

PRESERVING SETTING OF MONUMENTS IN SUBURBS OF NEW BORNE CAPITAL CITY

Dvorakova Viera /Slovakia

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The history in the field of preservation of historical urban structures in the form of protective zones in Slovakia started with the law 27/1987 on protection of historical monuments and sites. Since 1988 the Institute for monuments preservation the whole Slovakian territory and Municipal institute for monuments preservation in territory of Bratislava started to prepare the protection of those historical urban structures, which were not as properly conserved as those declared to reserves, but still obtained a great number of valuable historical values. During next 15 years there were gradually proclaimed altogether 93 protective zones, which is only a part from originally (in 1970s) identified about 150 areas of interest. The quality and value of these structures were judged after the density of monuments listed as the separate buildings in the Central List of monuments, cherished historical structures and other values, as environs of the habitation. Some of the formerly identified structures during the course of years were either wasted by new building activities, or their protection was refused by local authorities, who did not want to listen to any state administration regulations after 1989.

Now, when newly erected Monuments Board of Slovak Republic, created after 2002 as specialised body for administration of the law on preservation of monuments and sites in Slovak republic is facing the contemporary requirements on clear definition of protection in juridical sense of this word, in 2004 there was made the survey of all 93 protected structures to review their legacy, to reconsider their values and to harmonise their aims.

The result of this review, though not completely unexpected, was rather astonishing: In 39 former zones it is necessary to change, mostly to reduce their limits. Group of 16 zones was recognised to be without appropriate values and it was decided to cancel this type of protection there. In some situations these zones would be replaced by protected buffer zones created to protect the environs of the protected monuments in the site, mostly churches.

These results evoked discussions among the experts on preservation in our country and of course we had to answer the cardinal question: What has happened during those 15 years in mentioned 16 zones? Who made mistake, what was wrong and is our decision correct?

Since the majority of zones, which structures would not be protected as protective zones in the future were identified in Bratislava, and they represent former historical amajor problems and the future solutions of them on one example of one of them, Zahorska Bystrica.

The oldest evidence of the settlement in area of this village, situated now on the western border of the capital city of the Slovak republic, was found from Celtic and Roman time, as well as from Great Moravian period. The first written records however are from 1208 and the site was that time called Bisztric, later Bistrich and settlement Pistrich in 1314. In 1515 the village was divided to two parts, Upper one belonged to Paulans Order in Marianka, which was occupied by craftsmen mostly and Lower one belonged to Lordship of Stupava, with peasants living there mostly.

Since 1520 there are coming immigrants to this region, mostly from Croatia, fleeing to here from southern territories of Hungarian Empire, occupied by Turks. In 1553 there were 42 Slovak homesteads and 8 Croatian homesteads recorded.

The development of the village is documented by tax accounts from 1592, when the village enlarged to 63 complete and 26 half homesteads. That time there lived producers of lime, carpenters, merchants, wine producers here. The presence of an independent butcher signalise the large settlement. In 1647 Bystrica obtained the status of town with right to sell the wine produced here.

The great fire in 1731 destroyed the larger part of the village, but 5 years later there were 129 prosperous settlements already. The strategic position on the road from

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Bohemia and Moravia to Bratislava was the reason, why this village often suffered during armed conflicts. In 19th C the Napoleon's army was passing by after the battle near Austerlitz, in 1866 there was decisive battle of Prussian – Austrian war on the meadows between Zahorska Bystrica and Lamac. In 1828, after great epidemic of cholera there are records on 211 houses with 1503 inhabitants. Since 1848, after abolition of villeinage it became an independent village.

The active trade developed also with Vienna, where mostly agricultural products were sold by inhabitants. These activities influenced the richness of the village, well known in the region. In 1920 the village had 446 houses with 2454 inhabitants and in 1928 it was electrified. In 1936 there was opened cinema "Olympia" and post office. After 1945 Zahorska Bystrica was an independent village until 1st Jan. 1973, when it was included into Bratislava, that time a capital of federative state Czechoslovakia. The contemporary municipality admits, that the building activities during 1967 - 1990 had injured the village. Perhaps this fact was one of the reasons, why at the end of totalitarian regime and at the break of the new times after 1989 the Municipal institute of monuments preservation in Bratislava together with District office had proclaimed 8 protective zones in Bratislava. Unfortunately, without serious and fair delimitation of real values of all protected area. Except of 3, which would by reduced the rest of these areas would be replaced by buffer zones only.

