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REVIVAL OF HISTORIC VILLAGES IN HUNGARY

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Revival of historic villages in Hungary.

Two further categories have been added in recent decades to the protected categories of historic architecture, to the groups of historic public buildings, ecclesiastic buildings, palaces and dwelling-houses, castles and ruins. These new categories are the groups of industrial monuments /windmills, water-mills, horse-driven mills, oil-mills, foundries/, and the groups of popular monuments /dwelling-houses and farm-houses/.

The classification by architectural ages as it was practised in the appraisal of monuments, i.e. the distinction of buildings according to the Roman, Romanesque, Gothic, Renaissance or Baroque style cannot be employed in the case of popular architectural relics. These buildings have no past of many hundred years, they are only some 100 -150 years old, sometimes not even so old. But they are valuable for us nevertheless. And they are valuable not for a few stylistical marks they possibly bear, or for features reminding of such marks, nor for a design of a window head, or the ornamentation of a window apron, or the design of a door-frame. Their value lies in the architectural conception of the building as a

whole, its shaping, the layout of the dwelling-place, in the material, manner of construction, structures of buildings; and all these, even if they are not older than, say, 100 years, bear on them, evidence in their present form their development history of many hundred years.

Hence the historical appearance of popular architecture and its various types change not so much with ages as in accordance with its building materials, customs - and by regions. These objects of popular architecture typical of different regions the popular monuments have been counted, registered and mapped in Hungary by proceeding from region to region, like in the case of monument buildings. This work - which took some ten years - this count and survey embracing the entire territory of Hungary, has supplied data on the extant, individual and group relics of Hungarian popular architecture. It has supplied data on regional types which form self-contained groups through their architectural particularities, and which can still be found in our villages.

And by this we have arrived at from the individual historic monuments to the historic ensembles to the historic nuclei of towns and villages.

The careful mapping of monuments - which has been completed by now - has shown that in Hungary we cannot speak of historic settlements ~~that~~ that have survived intact in their original form and should require protection in their entirety. This is not so in the case of either towns or villages. Each of our settlements shows more recent details which do not fit into the original architectural atmosphere of the historic nucleus, into its scale, its structure formed by the streets and squares.

Needless to say, the first step to be taken for the revival of historic villages is to afford protection to the existing ones. Thus the first thing we must do in this respect may seem paradoxical: to protect the old urban nucleus, or the historic nucleus of the village, and to organize such protection. And the fundamental requirements of protection were the marking out of historic villages, drawing up a list of them, ^{to} declare them protected /1/, and ensure protection by law /2/. 17 "areas of monument significance", including two villages, have been declared protected in Hungary so far, in an effort to preserve historic settlements. Legal protection is afforded by Decree 1/1967 of the Minister of Public Construction /58/.

The marking out of further protected historic units and ensembles in villages has been started, but proceeds slowly. The reason is that protection is of ~~para~~ practical value, can fulfil its purpose, i.e. the revival of a historic ensemble, only if we can - together with the marking out for ~~the~~ protection - make a rational suggestion that can be realized in practice in the near future for the revival of historic villages.

The value of popular monuments lies in most cases in their oldness, their manner of building rare today, in their structures, which are exposed to the consequences of changing needs - changing at an increasing rate today - to alterations. The villagers now demand a more modern life, more modern ~~facilities~~ facilities; to force them to preserve and maintain outmoded ways of life, ground plans of houses, hearths, etc. would be antisocial. The rural population in search of modernization must be relieved of such burden by the expropriation of the buildings in question, by taking them over into public ownership. Or ~~is~~ if the owners are willing to accept such responsibility and burden, they must be compensated with proper annual sums. what we have said here applies in particular to

village ensembles, parts of settlements of historic value, in addition to given individual popular monuments.

The survey of historic villages in Hungary has permitted a numerical determination of the subsidy expected from the state, of the sum necessary for the maintenance of monument values in the popular respect. And this, we might say, took place at the eleventh hour because old village houses are being demolished one after the other, new ones reminding of outlying suburbs are being built in their place by which the historic character, beauty and unity of villages is irrevocably destroyed.

Based on our surveys, two Hungarian historic villages have been declared protected till now: these are the villages of Tihany and Hollokő. The protection of both applies to the village nucleus.

Tihany is one of the most attractive and frequented settlements in the Lake Balaton region. This village is situated at a scenic spot of the peninsula which abounds in the beauties and rarities of nature. The relics of a varied and rich historic past attract large numbers of tourists, and the one-time fishing-village with its characteristic small houses is no less attractive. Hard living

conditions, the seigniorship of the Abbey, restricted the development and expansion of the village in the past; so this old village has preserved to our days a network of streets which recalls the medieval village structure. Small cotters' houses stand on tiny, ~~holdings~~ irregularly shaped holdings, are sometimes built together, their unplastered ashlar facades, the stone-walls and the zigzagged, narrow streets emanate a special atmosphere. ~~xxxxxx~~ Some of these reed-thatched peasant houses with a pillared portico and an open-hearth kitchen have undergone alterations of greater or lesser extent, but give a homogeneous village appearance even so, represent an ethnically and architecturally valuable group of ~~monuments~~ monuments.

