

CRITICAL PRESERVATION

towards a conscious approach to future architectural production based on a complex understanding of authenticity and value, in relation to the user experience, passage of time and materiality.

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“People claim that we recapture for a moment the self that we were long ago when we enter some house or garden in which we used to live in our youth. But these are most hazardous pilgrimages, which end as often in disappointment as in success.”

— Marcel Proust, In Search of Lost Time

The notion of time could be understood in multiple ways in relation to architecture, which underlines the complexity of the notion and plurality of its interpretations. To recognize that a building belongs to a specific time in the history of architecture, can be a way to analyze the development of a place, where the assignation of a time period allows us to make classifications and judgments. Daily habits are contained in time spent in different types of buildings, that influence the cycles in which they are being exploited and perceived by its users. Events and social movements can contribute to the rise of a particular type of architecture and become an expression of a certain ideology. Even the most basic system that architecture operates within, the system of distances, can be measured with time.

Passage of time can be observed also in the most tactile realm of architecture, which is its physical fabric. As architectural matters evolves, the lifetime of a building becomes a choreographed set of actions. Building materials of all kinds go through different processes in time, they age, interact with biological processes happening in their surroundings or are modified by the users. Regarding natural materials, they go through the whole circle from being collected from nature, used to serve a certain function, decay to finally become back again a part of a natural environment.

The destruction of material that the building was made from, clearly indicates the flow of time. The process of destruction or change of the material from its original state is inevitable. Therefore only for a very short period of the building's lifespan, the project looks as it was originally intended by the designer in his drawing. To approach the problems of modern societies, specifically the case of sustainability we as designers have to revise our approach to materials and their conscious use.

“ Everybody knows—and especially architects, of course—that a building is not a static object but a moving project, and that even once it is has been built, it ages, it is transformed by its users, modified by all of what happens inside and outside, and that it will pass or be renovated, adulterated and transformed beyond recognition.” (Latour & Yaneva, 2008).

The aim of this paper is to investigate a way in which future architecture development can incorporate the passage of time and decay as a means of creation of aesthetic value. It also analyses changes in social relations that such an approach may cause and its relevance to the modern constraints of sustainable development as well as an appreciation of cultural heritage. Seeking to formulate outlines that will allow multiple solutions to follow under a general design philosophy of *critical preservation*.

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INTRODUCTION

critical | 'krɪtɪk(ə)l |

adjective

1. expressing adverse or disapproving comments or judgements
2. expressing or involving an analysis of the merits and faults of a work of literature, music, or art
3. (of a situation or problem) having the potential to become disastrous at a point of crisis

preserve | prɪ'zərv |

verb

1. maintain (something) in its original or existing state
 - retain (a condition or state of affairs)
 - maintain or keep alive (a memory or quality)
 - keep safe from harm or injury
2. treat to prevent its decomposition

DEFINING CRITICAL PRESERVATION

In the light of the delimitations of the two words, I would like to consider *critical preservation* as an idea of a specific approach towards production of architecture that both consists of conscious choices in the design process, that will allow new buildings to last for a long time (on a functional, social, tectonic and material level), as well as maintenance practices that will preserve the growing age-value and memory value of a building in its lifespan. Memory and age in that argument are considered, notions understood universally, legitimizing the building in the eyes of the users.

Critical, because it requires us as designers to question many obvious to us concepts like function, form, readability, etc. but also critical because it is an action that is strongly connected with the crisis we are facing at the moment. It is a crisis that happens on many levels simultaneously, affecting the climate we live in but also the social structures that we create.

Preservation, because in the upcoming decade we will have to drastically reduce the production of buildings, that will directly shift the focus of architects on maintenance and re-appropriation of the building structures that we have in the cities. Quicker we accept that our cultural production in general leads towards destruction, the better we will develop conservation methods to maintain what we have. We have to accept that idea of eternal growth, and the fact that we hide all the natural elements of human-environment like decay and waste from our “public” view led us to this crisis. Short-sightedness and greed for “more” have led us to this situation.

“*Everything we do is our own responsibility, and when we make the choice of doing something, and actually even the choice of doing nothing, we are setting standards for how one should act in a given situation.*” (H. Harper, 2018) Therefore in times of global change and uncertainty, we have to give good examples, set ways for future development, pose important questions and seek solutions and answers. Design is not about making things that are only amusing anymore, they have to be resistant to change, ecological and they have to present a historical significance for future generations. We have to find ways to avoid

designing future architectural garbage, buildings that get outdated in their aesthetics in 10/15 years or are being replaced by new more “trendy” buildings (eg. study conducted on skyscrapers in Warsaw).

The constant change of buildings in the cityscape, driven by the needs of “commodity” will need to be reconsidered. We have to establish an alternative understanding of the idea of change and impermanence of architecture and building matter, which is based on a more complex understanding of the passage of time, that responds to the constraints of the age of overproduction and devaluation of meaning.

Architecture production has to strive towards sustainability, within a complex understanding of the notion itself. It has to reach towards social sustainability, formal sustainability (form that does not limit use), material sustainability and labour sustainability (healthy work environment - for both architects and builders). Sustainable development in its definition takes into advantage the interest of future generations, that since they are not alive yet cannot decide for themselves. Therefore our creations will become their heritage or burden.

It is important to start with a description of the time I write this paper in, as the thoughts that I try to express, are contextual to what I observe. They are an expression of the concern I share with many other young architects and other young individuals. The concern about the future - not only the future of the profession - but the future of human civilization. In October 2019 Climate Emergency Declaration has been published. There is no denying that human action (that architecture production is a great part of) has led in the past century to Anthropocene extinction and large destruction of the natural landscapes. This devastation on a material level is mainly caused by an accumulation of waste, that consists of man-made materials (plastic, glass, concrete) that unlike natural materials does not decompose, but builds up creating new contemporary landmasses. Even though we are surrounded by waste materials, we still continue to produce more, against the alarming damage that we can clearly see that our actions cause.

