

BETWEEN PAST AND PRESENT: THE ISSUE OF PROTECTING THE ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE OF THE 20TH CENTURY IN SARAJEVO

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Abstract

The restoration of architecture from the 20th century, depicting a set of complex transitions between historical periods, represents a relatively young issue. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, it covers methods starting from the so-called "Italian school" of critical restoration—which is still rare in this country—where the preservation of the historic building is imperative, although in specific cases, subtractions or additions based on contemporary technologies are allowed to reverse the restoration approach. In the latter method, which has become dominant and widely implemented in Bosnia and Herzegovina, preference is given to preserving form. The protection of modern architecture, with its dilemmas and different approaches, needs to be viewed in a broader historical context, even though this tangible heritage remains heavily influenced by local tradition. It is especially interesting to analyze this phenomenon in Sarajevo, a city where for almost 20 years, many restoration works were stalled to complex economic and political conditions. Even though multiple professional activities have been carried out recently to protect such architecture, valorization of their credibility will be possible only after a certain time, given their predominantly experimental character. Therefore, this article aims to present a fresh critical analysis of the main approaches in local renovation.

Keywords: *tangible culture; architectural heritage; restoration methods; Bosnia and Herzegovina; Western Balkans*

Introduction

At the beginning of the 20th century, the spirit of historicism in the architecture and art of Sarajevo, the capital city of Bosnia and Herzegovina, was still thriving. The most representative historicist building, the National Museum of BiH, designed by Karel Pařík and completed in 1913 in the Renaissance Revival style, also followed the artistic mainstream [1].

However, over ten years earlier, under the influence of foreign trends and local innovations, aesthetics began evolving in the direction of the geometrization of form, and soon, more sophisticated architectural expression bluntly overshadowing historicism appeared. Among others, various forms of the Secession style emerged, exemplified by structures such as Salom's Palace in the Obala Kulina bana [2], designed and constructed under the supervision of Josip Vancaš and completed in 1901. Ludvig Huber and Jan Kotera, a student of Otto Wagner [3], went

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at least one step further, developing the buoyant poetics of the geometric Sarajevo Secession and simultaneously striving towards modernist architecture as its alleged opposition.

It was not before the mid-1920s, however, that Helen Baldasar and Dušan Smiljanić designed and built the Damić house, the first building in the spirit of contextually unexpected modern architecture [4], with Art Deco elements still present. Thus, different currents of architecture had been developing practically at the same time in the Western Balkans, starting with historicist styles often recognized as a type of architectural inertia, where forms of the not-so-distant past were built with the use of new materials, ending with the “extreme” design approach, where creative experiments were carried out, including the removal of ornaments from historicist buildings [5].

Today, the tangible heritage of Sarajevo is starting to be professionally valorized, paralleling the trend observed throughout much of Europe, where the architectural values of a specific creative period are recognized and evaluated. However, the architectural heritage is primarily threatened due to a lack of maintenance and/or the consequences of the destruction resulting from war between 1992 and 1995. Viewed from the current “vantage” perspective, the indigenous heritage mentioned above results from the creative, sophisticated game played between diverse European trends, strong local influences, and their various interpretations following artistic imagination and nationalistic or partially imperial attitudes. This mixture seems quite sophisticated and worthy of scientific analysis, enabling comprehensive valorization to protect the precious local architecture more efficiently.

Materials and methods

Materials sourced from the Commission to Preserve National Monuments of Bosnia and Herzegovina (CPNMBiH) pertaining to the architectural heritage of the 20th century have been utilized in this research. Furthermore, the researcher’s direct findings were obtained during unpublished research endeavors. Given the scarcity of documentation, direct testimonies of preeminent specialists were used in some cases. On-site visits to specified locations facilitated the collection of measurements and photo documentation, while data acquired throughout the restoration and preservation process managed by the aforementioned commission during the second decade, and early third, of the 21st century have also been used.

