Preservation of cultural diversity and current tools of monument care

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Preservation of cultural diversity and current tools of monument care
This article deals with cultural sustainability, authenticity and one of its basic pillars: the preservation of diversity. It looks at constructions around the world and how they have adapted to local geophysical circumstances, both in the construction methods and materials used. It analyses how diversity has been endangered by globalisation in the territory of Slovakia and elsewhere. Subsequently, the article focuses on monument care and preservation in Slovakia and other countries, comparing the legal instruments used in different countries. The article proposes a system for the categorisation of objects built before 1947 in Slovakia. This is key to better understanding the topic of protection of heritage buildings for professionals and government agencies dealing with monument protection. The proposed categorisation could help significantly in systematising the protection of tangible cultural heritage and building culture in Slovakia.

Keywords: monument care, monument protection, monument law, cultural sustainability, traditional architecture, vernacular architecture, preservation of diversity, cultural diversity, authenticity, globalization, categorisation of monuments, national cultural monument

Cultural sustainability

Traditional architecture both in Slovakia and throughout the world was suppressed at the turn of the twentieth century by the advent of individualistic modernity, and traditional forms of construction began to be replaced by new constructions and technologies, among them buildings characterised by large-format glazed surfaces, steel and reinforced concrete. Due to technological development, traditional technologies became "archaisms" and traditional structures could no longer keep pace with the innovative parameters of modern buildings. However, in the current technological shift (compared to the period of the advent of modernity), it is possible, through sensitive restoration, to return traditional monuments to a state that meets today's requirements. It is also possible to preserve historical values, which primarily include the value of authenticity, even when dealing with listed monuments. With the onset of

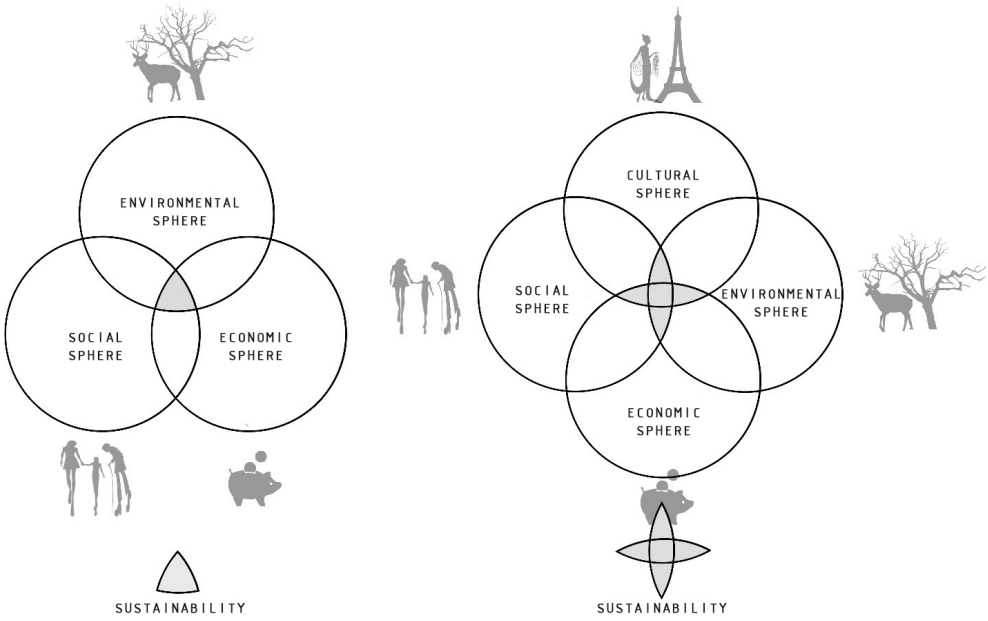

Fig. 1: *Left – Sustainability as the interweaving of three spheres: the environment, the social and the economic sphere. Right – Integrating the cultural sphere of culture into the philosophy of sustainability* (source: E. Ruhigová, after P. Pagáčová, 2015.)

cultural diversity in today's society, the question of sustainability has begun to resonate more intensively. The issue of sustainability has come to the fore because of the lack of acceptance of the balance between the artificial and natural environment, stimulated by interventions (from reconstructions to demolitions) which ignore the context of the original environment in the pre-Soviet period. Modern architecture and construction replaced traditional forms that were primarily based on the harmony of "house and environment" and whose impact on the natural environment was less drastic. Sustainability is often referred to as the intersection of three spheres: the economic, the social and the environmental. These are also known as the three pillars of sustainability (Fig. 1).[1]

Sustainability is about preserving continuity while at the same time finding a new path on which it is possible to question fundamental assumptions and continue only with those

[1] GREGOR, P. et al. *Restoration of monuments.* Bratislava: PERFEKT, a.s., 2008, p. 10. ISBN 97880-8046-405-9

which are relevant to today's context. To achieve this, sustainability actions must operate on both a quantitative and a qualitative level – i.e. large-scale buildings should not be lacking in quality. In recent years, sustainability in architecture has been characterised by concerns over energy efficiency and consideration for the environment, as a result of the need to reevaluate the relationship between humans and nature. But it is also necessary to consider attitudes towards culture. Sustainability in architecture will never be achieved as long as it covers only the quantitative side (for example a large number of buildings that are poorly constructed). This is an issue not only in the field of architecture but also in other areas concerned with sustainability. Architecture is a clear expression of the bouandary between the world of ideas and physical reality, and it is as much an art as a technical field.[2]

Figure 1 shows the scheme of sustainability, enriched with the sphere of culture, which in this model is given an equal status with other three standard pillars of sustainability, as per the model developed in Petronela Pagáčová's thesis.[3]

Preservation of diversity as a basic pillar of the principles of authenticity

Cultural sustainability refers to the need to preserve the diversity of cultural manifestations – both in their social dimensions (local customs and conventions) and in terms of constructions (traditional structural details, ornaments on the facades).