IN SEARCH OF NEW VALUES

What we also observe is a rise in the production of new buildings at the same time accompanied by the demolition of the buildings from the period that are not classified yet as cultural heritage (depending on the country, buildings raised in the past 100 - 50 years). Therefore the lifespans of singular buildings become shorter, due to an unfair paradigm of the newness and innovation. At the same time, lifespans of their statistical users become longer. For example, we can imagine a situation where during a lifespan of a person's life, there could be up to 3 complete changes of a building that stands on one site. With every change the users' perception of this space has to be redefined, his memories with what was there earlier are vanished, the understanding of the identity of this place is gone.

But does it mean that we just always want to replace what we already have with something new? Is the newness something that primarily defines the value of the object for

society Today? Well if only it was that simple. Studies show that in 21st-century authenticity is argued to be the new business imperative as the consumers' search for authenticity is one of the cornerstones of contemporary marketing.

The question would be how to define value of architectural matter in the scope of authenticity? On a superficial level, we can perceive as a valuable material a piece of marble extracted from a quarry in Italy or China. But it also could be a material that has qualities that makes the user perceive it as unquestionably authentic on a more complex dimension - the object was handcrafted, has a historical significance or marks and traces that define its age-value. Therefore there is a chance that an object made in a rather ordinary material can also be perceived as authentic and therefore valuable.

In the western conservation practice, we aim to identify buildings' authenticity primarily based on the age of its matter, next to the idea behind a buildings' form or its structure. It is in opposition to the processes that define the Eastern architectural practice, where a good example might be the Japanese tradition of constant rebuilding and demolition of temples (eg.Ise Jingu grand shrine in Mie Prefecture). There the value is defined as the chance to acknowledge the change, combined with the resistance of the spatial idea and craft methods, not the preservation of the material itself.

In a sense, the monuments (a historical building considered socially valuable) are perceived with a tendency to only acknowledge the exact moment the modern user encounters them, due to the romanticization of the past that we are so easily allured with. There the process of aging seen in the fabric of the building is a construct socially associated with value. Perhaps then as designers, we should take advantage of this fact and try to embrace it within the material choices that we make when designing new buildings.

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF AN ARCHITECT

Architects produce in the spirit of the “Kunstwollen” described by Alois Riegl, which is a concept that all art is an expression of reality desired by a man of a certain epoch, and not a simple “commentary” and fix to what is, but the representation of a dream state that emerges from known reality surrounding the art production. This is why naturally we design to tackle the societal problems of today, as well as to reach towards desired change in the future.

“*Once again, change begins with criticism. In my view the function of art and architecture continues to be to encourage the viewer to think critically and so to be open to change. In itself architecture cannot change anything; what it does do is to prepare the way for change*” (Toorn & Bouman, 2005 p.25) stated Gincarlo de Carlo in the interview “Architecture is too important to leave it to architects” taken on October 7, 1987, on the occasion of Gi-ancarlo de Carlo’s opening speech of the lecture series The Invisible in Architecture, at the Delft University of Technology. In his writings he was investing the responsibility of architectural movements and their impact on society, seeking to redefine its meaning and purpose. He was opposed to what he was observing in the profession in the ‘80s, highly influenced by the commercial clients, politicians, and bureaucrats.



FIG . 1.1

The atmosphere of Barcelona Pavilion is solely created by the value and beauty of the surface of marble walls that devide the interior space. Anne Holtrop's pavilion presents the opposite approach. It aims to create the atmosphere of authenticity due to the method used to cast the concrete walls, in moulds made from sand. In effect turns common inexpensive material into a sculpturous form which origin we cannot easily guess.

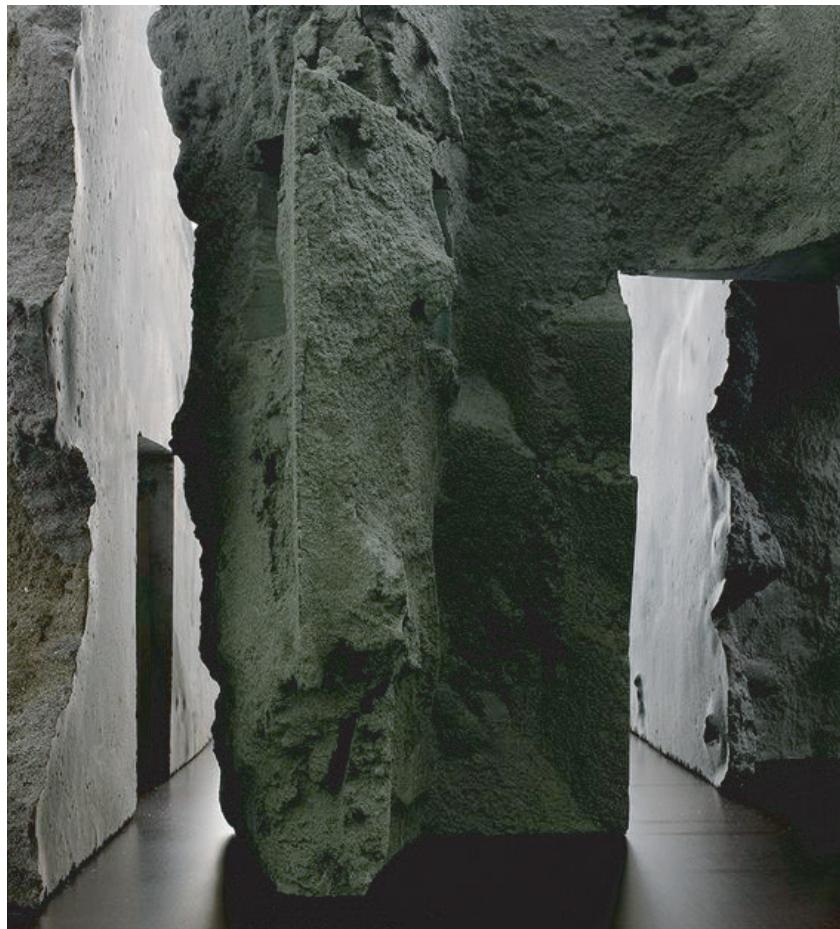


FIG . 1.2

For De Carlo the social potential of the place was the most important part of any design. He argued for modern architecture to renew the dialogue with the user taking into consideration specific place and context. He also calls for architects and designers to realize that their actions will affect the user's life and daily experience. Therefore architect must show commitment towards the society he works within, he must apply solutions that can be legitimized and that will work on the benefit of the users. In De Carlos' understanding „*everybody should be able to find a meaning in architecture that corresponds with his or her cultural level, history or background. It is this sort of multifaceted meaning that I am looking for in my own work.*” (Toorn & Bouman, 2005 p.22)

