallenbach
- 9 Mühldorf and Ranna castle
- 10 Spitz
- 11 Hofamsdorf
- 12 Mitteramsdorf
- 13 St. Michael
- 14 Wösendorf
- 15 Joching
- 16 Weißenkirchen
- 17 Rossatz
- 18 Dümstein: town and abbey
- 19 Oberloiben / Unterloiben
- 20 Mautern
- 21 Stein
- 22 Old town of Krems
- 23 Göttweig abbey

NATURAL MONUMENTS

- 1 Vinestock on the south-east slope of the abbey rock
- 2 Horse chestnut by the village chapel
- 3 Common oak with boundary stone
- 4 Oak at the mouth of the Aggsbach
- 5 Line of pear trees (85 old trees)
- 6 Three black poplars on the banks of the Danube
- 7 Half-dry grass with rare orchidaceae
- 8 Stoned rock formation on the left bank of the Danube
- 9 Old ash in the village of Mühldorf
- 10 „Setzberg“ (400m) abounding in rare flora and fauna
- 11 Avenue of trees along the Danube wharf
- 12 Horse chestnut on the market-place of Spitz
- 13 Old service tree near the „Rote Tor“ (red gate)
- 14 Two old summer linden-trees in front of an inn
- 15 Three rocks with erosions scoured by the primaeval Danube
- 16 „Evangelisteine“, two rocks of Gföhl gneiss
- 17 Group of red oaks at the entrance to the Seegraben
- 18 Bizarre gneiss formation
- 19 Dry grass of national significance
- 20 Humid biotope near the Archduke Ferdinand lookout tower
- 21 Old plane in the castle courtyard



**CULTURAL LANDSCAPE
WACHAU**

Contents		Cultural and natural monuments	
Scale	0 0.6 1.2 1.8 km	Date	April 1999
Made at	Bundesdenkmalamt Wien	Drawn by	Andreas Zbrtal
Legend	North		
Boundary of core zone	Boundary of buffer zone		
Cultural monuments/ensembles	Natural monuments		
Vineyards / vine terraces	Forests		

1

MONUMENT PROTECTION ACT

as amended in
1978 by Bundesgesetzblatt (BGBl.) (Federal Law Gazette)
No. 167/1978) and
1990 by Bundesgesetzblatt (BGBl.) (Federal Law Gazette)
No. 473/1990)

BUNDESDENKMALAMT
(FEDERAL MONUMENT OFFICE)
A-1010 Vienna, Hofburg, Säulenstiege

Denkmalschutzgesetz (Monument Protection Act)

This Federal Act of 1923 (BGBI. No. 533/1923) as amended in 1978 (BGBI. No. 167/1978) and 1990 (BGBI. No. 473/1990) determines the protection of monuments as a concern of the entire state (i.e. a federal concern) (Section 10 of the Federal Constitutional Law of October 1st, 1920). The determination of the historic, artistic or other cultural significance of an object (Section 1 of the Monument Protection Act) as well as the public interest in its preservation is, in the first instance, a matter of the Bundesdenkmalamt as the administrative agency concerned with the protection of monuments. It is possible to appeal against such a decree to the Federal Ministry for Science and Research (second instance). The Bundesdenkmalamt is, however, not solely an administrative agency. The basis of its work is the research into the existant body of monuments; thus, this agency is also a scientific institution (in accordance with the scope of the "monument" concept, the monument research covers all disciplines of history). Finally, the "public interest" in preservation embodied in the Act also assigns practical tasks of conservation and restoration to the Bundesdenkmalamt.

Section 1.

(1) The restrictions contained in this Federal Act apply to man-made immovable and movable objects (including vestiges and traces of creative human intervention as well as artificially constructed or moulded ground formations) of historic, artistic or other cultural significance if their preservation, by virtue of this significance, is a matter of public interest. While this significance may be due to the objects *per se* it may also arise from their relationship or location with respect to other objects. The provisions regarding individual monuments shall also apply to groups of immovable objects (ensembles) and collections of movable objects which form a homogenous whole by virtue of their historic, artistic or other cultural context including their location if, due to this context, their preservation as a unit is within public interest.

(2) Taking into consideration the results of relevant scientific research, it shall be incumbent upon the Bundesdenkmalamt to decide whether the preservation of an individual monument, an ensemble or a collection is a matter of public interest. If research into monuments of this type - in particular in the case of non-excavated archeological monuments - has not yet been completed to a sufficient extent, the listing of the monuments as of public interest shall only be permitted if scientific research documents that it is at least probable that the requirements for listing the monuments as worthy of protection will be met, and if in the adverse case the preservation of the monuments in their intactness would be put in jeopardy.

(3) Inasmuch as procedures according to Section 2; Section 3, paragraph 1; Section 6, paragraph 2 and Section 10, paragraph 3, concern the designation of immovable monuments as of public interest, only the owner (Section 3, paragraph 3), the governor of the respective Land (province), the municipality and its mayor as well as the holder of the building rights (if such have been assigned) shall be heard as parties.

(4) The governor of the respective Land shall be entitled to submit to the Bundesdenkmalamt requests for the purpose of determining whether the preservation of monuments (including ensembles and collections) is within public interest or not, but also for altering or demolishing them or for suspending their listing as monuments (Section 2, paragraph 1; Section 3, paragraph 1; Section 5, paragraphs 1 and 6) if they have already been listed as such.

Section 2.

(1) In case of monuments (Section 1, paragraph 1) owned wholly or predominantly by the Bund (federal government), a Land or by other public bodies, authorities, foundations as well as by legally recognized churches or religious communities including their institutions, public interest in their preservation is taken for granted (i.e. they fall under monument protection) for as long as the Bundesdenkmalamt does not pass a decision to the contrary, either following a request submitted by the owner or *ex officio* (paragraph 2) (listing as monument by virtue of legal presumption. Legal presumption shall apply even if sole or predominant ownership in the above sense should merely be a result of the co-ownership shares of a majority of the abovementioned persons or entities. Legal presumption pursuant to this paragraph shall not supersede any decree issued by the Bundesdenkmalamt in accordance with the last sentence of Section 1, paragraph 1, with respect to the existence of a homogenous whole of several immovable or movable monuments (ensembles, collections).

(2) Moreover, the Bundesdenkmalamt may decide *ex officio* whether the preservation of such a monument is in fact a matter of public interest.

(3) Decrees confirming public interest in the preservation of a monument in accordance with paragraphs 1 and 2 above, with Section 4, paragraph 2 (as amended by BgBl. No.167/1978); Section 6, paragraph 2 and Section 10, paragraph 3, shall entail all legal consequences, without any limitation in time, of decrees in accordance with Section 3, paragraph 1 (listing of monuments by decree), even if it should be determined at the same time that the monument in question is a homogenous whole according to the last sentence in Section 1, paragraph 1.

Section 3.

(1) In case of monuments not under monument protection by virtue of legal presumption (Section 2, paragraph 1; Section 6, paragraph 1), public interest in their preservation shall be presumed to exist only if thus decreed by the Bundesdenkmalamt (designation as monument by decree).

(2) The fact that an immovable monument has been designated as such by decree (Section 2, paragraph 3 and Section 3, paragraph 1) shall be made public, *ex officio*, by means of an entry into the deed book (Grundbuch), *ex officio*, by the Bundesdenkmalamt. In case of a lapse of the decreed public interest in preservation (Section 2, paragraph 3 and Section 3, paragraph 1), the notice entered by the Bundesdenkmalamt shall be deleted *ex officio*. The Bundesdenkmalamt is obligated to issue a notice according to this paragraph only if corresponding procedures were instituted by the Bundesdenkmalamt. The notice shall be issued six months after entry into effect at the latest.

(3) In case of immovable objects, the owner according to the deed book (Grundbuch) shall be considered as the owner for the purposes of this Act.

Section 4.

(1) Any demolition or alteration that might influence the condition (built volumes), historic appearance or artistic effect of any monument under monument protection in accordance with Section 2; Section 3, paragraph 1; Section 6, paragraphs 1 or 2 (or before the amendment by BGBl. Nr. 167/1978 in accordance with Section 4, paragraph 2) or Section 10, paragraph 3, shall be prohibited unless a permission in accordance with Section 5, paragraph 1, was issued. If the owner or any other person or entity responsible for the upkeep of the monument purposefully neglects to perform the measures that are essential for its conservation with the obvious intention of demolishing it, this shall be considered equal to the demolition of the monument. In particular, the following shall apply:

- a) The demolition of a monument shall be tantamount to its actual complete destruction. Such a monument shall be regarded as destroyed even in the case that individual essential parts are still existant. If only parts of an object are under monument protection, the above sentences shall apply *mutatis mutandis*. For the purpose of determining whether ensembles or collections that were assigned monument status as units (last sentence in Section 1, paragraph 1) and, as such, demolished or merely altered, these provisions shall apply as for individual monuments. The demolition of a monument listed as such solely as part of such a unit (and not as an individual monument) is only tantamount to an alteration of the ensemble or collection.

b) In case of imminent danger, essential safety measures which are actions within the meaning of the first sentence of paragraph 1 may be taken without the prior approval of the Bundesdenkmalamt upon simultaneous notification of the Bundesdenkmalamt.

(2) The voluntary sale or alienation of monuments designated as such by legal presumption (Section 2, paragraph 1; Section 6, paragraph 1) without a permission according to Section 6, paragraph 1, shall be prohibited.

(3) The voluntary sale or encumbrance of individual objects from a collection without a permission according to Section 6, paragraph 5, shall be prohibited if the Bundesdenkmalamt has assigned monument status to this collection as a unit (last sentence of Section 1, paragraph 1).

(4) In all other cases regarding a sale or alienation of objects listed as monuments that were not mentioned in paragraphs 2 and 3, the seller or alienor shall immediately notify the Bundesdenkmalamt of this fact in accordance with Section 6, paragraph 4, including an identification of the alienee or buyer, as well as advise the alienee or buyer of such a monument that it is subject to the restrictions of this Federal Act.

Section 5.

(1) Any demolition or alteration of a monument according to Section 4, paragraph 1, shall require the permission of the Bundesdenkmalamt unless these measures were taken due to imminent danger (Section 4, paragraph 1 lit.b). The onus of proof that the reasons put forward for the demolition or alteration are justified shall rest with the applicant. Each party within the meaning of Section 8 of the General Administrative Procedure Law of 1950 as well as the governor of the respective Land (Section 1, paragraph 4) shall be entitled to submit a request. Apart from these persons or entities, the mayor shall also be heard as a party in all procedures regarding the demolition of a monument in accordance with this paragraph.

(2) In the procedures according to paragraph 1 regarding requests for the alteration of a monument, the Bundesdenkmalamt may determine, in a permission issued as a decree, which measures in detail shall be additionally required by the Bundesdenkmalamt; these measures may also be communicated verbally.

(3) Before permitting the demolition of a monument according to paragraph 1, the Denkmalbeirat (Monument Advisory Board) (Section 16) shall be heard.

(4) Any permission according to paragraph 1 shall lapse if not actually made use of within a period of three years.

(5) Notwithstanding the provisions contained in paragraph 1, the request for the alteration of a monument devoted to the religious service of a legally recognized church or religious community including its institutions shall be permitted in any case insofar as the change is necessary for holding the religious service according to the liturgical provisions stipulated by the legally recognized church or religious community. Proof of the type and extent of this necessity shall be submitted, upon request of the Bundesdenkmalamt, by means of an attestation issued by the competent superior body of the respective church or religious community. This attestation shall also comment on the counterproposals, if any, suggested by the Bundesdenkmalamt.

