

Evolutionary attitude towards preservation of domestic architectural heritage. Time cycles concept.

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Abstract - The article discusses patterns in changing attitudes to domestic architectural heritage in the twentieth - early XXI centuries. Interconnection of processes in restoration theory and practice with attitude towards preservation of historical architecture at the state and public levels is observed. The most specific periods in attitude change towards heritage due to general political situation in the country are noted. Time cycles are distinguished. They are characterized by the change in the approach towards heritage from awareness of its unique value to polar depreciation and destruction. The findings are visualized in the form of a graph showing attitude evolution towards preservation of domestic architectural heritage from the perspective of the time cycles concept.

Keywords — cultural heritage, scientific restoration, theory of time cycles

I. Introduction

The development of architectural restoration theory and practice is largely determined by the attitude towards cultural heritage in various periods of the country's life. The time factor role in assessing objects of cultural heritage is explained by the theory of time cycles in cultural-historical process, developed at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries and describing patterns of change in styles at certain equal time intervals. B.M. Matveev applies this theory to determining historical and cultural significance of monuments in various periods [1]. The mechanism of domestic restoration theory and practice evolution in cooperation with professional and general cultural motivation is analyzed concerning vast factual material of A.S. Puppy. The researcher notices the turns of a certain evolutionary spiral, giving a complex picture of social consciousness evolution, in particular in its relation to cultural heritage [2]. The theory of time cycles is applicable when observing relationship evolution between the state and society to preservation of the domestic heritage during the XX - early XXI centuries.

II. Attitude towards architectural heritage preservation in the first half of the twentieth century (pre-war period).

At the beginning of the twentieth century despite the absence of Russian law on the protection of “antiquities” repair, construction and restoration work at ancient sites was regulated using legal procedure for its implementation. In the first post-revolutionary years there was a weakening of the entire state system which also affected monuments protection. The main idea of preserving the heritage was its turning to museums. The problem of the enormous number of unique buildings left without owners, with particular acuteness, required determination of new mechanisms for their protection. The first years of Soviet power were marked by a number of laws aimed at

preserving artistic heritage of the past. At the same time, one can note absence of a clear organizational structure typical of these years and excessive diversity of newly created and transformed institutions at various levels of administrative management. By 1919, the protection of architectural monuments in the USSR had received state organization for the first time.

In connection with massive alienation of monuments, the security authorities faced the task of ensuring their control. A significant document was the 1918 Decree "On the registration, registration and protection of monuments of art and antiquities owned by private individuals, societies and institutions" which provided state registration of valued monuments. This period can be called inertia: funds for protection and restoration of monuments continued to be allocated centrally, for individual landmark monuments at a very large scale (Moscow Kremlin) [2]. By 1920 - 1921 financing had been reduced to insignificant amounts and the work to preserve the monuments was reduced mainly to maintenance repairs. An increasingly widespread activity was the register of destructible buildings. Restoration work was carried out fragmentarily at only a few sites.

From the mid-1920s to the 1930s a period of negative attitude to heritage followed. It was expressed in the mass demolition of monuments, the policy of "liquidation of churches" and depriving them of their traditional look and functions. Since the late 1920s the idea of a socialist city began to develop actively. It was accompanied by an increase in nihilist sentiments. On the basis of the idea of a socialist type city development, urban centers were reconstructed with the destruction of entire ensembles of religious buildings.

Another milestone in the struggle against traditional architecture was the defeat of rural peasant culture associated with collectivization. The authority of monumental protection decrees fell. There was a paradigm shift in the official attitude to heritage - the end of the "museum period" and the onset of a new state mythology development [2]. The change in the country's course towards depreciating historical heritage and activities for its conservation, especially the province's heritage, became obvious. The reorganization began with the partial abolition of the monument protection committees; activities in this area found more compromise with the state showing respect to the authorities.

During this period, restoration work of the monuments was even more reduced. Demolition of the XVII - XVIII century monuments took place in Moscow, Nizhny Novgorod, Vologda, Vladimir, near Pskov, in Kashin and Rostov. Alongside with mass demolition of religious buildings the destruction of civil buildings with features of national architecture occurred and estates of the Classicism period were ruined. Restoration work in the early 1930-s was a rare exception. The restoration approaches were dominated by a decisive appeal to holistic restorations with return of original look to the monuments. This was largely due to the focus on meeting understanding of the unprofessional majority and government officials.