It is important to recognize that all our future action has to come from an acknowledgement that we are in the crisis. Crisis of values and a general crisis of culture, that our consumption and lust-driven approach has led us to. The position of an architect that has been established in the past century (best expressed by portmanteau - starchitect) that achieves general recognition due to the “innovative” approach to form and function he or she presents, has now reached the moment it will become outdated. In the moment of crisis, there is no place for “celebrated individuals” but joined action towards more reasonable action.

METHOD AND REASERCH QUESTIONS

In light of *critical preservation*, the conscious design approach allows for the building to become even more aesthetical with the passage of time. Where every conservation that has to be conducted, can highlight the memory of the past and preserve all the marks of the time passage, such as decay, corrosion or patination as well as fraying, stains, marks, etc. Therefore the building with time acquires an extra dimension, a dimension of use. It allows the user or events to commemorate to buildings meaning. To form new meaning, a new understanding that speaks of the past in the present helps the structure gain complexity. Marks left by the event that took place there, make the user interested in the buildings past and history, maybe even for some users, it will allow to create a personal bond with the space. Like the writing that one leaves on the wall “... was here”, but in a more subtle way. The user that experiences the “destructive” event that happens in the building, then acknowledges the reparation process that does not vanish the marks of the event, establishes an understanding of the change. The “observation” of the difference that occurs over time becomes his memory of the place.

Albena Yaneva points out in her essay “Give me a gun and I will make all buildings move”, that even though “*euclidean space is the space in which buildings are drawn on paper but not the environment in which buildings are built*” (Latour & Yaneva, 2008). Therefore architectural matter is basically under permanent change. We may say that constant change, is the most permanent state that a building can be in. Only for a slight second it precisely resembles the drawing it is based on, before first users encounter the space and add to it another set of values. In a sense, as designers “*we have to add human subjective intentional dimensions to a “material” world that is well described by geometric shapes and mathematical calculations*”(Latour & Yaneva, 2008). Acknowledgment of the inevitable change and its inclusion at the stage of the design phase will allow the new buildings to

work with time and use, as factors that supplement to their aesthetics, allowing them to last longer.

The following part of the research paper will concentrate on the analysis of the notion of value in the context of materiality and aesthetics. Attempting to question the superiority of newness, with the introduction of the notion of age-value taken from conservation practice. The notion was coined by Alois Riegl whose essay „The Modern Cult of Monuments” will become the supporting theory for the analysis of the study case: the rehabilitation of Neues Museum in Berlin conducted by David Chipperfield architects. The design process, methods and the final effect of that project may be considered one of the examples in which the philosophy of critical preservation can be exemplified. Seeking to present an alternative way to perceive a change in architecture, then demolition, replacement or reconstruction of a building.

The element tying the research together will be the questions: Can buildings be designed with consideration for their future lifespan, where aging and decay processes bring new art value to the structure? What design approach can allow us to perceive buildings' appearance as a consciously designed choreography of changes rather than one fixed aesthetic?

THEORY

INTRODUCTION TO ALOIS RIEGL'S WORK

In the essay “The Modern Cult of Monuments: Its Character and its origins” originally written by Alois Riegl in 1903, the author has defined novel approach towards preservation of buildings and their matter, that led to the establishment of 20th-century conservation practice and since then has been a principal theory behind understanding the value of heritage in the Western society. What accounts for the importance of the essay was its holistic and precise approach to the problematic of monuments, that first described their types and origin, then established a set of principles that characterized the value of such an object, finally presenting ways in which such artifacts of cultural activity should be taken care of.

Riegl's work has been opposed to the contemporary approach of his purist peers, such as Viollet-le-Duc (restorations in Notre Dame and Carcassonne). He saw the essence of authenticity in keeping the marks of the past, advocating to “*preserve so to speak, the signs of natural decay*” (Riegl, 1903) as it was the index of time that marked a building or a structure as a historical monument and clearly differentiated it from contemporary buildings. At the end of the XIX century when Alois Riegl was practicing as a historian and conducted the writing of his theory, the need to acknowledge the worth of tangible heritage of culture was very much relevant, since the prevailing style was historicism, and in some way, new and old architecture might have seemed indistinguishable to a layman observer.

TIMELESS RELEVANCE OF THE THEORY

The most unique aspect of this theory in my perception is its timeless universality. A similar view was represented by Kurt. W Forester who in 1982 dedicated a whole issue of “Oppositions” journal to the analysis and recap on the short essay written by Riegl, underlining its importance for contemporary thinking and approach to the architectural heritage of the modern era. He starts his article “Monument, Memory, and Mortality in Architecture” with the words: “ *What makes Riegl's study of monuments and his speculation on the historical fate of art and architecture a touchstone for our own thinking today? At a time when casual borrowing of historical forms for new buildings is said to signal the end of modern architecture, a true historian's view is both sobering and challenging.*”

Even though 36 years have passed now, modernism is continuously criticized and widely considered a closed chapter in architectural development, postmodernism became associated with tackiness, and uncountable new ideas on how to shape architecture in the future were presented, his reflection on the text remains still relevant. In majority architects today are still afraid to design in the spirit of traditionally understood architecture, afraid it will not sell or will be considered old fashioned and anachronistic to the digital era that we live in. The tendency of separating the “past” from “now and future” is strongly visible in the profession, also due to the separation of the architecture and conservation into two individual sciences, that has taken place at the beginning of the 20th century, sparked by Alois Riegl among others.

