

## **DO UT DES IN UNIVERSITY EDUCATION ON MONUMENTS' RESTORATION - A VIEW FROM THE FACULTY OF ARCHITECTURE, CRACOW UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY EXPERIENCES.**

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### **Abstract**

*In Poland, issues concerning the restoration of architectural monuments are the responsibility of studies in various formulas, with diverse scopes and at different types of higher education institutions- – from academies of agriculture, through universities of economics, universities, technical universities to higher education institutions of a typical technical and technological profile. This implies that there is a considerable need for higher education in this field of science, especially in activities related to multiple specialisations, even though these issues are not elementary fields of interest at these universities. Except for Cracow, a limited amount of time is devoted to education in this field at Faculties of Architecture as compared to practical classes in design in architecture or modern urban development. There exists no generally adopted strategy or content of curricula and each curriculum at Polish higher education institutions is different as it depends on the status, qualifications, experience as well as personal opinions of academic staff responsible for education in this respect. Paper will present several postulates concerning the teaching of conservation design in confrontation with contemporary needs and requirements of monument protection and presentation of historic values to the community as a method for gaining social support for such activities.*

### **Keywords**

*Architectural Departments, restoration, education*

### **1. Systemic regulations of higher education in cultural heritage protection at Faculties of Architecture in Poland.**

Pursuant to the Polish Act on Higher Education of 27 July 2005 and subsequent Regulations of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 5 October 2011 concerning the conditions of conducting studies in a specified field and level of education as well as the Regulation of 2 November 2011 concerning the National Framework of Qualifications for higher education. higher education begins after passing the *matura* (maturity) examination in secondary schools of general education or specialised technical secondary schools. The majority of higher education institutions educate in two cycles, in accordance with the Bologna Process. Having completed one or two cycles of studies, one can continue education at post-graduate specialised studies. The Minister of Science and Higher Education nominated experts to develop educational standards, thus providing basis for proprietary curricula. The standards did not come into force until 2008. Fields of study of concern to us for which these standards were developed included, for example, conservation and restoration of works of art, monument preservation, archaeology, history of art and architecture. Issues of cultural heritage protection were tackled in all these fields of study (Journal of Laws 2007, No.164). Although the developed standards ensured equally high level of education in a given field, they did not meet approval of representatives of higher education institutions who complained about the interference of state administration in the autonomy of these institutions (Łukaszewicz 2014). Changes introduced in 2011 to the Act on Higher Education involved the liquidation of the requirement to use previously proposed standards which were converted into a set of rules governing the teaching at higher education institutions, prepared in accordance with the regulations of EU law, including Directive 2005/36/EC of the European Parliament of 2005 on the recognition of professional qualifications of graduates [e.g. architects] (Journal of Laws 2011, No. 207).

At present, classes devoted to the preservation of monuments are offered in Poland in the major of Architecture at six higher education institutions and in the major of Architecture and Urban Planning at 30

