

Economics in the Conservation Process

Several experiences from Slovenia

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My report is, on one hand based on the experiences of archaeologists, art historians, historians and ethnologists, shortly: on the experiences of the humanistically educated professionals who work in the monument conservation practice. The economic side of our activeness are, of course, studying appropriately educated professionals. But nevertheless, very frequently are we those who just have to explain to the authorities, owners and broader public that the conservation decision, the appropriate renovation of old building or of the settlement environment (elements of the settlement) has the economic advantage as well and that it makes sense. How to explain to the land owners of the biggest hill fort in Eastern Alps (Stična – GABROVEC 1966) who earns with tennis court and large stable a lot, that he could manage differently as well, if he gives it up? Such kind of experiences had shaped quite a few of our questions addressed to the economic branch (BAS 1950, SEDEJ 1976).

On the other hand my report is based on the specific experiences of Slovenia, of the state in transitional period regarding many respects, of the state with small towns where the conservation branch did though forge ahead with its ways which could though, regarding its aims and achievements, be compared with many other countries.

Both the problems I wish to deal in this report with I discussed often with the colleagues from the nearer and remote countries, too. We often came to the similar conclusion that specialists dealing with monument conservation, should forward together few of these questions to the economic branch and

appoint out at which particularly should the international economic organizations be warned about. Therefore I do take the liberty of presenting this topic to the broader public.

Slovenia is situated on the eastern margin of Alps, touches the northern Adriatic and ranges in western sub-pannonic territory. Since the First World War Slovenia had been the constitutional part of Yugoslavia, in the second, Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, its north-western republic. Three years ago Slovenia changed its system and directed itself determined towards the market economics. Two years ago it attained independence from Yugoslavia. Before the First World War it belonged, since the Carolingian times, to the complex of western European state formations. Natural and historic circumstances determined the state its history-economical feature which is relevant for conservation of heritage as well. Agrarian basis is limited and therefore are since ever important the secondary agricultural activities as cattle-breeding (with still retained mountain seasonal pasture), wine-growing, fruit-growing, gathering of forest fruit and growing of vegetables. Several of that kind products gained in the past a wideranging reputation. The important economic branch has always been the forestry. In old times the country has been significant of its ore deposits which were soon worked out or are though generally too modest for the modern economy. However, to the contemporary times survived only few mines of brown coal and several iron ore mines in memory of the intensive mining in the Antiquity and in the Middle Ages. For many years has the

particularity of the country been the rather big mine of mercury in Idrija.

An important role played in the country, particularly in old times, the busy continental trade, due to the easy passages from the Adriatic to the middle Europe. In 16th and 17th century the Turkish armies stopped the brisk exchange of goods between Hungarian countries and Venice through our territory. The Austrian "Su "dbahn" (south railway line) between Vienna and Trieste is the base of the railway network and there are still preserved some elements from the time of its origin. All these activities could, of course, not wholly maintain the entire population. Blind spots were to a certain extent bridged by various domestic crafts and peasant trade. Until the First World War quite a number of people from certain areas emigrated to America, too (KOS and others 1970, 1980).

All these facts had ascendancy over those features of the country which are today our monuments and sites. Towns remained small, but having in mind the size of the territory, they are proportionally numerous. Nevertheless, we just have to deal conservationally with even much smaller settlements and treat them as urban monuments, particularly regarding the layout plan, the space for joint living and regarding the evidences of economic activity because they discharged number of functions for their surrounding, only that their influential territory had been smaller (Alpen-Adria 1985).

Equally, we have to treat as urban monuments those villages which are preserving in their image a basic cell from which arose on the same territory a town, as well. It concerns particularly the villages with dense street series and with ramparts in classical Karst region and in the littoral zone (STUPAR-SUMI 1972 and 1977).

The system of monument conservation was influenced by the history of the country, too. The professional activity has until the end of the First World War been the part of

Austrian system of monument conservation. Later it grew organically from this tradition, even to the time after the Second World War, as the lucky circumstances retained the personnel continuity. Regretfully, after the Second World War our branch did not deal enough with economic questions. Here is to emphasize that we did soon have, regarding the circumstances, very opened borders and so we got soon well acquainted with various "western" technologies used by monument conservation, but they did though not come into use, due to the fact that they were too expensive. The whole time we were also familiar with the benevolent influence of the owners' mood regarding the maintenance and restoration of, before all, ecclesiastical as well as dwelling buildings in towns. In the country caused, regretfully, exactly this influence (after 1960) the quick change of building fund feature. Against these changes the professional branch could not do a lot, although in the theory it did have many possibilities. The professional offices were maintained nearly entirely by state finances which at least co-financed many of their interventions. Private and free lanced implementers of more demanding restoration interventions appeared only late. Some of the old arts and crafts were though all the time alive (and were gradually disappearing as well).