Before the delimitation presented by Riegl in his essay, there was no definition of the “monument” that could be opposed to the “modern” building. On one hand, the theory

clarified the position of an architect and conservator, which allowed a new modernist approach to flourish, on the other, it also has limited the need for an architect to look upon the history of architecture. Is this separation is still beneficial for our practice Today?

At the beginning of his essay, Riegl presents the definition of a monument as a “*human creation, erected for a specific purpose of keeping single human deeds or events alive in the minds of future generations*”(Riegl, 1903). He, therefore, criticizes this delimitation as, reductive since it strongly defines monument as an intended act of art and history creation. In opposition to that, he divides monuments into “intentional” and “unintentional”. Intentional monuments are buildings or objects, meant to commemorate an important event or historical figure. In the moment of their conception, their value is being established by their creators. The value of the unintentional monuments is proven by the modern spectator, whose interest in the art piece validates its significance among other artworks. That way Riegl expands the understanding of the monument itself, including all the artifacts that initially had no significance but the passage of a considerable time has brought them to be considered important in the view of the present generation.

UNINTENTIONAL MONUMENTS AND UNPREDICTABILITY OF FUTURE

That stated, Riegl names five specific types of values that an architectural monument might possess, dividing them into two categories: memory values and present-day values. The first category justifies the monument as an object of heritage, while the second one underlines its significance in the modern spectators’ view. Categorization was made to first acknowledge that memory has value, and it can be represented in building matter as well as in objects or written documents from the past. Secondly, to outline the most appropriate conservation methods for each type of historical building, that will preserve the values rather than vanish them.

In Riegl’s opinion, the general restoration of the building thoroughly canceled both its documentary value, as well as diminished the marks of time, in result making it an unreliable witness to the time passage and origin of its creation. What he advocated for is to let the already ruined buildings decompose in their own tempo and only use the most necessary measures to maintain their shape and most basic presence.

Riegl’s ideas on monuments were based strongly on his observation of the cycles, in which everything generated by humans, was inevitably leaning towards destruction, but also was omitted in the general perception, as if we “*from man expect accomplished artifacts and symbols of a necessary human production; on the other hand, from nature acting over time, we expect their disintegration as the symbol of an equally necessary passing*”(Riegl, 1903). In this statement, we can see that he was fully aware of the contradiction that was leading to alienation of the architecture from embodied experience and its further mathematization. Forster also underlines that “*his positive appreciation of decay was springing not from nostalgia but from a keen sense of historical necessity*”. (W. Forster, 1982)

At the same time, one can argue that such an almost religious approach to conservation of the monuments can be completely justified in the case of XVth century castle set in

FIG . 2.1



Modern ruins are elements of architecture production that exist on the margin of the profession. Bas Princten photographed the carreys in which stone is extracted. The beautiful monuments are effect of destructive exploitation of the natural environment conducted by humans. Another type of modern ruins are buildings that never got finished and because of not being used fall into decay. Buildings such as The National Art Schools of Cuba.

FIG . 2.2



a distinct location, which main purpose is to be visited by tourists and to “speak” of past historical events that were hosted in it, but becomes problematic in the situation where the monument is a building that stands in the prime location of a highly populated modern metropolis.

That perspective has a direct impact on the way we should perceive architecture we produce Today, realizing that it will leave a mark of our actions for future generations, and it will become a monument of our contemporary reality. Therefore an enormous responsibility lies upon us as designers and architects to envision the future of our designs and possible alterations of their use and preservation techniques we wish to be put in place in case of unpredictable destructive events.

20th-century history has proven Riegl's theory since historical events have been and remain unpredictable, any type of architecture might become a monument in the future. As an example, on Polish land, there are monuments that don't represent a significant architectural value but due to their social importance are considered elements of heritage (eg. a shipyard in Gdańsk that became a symbol of the uprising in authoritarian society). Thus a building does not have to represent in the moment of its arising special artistic value to become a representation of a memory of something that has happened.

As mentioned before Alois Riegl presents in his essay a strict categorization of values that monuments can be perceived through and appreciated for. The categorisation has also a practical use, it allows to choose the most appropriate preservation methods, regarding which of the values are of the most importance to the beholder. The memory values are: intentional commemorative value, historical value, and age-value. The latter was strictly bonded with the concept of the unintentional monument. As Thordis Arrhenius mentions: „*The value of the monument would reside no longer in its historicity but in its capacity of revealing the process of development itself, the cycle of death and life*” (Arrhenius, 2003 p.53). This appreciation of the process of evolution, of the passage of time, Riegl termed age-value that was the most modern value and the one that would guide the conservation of the monument in the future.

EGALITARIAN ASPECT OF AGE-VALUE

“*To possess an age-value it was required that the monument display “truthfully” the changes and evolutions it had undergone since its construction, communicating primarily the passage of time.*” (Arrhenius, 2003 p.53) In light of this rule, for example, the fragmentation of the object after an explosion or other destruction must have been kept, for the object to remain truthful to the past events. In Riegl's perception that fragmentation may have jeopardized the art-value as he perceived completeness as its main attribute. “*Age becomes the sign that defines the object as a monument [...] fragility rather than permanence becomes its mark.*” (Forester, 1982) Monuments apart from the memory values present also “present-day values” that make them purposeful and aesthetically pleasing for the user. The notions described by particular values might be sometimes read as contradictory and therefore make the process of choosing appropriate preservation methods quite problematic.

The biggest merit of the age-value itself is its egalitarianism and universal readability. Riegl identified age as the clue to the extension of heritage into mass-culture. “*Age, signified through disintegration, manifested itself immediately to the beholder; no scientific or art historical knowledge was needed to appreciate its visual qualities. (...) Riegl saw this visual directness as the future potential of age in a mass-society directed*” (Arrhenius, 2003 p. 51)

While in Riegels understanding the age-value and art-value are working against each other, in my opinion, it does not always have to be true. In many cases, one can be the creative force of reaching the other. If we decide to actually see the beauty in incompleteness, flaw, and decay we can realize that the patination processes connected with gaining age-value can bring new aesthetical feature to the object making it even more alluring. It only requires a conscious design approach, that will in advance take the decay processes into consideration, that also provides suggestions of preservation methods, which should be put in place in case of destruction of the fabric, allowing creation of readable repair patterns. Therefore the building will gain new appearance with passage of time, one that respects the events that have influenced the building and keeps the memory of them on the surface.