Cultural sustainability is also closely connected with the concept of tradition. It represents a complex of certain cultural patterns, values, norms and patterns of behaviour that reduce the uncertainty of decision-making. It works against the loss of historical memory, cultural discontinuity and feelings of uprootedness, and at the same time fosters the acceptance of innovations.[4]

I believe that architecture is not a part of civilization, but of culture. Architecture arises and grows only against the background of history, tradition, climate and other natural factors. It has certain social, economic, legal and political limitations.[5]

This division of civilisation can draw attention to the fact that the global diversity in building styles is not primarily a result of human individualism but rather the local environmental conditions, such as climate and geomorphology, to which people had to adapt. These natural conditions and the lifestyles associated with them lead to the development of original and authentic design in different environments. Until the modern period, the geomorphological and climatic conditions of a given locality were the basic factors determining diverse architectural forms and the manner of construction. Specific cultures bound to the location were also formed, preserving their uniqueness until about the middle of the twentieth century, which brought industrialization and gradual automation of technology, greater mobility of people and easier access to information from more distant parts of the earth). As a result of globalisation, the naturally created, millennia-long diversity of construction manifestations begins to disappear from the middle of the twentieth century.

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[2] PAGÁČOVÁ, P. *Aspects of sustainability in the restoration of heritage-protected structures.* Dissertation thesis. Bratislava: Faculty of Architecture STU. 2015, pp. 17.

[3] Ibidem, p. 20.

[4] HANUŠIN, J., HUBA, M., IRA, V., KLINEC, I., PODOBA, J., SZOLLOS, J. *Explanatory dictionary of sustainability terms.* Bratislava: STUŽ/SR, 2000, ISBN 80-968415-3-X, p.158.

[5] TADAO, Ando. *Facing the crisis of architecture*, 1986, accessed Feburary 2024,
https://www.archiweb.cz/news/tadao-ando-tvari-tvar-krizi-architekturystandards/386-the-nara-document-on-authenticity-1994

The situation in Slovakia is very similar. The country's diverse geomorphology led to the formation of various types of architecture, especially evident in rural architecture, which has

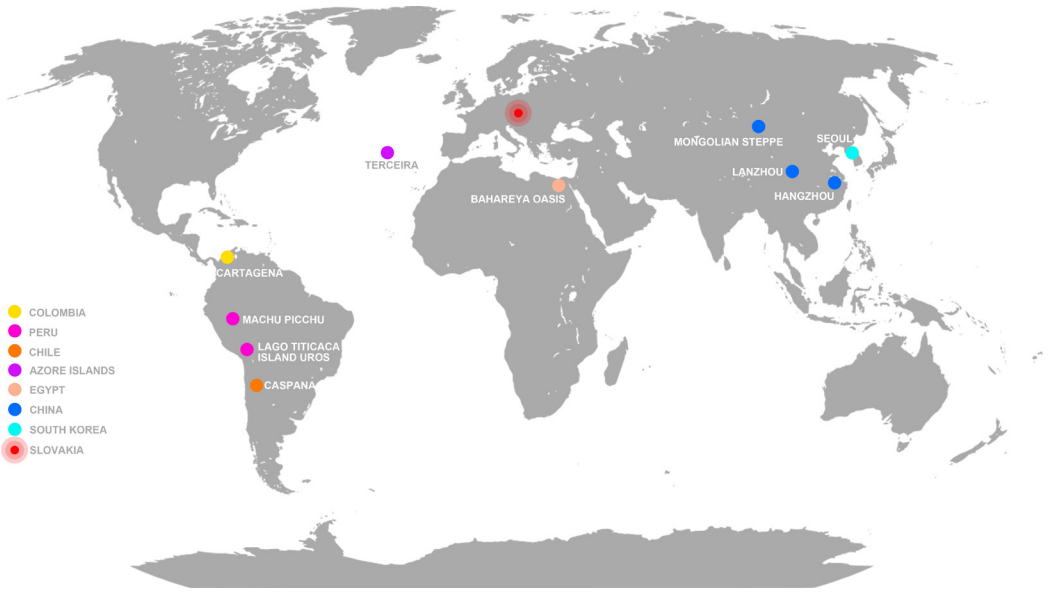


Fig. 2: *Map showing selected locations of architectural interest* (Source: E. Ruhigová)

Atacama, Chile – Caspana
- tropical climate zone
- natural environment: desert
- local materials used: clay, sand
- period: the oldest preserved building is the church of St Lucy, dating from 1641.

a primary relationship to the natural conditions. Unlike rural architecture, urban architecture tends to be affected by influences from other areas, so the direct relationship to the original environment less pronounced than in rural architecture. As a result of migration, architectural ideas are often imported from further afield. Due to globalization, professional architecture in individual areas is starting to take over general building procedures, which are no longer significantly linked to geomorphology and natural conditions.[6]

Endangered diversity in a global world

Traditional architectural forms in individual cultural contexts are not just determined by when the buildings were constructed (and hence by the materials and expertise available to those who built them). Architectural authenticity also arises from the natural conditions, such as geomorphology and climate, which are an integral part of the architectural design.

As mentioned above, there are a wide variety of architectural styles globally due to the wide variation in natural conditions. Below I discuss a few specific locations marked in Figure 2. These specific locations and sites of architectural interest were chosen because, with the exception of Egypt, they are all places I was able to conduct field research. This involved visiting the location and observing the constructions from the exterior and, in the vast majority,

[6] GREGOROVÁ, J., PAGÁČOVÁ, P. Ecological aspects of monument preservation – potentials or limits? In: *TERRA SPECTRA STU*. Planning Studies: Central European Journal of Spatial and Landscape Planning, STU, Vol. 5, 2013, No. 2, STU Bratislava, SPECTRA Centre of Excellence EU, Bratislava 2013, ISSN 1338-0370, pp.17–25.

the interior. I also spoke with the owners of the houses or other local residents, and gathered the necessary facts.[7]

One of the characteristic inhabited places of the Atacama Desert is Caspana, a village located in a valley carved by the river with the same name. The original architecture consists of low single-story white houses made of clay and sand with flat roofs. Their location follows the edges of the "residential" ridge, which protects the dwellings from the weather conditions associated with desert storms. Colour in the Atacama dwellings can only be seen in some architectural elements, such as windows, doors, frames and furniture, while the walls are left uncoated, as they would soon be devastated by strong winds and sand.