higher education institutions. Education according to EU standards involves knowledge on monument protection to a limited extent only. Standards for this subject specify the content of education in the following manner: "Architectural preservation of historic sites, historic urban complexes and cultural landscape" and the outcomes of education are supposed to ensure the obtaining of such skills as "conducting research in the field of history; formulating conservation conclusions; design and adaptation of structures, monuments of architecture and historic urban complexes." (Regulations 2011) Varied curricula have been prepared based on these principles formulated in a general way and these are sometimes difficult to compare. Only four of them (in Cracow, Wrocław, Warsaw and Gdańsk) pursue a broader curriculum, offering various subjects related to monument preservation. But only at the Faculty of Architecture in Cracow the classes in conservation design (105 hours -7 ECTS credits) are equally important as classes in any other kind of design, e.g. in urban planning or architecture, which are obligatory for all students of the faculty at the level of second-cycle education. Several universities decided to organise second-cycle specialised studies in the majors of Architecture. But a decision was made at these universities to introduce several more specific and technological subjects of a lower number of hours and credits, to educate in a completely different way the future architects who will work on historic monuments. Other universities implement the mentioned standards in this respect to a very restricted extent. In most cases, post-graduate studies on these issues are organised irregularly, depending on the outcome of recruitment. Names of subjects in curricula available on the Internet do not imply the actual knowledge helpful in monument preservation and lectured at universities. It has been common knowledge for several years now that there is a deficit of new young specialists in Poland with expertise in old construction techniques and conservation issues as well as well-qualified researchers of historic architecture. In the opinion of the author, this proves that the educational system does not function properly as the reduced number of hours of classes devoted to history is replaced by an increasing number of hours of classes devoted to modern materials, techniques, technologies and the newest ways of investment management in cities. It should also be added that any architect with a university diploma and professional licence may design in the historic environment. Professional licence is obtained after at least half a year of practice in the construction site and passing of an examination in construction law and other applicable regulations concerning construction, environmental protection and spatial management. The examination does not cover questions involving knowledge on conservation; it only tests knowledge in the scope of one Act on the Protection and Custody of Monuments which regulates the formal and legal aspects of architect's conduct. Even though the project of historic monument adaptation requires consultation with a city or province monument conservator prior to its approval, conservators often do not have any standards that specify the limits of contemporary changes to the design of monuments. Therefore, a restoration project that is rejected in one region of Poland may be approved in another.

## **2. Education in the field of cultural heritage protection at the Faculty of Architecture, Cracow University of Technology**

Currently, there are more than 1,500 students at the Faculty of Architecture of the Krakow University of Technology. They receive education from almost 200 academic teachers in three fields of study: Architecture (1st-3rd cycle studies), Landscape Architecture (1st and 2nd cycle) and Spatial Management (2nd cycle). The Faculty also offers classes in English for Erasmus students, as part of bilateral exchange with the University of Tennessee, and second-cycle studies in Architecture - Master In English. It has occupied the top position in the ranking of the best faculties in Poland for several years. It is the only faculty in Poland with accreditation of the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA). The faculty was established in 1945 within Polytechnic Faculties of the Mining Academy based in Wawel and was headed by distinguished professors of architecture who mainly specialised in historical monument conservation and history of architecture. Education related to monument preservation has mainly been provided by the staff of the Institute of the History of Architecture and Monument Preservation in first-cycle studies in such subjects as History of Architecture (for 6 semesters of 30 hours each), History of Urban Development (3 semesters of 30 hours each), Revitalisation of Cities (1 semester - 30 hours), Monument Protection (1 semester - 30 hours), and diploma design in the scope of monument preservation (for selected students of the last 7th semester). During studies, students are also required to complete the architectural inventory practice of 60 hours (Programming 2016/2017). The total of more than 390 hours of lectures, classes within first-cycle studies are devoted to historic monument preservation. In the second-cycle studies, the theory of conservation philosophy is lectured under the Monument Conservation and Revalorisation subject (1 semester - 15 hours); there are also the History of Arts and Culture (1 semester - 45 hours), the Protection of Historic City Complexes (1 semester - 15 hours) and Conservation Design - one of the major subjects devoted to design at the Faculty, with a total of 105 hours of classes during one semester, with 7 ECTS credits, which must be obligatorily passed by all students. A diploma in conservation design is very popular among students who win numerous prizes and distinctions with

their designs (also in international competitions). The total of 195 hours are devoted to issues of monument preservation divided into three semesters of studies. If it is taken into account that such education is not incorporated into the specialisation dedicated to historic monuments but into a general syllabus of studies offered to all students, it can be stated that the Faculty of Architecture in Cracow attaches particular importance to the education of architects so that they would know how to behave properly in the historic environment, regardless of further specialisation they choose. Students should be able to conduct a historical, urban planning and compositional analysis of a historic place, prepare stratigraphy of the object, prepare an inventory of a historic monument along with elementary recognition of its value, draft detailed conservation guidelines for the site and, finally, design a new function for the selected place, along with extension (in line with guidelines), reconstructions and supplements that are in accordance with the conservatory guidelines. Although students are not instructed in conservation practices, they should know that while working they should turn to their adequately trained colleagues (manual conservators) for consultation and cooperation.

