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PRESENTATION OF ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE - EDUCATIONAL ASPECT

Architectural Heritage is a result of long period of human activity reflecting the relationship between mankind and nature. The present cultural property reflects different living conditions and levels of development. Application of actual, innovative forms of presentation based on the principles of theory of monument preservation will enable to preserve heritage for the next generations. Implementing this topic into university curricula will help students to understand historic buildings in context with their environment and perceive this message.

Introduction

Historical architecture is an important resource for development of our environment. Every place has its time, its own history, building type and style. These are the environmental factors that enable us to identify the space and time. The cultural heritage is a result of a long complicated historical process reflected in the relationship between civilization and natural environment. The particular heritage and collective memory of each locality or community is irreplaceable and an important foundation for development, both now and in future.

The complexity of understanding Cultural Heritage includes its tangible and intangible components in both cultural and natural environment. Architectural Heritage belongs to the most significant marks in tangible components. Architecture, in the past as well as in the present, reflects the requirements of society and its level of development. It is a window of social changes, living conditions and level of thinking of mankind. Undoubtedly, historic architecture is an inexhaustible source of information and inspiration for present architectural work.

The presentation of Architectural Heritage and its values in historical context had a special role in forming the young generation to understand the historic environment. If we take into a consideration, that every situation, activity that happened yesterday is historic, then our current environment is historical. It is a primary task of society to learn to perceive our environment with all its components, buildings, nature, its relationships and humanity.

In this article, I would like to write about the preservation and presentation of architectural heritage. It is divided into three parts:

- > definition of architectural heritage
- > short theoretical background of monument preservation
- > modern trends of presentation.

Nowadays, the topic of architectural heritage is widely discussed. There are different opinions in the theory of preservation between the specialists. The problems of competency and different approaches in the field of Heritage Preservation are obvious. We are also the witnesses of the time of vast destruction and incorrect reconstruction.

Definition of the architectural heritage

Generally we can say, that architectural heritage is a result of human activity with the values respected by the community. The values are principally the main reason for recognising an object as a monument. In the far history the built structures were not meant as monuments. They were preserved, as there was fear of unknown structure. (Stonehenge) Later, people built structures intentionally as monuments to memory of somebody or something.

Today's definition of Architectural Heritage is based on European Charter of Architectural Heritage adopted by Council of Europe in October 1975. It specifies the European architectural heritage in the following way:

The European architectural heritage consists not only of our most important monuments: it also includes the groups of lesser buildings in our old towns and characteristic villages in their natural or manmade settings.

(www.icomos.org/docs/euroch_e.html)

This definition is specified in The Convention on the Preservation of European Architectural Heritage (clause 1):

The architectural heritage includes:

1 monuments: all buildings and structures of conspicuous historical, archaeological, artistic, scientific, social or technical interest, including their fixtures and fittings;

2 groups of buildings: homogeneous groups of urban or rural buildings conspicuous for their historical, archaeological, artistic, scientific, social or technical interest which are sufficiently coherent to form topographically definable units;

3 sites: the combined works of man and nature, being areas which are partially built upon and sufficiently distinctive and homogeneous to be topographically definable and are of conspicuous historical, archaeological, artistic, scientific, social or technical interest.

(www.icomos.org/docs/euroch_e.html)



For many years, only major monuments were protected and restored but often without reference to their surroundings. More recently it was realized that, if the surroundings are impaired, even those monuments can lose much of their character and value. In these groups there are especially monuments carrying indirect and transfer values.

Most countries have a List of Monuments, where the movable and nonmovable monuments are listed. It usually consists of two parts. The first is a short description of the monument and in the second there are pictures and schemes. The outstanding heritage is inscribed in the World Heritage List. Our country is represented by four localities. The Spiš Castle with its close neighbourhood, Bardejov, Vlkolinec, Banská Štiavnica and its water works. It is a prestige of each country to have objects that are inscribed in The World Heritage List. Lots of monuments today are endangered, also some of the most valuable on The World Heritage List. These are written in a document World Heritage List of Monuments in Danger.

Formally there are five criteria according to which the architectural heritage is divided:

- > value
- > social
- > qualitative
- > quantitative
- > time aspect.

The main aspect in value criteria is an ability of carrying values. If it is possible to perceive values directly then the structure is a monument with direct expression of values. If the value of an object is bounded to memory of somebody, or some event, then it is a monument with indirect expression of values. It means that the object alone can be without any aesthetic or architectural values. Then, there is an evidence of somebody interesting or important and therefore it becomes a monument. The monuments with transfer values are similar: the structure of groups of buildings, which do not include any example of outstanding merit, may have an atmosphere, welding different periods and styles into a harmonious whole. That is why they can be considered a monument.

Social point of view is connected to the owner of the monument: private monuments, monuments of groups of people and monuments of society.