In terms of theoretical approaches, especially those concerning the restoration of modern architecture, relevant literature from the field of architectural restoration in Italy and other European countries has been referenced. The first part of the research includes a situational description of the restoration concerning buildings from various parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina as examples that substantiate the assertions set forth in the discussion.

The main research presents four case studies, encompassing the restoration of Hotel Zagreb, the National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Bosnian Red Cross Society building, and the Skenderija cultural and sport center, representing the contemporary architecture in the country. Notably, even though the first three cases date back to the first half of the 20th century, they belong to different typologies, similarly to the latter one.

The above-mentioned museum and hotel are rooted in the tradition of historicism, while the Red Cross Society building epitomizes a developed form of modernist architecture. Additionally, in the case of Hotel Zagreb, the historicist facades were removed in later interventions.

Authenticity in the architectural restoration of 20th-century heritage in Bosnia and Herzegovina

In the early 1990s, Renato Bonelli, a renowned professor of restoration at the Sapienza University of Rome, alluded to the satirical work *Simia* (1516) by Andrea Guarna. The satire depicts Saint Peter judging Donato Bramante at the gates of Paradise. Bramante is questioned about his demolition of the old Vatican Basilica, a structure admired even by staunch nonbelievers for its age [6]. Bramante’s retort suggests that he intended to reconstruct the entire Paradise; if

not, he would choose Hell instead! [7]. Here, two trends in restoration practice and theory that are still present today can be seen: The first emphasizes profound respect towards a building in terms of fidelity to memory; the second approaches the historical document in the dialectic of the passage of time.

Returning to this satirical dialogue and its relevance to the attitude towards heritage in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the informal response from the architect Zlatko Ugljen in July 2007 regarding his creation—the hotel Bregava, which was erected in the 1980s in Stolac and is now in ruins—being considered for placement under protection as part of the architectural complex of the historical public bathing area [8] is of particular satirical significance. Ugljen replied that he did not remember his project! Besides, it was impossible to find the “original documentation” for the hotel after the war in the 1990s. In fact, the architect did not agree to a static approach that would “restore the lost authenticity” of the building created during the 1980s [9]. It can be inferred that Ugljen probably questioned the prevailing new way of thinking of the end of the first decade of the 21st century and determined that the reproduction of the forms carried out in the 1980s would not be the right answer in terms of preserving the authenticity of the whole. A new era also brings new architectural trends, and therefore it would be possible to erect a new building integrated into the historical townscape of Stolac, adapted to new sociohistorical assumptions that propose the application of different forms.

Looking back a decade, following the systematic war-related destruction of Bosnia and Herzegovina’s architectural heritage, a reaction akin to that witnessed in most European countries after World War II unfolded. This reaction was grounded in the notion that the destroyed buildings were symbols related to national identities: Reconstructions were carried out according to the rule “*dove era, come era*”—“where it was, how it was.” Notable examples include the reconstruction of the Old Bridge and the Orthodox Church in Mostar, as well as less significant structures such as the mosque in Međurječje near Čajniče [10].

From a theoretical perspective, a parallel can be established between the post-war reconstruction of Europe after World War II and the reconstruction of the architectural heritage in Bosnia and Herzegovina after 1995. In justifying reconstructions, Italian theoretician Guglielmo De Angelis d’Ossat determined after World War II that *ex novo* reconstruction is acceptable if it is not a question of complex internal or external plastic (he hoped that the Baroque Montecassino Abbey in Italy would be completely replaced by a new church, which did not happen) [11]. Within the general social climate in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the reconstruction, even in the absence of documentation, of key buildings to which entire groups of people tied a part of their identity became an imperative that conditioned the possibility of the population returning to devastated regions after 1995. Another renowned architectural theoretician Giovanni Carbonara had already asked himself in the 90s: “Is it possible to revive the authenticity? Is it necessary to reconstruct additions that took place over time? How to treat damage that clearly violates formal unity? And even more importantly, in order to conceive the reconstruction at all, is it necessary to determine which form should be treated as authentic?” [12].

