

THE DIFFERENTIATION OF MONUMENTS
A FIRST STEP IN DECIDING UPON
THEIR SOCIAL USE AND RESTORATION

Ludwig DEITERS

With reference to earlier ICOMOS documents and to the work of our revered hosts at this conference, and also in the light of the consultations which are now leading in the D.D.R. to the classification of monument-preservation within the organized community system of socialism, I should like to submit the following considerations for discussion on the definition and differentiation of monuments and monument-preservation.

A comprehensive definition for all types of monument might read: Monuments are places or objects of human endeavour or natural evolution, whose preservation by reason of their historical, artistic or scientific importance is in the interests of society.

Monuments can be divided into :

1. *Historical monuments*
2. *Artistic monuments*
3. *Natural monuments*

I am not competent to speak about the 3rd category, the relevant questions being handled in our country by a nature-conservation authority which comes within the province of rural economy and environment, while the preservation of historical and artistic monuments is the responsibility of the Ministry of Culture and its institute for the protection of monuments.

The division of historical monuments and artistic monuments into categories presupposes the establishment of historical and artistic values as part of the desirability inherent in monuments for the community as a whole.

In establishing the relative values of monuments, conclusions have emerged, particularly from the work of Walter Frodl, which one may accept here as fundamental. I should merely like to make a few additional comments on the significance to society of the historical and artistic value of monuments.

The historical value of monuments benefits historical research by its documentary evidence. In view of the general advance in historical scholarship in the postwar period, this is of great importance, especially

in countries which, as a result of a changed national or social situation, are supplementing or revising their presentation of history. Equally their visual quality enables monuments to become an important means of training men's historical and political consciousness. Thus the historical value of monuments acquires added significance.

The artistic value of monuments is of fundamental use in aesthetic education. As they stand at the centre of the life of the community, they are consciously or unconsciously accepted and so become the basis or yardstick for the further development of national culture. If the artistic achievements of the past in buildings and decorative arts are recognized as the representation of human relationships, economic and political links, intellectual attitudes and as the endeavour to solve social problems in a manner valid for the future, the testimony of artistic monuments today is particularly productive in the all-round education of creative, responsible personalities, which the era of the scientific-technical revolution and socialist evolution needs.

But not only does the differentiation of the theoretical value of monuments and its social importance lend itself to division into different categories, the practical work of preservation also demands the differential treatment of individual types of monument. In other words, differentiation is significant in acquainting ourselves with the specific value of particular monuments and in determining, according to their individual character, the appropriate use and in choosing a suitable course of restoration. I shall now propose a feasible system of differentiation and illustrate it by a few examples. Wherever possible, too, I should like to draw attention to certain special aspects connected with the use, restoration and equipment of particular types of monument.

1. HISTORICAL MONUMENTS

Historical monuments comprise all those places and objects, which are associated with events and personalities of popular history or which throw light on historical research and its branches (like cultural history, folklore, industrial history, the history of transport, military history and archaeology).

Regarded in this sense, artistic monuments are fundamentally historic monuments, being also the subject not only of art history studies, but of historical research and visual evidence of benefit to the teaching of history.

They should be considered, however, as a special category, for in their case, in contradistinction to all other monuments of artistic value, the decisive criterion lies in the acknowledgement of their quality as monuments.

Historical monuments may be squares, streets, public gardens, buildings, furniture and articles of common utility, costumes and weapons, documents, plastic and pictorial representations, inscriptions, burial places and tombs, boundary and milestones.

The very different character of historical monuments compels their differentiation into definite groups, which I will designate individually:

- 1.1. Monuments of national history.
- 1.2. Monuments of cultural history.
- 1.3. Monuments of folklore.
- 1.4. Monuments of industrial history.
- 1.5. Monuments of the history of transport.
- 1.6. Monuments of military history.
- 1.7. Monuments of archaeology.

1.1. To monuments of national history

belong — and these are particularly important — monuments of the revolutionary struggles of peoples, in addition to battle-fields, buildings, graves and objects which are associated with leading statesmen, army commanders, and so on.

Like all historical monuments, those concerned with national history are of especial service to the community as subjects for study, from the viewpoint of general scholastic instruction to the further education of the individual as a part of his spare-time cultural activities.

From this follows the need for exhibiting and preserving their original character. This, however, is often neither sufficient to be informative nor to acquire an emotional impression of the nature and significance of the historical episode.