The qualitative division of monuments is based on legislative levels of safeguarding of monuments. On the highest level are monuments inscribed in World Heritage List, then Monument reserves, Monument zones and finally, on the lowest level are Protective areas. (Closer specified in the Act No. 49/2002 – about the preservation of monuments.)

The quantitative aspect reflects various types of monuments in functional use: dwellings, industrial heritage, rural architecture, sacral architecture, sepulchral architecture, ... etc.).

The time point of view corresponds with the time when the particular monument was built. So, the monuments are known as Prehistoric Monuments, Ancient Monuments, Medieval Monuments, Monuments of Renaissance, Monuments of Barock, Monuments of 19th century and Monuments of 20th century.

Except for the above mentioned criteria, each object, which includes aesthetic, functional, structural and economic values, based on the author's idea and respect of environment, has an opportunity to become a monument for further generations.

Short theoretical background of monument preservation

The theory of Monuments Preservation doesn't have a long history. The first scientific approach to preservation of historical buildings appeared in the 19th century. The reconstructions of historical buildings realised before were reconstructed without any analytical background. The old buildings were used for suitable new functions. Or they also could become a source of building material for new objects. In other cases were historical buildings changed into different type of building with new function and appearance. Conscious safeguarding of a historical object was very rare.

In the 19th century, Viollet le Duc for the first time introduced the theory of scientific reconstruction of historical objects in his theoretical work *Dictionnaire raisonné de l'architecture* (JOKILEHTO, 1999, page 152). Here the author presents the first scientific approach to preservation. He stressed three main steps in the preservation process:

- > the object analysis
- > documentation of interventions
- > the use of completely different building materials for added parts.

At that time, it was really a revolutionary approach to reconstruction, although his work carried the seal of Romanticism. On the other side there were the opinions of William Morris and John Ruskin. They understood structure in its life existence. They were of meaning that once the structure started to deteriorate, it was useless to take any protective interventions.

At the turn of 19th century, Prague and Vienna became centres of monument treatment. Especially well known became Alois Riegel with his „memorial value“ and its „analytical way“ of preservation (JOKILEHTO, 1999, page 210). He preferred a very detailed research of the structure on the first place. Then, after all historical traits have been disclosed, they had to be



presented in their original form. Through this approach, the monument (after its reconstruction) reminded an encyclopedia of its historical development and changes. No matter how aesthetic the final reconstruction was. The documental value was the most preferred. Max Dvorak, Riegel's follower, developed these principles into the conservational praxis.

Vaclav Wagner was of the opposite opinions. He represented a synthetical approach with accenting the whole monument, „ a monument does not have only a documental value, but in each epoch it should be a living work of art“. (JOKILEHTO, 1999, 215).

In the post war period, different opinions in the field of preservation required, principles that would be accepted internationally. As a result, an international meeting of preservation specialists, artists and architects was held in Athens, in 1931. The result of this meeting was well known the Athens Charter drafted in 1933. It was the first document in which monuments were defined. The ways of conservation and reconstruction of historical buildings were specified. The modern principles of preservation were conceived in the International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites, introduced in Venice in 1964 (The Venice Charter):

„Imbued with a message from the past, the historic monuments of generations of people remain to the present day as living witnesses of their age-old traditions. People are becoming more and more conscious of the unity of human values and regard ancient monuments as a common heritage. The common responsibility to safeguard them for future generations is recognized. It is our duty to hand them on in the full richness of their authenticity.“ (DVOŘÁKOVÁ, 2002, page 13).

These principles have resulted from a long search and the crystallization of the essential ideas in the conservation of cultural property. The Convention on preservation of Cultural Heritage from 1972, with the respect of the authenticity and integrity of Monuments has had a core role in deciding about the way and art of preservation.

The present approach in the field of preservation of historical buildings comes out of the exact knowledge and minimum destructive interventions. The monuments are understood in compatibility with their environment and with respect to all their development layers and their values. The reversible interventions are preferred. It is quite difficult to determine the frame methods of reconstruction. An interdisciplinary team of architects, historians, arthistorians and archaeologists is required. In many cases the reconstruction is a combination of different partial methods. But it is impossible to take a general scheme for reconstruction of each monument. Each monument requires an individual approach.

Presentation of architectural heritage and its educational role

Presentation of architectural heritage is understood as the process in which the architect designs the reconstruction of the historical site so that he stresses historical architectural layers or valuable historical parts of the structure.

The designed reconstruction is strictly based on the archaeological or historical analyses (research). In other words, by presentation of architectural historical monuments we mean the reconstructed structure with clearly visible historical values. The presentation is directly dependent on the interpretation of the building's cultural phenomena. The interpretation is an explanation of function, appearance, location, historical changes and their reasons from various points of view. Usually archaeologists and arthistorians play a key role in this process. These facts create a necessary background for further „correct“ presentation. Missing interpretation brings „a false“ evidence of the historical monument and mostly causes an incorrect reconstruction. The architects base their redesign on this interpretation. They try to find the most suitable form and structure of the conserved or reconstructed building. The design depends on determination of a specific frame method of reconstruction. The architectural design should always be based on the architect's aim to create a valuable and harmonious atmosphere of both the interior and the exterior environment. The main task of the architect's work is to maintain the building as a „living“ structure with clear expression of its historical background. So, the presentation is very closely connected with the particular approach to the monument. Generally we can sum up that presentation is the final result of monument preservation methods and their use in the preservation process.

