

POTSDAM SANSSOUCI

World Cultural Heritage since 1990

Engineering geological conditions and problems:

The town of Potsdam and the surrounding glacigenous landscape is embedded within the morphologic mosaic of the middle Brandenburg "zone of plates and lowlands", whose appearance is the result of the last glacial epoch (Weichsel glaciation) and the subsequent Holocene processes.

The park of Sanssouci was built into an east-west orientated depression filled with valley sands (glacial spillway deposits), which are overlain by Holocene limnic, aquatic or floodplain sands.

The castle of Sanssouci and the adjoining buildings are situated at the top and the south slope of a push (end) moraine complex (Weichsel glaciation).



Parkside from South

Hydrogeological Situation:

Due to the geologic setting the hydrogeology of the Sanssouci area is very inhomogeneous. There are two aquifers, the upper one is uncovered. Its thickness ranges from 2.5 to 25 m. Along the valley bottom the groundwater table is positioned at about 1.5 - 2.5 m below surface, whereas on the top of the hill, nearby the castle or the orangery, it is expected to be more than 10 m below the surface. Groundwater flow is directed from the highland to the valley towards the south-southwest, in the lowlands towards the west. Here flow velocity is about 0.1 - 0.2 m per day.

The hydrochemistry is influenced by ascending deep saline waters of adjacent areas.



Sanssouci palace

Other information:

1744 Frederic II "the Great" (24.01.1712 - 17.08.1786) ordered a small palace to be built on the former "Wüsten Berg". He wanted the palace to be without a cellar, in contrast to his friend and architect Knobelsdorf. "If you walk through Sanssouci in winter, you will be able to feel why this was a big mistake."

Building started in 1745 and was completed in 1747. After the Seven Years War, Frederic II decided to leave Berlin and live in Potsdam, where, according to the legend, he could be "without worries" (French = "sans souci"). In the same year 1744, Frederic II had already ordered a mausoleum to be built for himself. However, until 1991, only his dogs were buried there. He himself was first buried in the Garnisonskirche in Potsdam, later in the village of Hechingen. Finally 1991 he was buried on the terrace of Sanssouci as he had decided in lifetime.

References on studies already performed:

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