As for technical facilities, heating, air conditioning and sewage are not found in traditional buildings. Interior comfort is provided through characteristic elements that respond to the hot climate and large temperature difference between day and night – massive walls, light roofs, small openings and many shading elements.[8]

Peru – Titicaca
• cold and dry climate
• natural environment: lake

• local materials used: tortora reeds
• period: tribe arrived 1700 BCE

The Uros islands are located at 3810 meters above sea level and are still home to the ancient Uros tribe. In the past, the Uros traded with the Aymara tribe on land, which is one of the reasons the islands are not firmly anchored to the bottom but function as floats on the lake. They were created by alternating layers of a local reed known as tortora with layers of clay. In order to preserve them, however, it is necessary to replenish the layers, as reeds rot much faster when in contact with water, especially during the rainy season. The islands are still inhabited by the original inhabitants, who continuously repair their homes with new layers of local reeds using traditional methods.

To this day, no infrastructure has been established in the dwellings. The houses are also very small so that on cold nights the residents literally heat themselves with the heat of their own bodies; the thick layer of reeds that forms the perimeter walls has excellent thermal insulation properties.

Peru – Machu Picchu
• tundra climate
• natural environment: primeval forest
• local materials used: stone
• period: created 1460 – 1470

The classic Inca style of using specially worked stone masonry in large formats is has been preserved and is clearly legible. This ancient construction technique is unique due to

[7] RUHIGOVÁ E. *Contribution to the solution of non-invasive interventions in the field of technical equipment of buildings at heritage-protected objects*. Dissertation thesis. Bratislava: Faculty of Architecture STU. 2020, p. 186.
[8] Ibidem, pp 21–22.

the extreme precision in joining individual rocks without the help of mortar or metal tools and draft animals. The architecture had to adapt to the local geomorphology, as it is built on very steep rocky ground. Individual houses were constructed on terraces and each house had terraced fields.

In terms of infrastructure, not much has been preserved, but the construction of a drainage system that is still functioning today is also remarkable, which was able (and still can) withstand even the biggest and most intense rains in these mountains. The entire residence is literally interwoven with stone drainage channels which drain houses, yards, and individual cascading terraces.[9]

Colombia – Cartagena
- tropical climate
- natural environment: Caribbean coast
- local materials used: wood, mud brick
- period: creation in 1533

The Caribbean port of Cartagena on the northern coast of Colombia is full of Spanish colonial architecture. Its entire centre, which has never been captured by outside invaders, has been preserved to the greatest extent possible and it is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, thanks to its perfect defence system and strategic location.

However, what makes this city liveable and pleasant even in the local tropical climate are the extremely narrow streets, which are almost completely covered with balconies creating pleasant shade and space for functioning even during the hottest parts of the day. Since the city is located in a tropical climate zone, heating was not necessary in the past and internal comfort was achieved by maximum shading of window and door openings.

Azores Islands
- mild, warm climate
- natural environment: hills of volcanic origin
- local materials used: stone, wood
- period: around 1500

The vernacular architecture of this area can be described as belonging to a "seismic architectural culture" which developed from the need to withstand frequent small and larger earthquakes by creating shock-resistant structures.

Among the main additional reinforcing elements are steel or wooden connecting rods (tensile), massive stone blocks placed around the perimeter of the masonry directly on the ground and massive stone bevelled walls supporting the perimeter masonry. In this location, traditional houses often feature reinforced corners, reinforcement of window and door openings around their entire perimeter, transverse arches between neighbouring houses and pombalino walls. These are part of the interior, dividing the space; their dense, ventilated cage-like construction creates an internal structure that mainly serves to cushion the perimeter walls.

[9] RUHIGOVÁ E. 2020. Contribution to the solution of non-invasive interventions ..., pp. 22–23.

The houses use a medieval form of heating, where smoke and combustion gases are directed out the building via a chimney, rather than allowed to remain in the room. Located on the façade of the house, the chimney also has a secondary function of strengthening the structure.[10]

Egypt – Bahariya
• desert climate
• natural conditions: desert
• local materials used: compacted clay

Traditional settlements in Bahariya are organised to clearly divide public, semi-public and private spaces. The social context here traditionally required the segregation of private life from participation in the economic and religious life of the community.

The dwellings adapt to the harsh conditions of the desert environment by being compact, so that the surfaces of the heat-exchange envelope exposed to direct sunlight are minimised. Narrow, often covered streets provide shade from sunlight and ensure vertical ventilation with a natural chimney effect, which is also realised "in the cross", that is, through the buildings.[11]

China – Mongolian steppe
• steppe climate
• natural environment: grass steppe
• local materials used: bamboo, animal skins

China's topography, broadly speaking, encompasses areas from subarctic to tropical climates, where numerous vernacular architectural forms have developed to respond to the regional climate with great effectiveness.

China has a distinct continental monsoon climate. Traditional Chinese country houses were heated in the cold months by brick kang stoves, which doubled up as beds.

The Mongolian steppe in North China was considerably influenced by the Mongols, who lived in yurts made of diagonally laid bamboo rods and completely covered with animal skins. In the upper part of the yurt is a circular opening which is used to expel smoke from the central hearth, used for food preparation as well as lighting and heating the interior. The shape of the yurt was also inspired by other dwellings, such as stone buildings with a circular floor plan. The type of heating in buildings was solved in the same way.[12]

South Korea – around Seoul
• monsoon climate
• natural environment: hills
• local materials used: bamboo, hand-moulded dried bricks, clay

The traditional architecture of South Korea is characterised by a roof made of clay tiles and inner courtyards, which together with the garden are placed as a whole on a raised platform of rammed earth. The roofs were designed to be steep to enable drainage during the monsoon

[10] CORREIA M., CARLOS G. *Local seizmic culture in Portugal.* ARGUMENTUM, 2015, Edições, p. 339, ISBN 978-972-8479-88-6
[11] RUHIGOVÁ E. Contribution to the solution of non-invasive interventions ..., pp. 23–24.
[12] Ibidem, p. 24.

and rigid to withstand large amounts of snow in winter. Their height also allows good air flow in the interior in the warmer, humid months. In ancient times, the wooden roof beams were covered with a layer of clay to ensure thermal insulation during cold winters and hot summers.