Athens Charter for the first time vitally stressed the role of education in the process of monument preservation. „It. recommends that educators should urge children and young people to abstain from disfiguring monuments of every description and that they should teach them to take a greater and more general interest in the protection of these concrete testimonies of all ages of civilisation.“ (DVOŘÁKOVÁ, 2003, page 22). Later, at the international meeting of ICOMOS in Colombo in 1993, were drafted Guidelines for Education and Training in the Conservation of Monuments, Ensembles and Sites. The monument preservation specialists determined the aims and objects of educational programmes and courses. The large accent was given to special requirements of course managers. The goal audience of these courses should be young people between 15-25 years. The specialists are convinced that this document should be accepted and practised in national cultural policy. The way of right understanding of our cultural and natural environment in systematic education seems to be the most effective way how to save our heritage for next generations. The positive relationships to old buildings, historic architecture will form young people into thoughtful behaviour.



In recent history, the passive form of presentation was spread. It means that the visitor had only one task to see, or to hear an explanation of a guide. Also, very often the monuments were used as the museums. Nowadays, this way of presentation seems not to be satisfactory. Statistic data indicate low attendance of museums and low level of knowledge about the audience's environment. These facts are a challenge to look for new ways of presentation of architectural heritage. For this reason we are convinced that the topics on architectural heritage preservation should stay a firm part of university curricula.

The educational programmes of English Heritage organisation can be positive examples of active presentation. One of the main aims of English Heritage is to help people understand and appreciate their built heritage. The educational programmes are managed by art educators with many years of practice. They produced publications, workshops and courses. Through the art-writing, art-drawing, creating models, collecting information, ... etc. young people are taught to perceive their environment.

Other educational programmes of bringing closer the historical situations are theatre, drama performed for example at the castles. This direct participation form allows the audience to perceive the performance in historical context.

Another effective activity is a participation of young people in the process of researching or reconstruction of monuments. It is a great opportunity of contact with authentic elements and the team of specialists. They can be directly present at solving of problems at the building site.

The heritage education of non-professional public in our country is on an unsatisfactory level. Except for a very few projects, there are no direct classes or topics included in primary and secondary school teaching. There are some volunteer organisations (The Tree of Life, Katarínka, Kláštorisko, The National Trust of Slovakia) that try to fill this gap.

The educational aspect is an important part of monument reconstruction. The complex understanding of a reconstructed monument: the reconstruction itself and the presentation, should become the aim of the architect's design. It should as well motivate the architect to look for new ways of monument presentation.

Excellent examples of new reconstruction concepts are the recent two examples of Austrian monuments Hofburg and Niederweiden castles. Both castles have been reconstructed in an innovative way. The architects tried to reconstruct not only the objects themselves, but also the life within the castles. Apart from original interiors, original food and drinks have been presented. In this way the historical background is much easier to understand.

The new ways of presentations based on the principles of monument care with respect to educational aspect seem to be the most effective way of safeguarding architectural heritage. Easily understood simple forms and integration of possibly all senses of the audience is probably the future direction of monument presentation.

References

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Appendix



Method of re-building of disappeared objects in situ

Very effective and understandable approach of presentation of architectural heritage to general public. This method is used very seldom especially as a product of experimental archaeology, because of avoiding of disinterpretation.

It is very popular and attractive for children and youth.

picture from Liptovska Mara, Slovakia



Method of integrating 3D models – material form
Understandable method of presentation. If it is used in context of other building, it is very easy understood relationships between themselves
(proportion, composition, historical development, ... etc.)
picture of Branč Castel Model, Slovakia



Method of analytical presentation in situ
This method is based on purpose of presentation of all valuable details visible in direct way. The result of these kind of presentation is very complicated appearance of facade. It is very difficult for general public to explore the meaning of presented part. This respect strictly rules of Monument Preservation Theory, but the building later looks as an Encyclopedia of History, with less aesthetical values
example from historic core in Bratislava, Jurajov dom



Method of 3D models - virtual form
New information technologies can be used in presentation of architectural heritage.
The most use are visualization and stimulation. The main advantages of using these methods is absolutely protection of authentic monument. It is very attractive and understandable form of presentation to general public, too.
picture of medieval period of Nitra Castle, Slovakia



Method of using symbols
It is very ofte use in presentation of most significant monument with very damaged surroundings.
That why it is impossible to present original, and on the other side is only few exactly information known.
Usually it includes interpretation panel or tablets, too.
picture of Laurinska Gate in Bratislava, Slovakia