(6) Monuments (including ensembles and collections) which were listed as such and demolished or altered in the course of time, accidentally or unlawfully without permission (paragraph 1) or for other reasons have lost the significance owing to which they were originally designated as monuments shall continue to be designated as such (this includes mere vestiges) until the Bundesdenkmalamt, upon request of the owner (a co-owner), the governor of the respective Land or *ex officio*, has stated in a decision that the preservation of the monument is no longer within public interest (procedure for the revocation of monument protection).

(7) Subsidies (including interest subsidies) may be granted, within the framework of financial legislation, for expenses arising from the safeguarding, preservation and research of monuments (including their surroundings, if these are of significance for the monuments) or caused by an alteration. The significance of a monument and the economic problems connected with its proper restoration shall especially be considered in this context. Subsidies may also be granted to owners and other persons or entities disposing of real rights in a monument in case of considerable impairments caused in the course of works undertaken by the Bundesdenkmalamt in execution of the Act (in particular according to Sections 10 and 12). All details of the directives covering the granting of subsidies within the meaning of this paragraph shall be issued by the Federal Minister for Science and Research in agreement with the Federal Minister of Finance.

Section 6.

(1) The voluntary sale or alienation of monuments designated as such solely by virtue of legal presumption (Section 2, paragraph 1) shall require the permission of the Bundesdenkmalamt. If such monuments are voluntarily sold or alienated without the permission of the Bundesdenkmalamt in such a way that at least half of the monument passes into the ownership of persons or entities not specified in the first sentence of Section 2, paragraph 1, they continue to be subject to the provisions of Section 2, paragraph 1, including the legal

consequences arising therefrom. As far as the voluntary sale or alienation occurs by law, this continuation ends five years after passage of ownership.

(2) Permission for sale or alienation according to paragraph 1 shall only be granted if the buyer or alienee is simultaneously identified as such. When granting permission for sale or alienation to a person or entity not specified in Section 2, it shall also be ascertained whether the preservation of the monument is a matter of public interest. In this procedure, the buyer or alienee shall be heard as a party.

(3) Any permission according to paragraph 1 shall lapse if not actually made use of within a period of two years.

(4) The alienor or seller of a monument listed as of public interest by virtue of a decree according to Section 3, paragraph 1, or by virtue of another procedure mentioned in Section 2, paragraph 3, shall, with simultaneous identification of the alienee or buyer, immediately notify the Bundesdenkmalamt of the alienation or sale. The designation as of public interest shall not be affected by the passage of ownership. Notwithstanding the provisions of Section 3, paragraph 2, the alienor or seller shall be obligated to notify the alienee or buyer of such a monument that it is subject to the restrictions of this Federal Act.

(5) The voluntary sale or encumbrance of individual objects from a collection as defined by Section 4, paragraph 3, shall require the written permission of the Bundesdenkmalamt. Any voluntary sale or encumbrance without this permission shall be prohibited and, in accordance with Section 879 of the General Civil Code, considered null and void. Any attachment of individual objects of such a collection shall be suspended upon request of the Bundesdenkmalamt. If the attachment extends to all objects of such a collection, they may only be realized in one body if the Bundesdenkmalamt notifies the court in due time that the collection comes within the meaning of Section 4, paragraph 3.

The fact that the objects of a collection are owned (or co-owned) by several persons or entities or have passed (e.g. by the devolution of the estate of a deceased person) into the ownership (co-ownership) of several persons or entities shall have no bearing whatsoever on a possible designation as a monument or the continuation of this designation as a unit.

Section 7.

(1) If there is danger of monuments being demolished, altered or alienated (in particular in contravention of the provisions contained in Sections 4 to 6), thus causing a considerable impairment to the interests of monument preservation, the competent district administrative authority, upon request of the Bundesdenkmalamt or - in case of imminent danger - ex

officio, shall take suitable measures (including construction work) and issue decrees and prohibitions in order to avert this danger.

(2) If directed at an unspecified group of persons, the measures, decrees and prohibitions according to paragraph 1 shall be taken and issued by ordinance, or otherwise, by decree. In this procedure, the Bundesdenkmalamt shall be heard as a party.

Section 8.

(1) In order to avoid any danger to or impairment of the existence or appearance of an immovable monument by way of alterations of its surroundings (e.g. by the erection of billboards, showcases, signs, kiosks, gas stations and other intrusive constructions), the district administrative authority, upon request of the Bundesdenkmalamt or - in case of imminent danger - *ex officio*, shall issue prohibitions.

(2) If directed at an unspecified group of persons, all prohibitions and decrees according to paragraph 1 shall be issued by ordinance, or otherwise, by decree. In this procedure, the Bundesdenkmalamt shall be heard as a party.

Section 9.

(1) If such objects are discovered beneath the earth or water surface (chance finds) which by virtue of their position, shape or structure may be expected to be subject to the restrictions of this Act (archeological monuments), the Bundesdenkmalamt shall be notified of their discovery forthwith, but at the latest on the day following the discovery. The same shall apply to archeological monuments uncovered, in part or entirely, merely as a result of events such as rain, ploughing or similar. Within the abovementioned period, the discovery may be also reported to the district administrative authority of the finding place, to one of the nearby police stations, to the competent mayor or a public museum subject to a territorial authority; these authorities shall immediately inform the Bundesdenkmalamt of the report so that notification of the discovery will be presented to the Bundesdenkmalamt on the third workday after delivery of the report at the latest.

(2) The following are obligated to report on the find: the finder, the owner of the property, the person or entity holding the building rights (if any), the tenant or lessee of the concrete part of the property as well as - in the case of works being carried out on the property - the local responsible construction supervisor.

Section 10.

(1) The condition of the finding place and of the objects found (finds) shall be left unchanged for a period of up

to five workdays after delivery of the report unless organs of the Bundesdenkmalamt or an authorized representative of the Bundesdenkmalamt should suspend the restriction or permit continuation of the works, inasmuch as there is no imminent danger to human life or health or the preservation of the finds. In the case that a permission is granted in view of the fact that the interests of monument preservation are not impaired or not appreciably impaired, the drawing-up of minutes shall be deemed sufficient.

(2) Notwithstanding the provision contained in paragraph 1, movable finds shall be taken in safekeeping by the finder or consigned to e.g. the mayor for keeping if there is danger that these finds might be lost. In any other case, the Bundesdenkmalamt or its authorized representatives shall be entitled to recover the finds and take the necessary measures in order to clarify the circumstances of the find as well as to safeguard any other archeological monuments which exist or are presumed to exist on the property.

(3) From the moment of finding until the completion of the works defined in paragraph 4 but for a maximum period of six weeks after delivery of the report on the find (Section 9, paragraph 1), the archeological monuments found shall be subject to the restrictions of this Federal Act; for this period, this shall apply uniformly in accordance with the provisions for listing by decree (Section 3, paragraph 1). Until the end of this period, it is incumbent on the Bundesdenkmalamt to decide, even with respect to objects subject to the provisions contained in Section 2, paragraph 1 in any case, whether the archeological monuments shall continue to be subject to the restrictions of this Act (in any case according to the legal consequences of listing by decree pursuant to Section 3, paragraph 1); remedies against this decree shall have no suspensive effect. Inasmuch as the archeological monuments were listed as of public interest even before their concrete discovery (excavation) according to Section 3, paragraph 1 or another procedure mentioned in Section 2, paragraph 3, no further decree by the Bundesdenkmalamt according to this provisions contained in this paragraph shall be necessary.

(4) Notwithstanding the provisions contained in Section 12, paragraph 1, the finder, owner, holder of real rights or actual holder of the property where the find occurred shall be obligated to make available to the Bundesdenkmalamt, upon its request, all movable objects found on the property for the purpose of scientific evaluation and documentation for a period not exceeding two years.

(5) If, in the course of excavations and other forms of scientific investigation carried out by organs of territorial authorities including museums, collections and other scientific institutions or by order of or by request of these authorities, movable objects are found

or discovered which before their discovery were hidden in the ground for so long a period that it is impossible to determine their owner, these territorial authorities shall be obligated to pay compensation for the part of the property due to the owner of the property according to the provision contained in Section 399 of the General Civil Code. The right to compensation shall be asserted in writing within two years after the discovery or total excavation of the object. The same shall apply in those cases where the share of the owner, in accordance with Section 400 of the General Civil Code, has fallen to the federal government (Bund) as a result of an unlawful act committed by the finder. In case of a total or partial exercise of the right to compensation, the property owner is entitled to an *bona fide* indemnity payment amounting to the highest selling price for final purchasers realizable on the domestic market. The excavation (investigation) cost shall not be offset in the calculation of this price. If no agreement is reached, the matter shall be settled by way of arbitration pursuant to the provisions contained in Sections 577 ff. of the Code of Civil Procedure; in this, three arbitrators shall be consulted, at least one of which shall formerly have sat as a judge. More detailed regulations of the arbitration proceedings shall be issued by ordinance of the Federal Ministry for Science and Research in consideration of Section 6 of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, BgBl. No. 210/1958.

(6) Notwithstanding all other legal consequences, the provisions of this paragraph shall equally apply to excavations carried out in contravention of the excavating provisions laid down in Section 11.

Section 11.

(1) All investigations entailing an alteration of the earth surface or of the underwater ground as well as all other on-the-spot investigations carried out in order to discover and examine movable and immovable monuments located underground or underwater may only be carried out by permission of the Bundesdenkmalamt unless paragraph 2 provides otherwise (research excavation). Such a permission shall be exclusively granted to persons who have completed a course of university studies relating to the subject or - if they submit evidence of another relevant, nonacademic education - have presented proof of their ability in the form of an examination taken before a commission consisting of representatives of the Bundesdenkmalamt, of the relevant university institutes and of at least one federal and one provincial museum concerned. The type and procedure of this examination shall be determined by the Federal Minister for Science and Research by decree. Permissions in accordance with this paragraph may entail restrictions, enjoinders and special regulations (with respect to area and depth, manner of execution, obligations to notify, inspections

etc). The provisions of this Act do not embody any legal claim to be granted permission to carry out excavations.

(2) Officials of the Bundesdenkmalamt, of federal and provincial museums, of university institutes, of the Austrian Archeological Institute and the Austrian Academy of Sciences who have completed a course of studies specified in paragraph 1 require no permission pursuant to paragraph 1 in order to carry out excavations provided they are active on behalf of these institutions.

(3) Persons authorized according to paragraphs 1 and 2 shall immediately notify the Bundesdenkmalamt in writing of the commencement of the excavation work (as well as of all previous investigations, if any) carried out on a property or on several adjacent properties.

(4) Finds shall principally be reported in accordance with the provisions of Section 9. While permissions and notifications for the purposes of paragraphs 1 and 3 shall in no way act substitute this obligation to notify, only the head of the excavation party, the finder and the person or entity on whose behalf the excavation is carried out (if there is such a person or entity) are under the obligation to notify, provided that the excavation is carried out in compliance with the provisions of Section 11. Any subsequent finds shall be notified to the Bundesdenkmalamt once per year only, at the latest three months after expiry of the year in which the relevant find occurred. The form and extent of the notification shall correspond to scientific principles of research and documentation. The second sentence of Section 9, paragraph 2, shall apply *mutatis mutandis*. The provisions contained in Section 10, paragraphs 3, 4 and 5, shall apply analogously. The term pursuant to Section 10, paragraph 3, shall end six weeks after delivery of these reports to the Bundesdenkmalamt.

(5) Persons authorized in accordance with paragraphs 1 and 2 shall be permitted to carry out alterations and demolitions only to an extent that is unavoidable and necessary for the purposes of scientific excavation work. Inasmuch as archeological monuments were decreed, however, as of public interest pursuant to Section 3, paragraph 1, or pursuant to another procedure enumerated in Section 2, paragraph 3, all excavations, due to the alterations and demolition they entail, shall require a permission by the Bundesdenkmalamt in accordance with Section 5, paragraph 1.