The protection of monuments in this delimited area ~~we~~ wishes to ensure the preservation of the traditional settlement structure and the relics of popular architecture. The best way to do this is to take over some of these buildings into public ownership and use.

Two peasant houses are used as museums at present, one as a folk-art shop, and one as a restaurant. The one-time farm buildings of the Abbey have been converted into the "Rege" confectionery and a row

granary

of fancy goods shops, the multi-storey (into the new cinema with the unchanged preservation of the old exterior. In 1969 the National Inspectorate of Monuments worked out a recommendation for the utilization of some parts of this village. A restaurant unit, a colony of artists, museums, artisans' workshops and guest-houses would be established in the peasant houses according to this plan.

The village of Hollokő is a mountainy settlement with one street and a combed-dentate building method; the ~~main~~ nucleus consisting of proticoed houses is protected. Like in the case of Tihany, it was important to expropriate several houses also here. These were restored by the Inspectorate to serve as a regional museum, a self-service tourists' hostel, and a sanitary station. Also the one-time peasant manufactures could be established here, such as ceramic, weaving, cartwright's, etc. workshops where the products could be sold on the spot. A post office, kindergarten, public nursery, restaurant, servicing centre, etc. could be equipped in the existing houses. And a considerable number should be maintained as dwelling-houses.

The protection of popular monuments, a field which has won appreciation only most recently, as

well as the cultivation of the ethnography of objects on the whole, was started around the turn of the century but was by no means so successful as the other branches of this discipline, as the collecting of songs and music /by Bartok and Kodály/, of ornamental motifs /by Huszka/, of customs, dances, costumes, tales, sagas, etc. A national survey of popular architecture was conducted in the last decades by an enthusiastic group of young architects. This work has been completed by now.

Registration of the various relics was followed by the beginning of restoration. But the chief advantage was the fact that with the help of this national survey we could form an overall picture not only of individual popular ~~relics~~ relics to be protected, but also of entire ~~village~~ village units which require protection, of the number and extension of our historic villages. This survey may be termed the first step on the road towards the revival of historic villages. This is followed by the organization of the protection of given historic villages, by the marking out of protected groups. The future use of certain buildings /houses/ and accessories /pens, sties, stables, barn-yards/ within a group is determined, misconstructured or

marred parts, e.g. fences, colouration, openings, plaster-work, roof structures, roofings, chimneys, telephone poles, well-curbs, watering troughs, benches, etc. are inspected in detail. The outward characteristics of the village ought to be defined in the course of this work. The spoiling factors found here and the recommendations for remedy are included in a list concerning the streets - i.e. trees, road surfaces, sidewalks, etc. - and the look of the village in general, and concerning also separately each property within the protected area.

The detailed village-development plan drawn up in this way must pay regard to the preservation of the historic atmosphere of the settlement as an extraordinary value, and also to aesthetical appearance. The plan must take into account the functions of a village centre that meets the new requirements of a developing, modernizing village. It must be examined whether such a centre can be established by making use of the existing, old buildings, or an area for a new centre must be marked out outside the protected area. What will the connection of these two be?

At present the dwelling-houses of Hollokő

have three rooms for the most part /58,3 %/, or have two rooms. There is a cellar under one room. The functional connection of the rooms has preserved the traditions of the Palots popular architecture. The centre of the village has hardly changed up to the middle of the 1950's, and the changes in taste seen on the houses of the new village quarter left the homogeneous appearance of the street in the Old Village unchanged for quite a time. A village expecting a lively turnover of tourists needs the establishments recommended for the revival of the historic ~~quarter~~ quarter anyway. Nor can it do without such facilities as a kindergarten, day-nursery, club, restaurant, etc. And to provide these in a quality and standards better than average agrees with the endeavours for the modernization of the village. In the case of Hollokő, for example, already the general village-development plan considered it necessary - in addition to providing more accommodation for tourists - to build a kindergarten for 60, a day-nursery for 40, a centre for party and mass organization meetings, a post office, a public bath, and a medical consultation unit.

The declaration of protection to the historic village nucleus was the occasion to begin in 1967

the archaeological opening up of the imposing ruins of the medieval castle which stands on a hill rising over Hollókő. Restoration of this castle-monument, and the ~~present~~ conservation of the ruins is in progress.

It is important, and is feasible, to preserve the small orchards surrounding the village in an area of about 36 acres. To maintain the hill-sides between the village and the castle in their present state as pastures is also important. The wild fruit-trees growing here must be preserved, the existing growing stock must be improved, gaps planted with ~~the~~ trees. Protection of the area surrounding the spring - including the mine - is to be ensured by the Inspectorate in cooperation with the National Office of Nature Conservation. From the very outset the precondition of carrying through these projects was the fact that they were the intention not of a single authority - monument protection - but were supported also by the local village council and the county council. The mutually supporting, helpful and concurrent cooperation of the authorities of monument protection, nature conservation, tourism and local administration - supported by the understanding of the local population - is the most important foundation for the revival of historic villages and for the preservation of valued aesthetical and historic treasures.