To summarize, the restoration practice in Bosnia and Herzegovina is characterized by the tension between public opinion advocating “faithful” reconstructions and most restorers, who often suffer from insufficient theoretical grounding and relatively poor financial capabilities, partially resulting from limited access to external funds. In practical implementations, contradictory restoration procedures often occur in their different stages even with the same objects, as exemplified by the case studies below.

The complex relationship between Bosnia and Herzegovina’s heritage policies and the main conservation principles

In order to better understand the reasons for the acceptance of certain principles in restoration practice in Bosnia and Herzegovina in recent times—that is, the first two decades of the 21st century—it is necessary to conduct a synthetic analysis of current heritage policies. The institutional framework is conditioned by a complex administrative solution founded on the Dayton Peace Agreement from 1995, based on which the war was stopped. Since then, the country has consisted

of two ethnic-based entities with different national compositions (the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska). At the state level, two institutions are responsible for protecting cultural heritage: the CPNMBiH and the Ministry of Civil Affairs.

The first institution makes decisions on the declaration of assets as national monuments, while the second coordinates the entity's plans in the field of culture. Accordingly, the Ministry of Civil Affairs should be the proposer of the Law for the Protection of the Cultural Heritage of Bosnia and Herzegovina; however, such a proposal is still not in sight, which contributes to the inconsistency in implementing existing regulations and in applying principles in specific cases of protection or restoration of tangible cultural assets.

At the entity level, there are ministries responsible for urban planning and culture, institutes, inspections, and other institutions with competencies related to the protection of cultural assets. For this area, 14 laws and various by-laws are currently in force. With the support of the Council of Europe, at the end of 2003, according to B. Mekić, vice executive officer of the CPNMBiH, the commission commenced activities on the drafting of the Law on the Protection and Preservation of the Cultural and Historical Heritage of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and in October 2009, the Ministry of Civil Affairs drafted the Law on Cultural Property of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which was never adopted. Bosnia and Herzegovina is one of the few countries that does not have a Ministry of Culture at the state level, and the Ministry of Civil Affairs has a total of 17 powers, so it is not difficult to understand why such a law has not been adopted to date. [13]

The insufficiently defined legal framework is partly connected with the heterogeneous application of conservation principles. In line with this, today, three decades after the end of the war, tendencies related to the post-war period are still present in Bosnia and Herzegovina, including insisting on "consistent reconstructions." At the same time, there are other influential tendencies in trying to carry out "consistent conservation," based largely on the model of the theories of John Ruskin, as in the case of the mosque in Bandol near Travnik. Furthermore, there are aspirations that completely deny the heritage and strive to replace it with a new one, such as in the complex case of Hotel Zagreb in Sarajevo. There are also cases where the decisions of the CPNMBiH, which have the power of a legal act, are too complex and rigid and are ultimately inapplicable (such as the contemporary "Crni Vrh" settlement in Sarajevo), so they achieve the goal in terms of preservation and preventing devastating construction, but, in the long run, they devalue the settlement and discourage the owners from trying to invest in improving the area.

Preserving historical authenticity while at the same time harmonizing with the contemporary needs of society seems to be a reasonable path, but there are serious obstacles to such development caused by vague legal frameworks, as well as different social interests. In such circumstances, the results achieved in the past 30 years in protecting architectural heritage seem surprisingly positive if the complex circumstances of the Bosnian society are taken into account. This also applies to the work of the CPNMBiH, which received the collective European "Europa Nostra" heritage award in 2010 [14], but also to individual awards presented to employees from the area.

Four case studies: Characteristics of the 20th-century restoration of architectural heritage in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Bosnian (BiH) Red Cross Society building in Sarajevo

In considering the protection of modernist heritage in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the relationship between reconstruction and authenticity, as well as the relationship with the intangible component, the case of the multifunctional BH Red Cross Society building in Sarajevo emerges as a notable case. Erected in 1929 and housing the famous historical movie theater [15], this structure underwent three distinct restoration phases (Fig. 1), executed during the second decade of the 21st century, each reflecting diverse restoration approaches.