Fig. 3: *A: Caspana – Atacama (Chile), B: Lake Titicaca (Peru), C: Machu Picchu (Peru), D: traditional homestead – Puno (Peru), E: Cartagena (Colombia), F: Terceira (Azores), G: Bahariya – Bawiti (Egypt), H: Mongolian steppe (China), I: Lanzhou (China), J: Hangzhou (China), K: Seoul (South Korea), L: Podbiel (Slovakia).*
(Source: A-F, H-L: E. Ruhigová, G: Mohamed Hakem)

Although the concavity of the roofs also served aesthetic purposes, the gentle curvature and raised eaves let the sun into the interior in the winter and, thanks to their large overhang, also provide shade in the summer. Another distinctive architectural–structural element of Korean traditional architecture is the hot air heating system, ondol.[13]

[13] RUHIGOVÁ E. Contribution to the solution of non-invasive interventions ..., p. 24.

Slovakia
• mild climate
• natural environment: from lowlands to rocky mountains
• local materials used: wood, stone, clay

Slovakia is located in a mild climate zone. The street-style construction that prevails in the vast majority of the country is characterised by placing houses perpendicular to the street, such that the gable end faces the line of the street. In mountainous terrain, traditional buildings are adapted more to the morphology of the terrain and have thus "disintegrated" into a more relaxed form. In a relatively small area, the type of construction differs mainly in the materials used and the shape of the roofs in response to the climatic conditions of the given location. Slovak folk architecture is characterised by an extraordinary expressive colour, the result of the demanding development of the past millennium.

Slovakia's moderate inland climate is associated with the need to heat residential buildings. Among the materials used are wood, stone and brick. In general, rural buildings use wood in various ways, while urban architecture traditionally involved masonry. In the cities, the technology for building fireplaces and stoves was imported from neighbouring countries in the Middle Ages.[14]

From the examples described above and shown in Figure 3, it can be seen that different types of houses are found in different geomorphological conditions, built using different materials and technologies. The form and design of houses are influenced by the materials used, be it clay, stone, reed, brick, bamboo, animal skins, or wood.

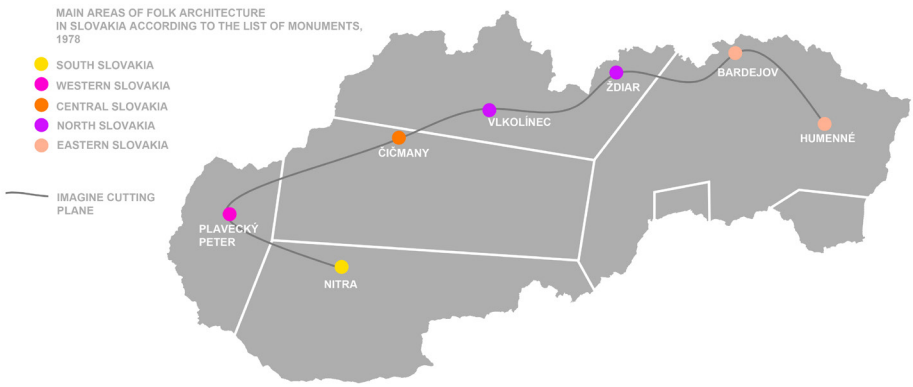


Fig. 4: *Schematic representation of studied locations within Slovakia* (Source: E. Ruhigová)

The form and materials also depend on the climatic conditions in which the object was located. Depending on whether the climate is hot, cold, humid, dry, or wet, interiors need to be heated or cooled. Older efforts to optimise conditions inside include constructing thick walls keep heat in and out, cooling the interior with ventilation, utilising body heat in small insulated interiors, and building a fireplace and hearth or other "primitive" heating systems (often implemented in brick houses). Heating systems were mainly developed in countries with mild, cold climates.[15]

[14] RUHIGOVÁ E. Contribution to the solution of non-invasive interventions ..., pp. 25–27.
[15] Ibidem, p. 27.

Fig. 5: *An imaginary section of Slovakia illustrating the forms of local folk buildings. From the left: Danube lowland, Small Carpathians, Strážovské vrchy, Veľká Fatra, High Tatras, Ondavská vrchovina and Vihorlat*
(Source: E. Ruhigová)

Diversity in today's Slovakia

With a relatively small territory compared to other countries, individual traditional buildings in Slovakia are no longer distinguished according to their entire form but by the execution of individual elements. Individual buildings are adapted to the local climatic conditions, as well as to the construction materials available. Diverse designs, as well as a number of original elements, are present thanks to Slovakia's location within Europe, where in the past it was a meeting point of various ethnic groups.

Slovakia's diverse and highly fragmented landscape, with significant differences in altitude, precipitation, temperature, soil, flora and fauna created the basic prerequisites for the diversity of forms of folk architecture that are still preserved today.

These conditions influenced the material–technical basis of folk building culture. We can divide folk buildings on this territory into two basic groups: clay (brick) and wooden buildings. In both groups, the most available resources and raw materials were used, namely, clay with various admixtures, stone and, later, mud bricks in one group and wood in the other.[16]

In an imaginary section across Slovakia (Fig. 4), it can be seem that houses constructed of wood were mainly located in the northern regions of Slovakia, i.e. near mountains and hillocks. Clay houses, on the other hand, were located in lowland areas, where types of clay suitable for the conditions of building houses were available. It is the same with the slope of the roofs, where in the mountainous areas the construction reached significantly greater slopes (due to the need for drainage of intense rains and snow) than in the lowlands (Fig. 5).