Due to worsening of international political situation by the end of the 1930s attitude to the heritage of the past began to change markedly. Prerequisites for strengthening patriotic moods appeared. The peak of the negative attitude towards the monuments had passed and their partial rehabilitation took place in the new system of ideology art [2]. The changes that took place within the framework of the state course on heritage protection were also reflected in the field of architecture: understanding of architectural experience and tradition value arose. The attitude to folk architecture also changed. The organization of monuments protection took place with noticeable regional differences: from inertia and hostility in peripheral regions to conscious maintenance of heritage as part of the national culture.

III. Attitude towards the preservation of the heritage of architecture in the second half of the twentieth century (post-war period).

In the post-war period, the state faced the urgent task of taking measures to save monuments damaged during the hostilities from mass death. The need to take urgent measures in relation to survived heritage served as a powerful impetus for the development of the state system for protection and restoration of architectural monuments in the country. From the first war years work on the examination and register of monuments in the liberated territories began. In 1942 the Commission on the Registration and Protection of Art Monuments was created. An important event was creation in 1944 the Main Directorate for the Protection of Monuments (GUOP) which led all the work on architectural monuments protection in the country. In 1944 a draft law was developed on protection and conservation of architectural monuments in the areas of destruction in the RSFSR, the Ukrainian SSR and Belarusian SSR. Thus, during the war years, the protection of monuments acquired the status of a nationwide affair.

From 1944 to 1946 a number of significant government decrees and projects were developed: a draft all-Union law on the protection of monuments; Decisions on the protection and restoration of architectural monuments of Novgorod, Pskov, Vladimir; decisions on measures to preserve the monuments of Moscow and the region and other regulatory documents. In 1947, a decree of the Council of Ministers of the RSFSR "On the Protection of Monuments of Architecture" was issued and in 1948 a decree "On Measures for Improving the Protection of Cultural Monuments" was issued. In 1949, the Committee on Architecture approved the Instruction on the procedure for recording, registration, maintenance and restoration of architectural monuments, which are under state protection. The release of these documents was a step after which the registration of monuments in the country took on a unified professional form.

In this difficult period, an extensive system of scientific restoration production associations across the country began to emerge. In a number of cities special design and restoration workshops were created (Novgorod, Pskov, Leningrad, Vladimir). Preparations were made for new restoration workshops in Kostroma, Vologda, Gorky, Yaroslavl, Ryazan, Kazan, Molotov and in the Union republics. Since 1950, the work of restoration workshops began a general positive shift associated with a significant increase in public funding. The organizational structure of the bodies for the protection and restoration of monuments that developed in the process of complex and long-term transformations continued to function throughout the 1950s - 1960s.

The second half of the 1940-s became a turning point in the activities of the country's restoration system: the accumulated experience allowed us to move on to solving fundamental issues in the field of protection and full restoration [2]. The restoration work at prestigious ensembles (the Moscow Kremlin, the monuments of Novgorod) was actively supported by the government initiatives. In 1947, repair and restoration work was carried out on 911 monuments (283 - of all-Union significance); in 1949 the volume increased to 1139 objects. The practice of restoration work focused on restoration of iconic objects in the form that they had before the military destruction. This dictated the priority of holistic restorations supported by state policy and budget allocations. At the same time, there were examples of fragmented restorations, but in those cases when they gave a completely perceptible image of the monument. An important task was the issues of urban planning.

From the mid-1950s to the 1960-s against the background of anti-religious policy, another intensification of negative trends in relation to the domestic heritage followed. This was accompanied by the removal of many monuments from the state guard, a sharp reduction in the funds allocated for restoration to 50%. During 1959 - 1961 about 60% of the monasteries that existed in 1958 were closed; by 1966 about 35% of Orthodox churches were alienated. The problem arose of the extinction of "unpromising" villages with traditional culture and the destruction of architectural monuments in them (in the Russian North during the 1950-s and 1960-s, almost 60% of villages were abandoned).

To a large extent, the attitude to the cultural heritage was influenced by a change in the figurative focus of Soviet architecture, the development of industrial housing construction and a ban

on decorative “embellishment”. The structure of historical buildings was destroyed and the principles of total old areas demolition with preservation of individual houses-monuments were established. Expressed negativity in relation to the constructions of the past was formed both among professional architects and among significant segments of the population. The desire to minimize economic costs led to increase in the share of conservation work and fragmented restorations in the total volume of restoration activities. Decisions that eroded the original semantics of religious buildings were encouraged during fragmented restorations. From 1965 - 1966 a turning point towards “rehabilitation” of cultural heritage occurred. Some changes took place after the decision of the Council of Ministers of the RSFSR “On the State and Measures to Improve the Protection of Monuments of History and Culture in the RSFSR” (1966). It recorded the need for a targeted allocation of budget funds for restoration. An important point was the creation of the State Inspectorate for the Protection of Monuments. The focus was proclaimed on preservation of cultural significance of the monuments, on their museum display, primarily in the framework of tourist routes.