The first phase of the reconstruction, factual consolidation, with its design part called the "Project of the primary rehabilitation of the structure," exceeded its initial technical goals and was characterized by the first restoration in Bosnia and Herzegovina with critical indications: The "Ecoplan" studio applied critical judgment and came to the conclusion that modern steel profiles would better respond to static challenges than the original wooden beams (Figs. 2 and 3), which were mostly burned. Also, the principle of flexibility was applied for the first time in restoration practice in Sarajevo, as well as throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina [16]. Following the idea of critical restoration, Renato Bonelli, a pioneer in this field, stated during a symposium in Lucca in the 1980s that all technical–technological operations need to be historicized. Separating consolidation from restoration represents a conceptual mistake that stems from a flawed definition of historical property [17].



Fig. 1. Movie theater of the Bosnian Red Cross Society building during the restoration, CPNMBiH. September 2023



Fig. 2. New steel I-beams, CPNMBiH, 2016

It is characteristic that in the second phase the principle of flexibility was activated if we define it as a spatial concept in contrast to reversibility. Reversibility is a temporal concept [18] of

functional adaptation of space; in this particular sense, the galvanized sheet that served as facade protection in the first phase was already intended as a roof covering in the second phase (Fig. 4).



Fig. 3. Bosnian Red Cross Society building in Sarajevo: preserved original carbonized wooden beam integrated into a new interior; actual state in 2016

As for the influence of the intangible component on the creation of the restoration concept, in this case, specific testimonies collected in the absence of historical documentation were crucial. One individual, B. Modraković, who had lived in Sarajevo and currently resides in Washington, reminisced in private email correspondence about the sensory elements of the historic movie theater in the Bosnian Red Cross Society building: “The aroma of oil used to clean the wooden floors, unthinkable today in modern movie theaters, and cowboy movies.”



Fig. 4. Bosnian Red Cross Society building: Transferring the sheet from the facade onto the roof, CPNMBiH (2015)

Highlighting the immaterial component as primary, he implicitly confirmed the futility of seeking “original authenticity” and “consistent” reconstruction of the physical parts of the building, especially considering the aforementioned lack of documentation. In this case, the “faithful” reproduction of the physical elements of the building becomes less pivotal for preserving authenticity than for preserving the spirit and specific associations related to the entire building.

Nevertheless, the second phase (Fig. 5), financed by the Italian Red Cross Society, which provided for the rehabilitation of the roof structure, was marked by an administratively conditioned conceptual “backward step” given that this time a “faithful” reconstruction was required according to the principle of “where it was, how it was.” The only available

documentation was one photograph from the 1930s of the street facade where the cover is visible. The designers were forced to thoroughly investigate the building on site and to look for traces of the roof structure on the gable walls of neighboring buildings. The result satisfied the functional needs of the Red Cross Society, but it is a reconstruction that was not done based on the original documentation, given that it was not found (Fig. 6). In looking for a “faithful” reconstruction, interpretation was inevitable.



Fig. 5. Bosnian Red Cross Society building, phase II—reconstruction of the facade in progress, CPNMBiH (2017)



Fig. 6. Facade after the completion of the reconstruction (2023)

Here we touch on another essential fact, namely the inappropriateness of developing separate phases in the restoration process. The reconstruction of the roof also entailed reconstructing part of the street facade, given its role as support, without which the roof construction could not be realized. For this reason, as part of the renovation of the roof structure, an “ad hoc” project for reconstructing part of the facade was created according to the same principle [16]. As a result, we could witness the conceptual inconsistency of the entire restoration procedure carried out as a last resort and in the face of the real possibility of constructive collapse.