Both, presented in the above analysis, the importance of the maintenance of age-value of any architectural object from a conservation point of view, as well as its intelligibility for the layman, justifies proposal to apply the idea of *critical preservation* into the design process of new buildings. The following chapter will present a study case where the destruction processes that occurred in a historical structure have been maintained, while the function of the building was re-erected after 70 years of it being a modern ruin after the Second World War destruction. Neues Museum as it is right now should be considered a new building that incorporates the matter of the old structure into its walls.

When David Chipperfield architects, in the year 1997 won the competition for rehabilitation of Neues Museum in Berlin, the approach they were representing rose anonymous debate among architects, conservators and even the inhabitants of the city. The building originally designed in 1841 by August Stüler and finished in 1849 on Museum Island next to another great museum, whose author Karl Friedrich Schinkel was Stüler's teacher and master. Within almost two decades of its lifespan, the structure had undergone multiple changes, from which the most violent and vivid one was the destruction made by bombs during the end of the Second World War. That event has broken the continuity of the buildings' use and for 60 years it has been falling into decay as a ruin. Since the whole of the Museum Island has become a UNESCO World Heritage Site, due to the accumulation of institutions of high historical value, any project that would want to resurrect the usage of the Neues Museum, had to respect all restrictions that the organization puts upon such sites.

David Chipperfield underlines that during the work on the project „*conventional methodologies were abandoned in favour of processes and procedures adopted specifically during the course of project*“ (Chipperfield, 2009 p.10) In a sense that made the project an experiment within the boundaries of the international conservation doctrines, that seeks to follow their rules understanding them as an intellectual outline, that helps to define the meaning of the new structure. At the same time the most important part, one could say was the proportion, in what the approaches represented by the theoretical background of the discipline itself, were implemented.

The tool for decision making was a discussion that was handled on many levels: the discussion with the ruined matter and its qualities and limitations of use, the discussions between the remaining parts and new tissue, the knowledge of how the building was originally designed represented in drawings and the expression of a modern architectural language itself. „*The finished building is a testament to the skills and professional commitment both of the planning team, the craftsmen and contractors who realised the project.*“ However, the real privilege resided in the climate of debate and discussion that surrounded the project and became a fundamental part of its process. [...]Indeed it is intensity of ownership that has infused the project with so much meaning. It is a tribute to the citizens of Berlin that they have engaged so thoroughly with the process and with the result.“ (Chipperfield, 2009 p.10)

Apart from the recognition of the owners (which are the citizens of Berlin) themselves, the building has also gained recognition among practitioners of architecture. In the preface to the monograph book on Neuses Museum in Berlin that was shortly released after the realization of the building, Alvaro Siza underlines that it was due to Chipperfields sensibility, precision and integrity of the overall strategy the building in his view “*is one of the most consequential lessons in architecture from the last decades.*“ (Siza, 2009) The balance achieved by the architects and conservators at the end of the process may be called „*picteresque*“, as it mainly evokes in users the feeling of curiosity and embraces the beauty and aesthetics of imperfection. Three conservation approaches that have been introduced in the rehabilitation process to reach the best results are: integrated restoration,

restoration that maintains the marks of time and the history of war, and reconstruction. Such a varied approach was needed to accomplish a holistic spatial experience that at the same time was aimed to leave as much of the „ruined” matter as possible.

I would like to pay special attention to the analysis of the examples of conservation methods introduced in the project, to realize how they were implemented so even though they use different means of expression, eventually they come together in a subtle and harmonious way. David Chipperfield from the early stages of the process has closely worked with conservation practice led by Julian Harrap and points out that without this collaboration he would never be able to develop such a complex approach. Therefore as the main piece of writing for this chapter, I will follow Julians’ essay in the publication analyzing it through the lens of earlier introduced Riegls theory of Monuments.

THE APPROACH IN THE LIGHT OF THEORY OF CONSERVATION

At the beginning of his essay „Freezing the ruin” Julian Harrap points out that even though the process of „freezing” the ruin might be seen as dishonesty to the decay processes that have been in place, it is coherent with the philosophy that was established for the whole design process that prioritized bringing the structure back to its primary use as a functioning museum. (Harrap, 2009) All the previously exhibited artifacts, due to their historical value have very particular conservation restrictions put on themselves. Therefore space had to become a so to say, a safe environment for all the antique sculptures and objects.

To balance this decision, Harrap mentions the opposite romantic approach represented by, as he calls them „*lovers of ruins*”, that are attracted by the sense of „*transience and vulnerability*” represented by the ruin, that he agrees has its beauty but is not appropriate for the function that was intended to be introduced while the process of repair was done. He, therefore, emphasizes the importance of healing that allows the building to continue its lifespan as a commemorative monument of the process of “healing the memory” of the nation and the city that has been divided as a consequence of the war.

Already here what can be a subject of discussion with the author, in connection to Riegls theory, is the notion of wholeness. Riegl defined the wholeness of the artwork as an indistinguishable characteristic that defined primarily the art-value of an object. The wholeness is achieved in this case through sensible patching of the old ruined matter with new material. Such action underestimates the age-value of the structure since from the perspective of truthfulness to the state of fragmentation left by the bomb, it stops it and works against the continuation of the decay processes that were leading to final decomposition of the building, that would be natural evolution step for the structure. It is hard to estimate how long this process would take, but definitely, from Riegls’ perspective, this is what should happen. Although we could argue that the building is hard to define strictly as neither an intentional or unintentional monument. Therefore an approach that both represents the destruction up until the moment of restoration, as well as allowing the reintroduction of the primal function is acceptable.