In cities, the relationship to the natural environment began to disappear with use of a small area defined by castle fortifications and the acceptance of new cultural impulses caused by migration. Due to the requirements of higher quality construction, brick and stone were mainly used. The shaping and position of houses gradually changed from solitary constructions in the early Middle Ages to more compact dwellings, the earlier ones being deeper, later ones connected longitudinally (also, to prevent fires, fire shields were built between neighbouring houses). The gradient of the roof significantly influenced the development of heating systems in addition to the effective drainage of rainwater.[17]

[16] DVOŘÁKOVÁ, V. *Ľudová architektúra.* Bratislava: Dajama, 2008. ISBN 978-80-89226-25-2, p. 6.
[17] ŠKABRADA J. *Vernacular buildings: the architecture of the Czech countryside.* 1st ed. Argo. 1999, pp.77–86. ISBN 80-7203-082-5

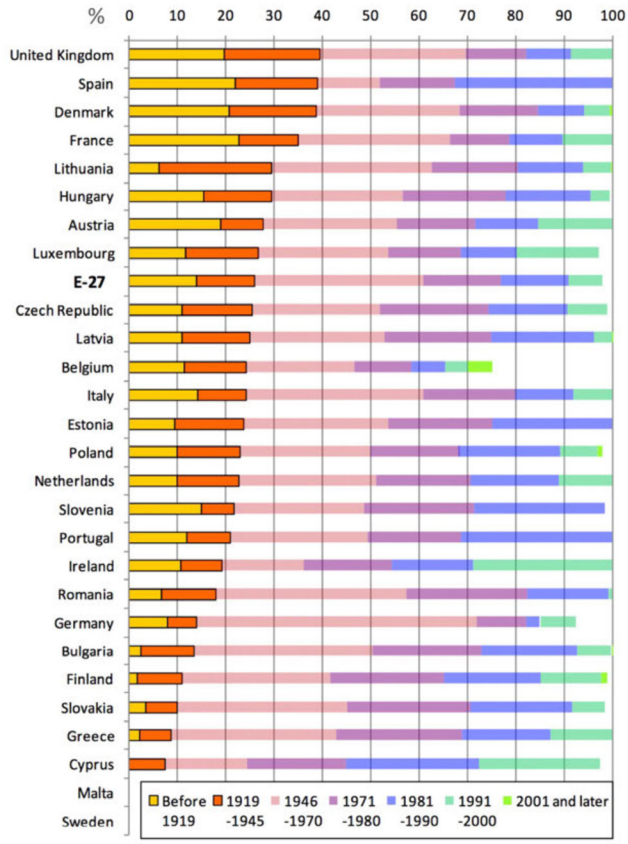
Fig. 6: *Pictorial illustration of the current "cult of globalisation" and its impact on the traditional way of life, habits and mentality for Amsterdam, Gdansk, Berlin, Madrid, London and Paris* (Source: E. Ruhigová)

Fig. 7: *Visual illustration of the current "cult of globalisation" and its impact on the original character of the development for Amsterdam, Gdansk, Berlin, Madrid, London and Paris* (Source: E. Ruhigová)

The problem of loss of cultural diversity through globalisation

Currently, the global trend is the "cult of globalisation", which arose mainly due to the availability and ease of media transmission of information from one end of the world to the other with extreme speed. We can consider the period of modernity – programmatically suppressing traditional ways of building and applying new technical and technological procedures – as the first manifestation of globalism. It goes without saying that this advances the development of civilisation by leaps and bounds, but its impact on preserving the authenticity and the original character of the environment where intensification is taking place remains questionable (Fig. 6, Fig. 7). New building technologies, typification, climate change and global capital have caused the requirements of the new era to be met in a similar way all over the world, especially in cities, where the mentioned problems (and the methods of solving them) are applied to a greater extent than in the countryside. Cities, as hubs of culture, use not only natural resources for construction but also the latest achievements of construction, related to artistic styles or innovative technical solutions. In the past, infrastructure such as sewage systems and running water was more prevalent more in cities than in the countryside. Today, infrastructure is absent only in the most backward rural areas, although the overall development of infrastructure tends

to be higher in cities than in the majority of the countryside.[18] However, modern people tend to find it difficult to give up modern comforts and return to past lifestyles without built-in sewage and water supplies.



	Number of housing units : before 1919	1919-1945
United Kingdom	3 963 000	5 019 000
Spain	4 581 000	3 519 000
Denmark	527 000	448 000
France	6 539 000	3 481 000
Austria	627 000	281 000
Czech Republic	476 000	624 000
Italy	3 894 000	2 705 000
Netherlands	637 000	824 000
Germany	2 964 000	2 223 000
Finland	44 000	233 000
SLOVAKIA	59 000	113 000
Greece	81 000	226 000
Cyprus	no data	22 000

Fig. 8: *Graph showing the age of housing units within EU countries in 2001, arranged by construction period* (Source: Alexandra Troi, Institute for Renewable Energy, EURAC research, Bolzano/Italy)[19]

The dimension of monument care

Globalisation, by intensifying the way of life, leads to demands for more and more new buildings to meet society's requirements, thus the pressure to replace traditional-style buildings is growing. For this reason, a system of monument care was created in Slovakia which identifies locations or buildings that represent the basis of the country's cultural roots, and the degree of preservation of these buildings is directly related to the degree of preservation of the nation's cultural identity. Each culture/country has developed its own system of rules for monuments and buildings, defining how their restoration must be approached. In a broader sense, monument care has become a tool of cultural sustainability. Each system takes into

[18] GREGOROVÁ, J. et al. *Presentation of architectural heritage II*. PERFEKT, a.s., Bratislava 2008, pp. 9–15. ISBN 978-80-8046-394-6

[19] Troi, Alexandra: Historic buildings and city centres – the potential impact of conservation compatible energy refurbishment on climate protection and living conditions, 2001, accessed Feburary 2023 https://www.eurac.edu/en/institutes-centers/institute-for-renewable-energy

account the preservation of authenticity by defining the extent to which new interventions are permitted.

This system affects, among other things, the degree of preservation of traditional buildings. In general, the traditional building techniques were used in Western cultures until about the middle of the twentieth century.

If we take into account all Slovakia's built heritage by construction period, then traditional buildings built before 1947 become a separate group of buildings, a relatively large proportion of which are declared monuments. These are objects built in a traditional way, from traditional materials (brick, stone, or wood). The graph shown in Figure 8 shows that in terms of residential buildings built before 1947 (which in Slovakia can be considered cultural monuments), there are significantly fewer of them have been preserved in Slovakia compared to other EU countries. This is the reason monument care is set much more strictly in Slovakia than in other countries.

