THE DIALOGUE OF BUILT HERITAGE WITH ITSELF – AN ONGOING PROCESS

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Summary: *Proces integracije starog i novog je jedan od najosetljivijih i složenih problema sa kojima se suočavaju ljudi u oblasti zaštite kulturnog nasleđa. Ovo uključuje organizovanje delova (ili elemenata) u jednu celinu (ili strukturu) koja radi harmonično u postizanju zajedničkih ciljeva, odnosno koja uključuje harmoniju između pojedinčnih i opštih oblika. Proces integracije je suština arhitektonskog stvaralaštva, jer još praistorijski čovek se potrudio da uspostavi nešto što je više nego samo dom, a dva sukcesivno podignuta doma već počinju da stvaraju integrativni proces. Tokom istorije, proces integracije starog i novog bio je uglavnom nenametljiv, s obzirom da je sproveden u dužem vremenskom periodu i nije uvek bilo uvođenja nekih radikalnih kontrasta. Zgrade su nicale jedna za drugom, ali gotovo nikada na identičan način. Međutim, one su bili slične po obliku, materijalima, izgradnji i stilskim karakteristikama. Po pravilu, značajne promene i implementacije novih ideja, koje su se znatno razlikovale od starih - posebno u pogledu stila – nailazile su na otpor većine, ali su prihvatane kada je njihov broj dostizao kritičnu masu, ili kada su javno bile hvaljene od arbitara mode. U brojnim slučajevima, originalni načini gradnje su nastavljeni u periodima potpuno različitih stilskih opredeljenja. Danas je interpretacija integracije starog i novog poprimila oblik vizuelnog diskursa i postoji nekoliko mišljenja koja funkcionišu paralelno, sa varijantama rešenja koja se kreću od kopiranja starih zgrada, onih koje su nestale sa te lokacije ili su se nalazile u okolini, zatim kroz primenu asocijativnog metoda, sve do stvaranja fizičkog kontrast,čime se otvara mogućnost prostornih ekscesa.*

Ključne reči: graditeljsko nasleđe, proces integracije, asocijativni metod, metod kontrasta, eksces u prostoru.

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of architecture is primarily to create a humane framework for human beings. Buildings affect our lives and create a physical framework in which people live

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for many years; therefore, their true means of testing is time. Good, old buildings and places that we always want to go back to and where temporal relations are not valid, are those who touch our hearts and have the power to create profound and immediate emotional experience. Similar to conceptual art, modern architecture seeks to separate itself from the world of emotions and associate the design process with the world of ideas, creating thereby a rational relationship between the structure and man free from any emotion. There are different ways to describe buildings possessing the timeless quality and carrying the inherent spiritual experience. Frank Lloyd Wright describes these buildings as "leaving you speechless", while Christopher Alexander writes: "Buildings with a spiritual value are the diagram of internal universe, or the image of the soul's hideout." In his book, "The timeless way of building," Alexander continues to develop its thought, saying: "There is one timeless way of building. It is thousands of years old, and the same today as it has always been. The great traditional buildings of the past, the villages and tents and temples in which man feels at home, have always been made by people who were very close to the centre of this way. And as you will see, this way will lead anyone who looks for it to buildings which are themselves as ancient in their form as the trees and hills, and as our faces are." [1] The state of our spirit that brings us closer to that quality is the level of knowledge and awareness that, regardless of external factors, indicates a healthy architectural logic present when contemplating and creating in space.

The main argument for the thesis that the dialogue is between the heritage itself is provided in order not to change that sense of the environment and continue creating buildings and places that we could really feel as part of ourselves and want to live in them. The problem is not in desire to change the style, but to transform the currently prevailing world view regarding the attitudes and approaches to creativity.

Distortion that is created in our time between man and its environment is a clear expression of changes that occurred in the concept that man is part of nature instead of being superior to it. Comparing the planning processes resulting from the separation of man from his environment with the planning process which makes him feel part of the physical world in which he lives, it is possible to emphasize the difference between the mechanistic-fragmentary and holistic-organic views of the world.

As a result, there are two sets of attitudes towards heritage. The mechanistic view of the world underscores the separation of elements of the contemporary architecture, while the environment is creation of autonomous fragments. There are lots of examples for this, from Niemeyer's design of the Cathedral of Brasilia, Corbusier's study of Chandigarh, a number of satellite towns throughout Europe. In all examples there is a structural break between the house and street, the streets and neighbourhood, and the neighbourhood and city. In sociological terms, this procedure has contributed to the sense of indifference and alienation.

