

PROTECTION OF THE TRADITIONAL ARCHITECTURE FROM 19TH AND THE BEGINNING OF THE 20TH CENTURY IN MACEDONIA

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Abstract:

Analysis of protection of buildings housing stock refers to the period of the 19th and early 20th century, when the traditional construction has been practised. Protection measures applied to the vernacular architecture of Macedonia are conservation (preventive and active), preservation, rehabilitation, restoration and reconstruction (open-air museums). The problems of old town hearts, villages and historic buildings lie in the bad conditions of life, worn out infrastructure, social and economic degradation, non-regulated traffic, as well as in the industrial structures located in the vicinity.

Key words: *architecture, protection, conservation, method, traditional, town*

INTRODUCTION

Historical developments in the territory of Macedonia through the centuries has created a large pool of monuments in the area of architectural heritage. Most recently, traditional residential architecture, forms the basic structure of the historic cores of cities in Macedonia. Area of preserved historic residential and public buildings are a good part of the urban area of the city, affecting the completion of the archaic city skyline. The protection of these areas is extremely important, to preserve the image of the city and its historic values.

The evolution of economic and social life in towns in this period resulted in more intense construction activities. Dwelling structure was the basic element in shaping of the town panorama. Nineteenth century Macedonian towns, in their structure

and urban concept, shared common features with other Balkan towns from the same period. Their population ranged from 5.000 to 40.000 inhabitants, both Christian, and Muslim. Christian population settled the hilly areas in utterly dense structure of houses, whereas Muslims lived in lowlands, where houses had large courtyards abounding with plants.

The basic features that that influenced the concept of the architectural form and the plan of the structures are the eastern-oriental, resulting from the dominance of Ottoman Empire as the superior one in these areas, in correlation with the local ethnic traditions.

Traditional architecture represents significant part of the Macedonian material culture. Its development throughout centuries under the influence of different natural, social, economic and many other factors that have been exerted in this part of the Balkans has brought about outstanding creation showing diversity of styles, forms and decoration.

In creative sense of conception of all the aesthetic, traditional and local factors, in correlation with the skill and activity of the Macedonian master-masons, who had a reputation of good constructors all-over the Balkans and more widely, this architecture has reached its peak in the 19th century.

Protection measures applied to the vernacular architecture of Macedonia are conservation (preventive and active), preservation, rehabilitation, restoration and reconstruction (open-air museums). Conservation experience started at the beginning of the 20th century, and it became more intensive in the second half of the 20th century, when professional institutions were created, in all regions in Macedonia.

Preventive conservation

Preventive conservation reduces risks, therefore it's a corner stone of any strategy of preservation, an effective and economical means to preserve the integrity of heritage, minimizing the need for additional intervention on single objects, and to develop a method for multi-disciplinary management of preventive conservation (Vanta, European preventive conservation strategy project, ICCROM, Vanta, Finland 2001). In preventive conservation government must take the leadership in the preservation of cultural heritage, with institutional planning, training and to involving the public. Conservation and especially preventive conservation, includes a wide range of responsibilities and disciplines entrusted with the protection and preservation of art and cultural heritage.

Early discovery and the reduction of the cause of damage. The preservation of monuments is concerned with a living, constantly changing environment.

Preventive conservation in Macedonia is based on evaluating the relationships between institutions, government and users of historical buildings.

Expert teams prepare extensive scientific documentation based on the social circumstances and technical conditions. The Declaration of Amsterdam (1975) has given rise to application of *integral* protection, not

only of cultural monuments, but also of entire ensembles of old architecture in towns, settlements and landscapes, and the UNESCO Conference in Nairobi (1976) has greatly contributed to it. In active protection one should bear in mind the time when structures originated, despite their incorporation in modern life. Alongside with the conservation treatment, a care should be taken of incorporating the old town hearts and historic sites in their new function.

Restoration of the buildings

The restoration of the buildings, which originate from two centuries ago is, a complex process, which is necessary for the application of different conservation methods. The required assessment of the actual situation, evaluation of the values of architectural structures, determining the actual realistic way of achieving the outlined methods of protection.

The problems of old town hearts, villages and historic buildings lie in the bad conditions of life, worn out infrastructure, social and economic degradation, non-regulated traffic, as well as in the industrial structures located in the vicinity.

Villages are most well integrated with its surroundings, inhabitants and the landscape. Villages have a particular internal structure, inroad connections their houses and fields, usually with a church in the middle.

Towns are a creation of East or the Mediterranean influence, but their real development is the result of increase of urban population depends on history culture, economy and legal tradition.