The historical monument therefore generally requires to supplement its resources of evidence by displaying documentary material, inscriptions, pictorial features and by architectural emphasis.

Thus, at the beginning of our century, the Battle of the Nations near Leipzig was recalled by a monument and the participation of the Russian armies among others is recorded by the Russian memorial church, both these monuments being cared for by us. In this connection, allow me also to draw attention to a historic monument of recent times, the memorial dedicated to the fearful sufferings and resistance of the anti-fascists at Sachsenhausen. As this can only convey a slight impression of the original circumstances, we erected a hall of remembrance over the ruins of the camp crematorium. The infamous Appellplatz has been surrounded by a wall in place of the vanished hutments.

1.2. To monuments of cultural history

belong places of important episodes in cultural history, like buildings or objects associated with important personalities of the past in the cultural and scientific fields.

The function of monuments of cultural history in the education and cultural life of mankind needs no emphasis. Every nation will therefore be at pains to maintain them where possible in their original state and to recreate them in the event of their destruction.

Thus the Goethehaus at Weimar, severely damaged in the last war, has been reconstructed.

A particular problem in caring for the memorials of outstanding personalities in cultural life lies in the preservation or recreation of the interior settings of their activities, e.g., in the Schumannhaus at Zwickau. Where the original furnishings have been lost, one must try to provide an appropriate impression with other contemporary pieces, as in Luther's room at the Wartburg, where the table is not the one upon which he translated the Bible, but comes from his parents' home.

1.3. *To monuments of folklore*

belong forms of land-holding, settlements, buildings, furniture, implements, weapons and tools, which offer fundamental evidence of the economic and political existence, way of life and cultural condition of peasants, artisans and labourers in town and country.

As a result of industrialization, even in agriculture, and of changing modes of living, the possibility of preserving examples of vernacular architecture in their original form and function is becoming increasingly rare. Only if they were initially built on a sufficiently ample scale, do they satisfy present-day dwelling needs (e.g., the "Umgebinderhäuser" at Gross-Schönau, whose continued use as homes is none the less reflected in altered fenestration). The influence of preservation policy is more effective, when vernacular buildings find a social application, as in the Vorlaubenhäuser at Lüdendorf used today as a kindergarten. We try to maintain, and to restore, the most interesting relics of vernacular architecture as museum items, like the farmstead-museum at Lehde or the 14th-century Hochständerhaus at Quedlinburg.

1.4. *To monuments of industrial history*

belong buildings, installations and fittings from the technologies of earlier periods like windmills and forges, abandoned mines and industrial layouts and apparatus, which are significant in the development of production techniques and processes. The technological revolution has not ended the operation of windmills and water-hammers, but has liberated traditional industrial methods. The most instructive and important of these should be preserved as show places to stimulate the creative urge of mankind, like the celebrated iron-ore mine at Freiberg and the traditional Happelshütte in the Thuringian forest. They make us realize how much we owe to our forbears.

1.5. *To monuments of the history of transport*

belong roads, bridges, railways, canals, harbours, lighthouses, ships and vehicles, which reflect the historical development of transport and traffic technology, e.g., the Gölschtahl bridge and the canals at Rüdersdorf.

1.6. *To monuments of military history*

belong defensive structures, weapons and apparatus, which offer basic evidence for the military historian and for the development of military science, like the town gates of Neubrandenburg or the stronghold of Königstein.

1.7. *To monuments of prehistory and very early periods (archaeological monuments)*

belong material evidence of early cultures and historical events, which required excavation for their exploitation or still need it (e.g., the excavation of ground floors of Romanesque houses at Magdeburg).

2. ARTISTIC MONUMENTS

For this category I propose the following definition:

Artistic monuments are historic works of urbanism, architecture, fine art, applied art and landscape design, whose preservation by reason of their artistic value or value to art history is in the interests of society.

Accordingly, artistic monuments comprise:

2.1. *Monuments of urbanism (town-planning);*

2.2. *Monuments of architecture;*

2.3. *Monuments of fine and applied art;*

2.4. *Monuments of landscape design (landscape architecture).*

2.1. *Monuments of urbanism*

May be historic housing clusters or parts of them, precincts, streets, squares and architectural groups. They are the most widely ramifying and complicated type of monument.