Foreign policy situation of the 1970-s – 1980-s was characterized by the expansion of contacts with the West. A significant role was played by processes and social movements related to the search for national identity. 1970-s associated with the beginning of the church revival, interest in the Orthodox tradition and ancient Russian art. Peasant culture began to appear as a bastion of domestic traditions and authenticity. The role of public organizations intensified and its requirements for the protection of heritage began to be taken into account by the official authorities.

1976 was marked by the adoption of the first Union law on the protection of cultural monuments in Russian history. The need to develop issues of restoration techniques was emphasized by the current legislation. The consequence of the change in attitude towards heritage was the expansion of the number of identified architectural monuments in the 1970-s and 1980-s. This reflected a reaction to the systematic mass loss of the old buildings in Moscow and regions. In organizing restoration work, there was a tendency to enlarge workshops by combining design and manufacturing sectors. There was a process of centralization of the restoration forces. The activity of the voluntary mass public organization “All-Russian Society for the Protection of Monuments of History and Culture” (VOOPIK) gained particular importance. It was unique experience in the development of voluntary restoration practices [3].

Period 1970 - 1980s marked the time of notable successes in restoration and heritage conservation. The volume of restoration work and mastered budget funding has increased significantly. Both unique monuments and objects of cultural heritage, located in the structure of ordinary historical city buildings, were restored. Work with monuments in these years has become more complex. The regional features of restoration schools were leveled, and they began to use the full range of restoration approaches. Moreover, the main method was to combine the trends of holistic and fragmented restoration. There was a desire to give the monuments a modern use, consistent with the original purpose.

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IV. Attitude towards preservation of architectural heritage at the end of the XX - beginning of the XXI centuries.

The period of 1990s - 2000s is associated with fundamental socio-political changes that affected monuments preservation and restoration system developed over the past decades. The division of state ownership into federal and municipal followed. In the conditions of market relations, privatization of historical and cultural monuments began, the monuments became private property. Against the backdrop of general spiritual upsurge, the transfer of religious buildings to religious organizations followed. In these conditions, the problem of legislative support for preservation of cultural heritage objects was acutely felt taking into account modern economic conditions.

The centralized system of special scientific and restoration production workshops was eliminated: a network of private restoration enterprises began to be created. The determining factor was the development of private financing systems for heritage conservation. This led to a shift in priority to adaptation of cultural heritage objects for modern use. New techniques entered into architectural and restoration practice: reconstruction of lost buildings, “facadeism” - restoration of the historical front facade of a building with complete or partial transformation of its internal structure. By the end of the 1990-s “prototyping” of monuments and objects of historical development became widespread when objects of urban environment were deliberately destroyed in order to be recreated with the help of new materials.

Since 2002 to the present, legal support for protection of domestic cultural heritage has been regulated by the Federal Law “On Objects of Cultural Heritage (Monuments of History and Culture) of the Peoples of the Russian Federation”. Despite the fact that the law gives an undoubted positive impetus to restoration activities, at present, the normative legal field for monument preservation reveals a number of gaps. A conflict between the tasks of preserving the monument and the priority of the private interests of the owner is still here to stay. The restoration activities of the late XX - early XXI centuries show that practice in this area is largely contrary to those principles and conservation methods that were relevant in the twentieth century. Today, the urgent task is the development of legal and methodological support for restoration which meets its basic principles and expands the possibilities in modern conditions [4].

V. Attitude evolution graph towards the problem of preserving architectural heritage in the twentieth - early XXI centuries.

Thus, in the history of restoration practice development of architectural monuments of the XX - early XXI centuries the periods of changing attitudes towards heritage are distinctly traced. It happens due to the general political situation in the country. These periods, or time cycles, are characterized by a change in approach from recognition of the unique value of the heritage and the need to preserve to its polar depreciation and destruction. These processes acquired particular intensity in the Soviet period (1917 - the end of the 1980-s) when the general attitude to the monuments was directly determined by ideological motives. In the years when the national principles of culture contradicted state-supported ideology, the heritage was persecuted. During periods of state or national patriotism, the protection and promotion of heritage came to the fore. These analytical findings were visualized in the form of a graph that shows attitude evolution

towards preservation of the domestic architectural heritage from the perspective of the time cycles concept (Fig. 1).

