PRESERVATION AND PROMOTION OF A ZONE ARCHITECTURAL STYLE

CONSERVAREA ŞI PROMOVAREA STILULUI ARHITECTURAL REGIONAL

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Abstract. *Cities are autonomous bodies developing according to their own laws whose knowledge and use is the source of the scientific approach to issues of urbanism in general, and urban renovation in particular. The long-term change in mentality regarding the concept of beauty is adding new life principles in the perception of the old to the scale of values. Time brings along not only the physical dereliction of architecture but it also erodes the particular role of a building at a given moment.*

Restoration principles, considered in their evolution, should be confronted with the corresponding practice which results in a critical assessment of the various theoretical orientations in order to identify the progressive issues and their limitations. The practice of stylistic completion or, on the contrary, the limitation of the architect's intervention according to actual documentation emphasizes the nature of stylistic unity and the historic restoration principle.

Key words: *historical centre, urban restoration, conservation, econstruction, urban reintegration*

INTRODUCTION

Like the Athens Charter, the new document considers restoration as ”an operation that should have an exceptional nature. It is aimed at conserving and emphasizing the historical and aesthetic value of the monument, and is based upon respect towards the works of the past and authentic documents. It ends where doubt begins; beyond this, any complementary work, considered indispensible, will be understood as an architectural composition and will have to bear the mark of our age.”

- The Charter accepts the employment of all modern means of conservation and construction to provide the consolidation of a monument when the tradictional techniques prove inadequate.
- The Charter claims the valid contributions of differents epochs, and rejects the return to stylistic unity. It accepts the elimination of certin stages only when the removed elements are minor, and their removal emphasizes archeological, historical or aesthetic aspects.
- The Charter claims that the elements ”destined to replace the missing parts (...) should integrate harmoniously into the landscape, and yet be different from the original parts so that restoration should not falsify the art and history document.”

From the viewpoint of creation itself, human being generates a unit that is singular, both in form and style. Like nature, both create distinct individualities, since ”we do not build ruins, and a new house with peeling plaster and darkened with dirt gives the observer a bad mood...”. Thus, one can identify old value from two points of view: location in the historical time, and carelessness to the object/group of objects (qualitative degradation).

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The principles of historical value are aimed at the conservation of the monuments in their current state and, as much as possible, at ceasing their normal dereliction by natural agents. It results from this that, in the conservation of the monuments, the interests related to old age and historical value are fundamentally opposed although both are recollection values. The conclusion is that, irrespective of the type of human intervention, the historical values decrease proportionally with its intensity; consequently, they eventually disappear, and the documentary importance of the monument becomes irrelevant and atemporal.

Reintegrating the historical centre presupposes both its rehabilitation and revitalization, and its inclusion into the tourist routes, its opening to the city.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The variety of urban settlements is based on two types according to their establishment:

- *Fortified development* – cities and towns that have developed surrounded by protection walls.
- *Unfortified development* – with no artificial barriers.

Irrespective of the above types, the historical centre is the area in a city or town which concentrates its historical value and functionality, urban architecture and memory.

The historical centres are often recognized owing to their street texture and structure which raise traffic and hygiene problems to contemporary urbanism. They are at the core of the urban architectural heritage and integrated conservation.

Integrated conservation involves the treatment (conservation, restoration, rehabilitation) of the old buildings and groups of buildings for the purpose of rendering them useful to modern society, and integrating them in the urban and rural improvement plans.

For the Romanian historical centres, the specific intervention techniques are determined by certain characteristics of the architectural heritage, as follows:

- the existence in the historical centre of a historical monument or group of monuments paramount for the respective urban identity through the multiplying effect of its rehabilitation upon the environment (spin-off effect);
- gathering the architectural heritage of the historical centres into groups (heritage concentration) or its spreading (heritage diffusion) within the area of the historical centre, by its influence upon the executant's organized intervention and commitment;
- the specific heritage report, together with the stylistic homogeneity, of the juridical or technical status of the heritage provides an operational justification of either the building-after-building interventions, insulated operations or general operations on the entire intervention area."

The concept of renovation is improperly used to refer to pulling down a building, an urban district occupied by flats, activities or both: we should replace it with demolition-reconstruction, and use the term *renovation* for rehabilitation.

Actually, "the concept of *urban renovation*, unlike urban reconstruction, refers to urban actions and operations precisely destined to modernization. Urban renovation expresses the continuity of the

modernization process occurring in most human settlements."

Urban renovation is a difficult operation which requires massive intervention of public power:

- institutionally, an improvement organization that purchases and pulls down the buildings, reinstalls the occupants, improves the land, and gives back the buildings;
- juridically, in order to allow expropriation;
- financially, most frequently and particularly at the beginning of the operation, for the purpose of infrastructure expenses and inevitable delays between the purchase and the first transfers.

The initial meaning of the concept of *rehabilitation* refers to the action of restoring someone to his/her own rights. This law term is figuratively employed to refer to the action of restoring self-esteem and respect.