(6) Apart from the notifications pursuant to paragraphs 3 and 4, a comprehensive report on the excavation work undertaken, including all drawings, plans, photographs and further documentary material, shall be presented to the Bundesdenkmalamt on a regular basis (at least three months after expiry of each calendar year).

(7) The Bundesdenkmalamt shall collect all notifications and reports submitted in accordance with Sections 9 to 11

(including the results of the finds made by the Bundesdenkmalamt itself) from the entire area of the Federal Republic of Austria in an inventory of finds (Fundkartie) and, inasmuch as they are of scientific relevance, summarize them in an annual publication in the form of a comprehensive overall documentation. The time elapsed between the uncovering of the find and the inclusion into the documentation shall not exceed five years.

(8) Inasmuch, however, as archeological monuments, even if they are still below the earth's surface, were decreed as being of public interest pursuant to Section 3, paragraph 1, or pursuant to another procedure specified in Section 2, paragraph 3, any utilization of metal detectors or other detecting devices on the property for any purpose whatsoever - with exception of detecting work carried out by the persons or entities specified in paragraphs 1 and 9 (and those authorized by them) in the course of their excavations and investigations - shall require a permission by the Bundesdenkmalamt unless it is the objective of these activities to eliminate sudden and unexpected danger to human life, health and property. In this case, the activities may be carried out provided that the authorities or institutions specified in Section 9, paragraph 1, are immediately notified; they, in their turn, shall refer this notification forthwith to the Bundesdenkmalamt.

(9) Excavations carried out on behalf of the Federal Minister for Science and Research or the governor of the respective Land shall require no permission by the Bundesdenkmalamt in accordance with Articles 5 and 9 to 12 if they are carried out, to the absolutely essential extent, in the course of appeal proceedings or in the discharge of supervisory obligations. The obligation to notify contained in these provisions shall apply inasmuch as the Bundesdenkmalamt shall be notified of the commencement of excavation work in accordance with paragraph 3; furthermore, the Bundesdenkmalamt shall be notified, in accordance with the third sentence in paragraph 3, of all finds, if any, within six months after termination of the excavation work.

Section 12.

(1) The obligation to disclose all required information regarding the identification and discovery of monuments and the recording, supervision (checks and controls) and preservation (salvaging) of existing monuments of the type specified in Section 1 to the Bundesdenkmalamt and its organs as well as to permit them (and their assistant personnel) the inspection and scientific examination of the monuments in question and of the presumed archeological finds shall extend to everybody. This shall also include the permission to take restoration samples and photographs and to carry out excavations. In case of indirect federal administration, the governor of the Land concerned and the district administrative authority and

their organs (and assistant personnel) shall thus be authorized as well if imminent danger is present and if excavations in accordance with Section 11, paragraph 9, are being carried out.

(2) Owners or other persons responsible for the maintenance of listed monuments shall furthermore be under the obligation, upon request of the Bundesdenkmalamt, to specify all damage and defects of these movable or immovable monuments as well as to provide information regarding the cause of this damage and defects. In case of danger, the abovementioned persons or entities shall in their turn notify the Bundesdenkmalamt of the damage observed.

(3) The Bundesdenkmalamt shall be entitled to carry out the competent supervision of (or have supervised by authorized persons) all restorations, excavations and similar inasmuch as these are subject to the Federal Act.

(4) The Bundesdenkmalamt shall be entitled to make available the results of its research and documentation work - as far as this is possible without prejudice to its further obligations, and within the bounds of all other legal provisions, such as e.g. data protection - chiefly for scientific purposes.

(5) Movable and immovable objects listed as monuments may be fitted with a sign (plaque, adhesive label, stamp etc) indicating that they are protected monuments. More detailed specifications regarding the shape and distribution of the signs, the obligation to put them up etc. shall be laid down by the Federal Minister for Science and Research by decree.

Section 13.

(1) All decrees issued by virtue of this Federal Act shall be enacted in writing.

(2) All decisions regarding appeals against decrees issued by the district administrative authority shall rest with the governor of the respective Land while appeals against decrees issued by the Bundesdenkmalamt and the governor of the respective Land shall be addressed to the Federal Minister for Science and Research.

Section 14.

(1) Whoever in contravention of the provisions contained in Section 4, paragraph 1, and Section 5, paragraph 1, demolishes an individual monument or more than one monument (ensemble, collection) shall be fined for an amount of up to 360 days' income (360 Tagessätze/per diem rates) by the court provided that no other provision requires that the offence be punished more strictly by the law. In addition to this fine, offenders shall be subject to a compensation fine (Wertersatzstrafe/i.e. a

fine equal in amount to the cost of the reconstruction of the monument) in the case that the reconstruction provided for in paragraph 6 was not ordered or, if ordered, was not carried out in spite of a formal reminder. Under these circumstances, the offender shall be subject to a compensation fine even if, in accordance with another provision, a stricter penalty is laid down by the law for the offence. The amount of the compensation fine shall correspond either to the presumptive cost for the reconstruction or reproduction of an object equal in value, or to the difference in value of the financial or other advantage achieved as a result of the offence. All persons involved in the offence shall be subject, on a *pro rata* basis, to the compensation fine with consideration paid to the principles of determination of a penalty (Sections 32 to 35 of the Penal Code). In case of irrecoverability of the compensation fine, the offender shall alternatively be sentenced to a term of imprisonment (*Ersatzfreiheitsstrafe*/imprisonment for failure to pay a fine) for a period not exceeding six months. The prosecution shall be incumbent upon the courts of first instance. Section 207a of the Fiscal Penalty Law, BGBl. No. 129/1958, in the version of the Federal Act BGBl. No. 335/1975 shall apply *mutatis mutandis*.

(2) Whoever in contravention of the provisions contained in Section 4, paragraph 1, and Section 5, paragraph 1, intentionally alters a monument or attempts to prevent or render ineffective the measures initiated in accordance with Section 7 or paragraph 6 below shall be fined up to an amount of 700,000 ATS by the district administrative authority provided that the act does not constitute a set of facts equivalent to a punishable offence coming within jurisdiction of the courts. Whoever in contravention of the provisions contained in Section 4, paragraph 1, and Section 6, paragraph 5, intentionally sells, encumbers or acquires a monument forming part of a collection, or whoever in contravention of the provisions contained in Section 11, paragraph 1, carries out investigations (excavations) without the permission provided for this purpose, shall equally be fined an amount of up to 350,000 ATS. Moreover, objects which form part of a collection according to Section 4, paragraph 3, and are sold without a permission according to Section 6, paragraph 5, as well as objects discovered in the course of such an excavation, may be declared forfeited. With exception of a possible imprisonment for failure to pay the fine, the provisions of paragraph 1 shall equally apply for legal proceedings instituted on the basis of this paragraph.

(3) Whoever

1. sells or alienates a monument without a permission in accordance with Section 4, paragraph 2 and Section 6, paragraph 1;

2. fails to notify the Bundesdenkmalamt, in accordance with Section 4, paragraph 4, of the sale or alienation of a monument or fails to advise the buyer or alienee of the fact that the monument has been designated as such;

3. attempts to prevent or render ineffective the measures initiated according to paragraph 8;

4. fails to report or reports incorrectly on finds in a manner according to Section 9, paragraph 1;

5. changes the condition of the place of a find or of the objects found in contravention of the provisions contained in Section 10, paragraph 1;

6. attempts to prevent or render ineffective the safeguarding or recovery of finds as well as all other measures in accordance with Section 10, paragraph 2;

7. does not make available finds in contravention of the provisions contained in Section 10, paragraph 4;

8. attempts to impede the assertion and enforcement of the right of compensation in accordance with Section 10, paragraph 5;

9. utilizes metal detectors or other devices for the location of objects hidden below the earth's surface in contravention of the provisions contained in Section 11, paragraph 8;

10. fails to submit or incorrectly submits reports or notifications in accordance with Section 11;

11. fails to submit or incorrectly submits information or notifications in accordance with Section 12, paragraphs 1 and 2;

12. attempts to prevent or render ineffective the inspection and scientific investigation of monuments and presumed archeological finds, or the supervision by the Bundesdenkmalamt provided for in Section 12, paragraph 3;

shall be fined an amount of up to ATS 70,000 by the district administrative authority.

(4) Whoever intentionally incites another person to perform an unlawful act according to paragraphs 1, 2 or 3 or aids and abets this other person in the unlawful act shall be subject to the punishment laid down in above paragraphs.

(5) For unlawful acts enumerated in paragraphs 2 to 4, the period of limitation according to Section 31, paragraph 2 of the Property Tax Law of 1950 shall commence as of the moment when said unlawful acts have come to the knowledge of the Bundesdenkmalamt and the guilty person has been identified; in any case, the period ends three years after termination of the act.

(6) Upon request of the Bundesdenkmalamt, the competent district administrative authority may decree that the guilty person shall, at his own cost, reconstitute the last condition of the monument or the condition of the monument which preceded any unlawful alteration or demolition caused by him previously, as far as this is possible, with respect to its former condition or at least its former appearance, under the given circumstances. Appeals against such decrees shall be addressed to the governor of the respective Land while appeals against his decisions shall be addressed to the Federal Minister for Science and Research.

(7) In legal proceedings instituted in accordance with paragraphs 1 to 4 as well as in proceedings instituted in accordance with paragraph 6, the Bundesdenkmalamt shall be heard.

(8) All sums received pursuant to Section 14 accrue to the federal government and are appropriated for the purposes of monument preservation.

Section 15.

(1) For the purposes of additional financing of measures pursuant to Section 5, paragraph 7, in particular for the salvaging of immovable objects listed as monuments and directly threatened by dilapidation, a "Monument Fund" (Denkmalfonds) shall be instituted as an administrative fund administered by the Federal Minister for Science and Research. Money will accrue to this Fund by virtue of contributions, proceeds of events organized for the benefit of the Fund, sums received pursuant to this Federal Act (Section 14, paragraph 8) as well as other revenues and donations.

(2) These funds shall be used, within the meaning of Section 17, paragraph 5 of the Federal Budget Law, for the measures specified in paragraph 1. Contributions to the Fund are donations to the Bundesdenkmalamt within the meaning of Section 4, paragraph 4, line 6, lit.c of the Income Tax Law of 1988.

(3) The funds shall be distributed by the Federal Minister for Science and Research for the purposes specified in paragraph 1 as provided in the directives according to Section 5, paragraph 7. The Denkmalbeirat (Monument Advisory Board) (Section 16) shall be heard before allocation of the funds (with exception of imminent danger).

Section 16.

(1) The Denkmalbeirat (Monument Advisory Board) is a body concerned with advising the Bundesdenkmalamt in the solution of questions regarding the protection and preservation of monuments. Permanent members are appointed by the Federal Minister for Science and

Research from representatives of the respective scientific disciplines (art history, architecture, civil engineering, regional planning, business management etc) for a period of six years. The Federal Minister for Economic Affairs, the Federal Chamber of Engineers and the Kunstsenat (Art Senate) may nominate one member each. Depending on the type and location of the monument, one representative each of the respective Land and municipality, of the tourism sector (Chamber of Commerce and Industry), in case of church-owned monuments a representative of the respective legally recognized church or religious community, and finally representatives of societies concerned with the preservation of the cultural heritage (including such of local significance) shall be furthermore heard as temporary members. The Monument Advisory Board may also convene commissions. Details regarding the composition and tasks of the Monument Advisory Board shall be determined by decree of the Federal Minister for Science and Research. Upon request of the Federal Minister for Science and Research or the Bundesdenkmalamt, each permanent member of the Monument Advisory Board may be called in for advisory purposes (as consultant) or to submit an expert opinion (as expert).