In Zahorska Bystrica under the regime of protective zone there was included enormous extent of the settlement, with streets constructed quite recently. This basic fact, supported by the idea to prevent planned demolitions in the site was perhaps one of the reasons, why later the preservation of the values of the site could not objectively sustain the concept preservation. Thanks to this initiative there was prevented construction of new settlement of panel blocks of flats, and the general rural view of it was not destroyed. The protected area was not proclaimed in historical centre only, and it contained new parts with poor quality of houses with new constructions, violating the setting of the site. Gradual replacement of historical structures by new ones is setting new principles in composition, new material uses, new colours, new construction details, which gradually are destroying the genius loci of the site. The territory shows incompact historical urban structures. What are the other negative impacts of these structures?

As the basic one there was recognised the structural change of the historical structure of the former agricultural settlement. Its historical structure represented dwelling

houses situated on the main street, in front of the long courtyard, mostly with their simple gables. The organisation of the estate was practical, to the house there were along the border of the estate added stables, sties, and all necessary farm buildings. The narrow and long grounds with vegetable gardens and fruit-trees situated behind the buildings were on their other end closed by huge wooden barns.

New function of whole settlement, which gradually turned from suburbs to residential quarter of Slovaks capital city, is ruthless to small, modest historical structure. Its weakness is even emphasised by some facts, which could not be neglected. The quality of building material of original houses is from contemporary point of view disputable. The walls are constructed from earth (mud), or they consist from mixed material, combining mud, stone, and some bricks. The set-up of the original houses, very typical for the region, consists from 2-3 additively joined spaces, with main entrance from the yard. Unfortunately, this organisation of the spaces is completely unsuitable for contemporary quality of life. The typical phenomena of the region is so called "long yard", where sometimes not related 2-3 families are living in houses interlocked in one long building on the common yard. This situation and the capacity of the houses and building are sufficient for week-end house only.

Described realities lead in previous 15 years process of preservation of the site as a protective zone to gradual respect to those building activities, which were planned in the inner yards and occurred on side facades, evoked often by inserting the apartments in the spaces under roofs, sooner not occupied. Thus there is slowly created new level of structure, different to the protected, historical one. The result of this controversial situation is sad. The consultations with architects, creating new villas in the protected area are leading sometimes even to comical results. Now we are facing the question, if this "urban façadism" has to be the real aim of monuments preservation, while reduced ambitions of preservation, are focusing on the external features of the streets mostly. Paradox is the fact, that monuments, listed in national list are without appropriate treatment and all the activities of methodologists are focused on consultations with architects, designing new dwelling houses on the places of the older, decayed historical structure.

Despite the hours spent upon correction of the designs of new houses, despite the control on the place, new constructions in the zones with all the kitsch details are often representing a very poor quality of architecture. How far is this reality influenced by the power of investor's money and weakness of creator imagination we do not know yet? This

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is only another illustration to the historical fact that often snob's whims combined with power of money is beastly erasing modest values. If to this statement we add lack of awareness to values from the past, which are representing our monuments and sites, especially flourishing among new rich men the result is for those, who are protecting the heritage values sad.

Though the results of the recent heritage preservation in mentioned urban structures are full of paradoxes, it played its important role, especially by preventing the large-scale demolitions, which were partly carried out in totalitarian period. While present day position of Monuments Board there is mostly to supervise architectonical designs of poor quality instead of practical preservation of important valuable protected historical monuments, it was decided to reconsider the preservation and to focus on monuments and their settings only. Now there is under prepare the buffer zone, which would be proclaimed until the end of the year and after would Ministry of Culture cancel the zone. We believe that this step will help us to focus on real values and to prevent effectively negative impacts on monuments and their historical surrounding, partly neglected before.

Abstract

Recent history in the field of preservation of historical urban structures in the form of protective zones in Slovakia will be presented on former historical villages in Bratislava's suburbs.

On the basis of field research will be compared the starting points and the present reality. To basic negative impacts belong

- structural changes influenced by new functions
- reduced ambitions of preservation, which are focusing on the external features of the streets mostly
- new respected activities in the inneryards and side facades ("urban facadism?")
- new constructions in the zones with poor quality of architecture
- lack of awarness to values

The results of recent heritage preservation in mentioned urban structures is full of paradoxes. Though it played its important role, especialy by preventing the large-scale demolitions, which were partly carried out in totalitarian period, its present day position is mostly to supervise architectonical designs of poor quality instead of practical preservation of important valuable protected historical monuments. It is to reconsider the preservation and to focuse on monuments and their settings.

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Fig.1 Typical peasant's dwelling house and blacksmith's house, protected as listed monuments



Fig.2 Illegally destroyed protected monument



Fig.3 bad quality of monuments renovation



Fig.4 Inappropriate change of the original house with enlarged flat under the roof, and complete new structure on right



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Fig.5 Protected cultural monument in the centre surrounded by newly built houses



Fig.6 Parish Church, in front the barns



Fig.7 inappropriate new structure



Fig.8 Impact of new use of the space under roof on the house