The social use of monuments of urbanism, and the type of protection and care entailed, separates them sharply from the individual monument.

The individual object, whether a work of art or architecture, is in general a rigidly defined entity. For society the interests of protecting the object as a whole and in its parts plainly outweigh considerably those of the user with his eye on change.

The need is to keep the monument unaltered for a long period under a basic legal instrument of protection.

The determination of the extent of the "site" entails a special state enactment, the fixing of the boundaries being dependent on many factors, economic ones among them.

The greater the extent of the site, the more various the social interests which conflict with those of monument-protection. Historic housing groups must generally be recognized as centres of present-day life also. Such places are in a continual process of metamorphosis. We need to establish the character of interiors and exteriors, what has to be preserved externally, the appropriate use, what features to minimize or eliminate, and which areas, on what alignments, on what scales and in what forms, and so on, to build. Instead of the static preservation of the existing conception stands the need for a dynamic development plan, ensuring the retention of all relevant values in the constantly evolving pattern of townscape.

Thus in the centre of Stralsund, uniquely symbolized by the Town Hall façade, three zones have been established:

- Zone I round the Old Market, which is being reconstructed house by house from the standpoint of monument-preservation.
- Zone II round the New Market, in which the historic character will continue to dominate in the future, visually at any rate.
- Zone III, a neighbourhood of war-destroyed areas and of undistinguished development of the mediaeval town, where in principle new building will fit harmoniously into the general picture.

Valid urban character demands the preservation of a large number of buildings. Comparatively few can be exploited as sights for tourists and other such purposes. The retention of the rest — looked at in economic terms — implies profitable use. Hence the houses of the Stralsund burgesses, whose historic interiors have in any case been lost, are being converted into modern dwellings even to the granary floors, e.g., the house at 21 Mühlenstrasse. The Knieper Gate-tower is today also used for dwellings.

We are currently contending with similar problems at Quedlinburg, Erfurt and other towns.

2.2. *Monuments of architecture*

May reside in the outer or inner form of buildings (ruins, too) or particular elements of them, like gates, oriel windows, interiors and furnishings, staircases and ceilings, or small architectural features, like fountains, steps, balustrades, and so on. The care and use of architectural monuments has many implications. I should like here to point out two necessary tendencies in restoration. One is the policy of "recreating the artistic effect", which has the very active backing of political and cultural interests of the population.

It was on this account that Magdeburg cathedral was so reconstructed that the scars of wartime bombs and resultant structural collapse are no longer

visible. On the same grounds the west wall of the Romanesque crypt of Brandenburg cathedral has been rebuilt.

The interior of this cathedral was disfigured in the 19th and 20th centuries by a series of steps between nave and chancel. Foundation-strengthening caused these to be removed. Parts of the west wall of the Romanesque crypt was thus exposed and reconstruction set in train.

The second tendency is the adaptation or architectural monuments to new social purposes. In this way large sections of the population acquire deeper experience, while the maintenance of the monument is simplified economically.

Thus, for example, the castle of Spyker on the island of Rügen has been converted into a workers' convalescent home, and the castle of Leitzkau made into a school.

2.3. *Monuments of fine and applied art*

May be works of painting, sculpture, graphic art and works of artist-craftsmen of appropriate importance. For us they must qualify as a monument-category independently of whether they form part of an architectural monument or whether they are static or movable. They are subjects for monument-protection.

Artistic monuments, which are a part of state or private collections, occupy a special position in relation to the conditions of their protection and maintenance. An instance of a monument in this category which is significant, although unconnected with a building, is the so-called "Magdeburger Reiter". The museum houses today the priceless 13th century original. A copy embodies its value as a symbol in the traditional location of the market place.

2.4. *Monuments of landscape design (landscape/garden architecture)*

May be examples of planned landscaping of all types, including avenues, parks and gardens.

Gardens and parks find their particular social purpose in recreation and civilized living. Their essential amenities include (among other things) seats, benches and restaurants.

A special problem of their maintenance lies in the periodical renewal of plants and plantations. Examples of our parks are to be seen at Postdam-Sanssouci, Wörlitz and Gross-Sedlitz.

Every form of systematization has its weaknesses. We believe, however, that a system is needed, in order to exploit in the interests of society the many and various values of monuments and to develop further and differentially the methodology of monument-care.