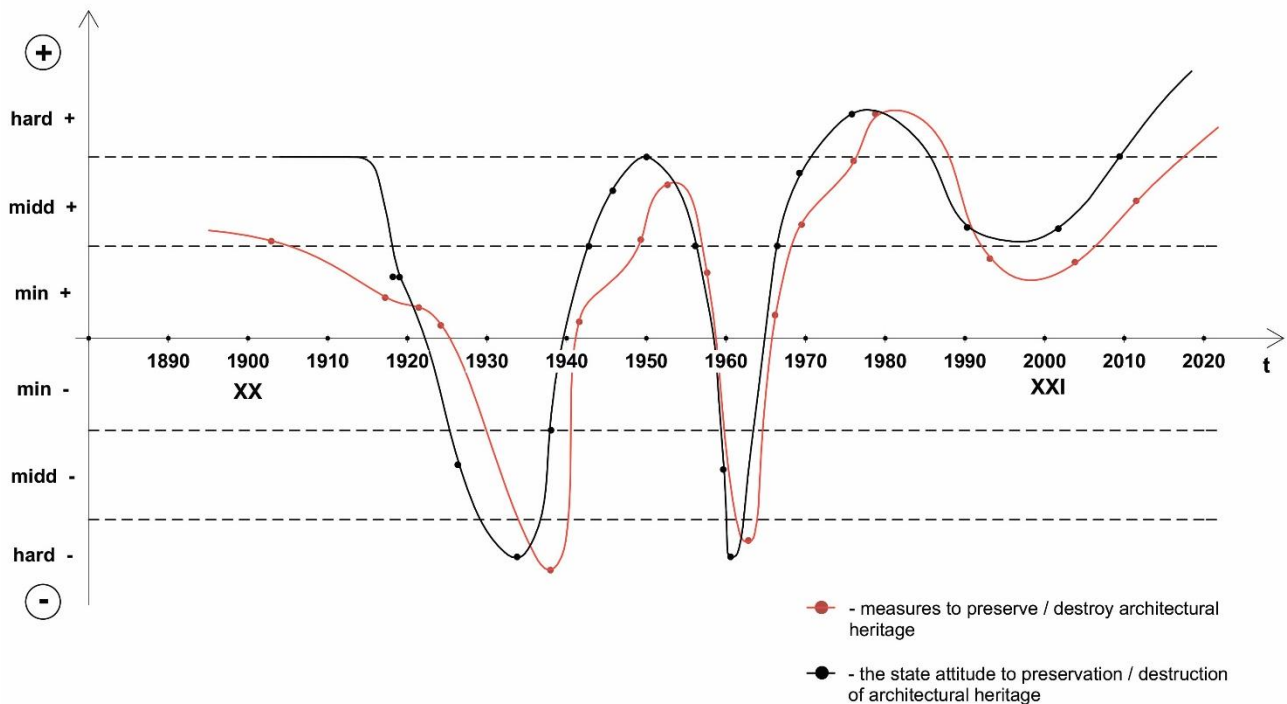


Fig. 1. Attitude evolution schedule to the problem of the architectural heritage preservation in the twentieth - early XXI centuries

The graph illustrates the main turning points that occurred in the twentieth century and related to changes in the ideological vector of the state, economic policy, military upheavals as well as the global situation. The frequency of changing positive and negative attitude to the problem of heritage with points of maximum rise or decline is revealed. The graph allows us to trace the mechanism of the relationship between evolutionary processes in domestic restoration theory /practice and attitude towards conservation of Russian architectural heritage at the state (ideological) and public level. The leading role of ideological motivation in the field of heritage is clearly illustrated at the turn of the XXI century. It is preceded and set this or that direction to the processes of monuments conservation and restoration throughout the 20th century. The analysis allows us to highlight the positive trends that determine the likely vector of the sphere of heritage preservation and restoration development in the future.

VI. Conclusion

Today, positive dynamics are visible in relation to historical and cultural heritage at the state and public level. Preservation of cultural heritage is the basis of national self-identification of the people as well as preservation of individual regions, cities, historical settlements identity. An important role is played by international principles in the field of monuments, cultural landscapes and historical ensembles of cities protection. Preservation of cultural heritage is regarded as a necessary component of urban development and creation of comfortable urban environment in the 21st century.

The integrated approach is based on the desire to preserve the figurative individuality of the monument and its original features by traditional methods of scientific restoration. At the same time, today the condition of restoration practice is ambiguous despite more than a century and a half

restoration history, which began to develop from the middle of the 19th century entering its “golden” period in the second half of the 20th century and laying foundation to modern scientific preservation of architectural and urban monuments. There is a need for further understanding of existing experience and development of successive approaches to preserving the heritage, developing basic principles of restoration and emphasizing their importance in modern conditions [5].

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