



Places and Technologies 2015

KEEPING UP WITH TECHNOLOGIES TO MAKE HEALTHY PLACES

Nova Gorica, Slovenia, 18.–19.6.2015

PT2015

BOOK OF CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

A healthy city is one that is continually creating and improving those physical and social environments and expanding those community resources which enable people to mutually support each other in performing all the functions of life and developing to their maximum potential.
Health Promotion Glossary (1998)

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Places and Technologies 2015

**KEEPING UP WITH
TECHNOLOGIES TO MAKE HEALTHY PLACES**

BOOK OF CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

Editors:

Alenka Fikfak, Eva Vaništa Lazarević,
Nataša Fikfak, Milena Vukmirović, Peter Gabrijelčič

Nova Gorica, Slovenia



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RECONSTRUCTION AND REVITALIZATION OF THE COMPLEX SENARA, WITHIN THE MONASTERY HILANDAR, IN ORDER TO ADAPT TO MODERN TRENDS AND SOCIAL CHANGES

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ABSTRACT

The Holy Mount Athos is the cultural heritage of mankind. Until the mid-20th century the Holy Mount Athos had been visited only by rare pilgrims. Strict rules of monastic communities limited the number of potential followers. The monastery complex provided the accommodation for all visiting pilgrims. Modern life and significant social changes have increased the number of the people interested in visiting this monastic land. The endless flow of visitors and their frequent visits eventually began to disturb the lives of monks. That was one of the reasons that led to creating new accommodation capacities outside the monastery complex in order to provide the necessary peace for the monks.

The Monastery Hilandar, the fourth monastery in the hierarchy of the Holy Mount Athos monasteries and one of the most significant spiritual and cultural center of the Serbian people, was founded in 1198. In the immediate vicinity of the monastery of Hilandar walls there are abandoned and demolished facilities: stable, mulekeepers' house and haybarn. These facilities were built in the beginning of the 19th century. Ten years ago, the reconstruction of the facilities started in order to restore the buildings and provide them with additional accommodation space for potential visitors.

This paper presents the methods of reconstruction through a multidisciplinary approach based on architectural solutions and the aspects of comfort as well as the aspects of psychological and sociological mutual influence between two groups – the monks and the visitors. In this way, the carried out reconstruction revived the

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old facilities and gave them a new function that is adaptable to modern trends and social changes.

Keywords: *cultural heritage, reconstruction, revitalization, social changes*

INTRODUCTION

The name Holy Mount originated in the world of eastern Christianity, when Athos began to create the most significant community of monasticism. The Holy Mount of Athos has been the crucial center of spirituality and knowledge for the entire Orthodox Eastern countries for more than one thousand years. It is included in the UNESCO World Heritage Sites list. The Holy Mountain is the unique monastic state in the world.

The Holy Mount is located on virtually inaccessible peninsula, with no travel overland routes to the rest of the world. The journey across the sea in boats was a great obstacle for the arrival of visitors. The road network on the Holy Mount of Athos used to be unfavorable for centuries; narrow cobblestone paths were all the traffic there and the only means of transport were mules. The strict rules imposed by the monastic community were limiting the number of potential pilgrims who were allowed to enter the Holy Mount.

The second part of the 20th century brought some social changes in the world. These changes significantly affected the life on the Holy Mount of Athos. For the first time the systems of water supply, sewerage and electric energy were installed. Over the last few years, electricity has been obtained by generators or solar panels. The road network was built in order to ease the traffic flow carried out by terrain vehicles. The Holy Mount is accessible only by boats, across the sea. There is no land connection between the Holy Mount and its surroundings, there are no roads and it is impossible to approach the land by cars. It is of crucial importance to point out that the strict rules are still applied and they have been unaltered since the very beginning: only men are permitted to visit the Holy Mount. Over the last decade of the 20th century there has been an increasing number of pilgrims. The accommodation for visitors is provided inside the walls of monastery complex.

Modern trends of social development have increased the number of visitors. There are so many people all over the world who want to visit this unique monastic land. Constant visits and an enormously increasing number of visitors have affected the peaceful way of life among the monks who are used to living in accordance with strict rules and principles regarding religion and prayers. Therefore, it was necessary to build some additional accommodation capacities outside the walls of monastery complex.



THE RECONSTRUCTION OF SENARA COMPLEX, WITHIN THE MONASTERY OF HILANDAR

The monastery of Hilandar is the fourth monastery in importance and influence and the second largest monastery out of twenty monasteries belonging to the Holy Mountain. The monastic brotherhood, mainly from Serbia, lives in Hilandar. Inside its walls, the complex is a real medieval town.