FIG . 3.1



FIG . 3.2



FIG . 3.3

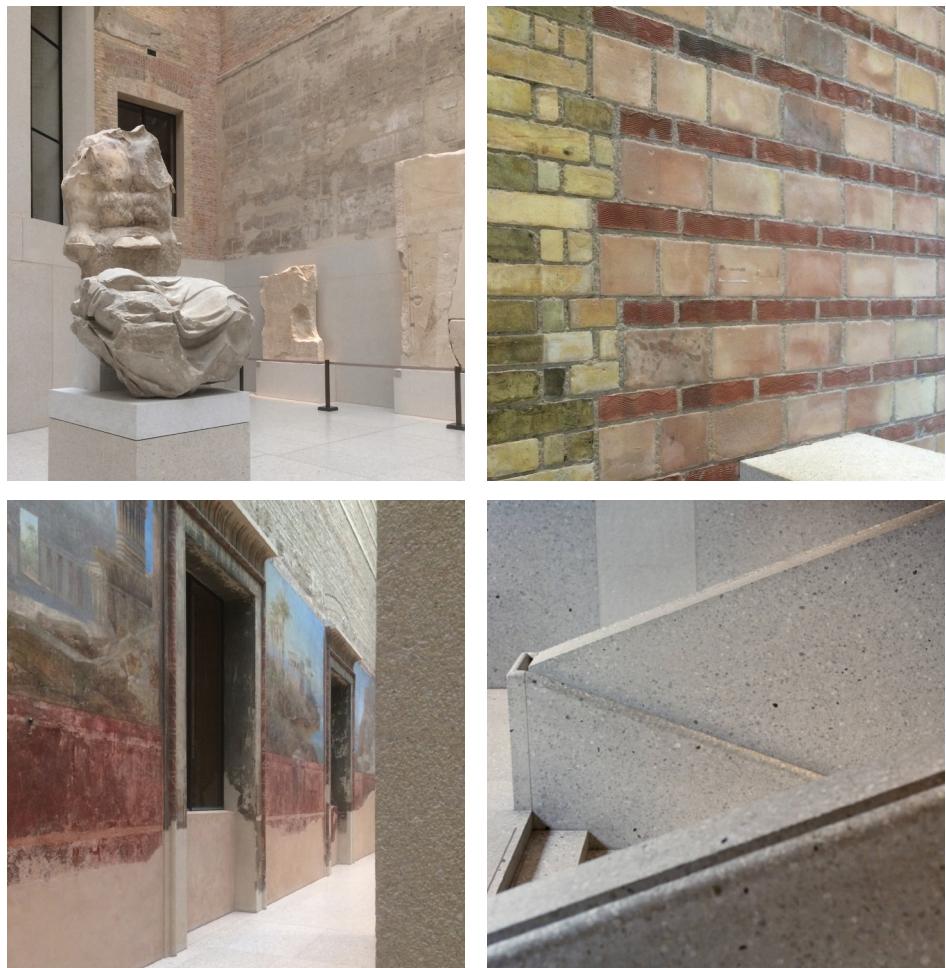
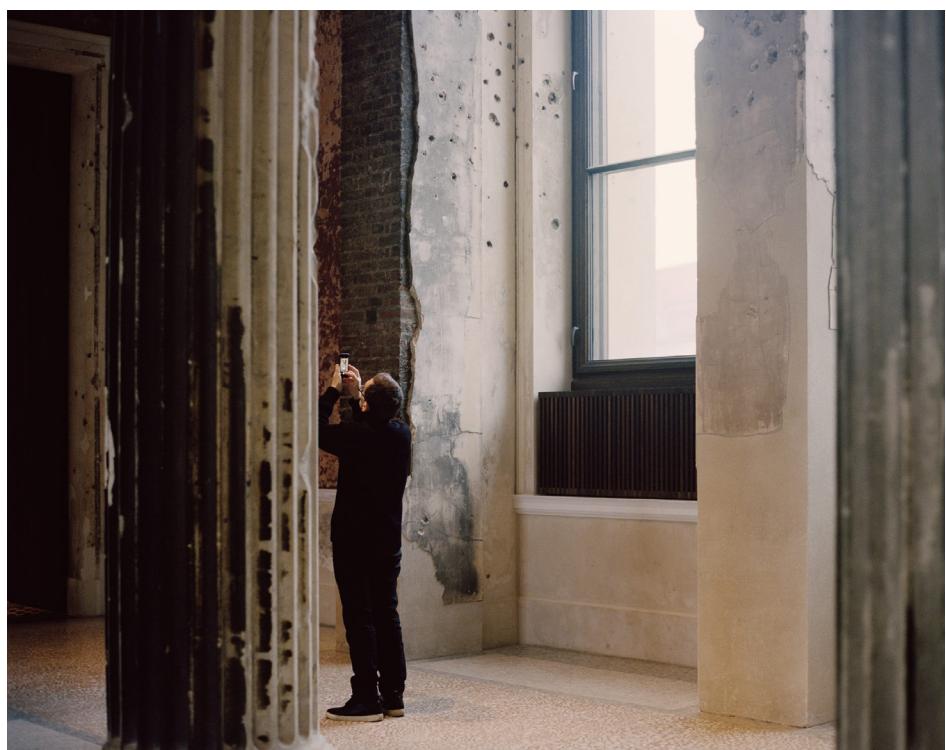


FIG . 3.4



Three special documents were introduced prior to the construction that were specially written for this project, based on the delimitations of Venice and Burra charters guidelines, defining the hierarchy of values to be preserved as well as framework for approach that could be insignificantly altered according to circumstances met in different rooms. As the most significant value defined was the possibility to „re-establish” the spatial sequence that was very characteristic and unique for the original design made by Stüler. For this to be accomplished new supporting material had to be introduced. At the same time, the second important element was to „clarify and retain the evidence of the damaged building” (Harrap, 2009 p. 122)

An overarching methodology was laid out to ensure the united composition of the interiors, within which the pre-existing ruin could be read, but at the same time was not jeopardizing the unity of the whole. As Julian Harrap writes “ *it was deemed necessary to ensure a united composition within which the pre-existing ruin could be read and studied closely without deception or loss of confidence in the reality of what survives.*”(Harrap, 2009 p. 123) New material implements of outer and inner walls were following the existing patterns following the rule of “solid and void”, which basically can be read as a simplification of the means of expression that allow visual continuity.