(2) For the elaboration of expert opinions (in writing) required for statements pursuant to the provisions contained in Section 5, paragraph 3, as well as for expert opinions in writing elaborated due to requests made by the Bundesdenkmalamt or the Federal Minister for Science and Research, the members of the Monument Advisory Board are entitled to professional fees analogous to the fees paid to expert witnesses according to the Fees Law of 1975.

(3) If the Monument Advisory Board should present no opinion within a period of three months for cases pursuant to Section 5, paragraph 3, and within a period of six weeks for cases according to Section 15, paragraph 3, it shall be assumed that the Monument Advisory Board has no reservations regarding the planned measures.

Section 17.

In all cases concerning archival documents, the Bundesdenkmalamt shall be substituted by the Record Office, while the Federal Minister for Science and Research shall be substituted by the Federal Chancellor.

Section 18.

(1) The publications directly caused by this Federal Act are exempt from stamp duties.

(2) Outstanding achievements in the field of monument preservation may be recognized by the Federal Minister for Science and Research through the awarding of medals and diplomas but also by way of financial remuneration.

Section 19.

The enforcement of the Federal Act is incumbent upon the Federal Minister for Science and Research, and in cases concerning archival documents, upon the Federal Chancellor. In cases pursuant to Section 2, paragraph 1, and Section 3, paragraph 2, (inasmuch as they concern matters relating to the deed book) as well as in cases pursuant to Section 14, paragraph 1, the enforcement of this Federal Act is incumbent upon the Federal Minister of Justice, in cases pursuant to the second sentence of Section 15, paragraph 2, and Section 18, paragraph 1, the Federal Minister of Finance. In cases pursuant to Section 5, paragraphs 7 and 8 and Section 15, paragraph 3, (inasmuch as they concern the issuing of allocation directives) as well as in cases pursuant to the first sentence of Section 15, paragraph 2, the enforcement is incumbent upon the Federal Minister for Science and Research in agreement with the Federal Minister of Finance.









Wachau (Austria)

No 970

Identification

<i>Nomination</i>	The Wachau Cultural Landscape
<i>Location</i>	Federal Province (<i>Land</i>) of Lower Austria
<i>State Party</i>	Republic of Austria
<i>Date</i>	24 June 1999

Justification by State Party

The Wachau cultural landscape has long influenced developments in town planning and construction, ecclesiastical and secular architecture, and landscape design in the Danube area.

Because of their architecture, their homogeneous development, and their location within a landscape cultivated by man and surrounded by almost untouched nature, the many towns, villages, and groups of buildings are of outstanding universal value as combined works of nature and of man.

Criterion ii

The Wachau exhibits a rare density of examples of the interaction between human economic and cultural activities within a given landscape. There is a significant correlation between the typology of the architectural monuments and the characteristics of the landscape.

Many periods of humankind's history are reflected in the distinctive and high-quality sites dominated by churches, monasteries, castles, and ruins, all of them monuments of the highest European level. They are located in the midst of a stunning natural setting where many spatial arrangements and single objects, representative of successive stages of their history, have remained unchanged.

Criterion iv

Within the existing pattern of European river landscapes, the Wachau has preserved an exceptional degree of historical integrity and authenticity, without industrial and technological interventions or harmful impacts on its environment.

At a time when many of Europe's traditional places and landscapes are threatened by irreversible change, the historic cultural landscape of the Wachau constitutes an outstanding example of the fruitful interaction between the works of man and an intact natural environment. It can justifiably claim to be in an exemplary state of conservation in terms of cultural history, topography, natural space, and ecology.

Criterion v

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 group of *sites*. It is also a cultural landscape, as defined in paragraph 39 of the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*.

History and Description

History

Clearance of the natural forest cover of the Wachau by man began in the Neolithic period, although radical changes in the landscape did not take place until around 800, when the Bavarian and Salzburg monasteries began to cultivate the slopes of the Wachau, creating the present-day landscape pattern of vine terraces. In the centuries that followed, the acreage under cultivation fluctuated, under the influence of changes of climate and the wine market and acute labour shortages and the resultant wage increases in the 17th century.

As a result, the forest recolonized the upper edges of the vine-growing land; viticulture in the valleys was replaced by other agricultural activities. The soils of the fallow areas, degraded by failed attempts at cultivation, have never recovered, which explains the distinctive types of special vegetation found in these habitats (dry grassland, shrubs, and woodland).

In the 18th century, hillside viticulture was actively promoted in ecologically optimal regions. The areas released in this way were given over to pasture, with the ensuing economic consequences: some enterprises had to close down while others were enlarged. It was at this time that viticulture was finally abandoned in the upper stretches of the Wachau.

Developments of the countryside in the 19th century had particularly far-reaching consequences for the Wachau. The appearance of *Phylloxera*, the ravages of war, and increasing competition from the Burgenland and Italy necessitated changes in business structures, the areas under cultivation, the methods of viticulture, and the acreages. Apricot growing, typical of the Wachau ever since, began to take over the valleys and lower slopes. The ratio of acreages devoted to viticulture and fruit growing respectively continues to be closely linked with recurrent fluctuations in markets for the products, giving the Wachau its characteristic appearance.

There has been human occupation in the Wachau from Palaeolithic times, as shown by the figurines from Galgenberg (c 32,000 years old) and Willendorf (c 26,000 years old). The region of Krems and Melk was densely settled as early as the Neolithic period (4500–1800 BCE), and there have been many finds from the Bronze Age (1800–800 BCE). In the Iron Age the Illyrian Hallstatt Culture (800–400 BCE) was gradually replaced by the La Tène Culture coming from the west: at this time the Celtic kingdom of Noricum developed to the south of the Danube.

When the Romans annexed Noricum in 15 BCE, the Danube became the frontier (*limes*) with the Germanic peoples to the north. Mautern (*Favianis*) was an important frontier garrison town where one of the Roman Danube

fleets was stationed. The *limes* collapsed at the end of the 4th century, and Noricum found itself on one of the main invasion routes from the north.

In 453 St Severinus, the "apostle of Noricum," founded the first monastic community in the province outside the gates of Mautern. As a result of his activities Mautern developed into an important spiritual and religious centre, where pilgrims assembled and departed for Italy.

The name "Wachau" is first mentioned in 853 as *locus Wahowa*. Krems first appears as *Urbs Chremisa* in 995, making it the oldest Austrian town to be mentioned in a document. The Wachau is the setting of the *Nibelungenlied*, the great German epic poem, which was written some time after 1200 and depicts the political situation at that time. It mentions the Wachau towns of Pöchlarn (*Bechelaren*), Melk (*Medelike*), and Mautern (*Mutoren*).

In 976, the Wachau came under the rule of the Babenberg margraves, beginning with Leopold I. The Austrian march was elevated to a dukedom in 1156 and bestowed upon the Babenberg Henry II Jasomirgott, who renounced his claims to Bavaria.

The great knightly family of the Wachau, the Kuenrings, came to the Babenberg march in the 11th century. When the line died out, the major part of their lands passed to Duke Albrecht V (King Albrecht II) in 1430. Owing to the fragmentation of land holdings and the absence of large unified administrative structures, the burghers of the Wachau enjoyed considerable freedom as early as the Middle Ages, enhanced by the *ius montanum de vinea*. The four towns of St Michael, Wösendorf, Joching, and Weissenkirchen formed an independent community from about 1150 to 1839, to be reunited in 1972 as Wachau or Tal Wachau.

Even after the power of the Habsburgs had been consolidated, the Wachau was repeatedly the arena for armed conflicts. During the Hungarian invasions of the late 15th century, Krems and Stein were besieged in 1477 by Matthias Corvinus.

The Counter-Reformation (1530–1620) had a strong impact in the Wachau, until Protestantism was finally repressed under the Göttweig abbot Georg II Falb (1612–31). His support for eleven Austrian Benedictine abbeys was a major contributory factor to the importance attained by the Austrian abbeys (and Göttweig in particular) in the Baroque period. Victory over the Protestants also found expression in the construction of churches, chapels, and small monuments.

From 1700 onwards, artistic and architectural monuments that are among the most important examples of Austrian Baroque were built in the Wachau. These include the rebuilding of Melk Abbey (begun in 1702), the conversion of the Canons' Abbey in Dürnstein (1715–33), and the large-scale rebuilding of Göttweig Abbey from 1719 onwards.

In the late 18th and early 19th centuries the Wachau began to lose its historic importance. The closures of monasteries in Austria and the secularization of Bavaria destroyed age-old ties. River transportation was increasingly superseded as a result of competition from road transport and from 1909 onwards by the railway. The late 19th century saw a

new perception of the Wachau, as the "Golden Wachau," a blend of history and legend, art and folklore, wine and hospitality. An action committee was set up in 1904 for the economic promotion of the Wachau, with the participation of all the local communities between Krems and Melk. In more recent times, there has been a return to the historical roots of the region, resulting in the intensive promotion of "sustainable" tourism, with the vineyards protected by law.

Description

The Wachau is the name given to the Danube valley between Melk and Krems, together with the slopes and the adjoining *Dunkelsteiner Wald* (Dunkelsteiner Forest) and the southern *Waldviertel*, which are essential parts of the cultural landscape both visually and functionally.

The long water gap cutting through the south fringe of the Bohemian Massif is entirely crystalline, while Tertiary and Quaternary deposits are found in places where the valley broadens out, as well as in the *Spitzer Graben*. Of these, the deposits of clay and loess in the regions of Weissenkirchen and the entrances to the Wachau have a major impact on land configurations.

The *Spitzer Graben*, a left-bank tributary of the Danube, is part of the primeval Danube, which in the Tertiary period flowed to the west of the Wachau on its northern fringe and then followed the present-day course of the river from Spitz onwards. The course of the valley is determined to a large extent by the fault line system of the southern fringe of the Bohemian Massif. Not only the Danube, but also its tributaries of this region follow these geological "weak" points.

Depending on the genesis of the valley landscape, extensive level stretches of the peneplains of the Bohemian Massif alternate with craggy steep slopes, loess-covered gentle surface configurations in the wider parts of the valley, and narrow valley floors. Each of these parts of the landscape reveals specific anthropogenic influences, which are much more intensive on the sunny than on the shady side, the latter largely retaining their original state. Specific locations result from basic spatial conditions, the geological and edaphic environment, and an exposed position. The depth of the valley reinforces the favourable thermal conditions of large areas by effectively screening them against strong winds from the west and in particular from the north.

The small-scale alternation of widely differing local conditions, caused mainly by the relief, has a high degree of ecological relevance. A further significant factor is a marked west–east gradient exerting a Pannonian-Pontic influence in the Lower Wachau, whereas the west is characterized by a Central European transitional climate. In the levelled zones of the peneplain and the upper valley slopes, the harsher plateau climate of the *Waldviertel* prevails. Another characteristic feature is the universal outflow of cold air, which is why the annual mean temperature within the nominated area varies between 9°C in the region of Krems and 5°C around the *Jauerling*.

The basic layouts of the Wachau towns date back to the 11th and 12th centuries. Mautern developed from a 2nd century Roman *castellum* in the 4th and 5th centuries into a fortified small town, and its core has been largely preserved. The forms of settlement that emerged as a result of continuous expansion, mostly during the 16th and 18th

centuries, remained widely unchanged up to the 19th and even the early 20th century. Some villages, such as St Lorenzen and Bacharnsdorf, have their origins in late Roman *burgus* complexes.