Education at the faculty of the Cracow University of Technology seems versatile and conservation issues are presented to all students and not only those who want to specialise in monument preservation. Nevertheless, the condition of Polish historic monuments, in particular those which have been adapted and restored, seems far from satisfactory. Although the majority of important historic structures have already been reconstructed from war destruction, architects who are well-versed with the specifics of designing in historic environments are still needed. Thanks to political and economic transformations that occurred in Poland towards the end of the 20th century, a lot of monuments were taken over by private owners and the state does not have custody over the majority of Polish historic objects any more. These objects are constantly transformed through more or less successful architectural adaptations and the creations of architects who are very keen on emphasising their layers are even shocking. Unfortunately, such designs are also made by well-educated graduates of the Cracow University of Technology. Thus, how should the Polish educational system in the sphere of historic monument preservation be assessed if one considers some effects of works by Polish architects who strip objects of historic values for which the object was granted the status of monument and do this without any deeper reflection? It is not only a Polish problem but it is observed globally. When travelling around the world, the author noticed that the increasing patriotism of nations and respect for national cultural heritage do not go hand in hand with respect for historic substance and the ability of architects to present its historic values to the community. Restoration works increasingly treat monuments as a façade shell on which a new structure with new functions is put. Historic walls are sometimes treated as fences which have to be left as they are in accordance with conservator's decisions. The lack of knowledge of old techniques often leads to improvements to historic monuments or to the strengthening of their structures with new techniques and technologies which lead to the destruction of the object in a short time.

### **3. Proposals for didactic regulations on the restoration and preservation of historic monuments at Architecture Departments**

It is hard to find one good method for the education of students in this field. In general, it is commonly emphasised during general debates that there is a need to incorporate into the curriculum practical classes which are to be held in restored historic structures. Such structures will help students see a complex and multi-disciplinary nature of the works performed. The Polish standard is to organise only inventory-taking practice. The extension of such practice of at least 10 days for researches may be an important element that facilitates education process at faculties of architecture. During such a practice, the student would attempt to analyse independently but under supervision of an assistant lecturer and recognise elements of a historic structure in order to prepare its formal and stylistic stratigraphy along with preliminary evaluation of the condition of the monumental structure before taking the course in conservation design.

Another recurring postulate is to incorporate, to a broader extent, knowledge on historic techniques, technologies and kinds of materials used for lectures and classes in subjects devoted to the history of architecture. Such knowledge may be expanded by organising practical classes held in historic sites. In Poland, there are no suitable textbooks for students that would present knowledge on both historic techniques and materials as well as traditional research methods used in historic sites. Broad knowledge in this respect, usually published in specialised journals, is frequently not available to the majority of students and some articles are written in excessively scientific style that is difficult to absorb for students.

Considering the specificity of works related to the restoration and conservation of historic monuments which are usually associated with all changes to the intended use of monuments, it is necessary to enable the broadening of the necessary knowledge of architects at the level of post-graduate specialised studies. Just like in many other European countries, no additional licences are required in Poland in order to design in the historic