The holistic-organic approach, which has long been one of the leading approaches in general science, is treating the social/physical environment as a system or a dynamic totality, the existence which depends on the actual, ever-changing relationship between the elements. The creation and existence of each element depends on the interconnections between the given element and the system. [2]

Heritage follows the principle of dependent formation. Buildings and other forms of architectural heritage arise depending on a variety of causes and conditions; therefore,

they are naturally not independent and cannot exist autonomously. Anything that is made up of elements, or depends on conditions and causes is transient and volatile. Instead of remaining forever, such things are disintegrating on a continuous basis. This kind of subtle impermanence can be scientifically confirmed.

The concept of interdependence and continuity makes it possible for totalities to be created continuously through the disintegration of its elements. As a result of this operation of the built environment, this type of heritage is always in dialogue with itself. This dialogue is unfolding in different ways, depending on the time at which the integration and disintegration occur.

Each element of any organic system has its own uniqueness and strength, always acting as part of a larger entity to which it belongs and where it is being complemented. By adopting this concept, cultural monuments, spatial cultural-historical totalities, renown places, archaeological sites, i.e. palaces, churches, factories, villages, landscapes cannot be separated from each other, but seen instead as a single continuous and dynamic system.

At another level, structures also cannot be perceived as a sum or collection of designed, formed fragments, but as a hierarchical language, in which every designed detail at any level of some scale results from a larger totality to which it belongs, and which tends to be promoted and for the existence of which it is responsible.

The overall experience of internal unity/totality is derived from the actual relations between the elements. As a model, this sense can be found as early as the ancient history, representing a process which always contains the centre of energy that supplies the surrounding elements. Yet, it is the existence of this energy centre which depends on the existence of surrounding elements.

Referring to the theoretical claims that the beauty and harmony of geometric properties are inherent to the very structure, and that senses are based on facts, the seemingly unplanned and unsystematic heritage actually clearly reflects a design that is based on a deeper and more complex level.

This order is based on the absolute law by which the quality and beauty of place is always determined, and it is a source of good feelings. In fact, there is a direct relationship between the pattern of events unfolding at the location and the physical pattern – the pattern of space of which it is constituted.

The fact is that some places contain common patterns of events unfo*lding in them. For example, the St. Mark's Square (Piazza San Marco) in Venice (*Figure 1.) and the Main Square (Piazza Mayor) in Madrid (*Figure 2*.), though of different forms, are generating the same pleasant emotional experience. Based on this, it can be assumed that behind of what looks different (the form of square in this case), there are some common things.

The situation is the same at the level of elements, fragments, or motifs. The motive of arcades, for example, is an archetypal structure, designed to form the transition between the building and the open space. Despite the fact that throughout history (from the early Christian through the modern age) arcades were formed in many different ways, they are based on a single superstructure which is common to all of them, and that is how the relationship between the building and its environment is defined (*Figures 3, 4.*). Since the environment consists of patterns that produce a common, identical or very similar experience, the question is what lies behind the specific patterns creating the same pleasant sense that we all share in the same environment. Using the explanation of Noam

Chomsky, different languages contain a common structural element, which he calls the language of all languages, i.e. a basic pattern, an element that is innate to human beings and therefore close to all of us. [3] The case with physical space is similar – there are schemes that reflect the inherent patterns structured in human brain.

Figure 1. St. Mark's Square in Venice; *Figure 2.* Main square (Major) in Madrid
Figure 3. Arcade in *cortile* of Palace in Urbino; *Figure 4.* Arcade at the ground floor of the hotel in Munich (Project 2010)

2. HOW HERITAGE CONDUCTS A DIALOGUE WITH ISTELF?

The need for building new buildings in settlements is made more difficult by the lack of available space for development. The existing centres are mainly lacking such space, so the attention is inevitably focused on the already built fabric. On the other hand, the changing needs of society, along with major changes in the ways of trading and manufacturing, have contributed to the fact that many of the old buildings have become obsolete or redundant, despite of their undoubted quality. Such buildings, architecturally attractive and structurally healthy, are ideal for remodelling and adaptation to modern life demands. Modifications can be at various levels, ranging from the mildest option, when only the infrastructure is improved, through drastic decisions about the complete destruction to give way to a completely new structure.
In practice, there is a rather wide range of remodelling options. The following are some of the solutions:

- Preserving the overall building structure, with all the internal divisions, improving the internal infrastructure, sanitation, reinforcing the existing staircase, with a simple heating system and natural ventilation.
- Preserving the overall existing external envelope, including the roof and most of the interior, with the introduction of minor internal structural changes and improving the inside covers, infrastructure and sanitation. Spatial changes may require the removal of some internal walls, the installation of a new staircase or maybe even an elevator.
- Preserving the overall external envelope, including the roof, along with the introduction of full scale structural changes, even retaining walls, and installation of new (usually concrete) reinforced stairs and new ceiling that divides the large storey height and increases useful space.
- Preserving the external envelope, but removing the roof and parting walls, and building a new structure behind the preserved facade. This option is used when the exterior of the building is worth keeping, but the interior does not suit the new requirements.
- Preserving only the ground floor, one or two floors, if there is any, and completely removing all the other parts, and building a complete new building behind the preserved facade walls. This option is often applied when the building is on the corner or at the end of the street block.
- Preserving only a single elevation, a single facade of the existing building, while the other parts are completely demolished and building a new structure behind the preserved facade wall. It is used when the facade is deemed an integral part of a valuable street.
- The most drastic option is the complete demolition of the existing building and its replacement with a new structure.

The above solutions are well known both in our domestic and international practice; the question is why to mention them. The answer may possibly be found in the dialogue of heritage with itself that lasts for centuries.

All of the above options were also known to our predecessors, and they apply them to buildings which have today been declared monuments of culture and for which the application of principles of respecting all values on the monument, as stated by the Article 11 of the Venice Charter (*Figures 5, 6.*) is recommended.

Figure 5. Archaeological site Paleopolis in Corfu. Prehelenic building converted into a Christian church; *Figure 6.* Early Christian basilica turned into an Omajada mosque in Damascus

In Serbia, there are also many examples of remodelling (due to various reasons) buildings that were regarded in their time as very important and worthy of respect. This remodelling sometimes required great efforts and ingenuity from builders to achieve the

goal. Efforts to change the spatial organization were undoubtedly the most difficult requirement, but it is realized successfully in buildings that are now considered the highest achievements of medieval engineering.
One of the most compelling examples for this is the basilica from the 9th century that was remodelled into a cruciform church of Our Lady of Ljevis in Prizren. The mutual implantation of the two forms undoubtedly required extensive architectural skill and courage to ensure the stability of structure. The awareness that this act negates the value of the existing building was certainly not present; at least we do not know it. On the contrary, we are aware of the value that is created by superimposing the two architectural types, and, along with its other values, we consider it a supreme achievement of the medieval architecture and art. [4] (*Figure 7.*)

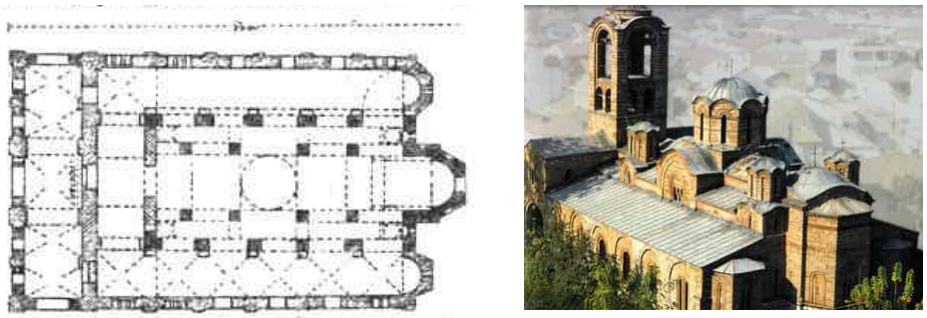

Figure 7. Grounfloor and appearance of the church Our Lady in Prizren

Figure 8. Edward Durrell Gallery of Modern Art in New York, built in 1964 has been revised recently by the principle of „the building in the building", so that the external shapes of the arcade remained visible inside the building.