The development of the settlements with their homogeneous character becomes evident in the town structures, both in the fabric and arrangement of the houses on mostly irregular lots and in the street patterns, which have remained practically unchanged since the late Middle Ages. Some town centres have been extended to some extent on their outer fringes by the construction of small residential buildings, mostly from 1950 onwards.

Typical features of the medieval market towns are the small fortified castles and towers. In Weissenkirchen there are several examples erected in the 13th and 14th centuries which are still partly visible. Outside the town boundaries are to be found fortifications and barriers dating from the late Middle Ages or the early modern period.

The buildings in the Wachau towns date from more recent periods than the street plans. In the 15th and 16th centuries, stone construction began to replace the wooden peasant and burgher houses. Traces of this are to be seen in the large number of houses built in rubble stone masonry. The constructional material is complemented by the local character of the houses, with hipped and half-hipped roofs emphasizing their cubic form.

The largely uniform house typology ensures the homogeneous character of the old settlement areas. Most of the houses are two-storeyed, with projecting or receding facades, gables, and eaves facing the streets. The vintners' farmsteads, which are oblong, U-shaped, or L-shaped or consist of two parallel buildings, date back to the late Middle Ages and the 16th–17th centuries. In a few towns, such as Schönbühel, Aggsbach-Dorf, and Oberloiben, the buildings date mainly to the 19th and 20th centuries.

The single-storeyed farmsteads, with two to four units arranged around a courtyard (partly with arcades), appear to be two-storeyed because of the sub-cellars that are characteristic of the Wachau. The partly tiled hipped, saddleback, and half-hipped roofs with varying eaves and ridge heights create a diversified pattern. This effect is intensified by some imposing vineyard farmsteads that dominate the townscape, some of them with integrated chapels (eg St Pöltner or Prandtauer Hof in Joching, Kellerschlössl in Dürnstein, Erlahof in Spitz), as well as by numerous historically significant complexes, such as castles, mostly dating from the 16th and 17th centuries (eg Rossatz, Spitz), or by ecclesiastical buildings.

Most of these farmsteads, with lateral gate walls or integrated vaulted passages and service buildings, feature smooth facades, for the most part altered from the 18th and 19th centuries onwards. Street fronts are often accentuated by late-medieval/post-medieval oriels on sturdy brackets, statues in niches, wall paintings, and sgraffito work, or remnants of paintwork (frequently from the late Renaissance or the Mannerist periods, a few from the late Middle Ages) or rich Baroque facades. The late-medieval and post-medieval configuration is still noticeable in many farmsteads and houses – in the strict simple facade design, the ground floor scantily equipped with windows, an elaborate residential floor, and the attic storey. The steeply pitched, towering hipped roof occurs so frequently that it

can be regarded as an architectural characteristic of the Wachau house; in many places, such as the historic building complex of Markt Weissenkirchen, it can still to some extent be found in its original proportion.

In towns or market towns, such as Spitz, Dürnstein, Weissenkirchen, Krems, and Emmersdorf, the vintner house type is joined by a substantial stock of late medieval and post-medieval stately homestead buildings and the houses of burghers, craftsmen, and merchants, particularly in Melk, Krems, Stein, and Emmersdorf. Many houses have preserved their internal layout, mostly from the middle of the 16th century onwards.

Many late medieval farmsteads have retained their interior layout and configuration to a large extent (service rooms on the ground floor, living rooms on the upper floor, followed by the attic storey). On the ground floor, large gates open unto a vaulted passage and/or corridor, as well as the service rooms. Large press rooms are usually situated on the sides (sometimes with preserved wooden press and lever), usually connected from the courtyard side with the sub-cellar, located on the ground level or a little lower, which then leads down to the deep cellar. Weissenkirchen is noted for its extensive cellar systems, often encompassing several storeys (press room, sub-cellar, deep cellar). These rooms, partly stone- or brick-vaulted and partly hewn out of the bedrock, with many niches, are interconnected by steep staircases and have been expanded since the Middle Ages because of an increasing need for space. Large cellars still exist today in, for example, the Kellerschlössl in Dürnstein or near the Erlahof in Spitz, in the so-called Burgstock.

The 18th century buildings which still serve trade and craft purposes and are partly integrated in the town structure, such as taverns or inns, stations for changing draught horses, boat operators' and toll houses, mills, smithies, or salt storehouses, frequently go back to the 15th and 16th centuries.

In 1827, the former *Pionierkaserne* (Engineer Barracks) was built in Krems, where a number of factories and commercial enterprises were also established in the 19th century. The landing stages and stations of the Danube ferry and passenger navigation, as at Aggsbach-Dorf, Spitz, and Rossatzbach, date from the early 20th century. The complex that dominates the townscape of Melk, the Birago Barracks, was built in 1910–13.

On the outskirts of Krems and Melk are to be found largely unchanged buildings from the second half of the 19th century and the early 20th century. From the middle of the 19th century onwards, commercial, industrial, communal, and utilitarian buildings were built as the town expanded. Representative residential buildings, apartment blocks, and villas show Historicist and local-style features (in part Secession-style ornamentation or framework); a district of villas on the model of the *Wiener Cottage Verein* was created in Melk.

A fine example of building in harmony with the landscape is the railway line built in 1909 between Krems and Emmersdorf. It was adapted and adjusted to the topographical conditions as far as possible, making an organic link with the landscape.

There is a number of castles dominating the towns and the Danube valley. Many of them began to fall into decay from

the 15th century onwards. Apart from the ruins of Hinterhaus and Dürnstein, the Aggstein castle ruins are among the most important structures of this type in Austria, by virtue of their size and historic significance, as well as their excellent state of preservation. The smaller knightly castles and other fortified structures from the 13th and 14th centuries are still in evidence, as, for example, at Weissenkirchen. The *Teisenhoferhof*, built in 1439-68, is a castle-type four-wing complex that forms a whole with the fortified church. The *Gozzoburg* in Krems is an example of a town castle which developed from a fortified house of the second half of the 11th century.

Many architecturally and artistically significant ecclesiastical buildings dominate both townscape and landscape. The numerous Gothic and Baroque churches and chapels with their magnificent towers incorporate Romanesque wall cores or the whole or parts of medieval churches. The fortified churches of St Michael and Weissenkirchen are among the outstanding buildings of this type to be found in Lower Austria. Many places of worship feature splendid Baroque interiors and furnishings (with a few late Gothic pieces) or murals dating back to the 12th century.

The extensive complexes of the abbeys of Melk, Dürnstein, and Göttweig, in part dating back to the Middle Ages, are among the finest Baroque buildings in Austria. Towering high up on a rock, Melk Abbey, a perfect exemplar of a Baroque synthesis of the arts, forms the gateway to the Wachau in the west, while Göttweig Abbey, since its refurbishment in the 18th century, symbolizes Baroque imperial demands that went beyond the monastic purposes.

While the Church was the main patron of the arts, the second half of the 16th century was characterized by an increasing tendency on the part of newly prosperous burghers to commission works of art, thus enabling artists to create outstanding works in the fields of painting, sculpture, architecture, and arts and crafts. Around 1500 these artists usually came from Augsburg, Regensburg, and Passau, but the majority of those who came around 1700 were from Italy. Many important Austrian architects, painters, and stuccoists created their main works in this region.

The narrow valley and bends of the Danube prevent any overall view of the Wachau. In the course of the centuries, structures of special significance were built at a number of high points, offering splendid views. The most important of these are Melk Abbey, Schönbühel (castle and monastery), the ruins of Aggstein, Dürnstein, and Hinterhaus, as well as the lookout towers of *Weiglwarte*, *Ferdinandswarte*, and *Donauwarte*.

Management and Protection

Legal status

The preservation of the historic cultural landscape of the Wachau encompasses a number of overlapping levels of protection:

- Federal laws

The first level of protection is afforded by the 1923 Monument Protection Act. It focuses on outstanding historic monuments (of which there are currently some

1000 in the nominated area). Protection covers both the building material and the traditional appearance. The historic, artistic, or other cultural significance and public interest in the conservation of a property is determined in the first instance by the *Bundesdenkmalamt* (Federal Office of Historic Monuments) as the authority responsible for the protection of monuments.

For monuments owned by the federal or a provincial government or certain other corporations under public law, institutions, funds, or legally recognized churches or religious communities, public interest is taken for granted. Thus in the Wachau cultural landscape, all important monumental buildings and other monuments are in public ownership, and all ecclesiastical monuments (churches, monasteries, etc) are listed for preservation. Monuments in private ownership are only listed for preservation if public interest in their conservation is declared as such by notice of the *Bundesdenkmalamt*.

Other federal laws that contribute to the protection of the Wachau are the following: Act on Water Law 1959 (as amended in 1997); measure for the privatization of the waterways board and establishment of the public limited company *Österreichische Donau-Betriebs-Aktiengesellschaft*, 1992; Hydraulic Construction Promotion Act 1985; Hydrography Act 1979; Forestry Act 1975 (as amended in 1995); Environmental Impact Assessment Act 1993 (as amended in 1996).

- Federal regulations

The following regulations are applicable in the Wachau: Waterways Regulation 1985; Regulation of the Federal Minister of Public Economics and Transport concerning traffic regulations for waterways 1993.

- International agreements

The Convention on the Regulation of Navigation on the Danube 1960 and the Inland Navigation Memorandum of the Federal Government 1992 (on occasion of Eastern opening and the completion of the Main-Danube Canal) apply to the Wachau.

- Provincial laws (Lower Austria)

Nature Conservation Act; Environmental Planning Law 1976; Building Code 1996; Provincial Roads Act; Act on Affairs of Power Supply in Lower Austria; Hunting Law 1974; Fishing Law 1988; Camping and Youth Camps Act.

- Regulations of the Lower Austrian Provincial Government

Regulation on Natural Preserves; Regulation on a regional environmental planning programme, Lower Austrian Central Area.

- Additional protective measures

Conservation areas:

Nature Conservation Area Wachau and surroundings (c 46,300ha);

Nature Conservation Area Göttweig Hill and Surroundings (c 225ha)

Nature Reserve Jauerling-Wachau (c 3600 ha).

In addition to the nature conservation areas, a large number of natural monuments are protected by notices issued by the regional administrative authority.

European Diploma Wachau:

On 5 September 1994 the Wachau was inscribed on the list of properties coming within the scope of the "Natura 2000" network of European sites initiated by the European Union. This imposes constraints on development within the designated areas.

Management

The open countryside of the Wachau is largely privately owned and consists of small lots. Much of the forest is owned by farmers, and the remainder by farmers' associations, the Austrian Federal Forests, or the church or local communities.

The historic cultural landscape of the Wachau in the nominated area comprises some 5000 monuments. The majority of these are privately owned, mostly by families who have been residents of the region for many generations. Their awareness of traditional values ensures full preservation of these buildings. This is also true of numerous buildings owned by the Republic of Austria, the *Land* of Lower Austria, and other corporations under public law and the recognized churches.

Overall professional responsibility for the conservation of the historic cultural landscape of the Wachau is vested in the *Bundesdenkmalamt* (Federal Office of Historic Monuments) and the *Landeskonservatorat für Niederösterreich*, both based in Vienna. The former maintains a complete inventory of historic monuments in the Wachau.

For the protected areas (nature conservation areas, nature reserves, natural monuments) responsibility for overall management rests with the *Amt der NÖ Landesregierung, Abteilung Naturschutz* (Office of the Lower Austrian Provincial Government, Nature Protection Department) based in St Pölten. This body also has overall responsibility for the European Diploma Area; at local authority level this is handled by the *Arbeitskreis zum Schutz der Wachau* (Working Party for the Protection of the Wachau), located in Dürnstein.

