

THE CONCEPT OF CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION OF WORKS OF ARCHITECTURE

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The history of preservation of historic sites and buildings has been affected by continuous changes and development of views on methods of protection and restoration of architectural heritage. The reasons for these changes in the conceptual approach can be found in the constant transformation of social and economic situation, the impact of ideologies and politics, the cultural level of society, and also in scientific and technological progress. Paradoxically, a high degree of synthesis of knowledge and a wider range of possibilities offered by technological progress in the 19th century resulted in the loss of original works due to the effort to present the most valuable cultural layer, while replacing the original works with their copies and destroying or transforming historic structures in favour of new aesthetic canons. The irreplaceable loss of the original substance has placed the authenticity of the cultural phenomenon on the highest level of the imaginary value ladder. In the 20th century, the concept of preservation of historic sites and monuments has been influenced by modernism and postmodernism, but the most notable impact has been left by the experience with the two world wars that radically reduced the historic building fund in Europe. Today's conservation and restoration of sites and monuments are based on international conventions and documents about the protection and restoration of historic architecture; and through the relevant institutions, the basic concepts of heritage preservation have been developed. They are based on established

methodologies, though the generalised application of these principles is not a success and satisfactory answers are not available for difficult challenges of the day—such as the completion of the settlement around the Bratislava castle's hill. The correct definition of the historic sites and monuments restoration concept depends on all the parties involved in the restoration, whether they can identify the factors influencing the choices as objectively as possible, and determine their level of importance. However, the exact assessment of cultural and historical value of the architectural work, its correct interpretation and true presentation are an essential prerequisite. Properly chosen concepts must be preceded with the preparation of alternative solutions and critical selection of the most appropriate one. Most determinants of the concept are temporally and socially variable over time, so the only “true-false test” is the realisation of the restoration and its evaluation from the perspective of the next generation.

PERSPECTIVES OF THE SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE

REFLECTIONS ON EUROPEAN SCHOOLS OF ARCHITECTURE AND THEIR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS

Jana Fečkaninová

The article “Reflections on the European Schools of Architecture and their Educational Systems” addresses the issue of spatial context of buildings of schools of architecture with regard to their institutional character and teaching methods. In the intersection of these two areas of study arise schools of various spatial forms, with respect to both their architectural image and spatial requirements,

especially with respect to their different use and understanding of functionally identical units. The paper focuses on the representation of the school's conceptual internal system in its physical form—a building.

The article describes the selected schools of architecture since the beginning of the institutional formation of the architectural schools in Europe up to the current architectural education full of progressive strategies, which have their significant place with respect to the milestones in education in this field. For research purposes, the best and globally well-respected European schools of architecture have been selected, with as many distinct and unique teaching systems and unique buildings as possible. They have been chosen because of their specific characteristics and diversity, therefore, schools public and private, technical and artistic have been selected. These are schools whose architecture of the building still reflects refers to the initial intention with which they were established, whether they were designed for the particular purpose to be a school of architecture or were transformed to fulfil this function later on. The only criteria limiting the selection of the architectural schools researched is their geographic location—Europe, which, with respect to the context, is naturally the closest to Slovakia.

Since there are circa 1,350 architectural schools all over the world, including approx. 400 schools in Europe, the research of the selected schools of architecture covers not only specific types of characteristic forms of the schools under review, but primarily offers broader understanding of the principles of architectural education, which majority of the architectural schools apply,

though on a much smaller scale and with a more diverse combination of foreign modules. Through the study of these various systems of teaching in connection with their manifestation in particular architectural schools, the article outlines the various concepts of the ideal school of architecture nowadays.

MODERN KINDERGARTENS PLAY ON THE BRINK OF EXTINCTION?

A NEW TOY DIMENSION

Lívía Kožušková

The term “Play” is naturally associated with children. It is the basis of emotional well-being and mental health of a child and affects its balanced development, whether psychologically or physically. “Play” is such an important component of human life that the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights has acknowledged “Play” as the most important primary need of every child. Through “Play”, children naturally learn, without any pressure, even before they are part of the organized education system.

Our Institute of Interior and Exhibition Design /Faculty of Architecture of the Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava/ has studied the extensive topic of “Design and its function in prevention of the civilization impact on pre-school children” for the past 4 years, following the grant project: “Interior design as the medium of preventing and treating civilization diseases”. The present article is a partial output of the project which focuses on the role and status of “Play” in context of the current lifestyle and describes how “Play” has developed, transformed and changed in time, what changes have occurred with respect to the

way “we play nowadays” and what impact the changes have had in general on the development of children’s personalities. The theoretical part of the study also covers the issue of the negative influence of the current way of life on children, as well as other factors that play an active role at the early stages of children’s development. The imminent social and technological changes are also relevant to the design of the space in which children move every day—this concerns the issue of the current state of the pre-school facilities, their spatial characteristics and the aim to provide children with suitable conditions for well-rounded development. It is the very lack of space for free play that, from a long-term perspective, can result in many problems concerning health, up-bringing and, last but not least, learning, which can have negative consequences in adulthood.

e primarily focus on physical exercise activities and play, therefore the concept of play and exercise in the subject-matter of the study are interconnected. For children, exercise is a natural component automatically integrated in their play activities. As part of the research, we studied the facilities and conditions for full-time play in pre-school institutions in Slovakia, the Czech Republic and abroad.

Using theoretical knowledge and background, we offer practical solutions in the designing of the so-called NO-objects—Interior elements for “play and exercise” for kindergartens with an emphasis on the synthesis of artistic creativity and practical (useful and health-friendly) design. Our goal is to prepare multifunctional space, equipped with objects and modules for play and exercise that assist in developing children’s gross motor skills

and can also be used for relaxation. We have created undefined objects without pre-defined shape that can be built into new shapes, serving as a larger-sized puzzle, which can be stored in the wall-component of our design with the possibility of multiple compositional variations. The objects are creative and unique work, the result of synthesis of theoretical knowledge and personal, practical experience from working with children—specifically several years of lecturing art courses.

Design work with the ambition to meet the needs of children nowadays, ages 2.5 – 5, is a demanding project because of the specifics of pre-school children’s physical and psychological development. Throughout our research, we consulted the topic with experts in psychology and design. The scientists and experts nowadays focus on the issue of how the concept of play will evolve in the future and how it can impact the children. Care, education and cultivated environment in which we move everyday cannot be perceived separately, but as a harmonic whole. The more adequate stimuli children get very early in life, the better they live their lives as adults.

It is extremely important to be aware of the fact that the quality of the pre-school environment influences not only the education and development of children, but also their health and emotional well-being.

Therefore, by designing of the NO-objects we want to try to reintroduce free play to pre-school facilities and, at the same time, to create appropriate environment in which healthy, happy and creative generations of future adults can grow up.