In the third phase of the process, which included the reconstruction of a part of the interior, we again encounter a new restoration concept. This phase entailed what was practically a matter of modern interpolation inside the building, where the steel supports made during the first phase were hidden—that is, incorporated into the floor and ceiling panels. While a functional necessity, this approach consciously or unconsciously invokes the “scientific restoration” principles of Gustavo Giovannoni from the first half of the 20th century, where the use of modern materials was considered appropriate, especially in the consolidation process, but on the condition that they were then “hidden” [19].

The National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Sarajevo

The National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina represents the most significant achievement from the Austro–Hungarian period in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The intervention, completed at the end of 2022, was carried out in two phases and was financed by the Special Fund of the US Ambassador (project entitled “Preventive Conservation of the Collections of the National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Sarajevo”). During the restoration of this capital complex, the building works attracted a lot of regional and international attention. Among the valuable data, particularly relevant to attitudes towards the heritage of the first half of the 20th century in Bosnia and Herzegovina, a brochure of the CPNMBiH from 2022 states that both phase I and phase II entailed works on the external carpentry of the museum [20]. However, details important for determining the restoration concept were not specified.

During the first phase of the works, the replacement of the external windows in the Pavilion of Prehistory (Fig. 7) was carried out. During phase II, there was a polemic between two

main groups of professionals. The first one advocated replacing the windows according to the aforementioned principle of “where it was, how it was,” with the exception of the well-preserved doors of the Pavilion of Natural Sciences in the south towards the inner botanical garden, where restoration was envisioned. For this purpose, a restoration project by an authorized company was prepared. The second group insisted that a more detailed analysis be carried out to justify the replacement of the original wooden windows (Fig. 8): The proposal was to restore the inner wings and frame while replacing the outer oak wings with multiple thermopane glazings. Although this approach would increase the weight of the wings, this would be compensated by making a special connecting element that would connect the new wing and the original frame.



Fig. 7. New windows of the Pavilion of Prehistory on the north facade that replaced the authentic windows from the Austro–Hungarian period, phase I (2025).
Replica of the famous car in which Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife were driven in Sarajevo in 1914



Fig. 8. Field research on the authentic window from the Austro–Hungarian period on the south facade of the Pavilion of Natural Sciences, phase II, CPNMBiH. Photo by Mak Bećirbašić, 2020

The first group defended the concept of replacement with the principle of “consistency of the restoration procedure.” They pointed out that similar windows in the northern pavilion had

already been replaced in phase I and argued that due to the scope of the work and the given time frame it was not realistic for any authorized restoration company to carry out such a restoration in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Others objected to the destruction of authentic double-paned windows made of special types of wood (framiré wood and oak), considering that the hired carpenter with extensive experience had offered a practical solution to the problem. The resolution emerged as a compromise, albeit at the expense of the authentic mass of the building's materials, where the majority of the windows were destroyed and new double windows were constructed in their place (this time made of oak, a material that was not used in the original version for the fabrication of the inner wings). This action raises questions about adhering to the intended "where it was, how it was" principle. Notably, only two window openings and the portal to the botanical garden were restored.

The building of Hotel Zagreb in Sarajevo

At the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, a mixed-use building was constructed in the Marijin Dvor area, in the new historical center built during the Austro-Hungarian period in Sarajevo (1878–1918) in the neo-Baroque style, at the junction of Tito Street and Valtera Perića Street. In 1932, the new owner of the building became the Railways Loans and Aid Cooperative of Sarajevo [21]. The designer Isidor Rajs, in the spirit of "extreme modernity" under the influence of the theoreticians Karel Teig, Adolf Loos, and Bruno Taut, then completed the extension of the first floor and removed all the ornaments on the facade [22], thereby expressing his attitude towards historicism (Fig. 9).



Fig. 9. The abandoned Hotel Zagreb building after the devastation of 1992, CPNMBiH (2007)

After the end of World War II, another floor was added, and the building, where Hotel Zagreb was later located, represented a unique testimony of a specific interpretation of the architectural heritage from the period between the two world wars. In 1992, the building burned down, but the exterior brick walls were preserved.