Conservation and Authenticity

Conservation history

As with any "organically evolved landscape ... which retains an active social role in contemporary society closely associated with the traditional way of life" (*Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*, para 39), it is not appropriate to talk of conscious conservation. The Wachau has developed in response to social and economic forces over several thousand years, and each stage in its evolution has left its mark on the landscape. This historical evolution is abundantly visible in the latter-day landscape.

For a variety of economic, political, and environmental reasons there have been few, if any, radical interventions over history, even in the later decades of the 20th century, which have obliterated or distorted evidence of the organic growth of the Wachau. For the past half-century protective

measures have been progressively introduced which will ensure its conservation in the future.

Authenticity

The authenticity of the Wachau may be judged to be high. It conserves the fundamental elements of a continuing cultural landscape as defined in paragraph 39.ii of the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*: "... one which retains an active social role in contemporary society closely associated with the traditional way of life and in which the evolutionary process is still in progress. At the same time it exhibits significant material evidence of its evolution over time." These qualities are manifested in the agricultural and forested landscape, in the layouts of the towns, and in the conservation and authenticity of individual monuments.

Evaluation

Action by ICOMOS

An ICOMOS expert mission visited the Wachau in April 2000.

Qualities

The Wachau is a stretch of the Danube valley which has high visual landscape qualities, and which retains to a remarkable degree material evidence of its historical evolution over more than two millennia, in the form of towns and villages, outstanding architectural monuments, and a largely vineyard agriculture.

Comparative analysis

The most immediate comparison is with the vineyard landscapes of the middle Rhine and Mosel valleys in Germany. However, neither has conserved its essential historic character so completely as the Wachau, nor such abundant traces of its long history.

In many ways the Wachau can be compared with the Italian cultural landscape of the Cinqueterre, which is already inscribed in the World Heritage List, where there is the same harmonious interrelation between water, mountain ranges, and human settlements. However, in this case the linking feature is the sea rather than a great river, and it lacks the outstanding monumental features in the form of impressive buildings and picturesque historic towns that distinguish the Wachau.

ICOMOS comments

Whilst there is considerable protection by a series of overlapping laws and regulations and a number of bodies at federal, state, and municipal level are responsible for their implementation, ICOMOS believes that it would be desirable to set up some form of coordinating commission to oversee the continued protection and preservation of the defined landscape as a unit. Its membership should comprise representatives of all the institutions involved.

At its meeting in June 2000 the Bureau requested the State Party to establish a coordinating commission on the lines proposed by ICOMOS. Documentation has been supplied which confirms that this request has been complied with by the State Party.

Brief description

The Wachau is a stretch of the Danube of high visual landscape quality which preserves intact and visible many traces, in terms of architecture, urban design, and agricultural use (principally for the cultivation of vines), of its continuous and organic evolution since prehistoric times.

Recommendation

That this property be inscribed on the World Heritage List on the basis of *criteria ii and iv*:

Criterion ii The Wachau is an outstanding example of a riverine landscape bordered by mountains in which material evidence of its long historical evolution has survived to a remarkable degree.

Criterion iv The architecture, the human settlements, and the agricultural use of the land in the Wachau vividly illustrate a basically medieval landscape which has evolved organically and harmoniously over time.

ICOMOS, September 2000

La Wachau (Autriche)

No 970

Identification

<i>Bien proposé</i>	Le paysage culturel de la Wachau
<i>Lieu</i>	Province fédérale (<i>Land</i>) de Basse-Autriche
<i>État partie</i>	République d'Autriche
<i>Date</i>	24 juin 1999

Justification émanant de l'État partie

Le paysage culturel de la Wachau influence depuis longtemps l'urbanisme, la construction, l'architecture séculière et ecclésiastique et l'organisation paysagère propre à la région du Danube.

Par leur architecture, leur développement homogène et leur implantation dans un paysage cultivé par l'homme, les villes, les villages et les hameaux, entourés d'une nature presque intacte, ont une valeur universelle exceptionnelle en tant qu'ouvrages combinés de la nature et de l'homme.

Critère ii

La Wachau possède une rare densité d'exemples de l'interaction entre des activités économique et culturelle dans un paysage donné. Il existe une corrélation forte entre la typologie des monuments historiques et les caractéristiques du paysage.

De nombreuses périodes de l'histoire de l'humanité se reflètent dans ces sites originaux et de haute qualité, dominés par des églises, des monastères, des châteaux et des ruines, tous ces monuments étant d'une qualité remarquable au niveau européen. Ils se trouvent dans un paysage naturel d'une beauté étonnante, dont l'aménagement et les éléments, témoins des étapes successives de l'histoire, sont restés inchangés.

Critère iv

Par comparaison avec les paysages de cours d'eau européens, la Wachau conserve un degré exceptionnel d'authenticité et d'intégrité historique, à l'abri des nuisances industrielles ou technologiques et des impacts dommageables sur l'environnement.

À une époque où de nombreux sites et paysages traditionnels européens sont menacés par des changements irréversibles, le paysage culturel historique de la Wachau constitue un exemple exceptionnel d'interaction fructueuse entre les réalisations humaines et l'environnement naturel intact. On peut dire à juste titre que ce paysage est dans un

état exemplaire de conservation en termes de passé culturel, de topographie, d'espace naturel et d'écologie.

Critère v

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, le bien proposé est un ensemble de *sites*. C'est aussi un paysage culturel, tel que défini au paragraphe 39 des *Orientations devant guider la mise en œuvre de la Convention du patrimoine mondial*.

Histoire et description

Histoire

Le défrichement des sous-bois de la forêt de la Wachau a commencé à la période Néolithique, bien que le paysage n'ait pas connu d'évolution radicale avant l'an 800 après J.-C., lorsque les monastères de Bavière et de Salzbourg ont commencé à cultiver les pentes de la Wachau, créant le paysage actuel de vignobles en terrasses. Dans les siècles qui ont suivi, les superficies cultivées ont varié pour diverses raisons : les changements climatiques, le commerce du vin, le manque cruel de main d'œuvre provoquant l'envolée des salaires au XVIIIe siècle.

La forêt reprit donc ses droits sur les hauteurs, au-dessus des vignobles, et la viticulture pratiquée dans les vallées fut remplacée par d'autres activités agricoles. Les sols des terres en jachère, dégradés par des tentatives malheureuses d'exploitation agricole, n'ont jamais retrouvé leur qualité d'origine, ce qui explique les différents types de végétation particulière présents dans ces habitats (herbages, buissons et bois).

Au XVIIIe siècle, la culture de la vigne sur coteaux fut vivement encouragée dans les régions qui s'y prêtaient le mieux d'un point de vue écologique. Les zones ainsi délaissées furent transformées en pâturages, avec les conséquences économiques qui en découlèrent : certaines fermes durent cesser leur activité pendant que d'autres s'agrandissaient. C'est à cette époque que la viticulture fut définitivement abandonnée dans les terres hautes de la Wachau.

Les changements intervenus dans la campagne au XIXe siècle affectèrent particulièrement la Wachau. L'apparition du phylloxera, les ravages de la guerre et la concurrence accrue du Burgenland et de l'Italie ont nécessité la réorganisation des activités, des superficies cultivées, des méthodes de viticulture et du travail de la terre. La culture de l'abricot, qui caractérise la Wachau depuis lors, s'est développée dans les vallées et les collines les plus basses. Le rapport des superficies de vignobles et de culture fruitière continue d'être étroitement lié aux fluctuations récurrentes des marchés de ces produits et donne à la Wachau son aspect caractéristique.

La présence de l'homme dans la Wachau remonte au Paléolithique, comme l'attestent les statuettes de Galgenberg (environ 32 000 ans) et de Willendorf (26 000 ans). La région de Krems et de Melk avait une

forte densité de population au Néolithique (4500–1800 av. J.-C.), et les trouvailles datant de l'âge du bronze (1800–800 avant J.-C.) sont nombreuses. Pendant l'âge du fer, la culture illyrienne de Hallstatt (800–400 avant notre ère) laissa progressivement place à celle de la Tène venue de l'ouest : à cette époque, le royaume celte du Norique se développa au sud du Danube.

Lorsque les Romains annexèrent le Norique en l'an 15 avant J.-C., le Danube devint la frontière nord (*limes*) avec les peuples germaniques. Mautern (*Favianis*) était une ville frontière de garnison très importante où stationnait l'une des flottes romaines du Danube. Le *limes* s'effondra à la fin du IV^e siècle et le Norique se retrouva sur l'une des principales routes d'invasion du nord.

En 453, saint Séverin, « l'apôtre du Norique », fonda la première communauté monastique de la province située hors des murs de Mautern, qui devint ainsi un centre spirituel et religieux très important, où les pèlerins se rassemblaient avant de partir pour l'Italie.

La première mention du nom de « Wachau » date de 853, dans l'expression *locus Wahowa*. Krems est citée pour la première fois en 995 sous le nom de *Urbs Chremisa*, c'est la plus ancienne ville autrichienne jamais mentionnée dans un document. La Wachau est le théâtre de la chanson des *Nibelungen*, le grand poème épique allemand, écrit peu après 1200, qui relate la situation politique de l'époque. Il mentionne des villes de la Wachau : Pöchlarn (*Bechelaren*), Melk (*Medelike*) et Mautern (*Mutoren*).

En 976, Léopold I^{er} fit passer la Wachau sous la domination des margraves de Babenberg. En 1156, la Marche autrichienne fut élevée en duché et accordée à Henri II Jasomirgott de Babenberg qui renonça à ses prétentions sur la Bavière.

La grande famille des chevaliers de la Wachau, les Kuenrings, s'installa dans la Marche des Babenberg au XI^e siècle. Lorsque la lignée s'éteignit, la majeure partie de leurs terres échut au duc Albert V (roi Albert II) en 1430. En raison du morcellement des propriétés foncières et de l'absence d'un cadre administratif unifié, les bourgeois de la Wachau ont joui dès le Moyen Âge d'une grande liberté, renforcée par l'*ius montanum de vinea*. Les quatre villes de St Michael, Wösendorf, Joching et Weissenkirchen formèrent une communauté indépendante de 1150 à 1839 qui fut de nouveau réunie en 1972 sous le nom de la Wachau ou de Tal Wachau.

Après la consolidation du pouvoir des Habsbourg, la Wachau fut encore à plusieurs reprises la scène de conflits armés. Lors des invasions hongroises de la fin du XV^e siècle, Mathias Corvin assiégea Krems et Stein en 1477.

Les effets de la Contre-Réforme (1530-1620) ont été importants dans la Wachau, le protestantisme ayant été finalement réprimé par l'abbé de Göttweig, Georg II Falb (1612–1631). Le soutien que ce religieux apporta à onze abbayes bénédictines eut une influence décisive sur le rayonnement du pouvoir des abbayes autrichiennes, notamment celle de Göttweig, pendant la période baroque. La victoire sur les protestants se traduisit par la

construction d'églises, de chapelles et de petits monuments votifs.

À partir de 1700, les édifices et les œuvres artistiques qui comptent parmi les plus beaux exemples du baroque autrichien furent construits dans la Wachau. Il s'agit de la reconstruction de l'abbaye de Melk (commencée en 1702), de la transformation de l'abbaye des Canons à Dürnstein (1715-1733) et des grands travaux de reconstruction de l'abbaye de Göttweig à partir de 1719.