In conclusion, *"rehabilitation claims interventions upon the built resources, of different complexity, for the purpose of eliminating the consequences of moral and/or physical wear of the buildings. The amount of novelty introduced by rehabilitation is determined by the functional concerns, financial resources and demands of heritage protection."*

The rehabilitation of the historical centres is based on the policies of safeguarding the built heritage, conserving the urban features of the group of buildings, and presupposes the improvement of living and increase in comfort, and revaluation of the historical group of buildings.

Case study: Sibiu

Planning: Historical centre



Fig.1 Passage of the Stairs

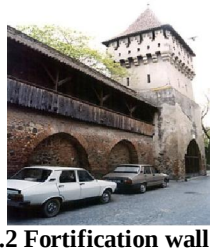


Fig.2 Fortification wall

Initial situation: four parts of the wall (about 50 m in total length), as well as parts of the supporting wall are in great danger of crumbling, as most stairs are damaged as a result of the sewage system.

Short-term measures

- reparation of the Passage of the Stairs and the Stairs of the Goldsmiths' Square.
- consolidation of the support walls in the Liar's Bridge area (City Hall, Ministry of Culture, buget: 48,000 Euro)
- consolidation of the town walls, town limits I-III, Goldsmith's Square Stairs area
- restoration of the Asylum Church (165,000 Euro)
- restoration of the Brukenthal Museum, 4 Large Square
- restoration Reformed Church facade
- Summer Academy – The International Week of Architectural Restoration (Bucharest University-GTZ, CCIA; budget: 30,000 Euro)
- "facade plastering to old buildings" (Mihai Eminescu Foundation)

Medium-term measures

- detailed urbanization plan for the following squares in the historical centre: Large and Small Squares, Huet Square, Goldsmith's Square (Sibiu City Hall, budget: 9,000 Euro)

Current measures

- reconstruction of the Thalia Theatre (C.J.S., budget: 410,000 Euro)
- restoration of the Roman-Catholic Church, Large Square
- the new City Hall headquarters (Emil Cioran St.) will become partly functional (car parking)
- the new Sibiu District Council building is under construction
- apartment-building restoration – 16, 22 Small Square
- artisans' training for the rehabilitation of the historical gates (GTZ)
- university training in restoration (Lucian Blaga University)

Long-term measures

- improvement works on the County Council Tower (Sibiu City Hall, budget: 82,000 Euro)

- repair of some important school buildings: Brukenthal High-School and the Art College
- redirection of tranzit traffic from the upper town, i.e. closing-down the lower town for heavy traffic and improvement of the Turnu St.
- establishment of a gastronomy school in Sibiu (FRG; budget: 40,000 Euro)
- building consulting services for restaurants, cafes and pubs (improvement of guest rooms, facades, companies, terraces, outside areas, etc.) according to the historical town architecture and monument protection laws
- establishment of a workshop belonging to the Mihai Eminescu Foundation

Project ideas

- introduction of certificates for special knowledge and achievement in renovation and restoration
- development of special offers promoting and financing artisan companies active in the rehabilitation of the old buildings according to the norms of monument protection
- promotion of the old town as a unique trading place for local, national, and international investors
- provision of consulting services for retailers (e.g., in shop-windows and advertising places, higher quality and specialization)
- water and sewage network renewal on important streets and squares, compelte renewal of water and sewage networs in the historical centre.

CONCLUSIONS

Urban reintegration is an operation aimed at recovering some groups of buildings or areas of a town or city.

The reintegration of the historical centre involves both its rehabiliation and revitalization, and its inclusion into the tourist routes, its opening to the city or town.

For the Romanian historical centres, ”the specific intervention techniques are determined by certain characteristics of the architectural

heritage, as follows:

- renewal and strengthening of the historical centre as place for the artisans' companies
- avoiding such negative effects upon other urban functions as habitat, culture or education, and the autonomy preservation of the various areas in the old town
- therefore, it is recommended to identify areas for the artisans and small producers only after a detailed check-up of the urban plan drawn for the respective area
- revitalization of the traditional handcrafts that require no special living or working areas
- no provisional working or noisy activities are admitted in the protected areas;
- rehabilitation, replacement, and extension of the technical infrastructure networks in view to avoiding new construction problems and providing the foreseen consumption per capita;
- planning and change in the household inlets according to the features and architecture of the old town
- reactivation of silted fountains and drainage;
- larger and improved services, particularly:

- the creation/establishment of a tourist information centre;
- diversification of the hotel and gastronomy offer in the historical centre, according to the severe criteria imposed by monument protection;
- drawing up of a detailed concept of tourism, promotion of handicraft and traditional crafts, and their integration into the general concept of tourism.

- improved conditions for the tourists by establishing additional tourist routes, recreational places, and a large range of tourist information;
- raising the inhabitants' awareness to the value, beauty, and the resources of their historical town;
- preservation of multicultural and multiconfessional customs and traditions.

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