For repair works on the walls, a surface treatment strategy was established. It consists of three steps that are followed respectively: cleaning, replacement, and repair of fabric with sometimes removal of previous “unsympathetic” repairs. The existing material had to always be seen to take priority, therefore for missing areas of classical stone detail elements minimum new stonework was introduced, only to provide physical support to the surviving elements. Moreover, every stone detail composition was assessed individually and documented before any additions were introduced. The wall paintings on the interior walls were completed to the point where the pattern or figurative scene showed a readable cohesion.

The dialog between new and old tissue can be strongly seen in the space of the main hall. In the newly re-introduced volume, sections of walls have been rebuilt with use of second-hand bricks and handmade tiles. that already had a certain quality of patination and history contained in the material. Even though new bricks have been chosen to match the original ones, “ *it is still possible to tell, on careful inspection, what has been rebuilt.*”(Harrap, 2009 p.) That also was connected with removal and replacement of some tissue: in a few places, the engineering brick added in the 80s was removed. This was a topic to large debate since it was by some considered contradictory to the general idea behind the restoration and its purpose to retain the story of the building’s lifespan. In the end the decision has been justified as a necessary measure to pay justice to the “war” damage as a main destructive force that led to the ruination of the building and to keep the narration between old and new materiality clear.

Even the marks of the smoke blackening caused by the fire that emerged in some places after the explosion has been left untouched. Four Doric columns supporting the balcony,

FREEZING THE RUIN : PRESERVATION TECHNIQUES

have been reattached in their original place. They also bear marks of time, water stains created by the way they were stored in the outside courtyard of the museum for 60 years of its ruination.

A new monumental staircase was inserted into space, allowing communication between 3 floors of galleries. It is made of high-quality marble concrete, with a simple but detailed finish. The form of the staircase is at the same time classical and modern, it is a “theatrical” spatial arrangement well known from the historical architecture vocabulary executed according to “precise” mathematical parameters, finished with rough edges of volumes and high-quality external surface that clearly marks it as a contemporary object. A new matter was also introduced for the surfaces of the flooring, due to the usefulness and maintenance reasons. Julian Harrap named this process as “conservative renewal” since the material that was used to replace parts of the ruined floors, was as much similar to the authentic one as possible. To ensure the correctness of the choice “*all conventional exploratory research was undertaken, including the sourcing of the stone and terracotta and encaustic tiling*”.(Harrap, 2009 p.)

APPRECIATION OF THE AESTHETICS OF DECAY

Even though the material choices made for the insertions, have been made according to many different factors, they always followed the same premise: to embrace the beauty seen in the imperfection of the ruined elements. Chipperfield’s architecture than can only be read simultaneously with the creations of Stüler’s, the destruction and time. The final result represents a combined effort of many different authors and various natural processes.

Introduced new fabric can be differentiated from the original one, it does not stand out or underestimate the aesthetical qualities of the existing ruined matter. Due to re-use, re-attachment, the inclusion of crafted elements and spoiliars, what we see on a material level, is sensibly created blend of tissues that in the end come together as one. „*Ironically the rather over-the-top high-color interiors of the 1850s never looked truer than today, as if the sole purpose of war and weather was to make them palatable to contemporary, more minimalist sensibilities. It is the best-preserved rooms like the Niobidensaal, that seem gaudy and inauthentic*” .(Shubert, 2009)

Aesthetic of decay combined with new harmonious materiality and language, grant the building’s appearance complexity and underline the aspect of its authenticity. Age-value of the old materials combined with new insertions, allows us to classify the building neither as historical or modern. It speaks rather about change than time itself, therefore answering the research questions posed in the introduction.

CONCLUSIONS

By definition heritage objects present collective cultural choices, not individual preferences. Buildings' image expands over its recognition as a tangible object, it also exists in memory of their users, on postcards, in social media, publications, and other cultural domains. Frequently its value is defined by the user's recognition much earlier than the law can grant it protection based on its actual qualities. Therefore we have to re-evaluate the limitations of term heritage. It may require deconstructing its commonly understood meaning. Heritage will no longer be associated with objects of the past, but also the products of our contemporary society.

That also redefines the role of „preservationist”, as an active actor in cultural creation rather than someone who works in the realm of the past and whose actions concentrate on an object that falls under “normalized” categorization of heritage, established by organizations and governments.

Architecture should aim to be understandable by everyone, but not trivial. Architecture should not be surprising or exciting (aiming for spectacle) but harmonious and modest. In my view good design is intuitive. It does not require description, special knowledge or higher education. Good design lasts also due to its aesthetics, which has in itself timeless beauty of simplicity and sophisticated proportion. Following the broad tradition of the past and universally understandable language of forms that could be achieved.

It does not mean that architecture should neglect the experiment, but find an appropriate place for its revaluation. Temporary structures and architectural festivals seem to be a great opportunity to test one's ideas before they find a permanent location in the urban tissue. As we highly value momentary and interactive, ephemeral experiences that architecture can provide. All such attempts should be documented and act as supporting knowledge for work on permanent designs.

Critical preservation aims to revisit and re-analyze common conservation methods, notice the beauty of aesthetically pleasing decay processes of materials and their possible alterations. It calls for a search of new materials that incorporate the damage processes (eg. self-healing concrete) as well as new materials that are produced from waste. On a phenomenological level, it seeks to understand the allure of ruins and general perception of architectural value based on the age of the building. It enhances to investigate new purpose and use of modern ruins: buildings that due to some reason become unwanted or forgotten.