À la fin du XVIII^e siècle et au début du XIX^e siècle, la Wachau vit décliner son importance historique. La fermeture des monastères en Autriche et la sécularisation de la Bavière sonna le glas des liens ancestraux. Le transport fluvial s'effaça devant la concurrence des transports routiers et, à partir de 1909, devant celle des transports ferroviaires. À la fin du XIX^e siècle, la Wachau, fut perçue différemment, comme étant la « Wachau dorée » un mélange d'histoire et de légende, d'art et de folklore, de vin et d'hospitalité. Un comité d'action fut formé en 1904 pour promouvoir économiquement la Wachau, avec la participation de toutes les communes situées entre Krems et Melk. Plus récemment, la volonté d'un retour aux sources historiques de la région s'est traduit par la promotion d'un « tourisme durable », et la protection des vignobles par la loi.

Description

La Wachau est le nom donné à la vallée du Danube entre Melk et Krems ainsi qu'aux versants et à la forêt voisine de Dunkelstein et du sud du Waldviertel qui forment une part essentielle du paysage culturel tant par leur aspect que par leur fonction.

Le fleuve a creusé son lit dans la frange sud du massif cristallin de Bohême et déposé des roches détritiques du tertiaire et du quaternaire aux endroits où la vallée s'élargit, ainsi que dans le Spitzer Graben. Les dépôts d'argile et de loess dans les environs de Weissenkirchen et les sites donnant l'accès à la Wachau ont eu un impact majeur sur la configuration des terres.

Le Spitzer Graben, affluent de la rive gauche du Danube, fait partie du Danube primitif qui, au tertiaire, coulait vers l'ouest de la Wachau en empruntant le côté nord avant de revenir sur son cours actuel, en aval de Spitz. L'orientation de la vallée est déterminée en grande partie par le phénomène de l'effondrement de la frange sud du massif de Bohême. Le Danube et ses affluents se sont fait un passage aux endroits géologiquement « faibles » de cette région.

Compte tenu de la formation de la vallée, les grandes retombées des pénéplaines du massif de Bohême alternent avec des grands bassins recouverts de loess, des pentes escarpées et des gorges étroites. Le paysage porte les marques de l'activité de l'homme, bien plus prononcées à l'adret qu'à l'ubac qui est essentiellement resté dans son état d'origine. Le caractère de chaque lieu est déterminé par sa position géographique, sa géologie, son environnement édaphique et son exposition. La profondeur de la vallée renforce l'effet favorable des conditions thermiques sur de vastes zones en les protégeant des vents violents de l'ouest et surtout du nord.

La succession rapide des conditions locales très différentes, essentiellement due au relief, a des effets certains sur l'écologie. Autre élément important, l'orientation ouest-est qui exerce une influence de la région panonienne pontique sur la Basse-Wachau, alors que sa partie occidentale connaît un climat d'Europe centrale transitionnel. Dans les zones planes de la pénélaine et en haut de la vallée domine le climat plus rude du plateau du Waldviertel. Enfin, un courant d'air froid fait régner une température moyenne annuelle comprise entre 9°C dans la région de Krems et 5°C autour de Jauerling.

Le plan des villes de la Wachau date des XI^e et XII^e siècles. C'est à partir d'un *castellum* romain du II^e siècle que Mautern s'est développée aux IV^e et V^e siècles en une petite ville fortifiée, dont le centre est largement préservé. Les formes d'habitat qui ont accompagné l'expansion continue de la région, surtout aux XVI^e et XVIII^e siècles, sont restées inchangées jusqu'au XIX^e siècle et même jusqu'au début du XX^e siècle. Quelques villages, comme St Lorenzen et Bacharnsdorf, étaient, à l'origine, des *burgus* de la fin de l'époque romaine.

L'homogénéité des habitats et des structures urbaines est visible, à la fois dans le tissu urbain, dans l'implantation des maisons sur des parcelles pour la plupart irrégulières et dans le tracé des rues qui est pratiquement le même depuis la fin du Moyen Âge. Certains centres villes se sont agrandis sur leurs limites extérieures avec la construction de petits bâtiments résidentiels, surtout à partir de 1950.

Les petits châteaux fortifiés et les tours sont typiques des villes de marché médiévales. À Weissenkirchen il en existe plusieurs exemples, édifiés aux XIII^e et XIV^e siècles, qui sont encore en partie visibles. Autour des villes subsistent des fortifications et des barrières érigées à la fin du Moyen Âge ou au début de l'époque moderne.

Les bâtiments des villes de la Wachau sont plus récents que le tracé de leurs rues. Aux XV^e et XVI^e siècles, les constructions en pierre commencèrent à remplacer les maisons de bois des paysans et des bourgeois. On trouve des traces de cette évolution dans le grand nombre de maisons construites en moellons. Ce matériau de construction est caractéristique du style local, tout comme les toits à croupe ou à demi-croupe, qui accentuent la forme cubique des maisons.

L'uniformité de l'architecture des maisons renforce le caractère homogène des quartiers anciens. La plupart des maisons sont construites sur deux niveaux, avec façades en surplomb ou en retrait, pignon et avant-toit sur la rue. Les fermes des négociants en vin, de forme oblongue, en U, en L ou constituées de deux bâtiments parallèles, datent de la fin du Moyen Âge et des XVI^e et XVII^e siècles. Dans quelques villes, comme Schönbühel, Aggsbach-Dorf et Oberloiben, les bâtiments ont surtout été construits au XIX^e et au XX^e siècle.

Les fermes construites sur un niveau, comportant deux à quatre corps de bâtiments disposés autour d'une cour (en partie avec des arcades), donnent l'impression d'avoir deux étages en raison des caves semi-enterrées ou de plain-pied, d'un usage courant dans la Wachau. Les toits en

bâtière, à croupe ou à demi-croupe, partiellement recouverts de tuiles, la diversité des avant-toits et des hauteurs de faitage, créent une vision attrayante. Cet effet est rehaussé par quelques fermes viticoles qui dominent la ville, certaines ayant leur propre chapelle comme St Pöltner ou Prandtauer Hof à Joching, Kellerschlössl à Dürnstein, Erlahof à Spitz, ainsi que par de nombreux ensembles de bâtiments d'importance historique, tels que des châteaux, datant surtout des XVI^e et XVII^e siècles, notamment à Rossatz et à Spitz, ou par des bâtiments ecclésiastiques.

La plupart de ces fermes, dotées d'un mur d'enceinte percé d'un portail latéral ou de passages voûtés et de bâtiments annexes, ont des façades lisses, presque toutes modifiées à partir du XVIII^e et du XIX^e siècle. Les façades donnant sur la rue sont souvent ornées de fenêtres en saillie posées sur de solides corbeaux (fin du Moyen Âge ou époque post-médiévale), de statues dans des niches, de peintures murales, de sgraffites et de traces de peintures anciennes - datant souvent de la fin de la Renaissance ou de l'époque maniériste, quelques-unes de la fin du Moyen Âge - ou bien de riches décors baroques. La configuration typique de la fin du Moyen Âge ou de l'époque post-médiévale est encore très visible dans de nombreuses fermes et maisons : la rigueur et la simplicité des façades, le rez-de-chaussée percé de rares fenêtres, un étage résidentiel soigné et l'étage des combles. Les toitures à croupe et les combles à forte pente se rencontrent si fréquemment qu'on peut les considérer comme typiques de la Wachau ; elles conservent très souvent leurs proportions d'origine, comme c'est le cas dans l'ensemble historique de Markt Weissenkirchen.

Dans les cités et les villes de marché, comme Spitz, Dürnstein, Weissenkirchen, Krems et Emmersdorf, autour de la maison-type du négociant en vins se sont implantés de nombreux bâtiments imposants, médiévaux ou post-médiévaux, et des maisons de bourgeois (artisans et commerçants), en particulier à Melk, Krems, Stein et Emmersdorf. De nombreuses maisons ont conservé leur agencement intérieur, surtout depuis le milieu du XVI^e siècle.

De nombreuses fermes de la fin du Moyen Âge ont conservé dans une large mesure leur configuration et agencement intérieur d'origine : locaux de service au rez-de-chaussée, logements au premier étage et au-dessus, les combles. Au rez-de-chaussée, de grandes portes d'entrée ouvrent sur un passage voûté et/ou un couloir ainsi que sur les locaux de service. La salle du pressoir est généralement située sur le côté de la maison (parfois certaines fermes conservent le pressoir et le levier en bois), ouvre souvent directement sur la cour et communie avec la cave à vin, construite de plain-pied ou légèrement enterrée, donnant accès à la cave souterraine. Weissenkirchen est remarquable par son réseau de caves souvent construit sur plusieurs niveaux (pressoir, cave semi-enterrée et cave en sous-sol). Ces salles voûtées, construites en pierre ou en brique, en partie taillées dans la roche, comportant de nombreuses niches, sont reliées entre elles par des escaliers raides et ont été agrandies depuis le Moyen Âge pour répondre au besoin d'espace supplémentaire. Il existe toujours de grandes caves, par exemple au Kellerschlössl à Dürnstein ou près de Erlahof à Spitz, dans ce qu'on appelle le Burgstock.

Les bâtiments du XVIII^e siècle, qui abritent toujours des activités commerciales ou artisanales et sont pour la plupart intégrés à la ville - tavernes ou auberges, relais de poste pour changer les chevaux, locaux de batellerie, bureaux de péage, moulins, forges, entrepôts de sel – datent souvent du XV^e et du XVI^e siècle.

En 1827, l'ancienne *Pionierkaserne* (caserne du Génie) fut construite à Krems, où s'établirent plusieurs entreprises commerciales et usines au XIX^e siècle. Les quais et les gares du ferry du Danube et l'activité du transport fluvial des passagers, comme à Aggsbach-Dorf, Spitz et Rossatzbach, datent du début du XX^e siècle. L'ensemble qui domine le paysage urbain, la caserne de Birago, fut construit entre 1910 et 1913.

Dans les faubourgs de Krems et de Melk se trouvent des bâtiments de la seconde moitié du XIX^e siècle et du début du XX^e siècle demeurés intacts. À partir du milieu du XIX^e siècle, les bâtiments utilitaires, communaux, industriels et commerciaux, furent bâtis en même temps que les villes s'agrandissaient. Des quartiers résidentiels composés d'immeubles d'habitation et de villas, possèdent des caractéristiques historicistes et locales (par exemple : ornementation et architecture de style Sécession); un quartier de pavillons s'inspirant du mouvement viennois *Wiener Cottage Verein* a été construit à Melk.

La ligne de chemin de fer construite en 1909 entre Krems et Emmersdorf fournit un bel exemple d'intégration harmonieuse dans le paysage. Elle s'adapte autant que possible à la topographie jusqu'à se confondre avec le paysage.

Un certain nombre de châteaux dominant les villes et la vallée du Danube. Beaucoup d'entre eux ont commencé à tomber en ruine dès le XV^e siècle. Outre les ruines des châteaux de Hinterhaus et Dürnstein, celles du château d'Aggstein comptent parmi les plus importantes de ce type en Autriche, par leurs dimensions et leur importance historique ainsi que par leur excellent état de conservation. De plus petits châteaux de chevaliers et autres structures fortifiées des XIII^e et XIV^e siècles sont encore visibles, comme par exemple à Weissenkirchen. Le château de *Teisenhoferhof*, construit entre 1439 et 1468, est un ensemble typique formé de quatre ailes et d'une église fortifiée. Le *Gozzoburg* à Krems est un exemple de château construit au milieu d'une ville à partir d'une maison fortifiée datant de la seconde moitié du XI^e siècle.