Systematic research of folklore and vernacular architecture was attempted in the beginning of 20th century. Beginning of a professional custody of such monuments started in the middle of 20th century.

Material part of the cultural heritage lives in the space which surrounds us and are assembled in institutions which protect them and make use of them such as museums, collections, libraries or archives.

The vernacular architecture in Macedonia, as a part of the European cultural heritage, dates from the 18th, 19th and the early 20th centuries. The traditional constructions, made of weak materials, are exposed to destruction and their conservation is necessary. Conservation on the very site, without dislocation and with a complete evidence, is most often applied.

Cultural tradition and heritage, and cultural goods take the priority in working out the urban planning. This is in accordance with the conclusions from the UNESCO – ICOMOS Conference on the topic *Protection of Rural Heritage*, which was held in Budapest in 1977, which state that relocating of structures in open-air museums could be applied as a method only in cases when it has been proved that *in situ* conservation is not possible. Monuments of traditional architecture are profoundly connected with the landscape and the environment in which they originated.

Translocation of structure diminishes their monumental value. When settlements or parts of them have been preserved, their adaptation should create possibility of their integration in the modern living space.

Reconstruction is being applied only when it is necessary, i.e., when the structure is completely ruined. Re-locating is not possible, due to the wornout material and the mode of building. Nevertheless, the method of complete reconstruction is in use, which includes building of structures in open-air parks.

In Krushevo (West Macedonia) the roots of the town settlement date from the 18th century. The houses of Krushevo are part of the old city architecture from the 19th

century. In this town there are examples of houses which were treated as separate units and on which conservation was carried out. These houses have been successfully incorporated in the protected heart of the town and the amphitheatrically position.

The beginning of the building of the town is along the approaching road, on the bottom of the amphitheatre. The urban development was continuous – the town district with time sequences attached one upon the other. The Krushevo bazar - *charshija*, has communicational, social and cultural importance, as an economics area was naturally situated on the very bottom of the amphitheatre, in the center of the town surrounded by its district. The workshops are, as a rule, one storey high- on the ground floor is the shop, and on the first floor was the storing space.

The houses of Krushevo are attractive with their looks, their facades and their texture, the roofs made by stone, natural coloring of the wood or its paints of blue tones. The gables were painted with floral decoration, a combination of zoomorphic and floral elements, architectural or mythological scenes. With their spacial, constructional and esthetical solutions they are considered among the most representative objects of the Macedonian city architecture.

All these characteristics of the Krusevo (West Macedonia) house as individual structure have been integrated in town panorama. Houses of high ambient values form the picture of protected urban zone with successful conservation applied on some houses.

Besides the fortress and 360 churches that form the historic town heart, traditional house is also integral part of the architectural heritage of Ohrid. protected and developed by UNESCO.



Fig.1 Street in Ohrid , Macedonia

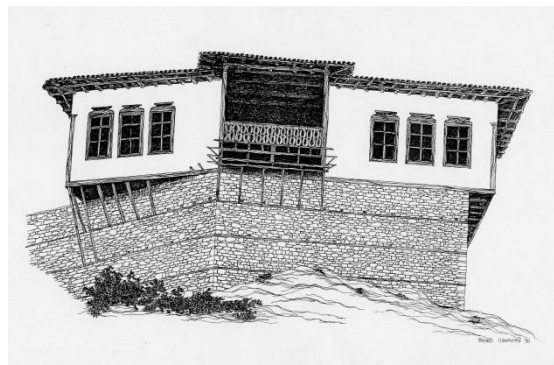


Fig.2 House from Veles, Macedonia

The restoration of the urban entities is applied most often as a way of protection of the folklore cultural heritage, as in Veles (Central Macedonia) and Ohrid (South West Macedonia) where groups of buildings or particular streets are included.

Urban historic architectural ensemble is a complex of particular cultural monuments aimed at protection of spatial and ambient values, which are included in active protection in modern times. In that, the emphasis is put on the most significant structures, the stylistic identity of which must not be disturbed. In Veles (Central Macedonia), the borders of the town heart were identified in 1979, by which this town gained the treatment of protected urban ensemble. Concerning the development of the town heart, the number of the residents was 10.000 in the beginning of the 19th century. In the 19th century it raised to 20.000, reaching to 50.000 in the middle of 20th century. The peak of its development

was at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century.

Today the historic heart is in the central area of the town. Structures were built densely for population of 170 residents per hectare. Most of the surface is occupied by individual houses, which are located on two hills with a river running between them. The specific terrain and other factors created a town of interesting panorama distinctive for nineteenth century Macedonian towns.