Preservation is perceived here as an active approach rather than a post-factum reaction to change. It aims to perceive value in existing building matter and seeks for possible ways of its appropriation that do not vanish the understanding of its past and origin. It analyses the understanding of material blends and spolia in the light of collective memory as well as an interesting use of common materials (eg. Anne Holtrop practice). All in the spirit of a rule to use materials appropriate to the buildings' foreseen lifespan: temporary materials for temporary structures, lasting materials for permanent structures.

OUTLINES AND ROLE OF CRITICAL PRESERVATION

FIG . 4.1



FIG . 4.2



In his only novel, Oscar Wilde tells a story of a fictional life of a young aristocrat called Dorian Gray. At the beginning of the story, we meet Dorian at the artist studio, where his portrait is being brought to life. He is accompanied by the artist and his friend, who points out that the most important qualities of his are beauty and youth and that they will fade away with time. Dorian forsakes his future and expresses his will for the painting to age instead of him. And in truth this is what happens, as Dorian ages, leading immoral and destructive life his physical appearance does not change, only the painting hidden in the attic shows the imperfections that are caused by his actions and the passage of time. Due to this dissonance between his deeds and their consequences expressed in his visual appearance, Dorian falls into further immorality and even kills his dear friend, the author of the painting who was the only one who knew about its existence. At a certain point in the story, Dorian tries for once to do something virtuous, hoping that his action will improve the appearance of the painting, but the damage of his previous acts cannot be vanished. The painting still expresses the indecencies that he has committed. Furious, he destroys the painting, which causes his death. His servants find the body of an old ruined man next to the painting of a young beautiful boy he once was. The story has become one of the best-known moralizing works of literature, that both did reflect on the decadence of the society of the late Victorian era, as well it underlined the bond between ethics and aesthetics.

AGAINST MODERN DORIAN GREY'ISM

I mention this story as a reference to my perception of the architectural production we conduct Today. Idealization of newness and the value we give to this notion is corrupted. The drive to sustain unchanged the perfect superficial facade ultimately destroys the true value of the object - its history. This ideology supports the constant change of the buildings in the cityscape, allows to demolish and build new "more appropriate for our times" structures, never allowing the patina to develop on the surface of buildings matter.

A change in the methods and aims of architectural production in the future will have to be re-established. In order to allow for a change of perception to happen, the position and role of an architect and conservator will have to be reintroduced, to meet the standards of sustainable production in the most complex understanding of the notion. New methods of analysis and drawing will have to be introduced to allow designers to work with a time perspective in mind.

DESIGNING WITH A TIME PERSPECTIVE

To have a short overview of how it could be conducted, I propose revisiting the historical practice in search of similar precedences. A good example is a set of drawings made over one week by Joseph Gandy for Sir John Soane presenting the Rotunda in the Bank of England: as intended in the design and as a ruin. Similar analysis has been prepared by Albert Speer, for his designs of monuments of the Third Reich. In historical practices among decades, a similar duality of representation has occurred, that underlines the authors' consciousness of the passage of time and its consideration on the design stage.

REDEFINITION OF METHODS AND APPROACHES

Critical preservation is meant as a suggestion of a design philosophy that allows many actions to follow. It underlines characteristics that should be met to produce more respectfully, both in the aspect of the meaning, as well as in the material-physical realm of architecture.

The conducted analysis was meant to prove, or question, many notions that *critical preservation* might address if established as a movement. It analyses the notions of value and authenticity of materials, that should be designed or used in the future for buildings to meet the criteria of sustainability. It provides a possible re-definition of the position of an architect in the future: a creator who's main tool of work is discussion, a keen collaborator who works with conservator (as well with as any other scientific or artistic professional) to understand the changes of materials in time, based upon the theoretical background of conservation praxis. It also underlined the importance of understanding the value of retaining the memory in buildings materiality, as a way to bond the user with space. To avoid ruination of the memory, so to say spatial amnesia that might occur with unthoughtful conservation or change in a builing.

The presented quest is demanding, imagining the profession of an architect even more challenging than it is now. On architects lies a great responsibility to tackle the crisis and prevent further destruction of the environment. Throught analisis of the impact of our actions we can ensure their rightfulness. As David Chipperfield points out "*the difference between good and bad architecture is the time you spend on it.*"

At the same time what we can find uplifting, is the need for change, that may allow us to be more explorative, unconventional and brave in our design decisions. It may allow us to re-tailor the profession's profile, and invite new interesting collaborators into our work processes. Empower us to take action, invent new materials and find new uses for existing ones but, also change the way we perceive their permanence. All that in order to fully express our modern *Kunstwollen* that is restricted, or fueled, by the crisis.

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Fig. 1.1

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Fig. 1.2

Batara, photo by Bas Princen, exhibition at Leth & Gori, Copenhagen (DK), 2012 , Retrieved December 8, 2019, from: <http://anotherspace.dk/batara-anne-holtrop-bas-princen/>

Fig. 2.1

Bas Princen, Earth Phyllar, Bas Princen, courtesy Solo Galerie, 2016, Retrieved December 8, 2019, from: https://www.domusweb.it/en/photo-essays/2016/08/09/bas_princen_earth_pilar.html

Fig 2.2

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Fig 3.1

Neues Museum in ruin, Retrieved December 8, 2019, from: <https://archpaper.com/2016/05/palmyra-preservation/chipperfield-2/>

Fig 3.2

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Fig 3.3

authors own photographs

Fig 3.4

David Chipperfield architects : Neues Museum, photos by Rory Gardiner, Divisare Journal, Retrieved December 8, 2019, from: <https://divisare.com/projects/338168-david-chipperfield-architects-rory-gardiner-neues-museum>

Fig 4.1

John Soan, the Rotunda in the Bank of England, drawing by Joseph Gandy, built between 1794 and 1796 Retrieved December 8, 2019, from: <http://socks-studio.com/2016/04/26/infinite-sequence-of-interior-space-john-soanes-bank-of-england-1788-1833/>

Fig 4.2

Architectural ruins, a vision Joseph Michael Gandy, 1798, Watercolour on paper, Retrieved December 8, 2019, from: <http://collections.soane.org/object-p127>