De nombreux édifices ecclésiastiques, importants du point de vue artistique et architectural, dominant le paysage de la ville et de la campagne. Les nombreuses églises et chapelles gothiques et baroques, avec leurs magnifiques tours, comportent dans leurs structures des murs romans, ou des parties ou parfois la totalité d'églises médiévales. Parmi les églises fortifiées de Basse Autriche, celles de St Michael et de Weissenkirchen se distinguent. De nombreux lieux de dévotion possèdent de splendides mobiliers et intérieurs baroques (avec quelques œuvres gothiques) ou des fresques datant du XII^e siècle.

Les grands ensembles des abbayes de Melk, Dürnstein et Göttweig, datant en partie du Moyen Âge, comptent parmi les plus beaux bâtiments baroques d'Autriche. Perchée sur son rocher, l'abbaye de Melk, exemple parfait de la

synthèse baroque des arts, surveille l'entrée de la vallée de la Wachau à l'ouest, tandis que l'abbaye de Göttweig, depuis sa restauration au XVIII^e siècle, symbolise les exigences impériales baroques au-delà des objectifs monastiques.

Dans la seconde moitié du XVI^e siècle, alors que l'Église demeurait le principal mécène des arts, la bourgeoisie jouissant d'une prospérité nouvelle commença à passer des commandes aux artistes qui créèrent ainsi des œuvres remarquables dans les domaines de la peinture, de la sculpture, de l'architecture et de l'artisanat. Vers 1500, les artistes les plus recherchés venaient généralement d'Augsbourg, de Regensburg et de Passau, mais en 1700, la majorité d'entre eux venait d'Italie. De nombreux architectes, peintres et sculpteurs ornemanistes en stuc autrichiens créèrent leurs œuvres majeures dans cette région.

L'étroitesse de la vallée et les méandres du Danube ne permettent pas d'embrasser d'un seul regard l'ensemble de la Wachau. Au cours des siècles, des édifices d'une importance particulière furent bâtis sur les sommets, offrant des vues splendides, les plus célèbres étant l'abbaye de Melk, le site de Schönbühel (château et monastère), les ruines d'Aggstein, de Dürnstein et d'Hinterhaus, ainsi que les tours de guet, telles la *Weiglwarte*, la *Ferdinandswarte* et la *Donauwarte*.

Gestion et protection

Statut juridique

Le système de préservation du paysage culturel historique de la Wachau comprend plusieurs niveaux de protection qui se chevauchent :

- Les lois fédérales

La loi sur la protection des monuments de 1923 correspond au premier niveau de protection. Elle concerne les monuments historiques exceptionnels (dont il existe quelque mille exemples dans la zone du bien proposé pour inscription). Les mesures de protection couvrent à la fois les matériaux de construction et l'aspect traditionnel. L'importance historique, artistique et culturelle et l'intérêt public pour la sauvegarde d'un bien sont déterminés en premier lieu par le *Bundesdenkmalamt* (bureau fédéral des Monuments Historiques), autorité responsable de la protection des monuments.

En ce qui concerne les monuments qui sont la propriété de la Fédération ou du Land ou de certaines entreprises de droit public, institutions et fondations ou églises et communautés religieuses reconnues par la loi, leur intérêt public est admis d'office. C'est ainsi que tous les monuments importants du paysage culturel de la Wachau, qu'ils soient grands ou modestes, sont des biens publics, de même que tous les monuments ecclésiastiques (églises, monastères, etc.) sont protégés par la loi. Les monuments détenus par des propriétaires privés ne sont inscrits sur la liste des monuments protégés que si leur sauvegarde a fait l'objet d'une déclaration du *Bundesdenkmalamt*.

D'autres lois fédérales contribuent à la protection de la Wachau : la loi sur l'eau de 1959 (modifiée en 1997) ; des mesures en faveur de la privatisation des établissements des voies navigables et de la création de l'entreprise publique *Österreichische Donau-Betriebs-Aktiengesellschaft* en 1992 ; la loi sur la promotion de la construction hydraulique de 1985 ; la loi sur l'hydrographie de 1979 ; la loi sur les forêts de 1975 (amendée en 1995) ; la loi sur les études d'impact environnemental de 1993 (amendée en 1996).

- *Les réglementations fédérales*

Les réglementations suivantes sont applicables dans la Wachau : réglementation sur les voies navigables de 1985 ; réglementation de 1993 du ministère fédéral de l'Économie Publique et des Transports en matière de voies navigables.

- *Les accords internationaux*

La convention sur la réglementation de la navigation sur le Danube de 1960 et le mémorandum du gouvernement fédéral de 1992 sur la navigation fluviale, rédigé à l'occasion de l'achèvement du canal Main-Danube, s'applique à la Wachau.

- *Les lois provinciales (Basse-Autriche)*

Loi sur la préservation de la nature ; loi sur la planification environnementale de 1976 ; code de la construction de 1996 ; loi sur les routes provinciales ; loi sur la fourniture d'électricité en Basse-Autriche ; loi sur la chasse de 1974 ; loi sur la pêche de 1988 ; loi sur le camping et les camps de jeunes.

- *Réglementations du gouvernement de la province de Basse-Autriche*

Loi sur la préservation de la nature ; réglementation sur la planification de l'environnement régional pour la région centrale de la Basse-Autriche.

- *Autres mesures de protection*

Zone de conservation :

Zone de protection de la nature : la Wachau et ses environs (environ 46 300 ha) ;

Zone de préservation de la nature : colline de Göttweig et ses environs (environ 225 ha)

Réserve naturelle de Jauerling-Wachau (environ 3600 ha).

En plus des zones de préservation de la nature, de nombreux monuments naturels sont protégés par décision des autorités administratives régionales.

Reconnaissance de la Wachau au niveau européen :

Le 5 septembre 1994, la Wachau a été inscrite sur la liste des biens du réseau européen d'espaces protégés « Natura 2000 » mis en place par l'Union européenne et qui impose des contraintes de développement sur les régions concernées.

Gestion

La campagne de la Wachau est morcelée en petites propriétés privées. La plupart des forêts sont privées et appartiennent à des fermes individuelles, certaines à des coopératives agricoles, d'autres au domaine forestier autrichien, à l'église et aux communes.

Le paysage culturel historique de la Wachau dans la zone proposée pour inscription compte quelque 5000 monuments. La majorité d'entre eux appartient à des propriétaires privés, essentiellement des familles qui, installées dans la région depuis plusieurs générations, sont conscientes des valeurs traditionnelles et assurent la préservation totale des constructions. Il en va de même des nombreux édifices que possèdent la République d'Autriche, le *Land* de Basse-Autriche ou d'autres organisations de droit public et les églises reconnues.

La responsabilité technique de la préservation du paysage culturel historique de la Wachau est assumée par le *Bundesdenkmalamt* (bureau fédéral des Monuments Historiques) et par le *Landeskonservatorat für Niederösterreich*, tous deux ayant leur siège à Vienne. Le premier est chargé de faire l'inventaire complet des monuments historiques de la Wachau.

La gestion globale des zones protégées (zones de préservation de la nature, réserves naturelles, monuments naturels), incombe à l'*Amt der NÖ Landesregierung, Abteilung Naturschutz* (Office du gouvernement du Land de Basse-Autriche, service chargé de la protection de la nature) basé à St Pölten. Cet office est également responsable de la zone spéciale de conservation « Natura 2000 » du programme européen. Au niveau des autorités locales, ce dossier est pris en charge par l'*Arbeitskreis zum Schutz der Wachau* (groupe de travail pour la protection de la Wachau), ayant son siège à Dürnstein.

Conservation et authenticité

Historique de la conservation

Comme pour tout « paysage essentiellement évolutif ... qui conserve un rôle social actif dans la société contemporaine étroitement associé au mode de vie traditionnel... » (*Orientations devant guider la mise en œuvre de la Convention du patrimoine mondial*, paragraphe 39), il ne convient pas de parler de conservation consciente. La Wachau a évolué sous l'action des forces économiques et sociales depuis plusieurs millénaires, et chaque étape de son évolution a imprimé sa marque sur le paysage. Les traces de cette évolution historique sont très visibles dans le paysage actuel.

Pour diverses raisons économiques, politiques et environnementales, il s'est produit peu de changements radicaux à travers les âges, et même dans les dernières décennies du XXe siècle, qui aient effacé ou dénaturé les témoignages de la croissance évolutive de la Wachau. Depuis cinquante ans, l'introduction progressive des mesures de protection permet d'assurer l'avenir de la préservation de la Wachau.

Authenticité

Le degré d'authenticité de la Wachau est élevé. Elle conserve les éléments fondamentaux d'un paysage culturel vivant tel que défini au paragraphe 39.ii des *Orientations devant guider la mise en œuvre de la Convention du patrimoine mondial* : « un paysage qui conserve un rôle social actif dans la société contemporaine étroitement associé au mode de vie traditionnel et dans lequel le processus évolutif continue. En même temps, il montre des preuves manifestes de son évolution au cours des temps ». Ces caractéristiques sont illustrées dans le paysage agricole et boisé, dans la disposition des villes et dans la conservation et l'authenticité des monuments individuels.

Évaluation

Action de l'ICOMOS

Une mission d'expertise de l'ICOMOS a visité la Wachau en avril 2000.

Caractéristiques

La Wachau est une partie de la vallée du Danube qui possède un paysage de haute qualité visuelle et qui conserve, à un degré remarquable, des témoignages matériels de l'histoire de son évolution sur plus de deux mille ans, sous la forme de villes et de villages, de monuments architecturaux exceptionnels et d'une économie agricole largement dominée par la culture de la vigne.

Analyse comparative

La comparaison s'impose avec les paysages viticoles allemands des vallées moyennes du Rhin et de la Moselle. Aucun de ces deux paysages n'a toutefois conservé son caractère historique de manière aussi complète que la Wachau, ni une telle abondance de témoignages de sa longue histoire.

À maints égards, la Wachau est comparable au paysage culturel italien de Cinqueterre, déjà inscrit sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial et dont le paysage allie avec harmonie l'eau, les massifs montagneux et l'habitat humain. Cinqueterre se distingue cependant de la Wachau par la dimension aquatique qui est donnée par la mer, et non pas par un grand fleuve, et par l'absence de caractéristiques monumentales exceptionnelles qu'offrent les édifices imposants et les villes historiques pittoresques qui distinguent la vallée de la Wachau.

Observations de l'ICOMOS

Bien qu'il existe toute une série de lois et de réglementations qui se chevauchent et assurent une protection considérable à la Wachau et qu'un nombre important d'institutions au niveau fédéral, gouvernemental et municipal soit responsable de leur mise en œuvre, l'ICOMOS pense qu'il serait souhaitable de mettre en place une sorte de commission de coordination qui superviserait la protection et la préservation du paysage de la Wachau dans son ensemble. Ses membres comprendraient tous les représentants des institutions impliquées.

À l'occasion de sa réunion en juin 2000, le Bureau a demandé à l'État partie d'établir une commission de coordination selon les directives proposées par l'ICOMOS. La documentation qui a été fournie confirme que l'État partie a accédé à cette demande.

Brève description

La Wachau est une partie de la vallée du Danube dont le paysage de haute qualité visuelle conserve intactes un grand nombre de traces - architecturales, urbaines et agricoles (principalement la culture de la vigne) - de son évolution vivante et continue depuis les temps préhistoriques.

Recommandation

Que ce bien soit inscrit sur la liste du Patrimoine mondial sur la base des *critères ii et iv*:

Critère ii La Wachau est un exemple exceptionnel de paysage fluvial bordé de montagnes dans lequel les témoignages matériels de sa longue évolution historique ont remarquablement survécu.

Critère iv L'architecture, l'habitat humain et l'utilisation agricole des terres de la Wachau illustrent de façon vivante un paysage essentiellement médiéval qui a évolué naturellement et harmonieusement à travers les âges.

ICOMOS, septembre 2000