In 2009, a new project was created, providing a new reinforced concrete structure with the same dimensions, with one row of original bricks (obtained from the demolition of the building) being placed on the surface of the same plastered facade with the same geometry [21].

In 2011, the CPNMBiH designated the building a national monument, and with protection measures [23], prescribing the preservation of the historical layering of the building, given that the facade was visible in an extreme interpretation of modern architecture from the 1930s, while in the interior, an authentic staircase built at the end of the 19th century was preserved. Although

it was not the only operation of its kind, this was the most dramatic and visible example of its kind that was worth protecting (Figs. 10 and 11).



Fig. 10. Preserved interior staircase built at the end of the 19th century during the Austro–Hungarian period in Bosnia and Herzegovina (a), CPNMBiH (2007)



Fig. 11. Preserved interior staircase built at the end of the 19th century during the Austro–Hungarian period in Bosnia and Herzegovina (b), CPNMBiH (2007)

In 2014, the competent service approved the demolition of a protected building at the national level, contrary to the prescribed protection measures [21] and the implementation of a project that envisaged an approximate facsimile reconstruction of the outer shell with a radical change of the object's contents (Figs. 12, 13, and 14). Without going into the legal implications, this approach shows a marked misunderstanding of the reasons for protecting authentic layered buildings related to modern architecture. An important layer of the urban history of Sarajevo was irretrievably lost, and in its place, a problematic facsimile covered with the remains of authentic bricks was constructed in a grotesque attempt at anastylosis.



Fig. 12. Interior of the first floor—preserved construction of the outer walls—Hotel Zagreb building, CPNMBiH (2011)



Fig. 13. Hotel Zagreb in 2011



Fig. 14. Hotel Zagreb with the reconstruction in progress in 2014

Skenderija cultural and sports center in Sarajevo

In 1969, the architectural–urban complex "Skenderija" was completed in the central part of Sarajevo, which was awarded the prestigious "Borba" first prize award for the most successful annual achievement of the former Yugoslavia. The decision was based on the fact that it was a unique achievement in terms of content, dimensions, and artistic determination: "Special qualities are expressed in the inventive articulation of spatial units and their adaptability, as well as in the ascetic choice of materials, which precisely with their succinctness constitute the basic values of the realized architectural expression" [24].

The concept of the construction was based on a brutalist architectural expression (Fig. 15): the bold monumental bare concrete surfaces of the "Dom Mladih" sports hall and cultural center, where the rock and roll movement in the former Yugoslavia was practically conceived, and other facilities are grouped around an open space [25] paved with warm-colored tiles, creating a compositional chromatic balance.



Fig. 15. Skenderija cultural and sports center (2021)

In the basement, a unique business center was constructed, a contemporary spatial development inspired by the historical core of the city, Sarajevo čaršija, which was composed of fragmented spatial units.

At the end of the 20th century, the complex, which was partially destroyed by the war in the 1990s, began to lose its importance. The degradation culminated during the first and second

decades of the 21st century when inappropriate business premises were built on the open area of the plateau (Fig. 16), and the business premises in the basement were abandoned or degraded (Fig. 17).



Fig. 16. Skenderija cultural and sports center, inappropriate facilities in the open area of the plateau (2021)



Fig. 17. Skenderija cultural and sports center, unvisited degraded business premises in the basement (2021)

At the same time, the regular maintenance works of the part of the open space in front of the Skenderija complex were utterly neglected (Fig. 19). The roof of the Ledena dvorana (Ice Hall), which was used for the XIV Winter Olympic Games held in Sarajevo in 1984, collapsed during the aforementioned earlier period.



Fig. 18. Skenderija cultural and sports center, destroyed paving of the open space due to a lack of maintenance (2021)

Such a situation should have been the reason for finding a comprehensive solution that would protect and restore the function of the complex, which, during the second half of the 20th century, became part of the urban history of Sarajevo. However, to this day, the property has not been formally protected (Figs. 19 and 20), although a study by the experts of the CPNMBiH was conducted; moreover, a proposal for a restoration project worthy of the value of the complex has not yet been prepared.