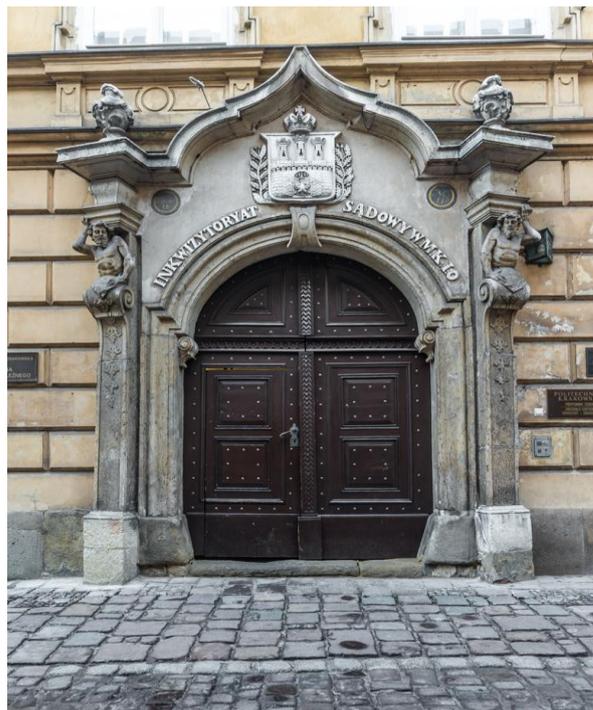
environment. However, due to the possibility of irreversible damage resulting from the lack of experience, nonchalance or even ignorance of designers with diplomas, architects should be required to present confirmation of additional training or vocational practice in design for conservation under the supervision of experienced colleagues.

Another postulate also seems important: to move the centre of gravity in conservation design as taught at faculties of architecture from the current main problem related to the incorporation of the new function into the protected structure of the monument, elaborated along with the consolidation of the monument and its adaptation to contemporary standards, to the problem of how to present historic values in a historic structure. The issue of presenting the value of the site is still not exploited sufficiently or even remains underestimated in conservation circles in Poland. It is usually reduced only to the arrangement of exhibitions in museums. After all, this is one of the most important methods of monument preservation in the contemporary times.

The issue of assistant lecturers at higher education institutions raising their professional qualifications seems extremely important. The creation of a forum for sharing teaching experiences, recommending textbooks, the availability of such books on-line and joint cooperation, for example, as part of workshops organised for free for academic teachers in various European scientific and research centres, as part of bilateral agreements between institutions or, for example, as part of the network created by REUSO, would be advisable.

There is insufficient awareness of the need for interdisciplinary approach to problems concerning preservation and conservation design in historic monuments. The belief in the leading role of architects who are even supposed to manage the research, design and implementation processes does not coincide in Poland with education concerning what the architect should require and who can help architects in activities aimed at the protection of a given monument and for what purpose. Rivalry of many generations on the exploited historic site between a different parties (manual conservators, archaeologists, architects, constructors, installers, owners, administrators and an officials from the monument conservator's office often leads to conflicts of interests when these individuals interfere with each other's competence or try to impose their own opinions and needs without even attempting to understand superior criteria and actual priorities of the monument under protection. The awareness of the need to cooperate and the existence of boundaries of interference with the preserved historic values which should not be crossed ought to be developed prior to any design decisions of students in a specific and analysed historic site.

Probably there could be more similar postulates but they would not be called innovative or creative. Having the knowledge of shortcomings and lecturing on monument preservation at our schools, we are constantly dissatisfied with the outcomes of our work. Why? According to the author, the problem most likely lies in the too broad practices of teaching these complex issues. New teaching norms and standards are imposed by ministries or by the unified European educational policy. Wider and more open access to the profession, competition law which ultimately leads to the choice of the cheapest solutions - all this has an adverse impact also on the current system of architectural education in the sphere of monument preservation. Officials often forget that monuments may not be unified or universal methods may not be used for monument preservation. Just as there are no two identical Gothic castles in the world, there will not be two identical ways to restore them. This is why the author believes that standards should not be established for the education concerning monument preservation but students should rather be taught respect and care for monuments in accordance with the code of professional ethics and their conscience.



Site of Institute of History of Architecture and Monuments preservation, Faculty of Architecture, CUT. In this building all students attend to courses dealing with history of architecture and design for conservation. Lectures and classes are organised in monumental object founded in Medieval period, than transformed during different periods. Fot. J. Sroczynska

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