

**Methodological Procedure in Research
Work on Monastery Entities**

Ideally the research of a monastery is based on the study of three sources: the buildings at the site, written historical sources and art sources — historical plans and graphic presentations — the monastery veduta. By combining the data from these sources it is possible to form a picture of a spatial entity of this type. Most important, of course, is the study of buildings at the site, which are the primary source. Systematic research of the site must be preceded by a preliminary evaluation of the monument as a whole which is the indicator for more extensive work. On the basis of available data from the site and written sources a general chronology and the spatial architectural type is determined. This may include archaeological soundings, in the case of insufficiently defined entities to determine the stratigraphy and preliminary chronology. Starting with an identified spatial model and the preceding evaluation, systematic research is initiated which consists of: exploration of a wider location and regional orientation, investigation of the spatial disposition of the settlement and research of the architecture as a whole. Examination of the location and regional orientation include an analysis of the basic conditions which were relevant to the building of a monastery at that place: the suitability of the ground for building; the existence of river or spring water; The existence of adequate soil for the economic development of the community; natural depots of building material — possible existence of older quarries; climatic conditions — micro climate; the position of the monastery settlement in relation to the road network at the time of its building; the relationship between the sacral and the urban structure of the epoch... Establishing that a sacral structure continuity existed at this location is also a significant element, especially in the case of entities of this type, as one of the important prerequisites for the choice of location.

The final result of the investigation of the spatial disposition of the monastery means: definition of the extent to which the monastery spread, identification of the primary spatial model and the phases of historical reconstructions in the course of its existence — establishing a relative chronology based on the recognition of building interventions, a functional analysis of the architectural spatial solution. Such a research program is realised through parallel architectural and archaeological investigation.

The functional analysis of the buildings is a special problem during the research of a monastery entity. To throw light on this question we require a knowledge of the regulations and organization of monastery life (typics), as well as other historical documents, that is sources which help us indirectly in the identification of the buildings as they are found on the site. This means that field work must be preceded by extensive work on the written historical material.

An important phase in the research of a monastery settlement is work on the architectural and constructional analysis of the buildings. The analysis includes examination of the architectural solution — horizontal and vertical plan, primary and secondary architectural plastics. It is necessary to establish the typology of the ground plans, window and entrance openings, floors, roofs and roof coverings — usually according to archaeological data on the origins of the material used. The building is measured according to the valid system of measurements — planning and building module.

The assessment of the building inheritance, as one of the final phases in the process of research on a monastery settlement, must be carried out on the basis of the inherent qualities of the complex in question. It should not be based on a chronological value system, because it can happen that priority is given to the building on the basis of its age instead of its architectural quintessence. A monastery, as a historical category has got two values: one that is valid at the moment of building, and another which it is provided by chronological distance. That is why the problem of evaluation must be solved by comparative study of the architecture. The monastery being a spatial architectural structure, the evaluation is carried out in two dimensions: first — assessment of the spatial solutions with successive additions over a longer period, second — assessment of separate architectural achievements within the entity. The problem stated in this way introduces the question of historical exposition, a category which is particularly expressed in a inhabited settlement. The concept of historical exposition here means the changes within a spatial structure during its entire existence. The results of this phase of research are directly connected with the presentation of the monument.

The final phase of research on a monastery settlement includes planning suitable reconstructions of characteristic phases of development of the settlement and separate buildings based on the results of

preceding investigations. Thanks to complete information on the origins, type and spatial architectural structure, it is possible to suggest the extent and type of restoration of a cultural monument.

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