The historical–cultural aspect in the issue of sustainability, and therefore also monument care, is comparable to the need to solve the issues of ecology and environmentalism, as the protection of cultural heritage is undoubtedly in the interest of the whole society. Cultural heritage documents society's overall development, whether in science, technology or art. Europe, with its cultural diversity and enormous dispersion of cultural features, represents a unique concentration of monuments, and setting up a system and rules for their preservation has a supra-regional significance for civilisation. The cultural identity of individual countries is different and therefore the individual models of monument protection also differ (in contrast to ecological or technical parameters, which are quantifiable and therefore their limits can be determined relatively more precisely and unambiguously). Therefore, a system for the protection of monuments has been determined worldwide which has a transnational (world, continental), national and regional dimension.

When comparing the cultural identity of European countries with other countries of the world, it becomes clear that Europe shows similar characteristics in terms of types of construction production. A significant difference is particularly noticeable in the degree of preservation of traditional buildings in relation to the total construction production in individual countries. It is therefore understandable that the types of monument care may not be the same. Among other things, they can also differ in the degree of directivity in the protection of the original. There is a visible difference in approach to monument protection in countries that have preserved a large number of monuments. These countries tend to use a differentiated system of protection to define the types of traditional buildings that are protected as monuments, even though the values of individual countries regarding their monuments differ. Thanks to this, it is possible to introduce new interventions to certain types of monuments which change their original character to a certain extent. Countries that have a small monument base tend to have not adopted a differentiated system of monument protection, possibly out of fear that their relatively small number of traditional monuments could be further diminished by insensitive interventions.

Instead, such countries often increase the degree of systematisation of protection in order to avoid loss of originality as much as possible. Slovakia is one of these countries with a small monument base where a differentiated protection system has not been applied. Proposed restorations of monuments in such countries are strictly monitored in accordance with the established legislation.[20]

[20] RUHIGOVÁ E. Contribution to the solution of non-invasive interventions ..., pp. 31–34.

Monument care abroad compared to Slovakia

As already mentioned, countries of the European Union vary in terms of the quality and number of preserved historical objects (Fig. 9). Despite the current global trends, requirements for the optimisation of energy consumption and the overall standard of use of protected heritage buildings, countries with a low (or minimal) degree of preservation of historically valuable structures and a related lower degree of cultural identity must set their system of heritage protection far more strictly. By way of comparison, the following text lists some examples of countries that apply a differentiated system of monument care, thanks to the presence of a large number of preserved monuments.

England and Scotland

Great Britain built its identity as a world empire thanks to a strong relationship with the products (buildings, art, cultural products) of its ancestors.[21]

England, together with Scotland, has one of the largest number of historical monuments in Europe. English Heritage, which takes care of the overall monument protection in the country, has defined a clearly differentiated and strict system of protection.[22] Buildings are divided into three categories:

- Grade I (in Scotland, Category A) - buildings of exceptional special interest;
- Grade II* (in Scotland, Category B) - particularly important buildings of more than special interest;
- Grade II (grade II, in Scotland category C) – buildings of special interest, warranting every effort to preserve them.[23]

In the framework of monument protection in the field of urban planning, the so-called "Conservation Areas" – protected areas that are declared for the important architectural and historical values of a set of several objects. Their goal is the monument protection of the characteristic historical territory as a whole.[24]

Spain

Spain, like England, has a large base of historical objects. However, it is currently facing the problem that dozens of state-protected ancient monuments are in an alarming state of disrepair and becoming ruins. Reasons include rural depopulation and a significant increase in vandalism. The government therefore decided to set up a social system supporting incomers to live in settlements at risk of dying out due to their aging population.

The Ministry of Culture divides its responsibility for national cultural heritage between two bodies. The General Administration of the Protection of Historical Heritage is responsible

[21] GREGOROVÁ, J. et al. *Presentation of architectural heritage*. Bratislava: Slovak Technical University in Bratislava, 2003, p. 140. ISBN 80-227-1837-8

[22] PAGÁČOVÁ P. *Aspects of sustainability in the restoration of heritage-protected structures*. Dissertation thesis. Bratislava: Faculty of Architecture STU. 2015, pp. 17.

[23] DEPARTMENT FOR DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA & SPORT: Principles of Selection for Listed Buildings, 2018, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5beef3c9e5274a2b0b4267e0/Revised_Principles_of_Selection_2018.pdf.

[24] HISTORIC ENGLAND: What Is a Conservation Area?, accessed Feburary 2024, https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/what-is-designation/local/conservation-areas/

for applying regulations on the protection of historical heritage, and the General Institute of Cultural Heritage of Spain develops and implements conservation strategies.

The protection of cultural heritage is governed by Act No. 16/1985 on Spanish cultural heritage, although the autonomous regions have drawn up their own legislation (which greatly complicates the implementation of heritage protection in the country). The powers of the central and regional governments are allocated in such a way that the central government deals primarily with protected property belonging to the state and manages public bodies and delegated authorities, and the autonomous regional governments focus on privately, locally and regionally owned historical objects and sites within their autonomous area.

The Autonomous Communities have established additional levels of protection under their own laws and, as far as intangible heritage is concerned, they have introduced their own special categories – a differentiated system of protection – which, however, is not the same for all Spanish sites.[25]

France

France has a very rich, diverse and valuable cultural heritage which plays an important economic role in the country and contributes significantly to the uniqueness of French culture. The protection and value enhancement of French cultural heritage is central to the tasks of the Ministry of Culture and is based on detailed scientific research.