These few examples are also examples of some topics which are currently discussed in the circles of those responsible for cultural heritage. Mobility, multiculturalism and globalization exist throughout history, but were interpreted differently, they were interconnected, and, of course, as phenomena in time they developed slower than today.

Nowadays, changes in historical structures do not seem so radical, due to the fact that they took place when there was a need for them, although some of the changes were obviously introduced to follow the current stylistic courses and functions. A good example is the era of Renaissance. When Leon Batista Alberti decided to keep the structure of the church of San Francesco in Rimini, and to provide it with a new renaissance appearance, he undoubtedly anticipated one of the modern principles of preservation of cultural heritage. [5] Some 20th century buildings evaluated as very successful and good representatives of the style that has already experienced one of the changes included in the list of possible interventions. (Figure 8).

3. CONCLUDING REMARCS - THE FUTURE OF DIALOGUE OF HERITAGE WITH ITSELF

There are many buildings erected in the first decade of 21st century as an expression of certain power which requires to be validated in the city space. How many of them will withstand the test of time, and be considered in future as distinctive symbol of the city, the countryside, the area? How many of nowadays powers (investors and architects) will be able to establish themselves in time to come? How many of this production will be declared a cultural heritage?

The questions are logical: in fact, they indicate the degree to which the power can be established and create a valuable architecture. For now, the city is an expanding universe, but power and quality are still not living at the same address.

Different ideologies have been developed architecture according their principles, but in each of them, in any civilization, directly or indirectly, architecture is a result of perception of the specific natural or built environment. The analytical procedure in the current architecture is very similar throughout the history. The history of architecture can be seen as the history of architectural ideas and the history of built shapes. If the history of architecture is seen as a history of built shapes, then we are faced with millions of examples, thousands and thousands of the authors. However, based on comparative analysis, we could see that there are some conceptual similarities among them and that it is sufficient to follow the birth, development and transformation of engineering ideas in order to understand their longevity and presence even when they are not visually easy to recognize.

It is believed, in fact, that technological advances made it possible for certain ideas, conceived a long time ago, to develop nowadays to amazing proportions, and that the number of new ideas is actually very few, and they are developing slowly. The longevity of ideas can be relatively easy to follow, because once the appropriate type of structure that corresponds to a specific function is created, then this type of structure is usually varied in material, size, colour, but people can always recognize them based on their importance for them.

In the 21st century we can expect the advancement of attitudes opposite to fostering competition with the historical architectural landmarks. In this sense, one cannot neglect the award given to the Polish pavilion at the 2008 Biennale of Architecture in Venice. The purpose of presented projects was to virtually predict the radical remodelling of structures over time and with the changes in society and environment; based on the

architecture or social significance, these structures will represent the monuments of culture of our time. They will not be removed; they also will not be recognizable, because they will be provided with a new purpose, enabled by the new technology. (*Figure 9.)*

Returning to the beginning of the discussion, we are clearly faced with a difficulty in dialogue about heritage, especially when it comes to the construction of new buildings in an older environment. The difficulty is caused by misunderstanding the existing difference between the old, traditional and modern architecture. We seek to interpret both of them based on terminology rigidly used by the standard history of architecture. The basic premise is that continuity rather than interruption is normative of a culturally prosperous society; ethics require conservators to preserve what we hold valuable from the past, and what does not endanger necessary changes. "In the practice of the past few decades, caring for cultural heritage often expressed concern that nothing new can be as good as the old; on the other hand, the conservationists' ethic was gradually turning to the future that may be better than the past" says Steven Sims in his book published in 2009. [6] The dialogue of heritage with itself clearly indicates the inevitable future in which heritage will be increasingly respected, but at the same time it will be constantly reviewed.

Figure 9. Library of the twentieth century turned into a shopping center

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DIJALOG IZMEĐU GRADITELJSKOG NASLEĐA – PROCES U TOKU

Rezime: *Interpretacija integracije starog i novog poprimila je oblik vizuelnog diskursa i postoji nekoliko mišljenja koja funkcionišu paralelno, sa varijantama rešenja koja se kreću od kopiranja starih zgrada, zatim kroz primenu asocijativnog metoda, sve do stvaranja fizičkog kontrast, čime se otvara mogućnost prostornih ekscesa.*

Ključne reči: *graditeljsko nasleđe, proces integracije, asocijativni metod, metod kontrasta, eksces u prostoru.*