The urban picture includes streets of irregular form running around houses, which are grouped in *maalas*, thus forming the compact town heart. Every *maalo* has a central area with urban elements like fountain, shop, a tree -*chinar*, etc. The architecture is rather tolerant, having been based on respecting the right to life and the right to view of the neighbour, depending also on the landscape, yet, creating living environment of high standards.

In different parts of the town various protective measures have been undertaken, including:

Conservation of specific parts of houses for the purpose of protection from their further deterioration; sanatoria undertakings, that is, strengthening of the structure; adaptation particular rooms and introduction of new elements that would not disturb the whole, as well as reconstruction of small number of structures by replacing of their structural system.

Several zones have been designated, in which different extent of interventions has been applied. The used building materials are authentic, as well as the coloratura, interior design and yards with the surrounding landscape.

Conservation of old architecture is possible if experts from institutions for protection have professional attitude, multi-disciplinary approach in incorporating it in

the urban planning. Cooperation with the local population is also very important, as well as the adjustment to the existing concept. Emphasis should be made to preventive protection and to the development of active protection through various forms, such as culture alternative tourism.

Reuse of the buildings

Diversification of existing historic buildings of cultural heritage is a current modern method of conservation, that is often applied. Thus this method is applied for individual facilities, but also in some districts that have values of ambient landscape.

By adaptation of specimens of local architecture in the villages, the buildings are transformed into tourist facilities, art colonies, memorial centers, while in the cities they are used as museums, galleries, but most of them are used for living.

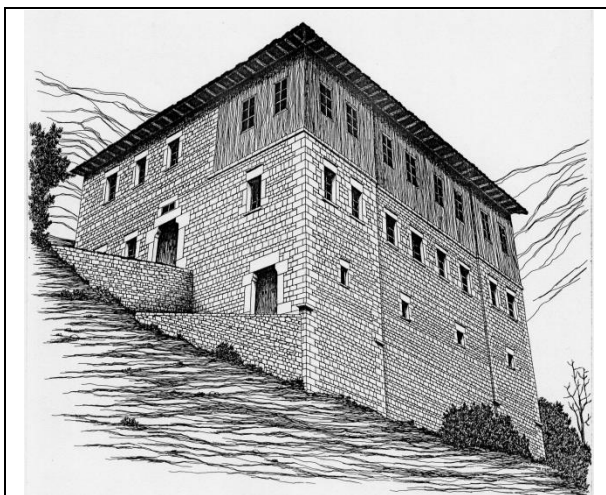


Fig.3 Village house from Galicnik, West Macedonia

Some rural settlements Galicnik (West Macedonai) dating mostly from the 19th and the beginning of 20th century and populated by about 5000 inhabitants have

been subjected to years- long conservation treatment, due to the rapid migration of population in the second half of the 20th century. Owing to the ambient and high architecture values of its houses. This settlement has tourist and recreational potential. Conservation treatment has been applied on several structures including renovating of both the exterior, and the interior.

The structures have been adapted and turned into memorial museum, restaurant, hotel, etc. Nevertheless, most of the houses have been maintained by families that use them for holidays, usually in summer time, because of the severe mountain climate. Galicnik was in 1975 included in the list of protected heritage sites as historic ensemble of rural-architectural, artistic and scientific values. The regime and measures for protection have resulted in passing regulations for preventive measures for protection of the village till the time when its urban planning will be completed. They refer to use of building materials, dimensions of structures, decorating of interior space, arranging of the environment, traffic regulations, as well as utilization of lands.

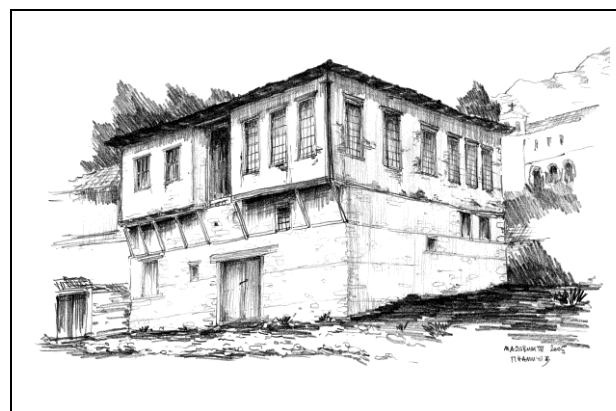


Fig. 4 Village house from Malovishte, Bitola region, Macedonia

Maloviste village, (Bitola region) is located deep in the National Park Pelister, this is a settlement which exists in accented peace. From its 1000 meters altitude above

sea level, where this village is located, only higher are the peaks of the surrounding mountains.