The Cultural Heritage Act replaced the earlier Cultural Property Act on 19 October 2012 in order to capture the wider legislative framework. This legislative transition led to many changes.[26] One of the dominant ones is the introduction of the categorisation of historical monuments into the following groups:

- Historical objects
- Historical or archaeological sites classified before 1978 as national cultural monuments (interiors are protected)
- Historical or archaeological sites classified after 1978 as national cultural monuments (interiors are not protected)
- Historic or natural districts
- Archaeological sites
- Works of art
- Cinematographic, audiovisual, photographic, radio and television works

The protection of cultural heritage is based on regulations that have been in place since the nineteenth century in all areas of heritage (archives, libraries, museums, archaeology, historical monuments). In 2008, following incidents of theft in cathedrals and museums and recurrent intrusions, the penal code was amended in order to strengthen powers to prevent theft and malicious acts committed against a protected cultural property.[27]

[25] COUNCIL OF EUROPE. 2024. National Policy Report. https://www.coe.int/en/web/herein-system/spain
[26] Gouvernement du Québec: Cultural heritage act, 2023,
https://www.legisquebec.gouv.qc.ca/fr/document/lc/P-9.002/20161209?langCont=en
[27] Ministry of Culture of France: A little history, 2023
https://www.culture.gouv.fr/en/Thematic/Monuments-Sites/Historical-monuments-heritage-sites/A-little-history

The genesis of the development of monument protection in today's Slovakia

The beginnings of the organised protection of monuments in Slovakia date back to the middle of the nineteenth century, when they were directly linked to the authorities concerned with the protection of monuments of the then Austro-Hungary. For decades, the Monarchy influenced the development of practically all of Central Europe, the so-called Vienna Memorial School.[28]

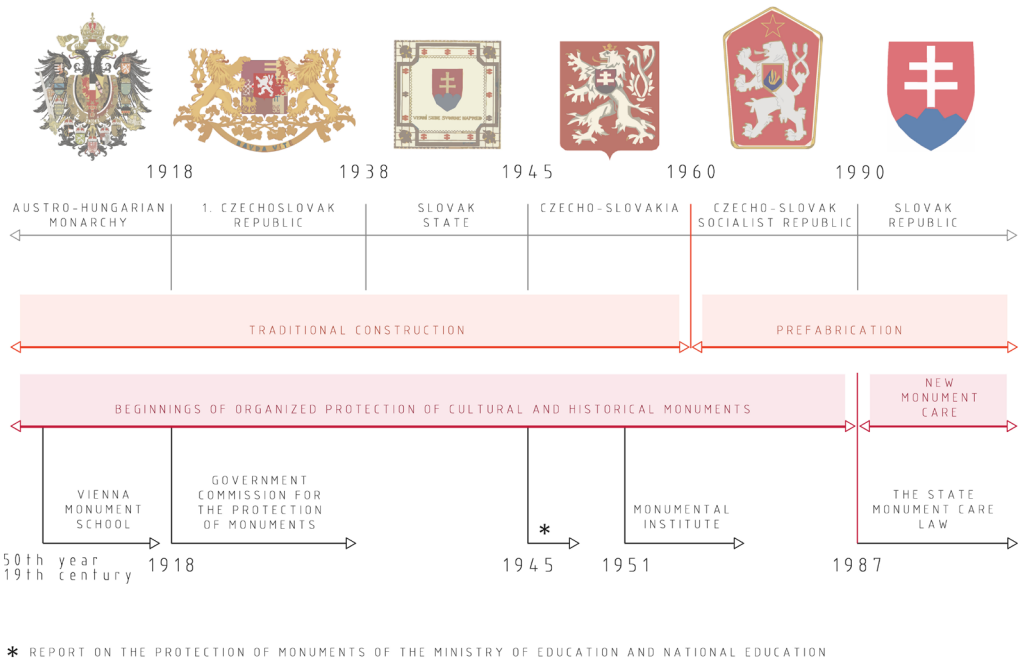


Fig. 9: *Development of monument protection in today's Slovakia.* (Source: E. Ruhigová)

The first truly Slovak monument authority, created after the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic and the consolidation of Czechoslovakian state power, was the Government Commissariat for the Protection of Monuments in Slovakia, renamed in 1923 to the State Department for the Protection of Monuments in Slovakia (State Department). It was established in October 1919 by Regulation No. 155/1919, which was issued by the minister with full power for the administration of Slovakia Vavro Šrobár.[29]

The creation of the report on the protection of monuments of the Ministry of Education and National Enlightenment in 1945 is connected with the creation of Czechoslovakia, which was already replaced in 1951 by the Monuments Institute, which continued even during the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic. At that time, regional (and also district) national committees were responsible for monument care. Among the most important actions of the Monuments Institute (which was later named the Slovak Monuments Institute [1951–1958]) was the establishment of an inventory of monuments in 1954. Just before the Slovak Republic was established (in 1993) came the Act on State Monument Care of 1987 and the associated

[28] Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic: Protection of the monument fund, accessed Feburary 2024, https://www.culture.gov.sk/posobnost-ministerstva/kulturne-dedicstvo/ochrana-pamiatkoveho-fondu/
[29] Profile of Slovak culture: Preservation of monuments in the past (1850 – 2002), accessed Feburary 2023, http://profil.kultury.sk/sk/ochrana-pamiatok-v-minulosti-1850-%E2%80%93-2002/

creation of methodology the so-called new monument care by the National Council of the Slovak Republic / Slovenská národná rada. Here, for the first time, differentiation was made between types of protected heritage, including national cultural monuments (NCMs), monument reserves, monument zones and protection zones. The legislation also defined how national cultural monuments could be used, how to conduct archaeological research, and so on (Fig. 9).[30]

In this context, it is important to note that while the law within the Czechoslovak Republic also applied to Slovakia, Slovakia had the protection of classification as a national cultural monument or a cultural monument. However, following the independence of the Slovak Republic, the ratio of monuments to the total construction production deteriorated significantly. Following independence, the differentiated system of monument care disappeared and the only category used is now NCM.

Current tools of monument care in Slovakia

The monument fund in Slovakia can be perceived from the point of view protection at a transnational, national and regional level. The transnational (world and continental) level is based on the principles of protection that were uniformly established for all cultural countries of the world. The national (state) level has its own monument care system which can be considered partially differentiated and applies to the entire territory of Slovakia. At the regional level, the monument protection system is a matter for individual regions or settlements, and is binding for the respective communities.