Fig. 19. Skenderija cultural and sports center. The devastated Olympic Ledena dvorana (Ice Hall, 2021)

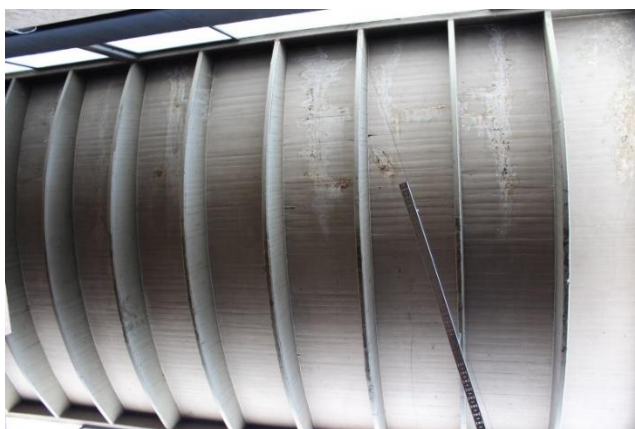


Fig. 20. Skenderija cultural and sports center. Leaking monumental roof of the Dom Mladih cultural center

Discussions: Preserving authenticity in 20th-century architectural heritage restoration in Bosnia and Herzegovina

The controversial development of the events observed in the aforementioned case studies is not surprising in a country where, almost three decades after the end of the armed conflict, an uncritical approach to so-called “faithful” reconstructions remains deeply rooted, although for various reasons it cannot be achieved in practice. All of the presented cases underscore the problematic nature of the partial approach, where restorations are carried out in stages without a consolidated methodology, the exception being the absurd renovation of Hotel Zagreb, carried out without division in phases. The shortcomings of this attitude, while frequently the only viable option given the urgency and due to a lack of systemic financing solutions, have become clear. In the case of the Bosnian Red Cross Society building, the constructive system of the entire building threatened passersby, and with the National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the safety of valuable collections was at stake.

Experiences related to the need to create a unique restoration approach should be taken seriously as a basis for future intervention in the Bosnian architectural heritage of the beginning of the 20th century. When it comes to works executed in the spirit of modern or contemporary architecture, where as a rule standardized industrially produced or prefabricated structural elements are used, the determination of the concept of authenticity is particularly important. In this regard, the previously mentioned Giovanni Carbonara noted that in front of an object that is produced in series, the concept of authenticity fluctuates: “Are those parts that were originally produced authentic, or does it not matter?” [26]. In the case of the Red Cross building, this refers to phase II—that is, the reconstruction of parts of the street facade made of reinforced concrete. If we are interested in the level of technological development of a certain historical period, it is acceptable to look for the most preserved component.

However, the scenario changes when dealing with a specific artifact, such as the plane flown by Gabriele D’Annunzio over Vienna in the first half of the 20th century, where we are only interested in a particular plane [26] with authentic components, which bears testament to a specific event. In the case of movable heritage related to Sarajevo, the car in which Archduke Franz Ferdinand was driven on June 28, 1914 (Fig. 7), which is kept in the Museum of Military History in Vienna, represents a “monument,” whereas a replica of the car at the place where the assassination took place in Sarajevo does not.

This principle is also applicable in the field of architectural restoration. In Sarajevo, the former Hotel Zagreb underwent a radical transformation in the 1930s, when Isidor Rajs removed all ornaments from the facades and thus presented his interpretation of modern architecture and expressed his attitude towards the historical document. Given that this was the most dramatic display of the extreme current of modern architecture, the building is protected at the highest level. However, in 2014, a project was realized that envisaged the demolition of the building and its reconstruction in reinforced concrete while covering it with original bricks. This operation destroyed the authenticity, mainly since after the intervention in the 1930s, the building retained authentic parts inside made during the Austro–Hungarian period. In this example, the authenticity would have been better preserved by conserving the material content rather than mimicking the form of the object in reinforced concrete.