It is to emphasize that in the time of the planned economy which also developed the regional planning of bold conception, we the professionals from the monument conservation branch, contributed number of analyses of image, significance and function of the individual settlements and objects and from these analyses sprang the proposals for conservation regime (BAR JANSA 1981 and 1985) Regretfully, the appropriate realizations were only few, many a time because the economic analyses had not been realistic. Negative influence had the arbitrariness of local authorities and individuals, as well as the meagre quality of carry-out-plans, elaborated in project enterprises which had long belonged to the state. Luckyer

were those parts of towns where the building fund belonged to the state property.

Now the situation is fundamentally changing. Many things referring to the individual rights of the owner, as well as of the professional worker and implementer of the specific interventions are still not fully defined and penetrated in the general consciousness. Regarding the preservation of urban building tissue is perhaps particularly topical the entanglement concerning the fact that the old logical entities of the residential-business buildings got recently per-more floor owners, who, above all, do not have at disposal enough capital to be interested in the qualitative renewal, yet.

But today let me focus your attention to the two questions only: 1. how to spread the cost-benefit analyses? and 2. how to stimulate, with the state system of licences for the professional conservation work on cultural heritage, the development of territories which are rich on heritage but are lacking in other economic potential? Although it seems paradoxically, the detail I wish to talk about concerning the first question applies, before all, the data addressed to the national economics, and concerning the second question, those data which are necessary for stimulation of the individual.

Ad 1

Until now, our collaborators economists, have analysed only the cost relationship between the renewal and newbuilding, estimated the value of the renewed building higher, evaluated various parameters of the building function. Only a few times they have compared the value of the not built-up grounds in old settlements, saved due to the renewal. About the number of other questions we did not get through so well. I did have the opportunity to hear the brilliant lecture of Mr. J. P. Tassiosa from Athens. however, he did also remain on the parameters which did not reach so high as we would need for the persuasion of public. Above all I am of the opinion that

in the cost-benefit analysis there ought to be included number of data about work. The conservation intervention itself demand operationally more intensive intervention than the new building and is engaging in different professional profiles, partly uses different materials. Preparations for these works are often carried out in immovables with monument value and they remain, in spite of the works, alive. Equally, the renovation demands different education of the implementer, different profile of studying on all levels! The done renovation is, further, challenged for the qualitative cultural marketing. Namely, the renovation then spark off the process which if appropriately planned and implemented generates new benefits for heritage conservation: it is then not any more entirely dependent on public finances.

Ad 2

Due to the fact that the majority of professional expert work, regarding the heritage conservation, had until now been associated to the government administration, our legislation did not consider either the system of licences for work nor the professional supervision. Present also was the poor principle of giving away the work by means of competition. Now are introduced all these things. We are, of course, aware that we will have to deal throughly with the positive and negative side of the whole. With licences ought to be dealt carefully in order not to degenerate the system into protectionism which prevent the positive competition among implementers. At the same time, we have also to be prepared to protect the particular implementers and manufacturers of materials and products. Namely, they often contribute a lot to our efforts to preserve the individual monuments and in particular sites in their original function and do not let them to decay degenerated.

This phenomenon is most vivid by conservation of cultural landscape (FERNANDEZ 1992), even wider, by the international entanglements

would enable him to know that he is going to get the right thing, and on the other side the producer, with enabling him the determined price. The international symposium and its conclusions should though be the occasion to point out to the huge international economic organizations this side of heritage conservation, too. regarding the agricultural policy, but number of legalities apply for the settlement of monuments as well. Many branches bound up on renovation and life of monuments can not survive in competition with industrial and farming production although they are for the well being and successful conservation is of vital importance. Therefore I am of the opinion that for these activities there ought to be re-established the particular quality standards and these should later be internationally coordinated and legalized. Such standards would at the same time protect the customer on one side, because they

Figures

1. From the analysis of interventions in Slovenian dwelling houses :
 - (a) reparation of all houses,
 - (b) reparations with public funds,
 - (c) reparations with professional advices,
 vernacular architecture :
 - (d) all reparations,
 - (e) with public funds,
 - (f) with professional advices.
2. For rural ensembles is the good economic analysis is of vital importance (example from classical Karst in Slovenia : a. Pliskovica, b. Godnje pri Dutovjah/Godnje by Dutovlje).

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