Transnational level

The main world conventions and recommendations on the protection of monuments also have an impact on monument care within Slovakia. Among the most famous of them are UNESCO and ICOMOS, which have clearly defined intervention principles. These include, for example, the condition of reversibility of all interventions, the effort to preserve all original imperfections and deficiencies as long as they do not conflict with safety, and that all new materials must be compatible with the original materials. Another of the supra-regional conventions is, for example, the Athens and Venice Charter. Dating from 1964, it outlines the need to preserve the authenticity of architectural works, which is also related only using modern technologies if the traditional ones are insufficient.[31] In 1994, the Nara Document on Authenticity was published; conceived in a similar spirit to the Venice Charter, it expands on the concept by strengthening the relationship between cultural heritage and the interest of the world in its preservation in relation to authenticity.[32]

In connection with the problem of emerging globalisation, reconstructive procedures are being used in the restoration of defunct monuments, leading to a debate about the extent to which traditional building procedures should be used if the object is to meet the current

[30] Monument office of the Slovak Republic: Monument authorities 1919 – 1951, accessed Feburary 2024, https://www.pamiatky.sk/pamiatkove-organy-1919-1951

[31] ICOMOS: International charter for the conservation and restoration of monuments and sites, The Venice Charter 1964, accessed Feburary 2024, https://www.icomos.org/images/DOCUMENTS/Charters/venice_e.pdf

[32] ICOMOS: The NARA document on authenticity, 1994, accessed Feburary 2024, https://www.icomos.org/en/charters-and-texts/179-articles-en-francais/ressources/charters-and-standards/386--the-nara-document-on-authenticity-1994

requirements for use. The great loss of monuments over the last 50 years is the reason behind the ever-greater insistence on preserving the original essence of the monument. For heritage objects the most sensitive methods are sought to preserve authenticity, even at the cost of finding exceptions or atypical solutions to the standard technical approach.[33]

National level

When it comes to new interventions in heritage buildings, the optimal approach is a differentiated system of monument protection which divides monuments into groups to which different exceptions or compromises apply, taking into account the technical standards of that country.

In Slovakia, for the reasons mentioned earlier, there is a relatively well-developed system of monument protection which is differentiated in the urbanistic dimension. However, in the architectural dimension, all monuments are classified in the same category, which significantly limits the possibility of creating a system of acceptable compromises.

At the national level, the Methodological Guidelines apply. Their main function is to specify how experts should undertake the restoration process. The Guidelines are an addition to the Monuments Act.

In the urban planning dimension, a differentiated system is ensured by the categorisation of heritage sites in the Principles of the Protection of Monumental Areas. These territories are differentiated according to the degree of preservation of historical values into monument reservations, monument zones and protection zones. The principles divide heritage sites into eight basic groups, one of which is national cultural monuments.

In accordance with the methodological guidelines of the monument office of the Slovak Republic for research documentation of urban–historical research and the draft Principles of the Protection and Restoration of Monumental Protected Areas, the following categories of objects are defined:

1. national cultural monuments (to which special sections of the Monuments Act apply)
2. properties selected for declaration as NCMs
3. properties with historical value
4. properties which respect the historical values of the territory
5. properties that do not respect the historical values of the territory
6. monuments that are registered in certain lists (they are registered at local governments and municipalities) and they are to a certain extent under monument protection, but they do not fall under the monument law.
7. other non-heritage buildings located within a monument area
8. national cultural monuments which are to be abolished the possibility of monument care.[34]

There are methodological guidelines created for the preparation of research (for example, Guidelines of the Monuments Office of the Slovak Republic for processing documentation of monumental architectural–historical research). In the case of architectural objects, which are covered by special sections of the Monuments Act, there is still no differentiated system of

[33] RUHIGOVÁ E. Contribution to the solution of non-invasive interventions ..., p. 40.
[34] PAGÁČOVÁ P. Aspects of sustainability..., pp. 21-23.

protection, there is only one category – national cultural monument (NCM).

At the national level, monument care is also defined by the Declaration of the National Council of the Slovak Republic on the Protection of Cultural Heritage (approved February 28, 2001) and Act of the Slovak Republic No. 49/2002 Coll. on the Protection of the Monument Fund, which was supplemented by Act 208/2009 Coll.[35]

Regional level

In the event that within the region (or municipality) there is a request for the protection of a building that does not have enough historical value to classify as an NCM, it is possible to initiate such an object of the relevant municipality to be included in the monument category. This category is also included in the Principles for the Protection of Monumental Areas, through which its protection can also be controlled by state authorities.[36]

A possible proposal for the categorisation of objects built before 1947

Any attempt to define groups of buildings in which new interventions would be possible under certain conditions would need to focus on the possibilities for different degrees protection when it comes to new interventions. In Slovakia, however, until now, for the reasons mentioned above, a differentiated system of protection has not been developed at the architectural level.

If, in the future, there is a need to differentiate buildings, it would be appropriate to start with categorising them, in line with the Principles of Monument Care, according to the following assumptions:

1. NCMs and real estate selected as NCMs are of the highest value and it is necessary to preserve their authenticity both inside and externally.
2. The exterior of properties which represent the historical values of a territory have a high historical value. Authenticity must be preserved externally, but the historical value of the interior may be lower, opening up the possibility of partial modifications.
3. There are two types of buildings in this category: 1) buildings with historical value (but not at all under historical protection); 2) monuments that are registered in specific lists (by local governments and municipalities) and are, to a certain extent, under monument protection, but do not fall under the monument law. These buildings may be partially modified but it depends on the type of building.
4. Properties that do not represent the historical values of the territory or for which is proposed to cancel monument care. The reason for cancelling monument care is often that its value as an original construction has already been disrupted or destroyed. New interventions in such buildings have no limit, but they can be adjusted. In the case of a protected area, it would be appropriate to require that any new interventions do not have a negative impact on its surroundings.

[35] Act of the NR SR no. 49/2002 Coll. Act on the Protection of the Monumental Fund as amended by Act No. 479/2005 Coll.

[36] RUHIGOVÁ E. Contribution to the solution of non-invasive interventions ..., p. 186.

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