Historical sources, registered the village of Malovishta for the first time around the middle of the 16th century, as a settlement with a few families and 48 inhabitants.

The traditional architecture is mightily poured in this magnificent landscape. By using stone as the basic material, the old constructors with tireless energy and sense for practicality, created buildings made of simple forms. Everything is dimensioned within the framework of everyday activities and human needs.

A labyrinth of narrow paved streets steeply descends following the configuration of the terrain.

Entering through the massive wooden gates into the spacious yards, we can be assured of the traditional hospitality of the inhabitants.

The organized transport of products. Along with trade and toiling migration to distant countries, were activities, which in ancient time provided to a large extent the strong development of the local population of Malovishta. The manufacture of objects in metal, wood and textile products were also activities that were widely renowned. Cattle breeding was the main occupation, which was most commonly associated in the past.

Most houses are in good condition and the process of their adaptation for different use is in progress, including hotel structures, craftsmen's workshops, museum premises, etc., certainly in accordance with the possibilities offered by the development of cultural tourism.

Open-air museums

Dislocation or rebuilding facilities with traditional form as a method is applied when there are specific enough resources.

Reconstruction is being applied only when it is necessary, i.e., when the structure is completely ruined. Re-locating is not possible, due to the wornout material and the mode of building. Nevertheless, the method of complete reconstruction is in use, which includes building of structures in open-air parks.

By arranging small ethno-settlements and ethno parks, the coherence is preserved of cultural and historic landscapes and architectural values. This would result in creative conservation and modern museological and economic approach to protection.

Open-air museums, as sites of exceptional importance for the national identity of the nation, is a rather significant segment in the frame of the overall constructional cultural heritage.

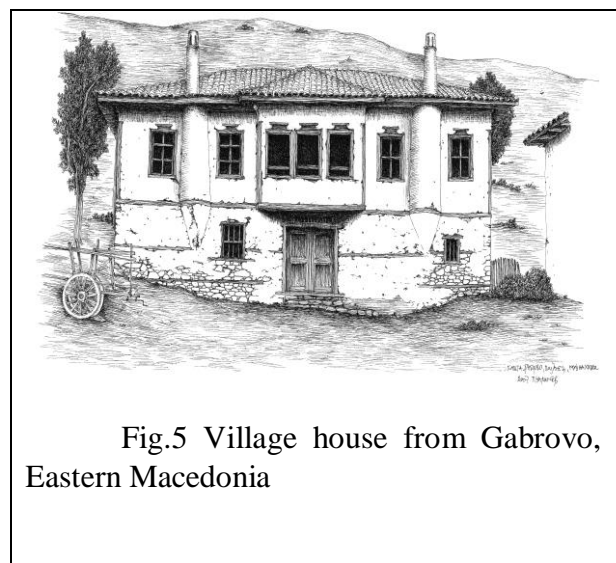


Fig.5 Village house from Gabrovo, Eastern Macedonia

The protection of the buildings as open air museum complexes is developed in two sites with regional character - in Berovo, where several of the existing rare structures are protected and in the Ethno Park Pijanec in the village Grad, near Delchevo, which is at the moment under construction, as a first open air museum in Macedonia.

The ethno-park Pijanec, which occupies a surface of 6000 m², is located in a river valley beside a fortress. It includes three different types of houses from the region, a mill, sheepfold, granary, baskets, two bridges, furnace, etc. The ethno-park has been conceived as active space with workshops for different local crafts, grain-mill, restaurant which offering traditional national cuisine, museum premises and open space for active cultural tourism. This park is of regional importance concerning development of tourism and raising the awareness for the heritage values. Taking into consideration that structures were in rainy state and their re-locating was not possible, they underwent a process of reconstruction, by application of local building materials and traditional mode of construction. The local people were actively involved in the construction and maintenance of the museum complex.

Conclusion

Protection of cultural heritage is one of the basic aims in their preservation for posterity and coming generations.

The interdisciplinary character of the preservation and conservation of cultural heritage, including tradition, has to enable the joining of the past and the present in space.

The aforementioned conservation methods represent a segment of the complex issues around, preserving the architectural heritage of this period . Of course vital to the development of awareness of the population,

adoption and compliance of legislation for protection of cultural monuments, the realization of planned projects and programs, incorporation of international standards worldwide in the same field, the development of a network of institutions and experts professionals etc. Protection of traditional architecture is a complex process, which is necessary to grow continuously, because it has meaning in terms of cities and the creation and preservation of the identity of the population, with the urban environment and historical heritage .

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