In the case of the restoration of 20th-century contemporary architecture, it is necessary to take into account the creative concept on which the realization is based. In 2019, the routine maintenance work on the awarded Skenderija cultural and sports complex, built in Sarajevo in the 1960s, transitioned into restoration. The building features geometrized surfaces in reinforced concrete, and the influence of brutalist architecture is visible; the terracotta covering the open space represents a counterpoint that enriches the monumental composition. Facade-reinforced concrete surfaces were treated with cement mortar, and worn-out floor panels in the outdoor area were replaced with high-quality panels of different chromatic characteristics. Covering the bare concrete surfaces of the brutalist realization with plaster represents a conceptual error that cannot be justified by ordinary maintenance works.

This maintenance work, conducted without prior analysis, reduced the monumental value of the whole. As stated earlier, the separation of consolidation from restoration represents a conceptual mistake that arises from an incorrect definition of the historic property [16], and from the example of the intervention on Skenderija in Sarajevo, it can be concluded that the separation of ordinary maintenance works from restoration also represents a conceptual mistake that can result in a significant decrease in the value of authenticity.

At the same time, there is no prospect of a comprehensive restoration project that would find a solution for revitalizing the dilapidated business basement, the unmaintained part of the plateau on its west side with inappropriate business premises, and the reconstruction of the "Ice Hall." Instead, there is a variant in circulation in which the complex would be demolished, and a series of skyscrapers would be built in its place. If that happened, this area of the city would become meaningless, and instead of a cultural and sports function, a residential purpose would be introduced with the purpose of creating profit for a small group of individuals while negating the monumental value of the brutalist achievement.

In that case, it would not be possible to talk about different approaches but only about the failure to recognize the value of the architectural heritage of the second half of the 20th century.

Conclusions

The protection of the modern 20th-century architectural heritage must be viewed in a broader historical context. Despite being the most recent layer, its theoretical and historical value is no less significant than that of older strata. While prefabricated elements introduce specific challenges when it comes to restoring such architecture according to Brandi's theory, the same general rules apply as for other architectural heritage, where it is necessary to consider "methodological unity" in restoration design for both movable and immovable properties. In other words, replacing or reconstructing prefabricated parts is not appropriate, given that original, historicized elements are considered authentic.

In this sense, it is necessary to consider another notion from Giovanni Carbonara: that it is necessary to choose whether one wants to preserve the authenticity of such construction in the material-shaped totality or merely the external visible form. The latter case resembles practices from centuries past, where, after detailed recording, efforts focused on preserving the ideal form of ancient buildings, while the authentic substance was lost by removing the original structural and other elements.

In Sarajevo, restoration of the tangible heritage mirrors dilemmas that remain present in the rest of Europe, particularly those related to the differences between the so-called "Italian school" and opposing currents that partially inherit the tradition of anachronistic restoration "in style," strongly present in Bosnia and Herzegovina. There are only rare cases of a consistent renovation approach—one being the Bandol mosque—that recall J. Ruskin's ideas.

Current restorations in Bosnia and Herzegovina encounter numerous legal issues and conflicting restoration methodologies, even within different phases of a restoration carried out on the same architectural asset. All this is related to the trend of developing restorations on the same architectural asset in stages without a previously developed unique restoration project and approach. Such disjointed activities driven by the professional, politically grounded capability of investors and financial scarcity do not contribute to preserving the authenticity of the architectural heritage in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the approach to protecting this type of heritage will have to be revised in the near future.

Raising social awareness regarding the importance of modern architecture and its potential integration into the contemporary social and economic context, not to mention the political one, is the only solution for preserving this part of the vibrant tangible heritage of Sarajevo. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, activities aimed at the protection and restoration of the early modern architectural heritage are carried out, as described in this paper, with greater or less success, but this is still an experimental field, and specific conclusions about the expediency of current operations will only emerge with time.

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