Near the access road leading to the monastery, along the edge of the garden, there was a complex that had been used for keeping the animals and their food (hay). These abandoned and dilapidated facilities were built in the first half of the 19th century, outside the monastery walls. The complex consisting of the abandoned facilities used to include: the barn – the facility accommodating the mules (Shtala); the facility accommodating the mulekeepers – the people who were taking care of the mules (Mulekeepers' House) as well as a large facility used as a storage space for hay (Heybarn). The whole complex was named Senara, after the haybarn (Figure 1.) (Nenadović, 1997).



Figure 1: Complex Senara: a. former appearance, b. the appearance after the reconstruction.

The lack of accommodation capacities for potential visitors and pilgrims led to the idea of reconstruction in order to turn these facilities into accommodation capacities for visitors. The adaptation and reconstruction of these facilities enabled the visitors to come and attend the monastery service hours – services of worship. This means that the monks are able to lead their lives without any disturbance caused by the guests.

The reconstruction project was supposed to remove all the demolished parts of the facilities, the ones that were not structurally stable. It was planned to rebuild the damaged walls using the existing stone – since the stone was originally used as the material for their construction, but this time adding a new binding material. i.e. (lime-cement) mortar, instead of the previous binding material (mud or lime mortar). The existing walls, as well as the recently built ones, are now covered with appropriate thermal insulation and bricks. Rendering was applied to exterior wall structure and this kind of sandwich walls provide a proper thermal insulation in winter periods as well as a summer stability during warm summer periods. Thermal



insulation and air-flows within the roof layers, thermal insulation within the groundfloors and the installation of wooden window frames with insulating window glazing provide the atmosphere of thermal comfort and pleasant stay in these facilities.

The reconstruction of the stable for housing the mules - Shtala

The longitudinal walls of this building used to be made of stone, about 70cm thick. There were only few window openings, in accordance with the purpose of the building - only small amounts of light were allowed to penetrate, in order to protect the health of the animals by avoiding the so-called donkey blindness.

The reconstruction preserved the original appearance of the facade walls – the face of both interior and exterior facade walls is made of stone. Small windows remained on the facade, just like it used to be and roof dormers remained where they used to be placed as well, thus achieving the authentic form of the new facility. The reconstruction of the building Shtala (barn) is of great importance since this reconstruction kept a very interesting roof structure made of timber in its original form. This roof structure is a part of the interior space meant for visitors' accommodation (Figure 2c). Sheathing was installed over the existing roof structure. New rafters were added and thermal insulation was placed between them. These new rafters are now covered with sheathing, back-up water proofing system and ridge-tile as the original roof covering.

The reconstruction provided this building with a completely new function. The reconstructed facility Shtala contains a large guest room, bathroom and laundry.

The reconstruction of the Mulekeepers' House

The facility consists of the ground floor and first floor. There used to be a barn on the ground floor, and the first floor used to accommodate the people taking care of the mules – they were called mulekeepers. The external walls were made of stone, built in lime mortar, 65 cm thick. The face of interior ground floor walls was made of stone. The first floor walls were plastered and painted white. The ceiling of the ground floor had visible joists, the planks on the upper side.

The reconstruction of this facility kept the appearance of interior ground floor wall, made of stone, and the facade stone wall on the first floor got the interior thermal insulation, plastered and covered with bricks. This type of sandwich facade wall meets the requirements of modern thermal comfort. In this way, the original appearance of the external wall is kept. After the reconstruction and roof construction, the building was covered with the authentic roof structure consisting of stone plates. Roof covering with stone plates was carried out over the sheathing substructure, back-up water proofing system and in accordance with all modern principles of wind-resistant roof. This type of modern wind-resistant roof with the



final covering made of stone was first applied during the reconstruction of the monastery complex of Hilandar (Šekularac, Ivanović-Šekularac, Čikić-Tovarović, 2012).

Nowadays, the reconstructed ground floor of the Mulekeepers' House contains the room for receiving guests, kitchenette and toilet. The first floor contains the living room with a fireplace, three bedrooms and a bathroom. The room for receiving guests retained its authentic appearance – the walls are made of stone and the ceiling is covered with wooden beams.

The reconstruction of the facility meant for hay storage - Senara

This tall building used to be the single space for hay storage. It was made of stone and mud mortar. The Heybarn Complex Senara consisted of extremely high peripheral stone walls and it was dilapidated, which means that it was not possible to keep these walls and perform the reconstruction of the facility (Figure 2a). Deconstruction was inevitable. It was planned to build a completely new facility. The new building was built in the system of massive walls; the facade face was made of stone and thermal insulation was installed. The new facility is horizontally divided into three floors by two mezzanine ceilings (Figure 2b). The facility retained its authentic ambient due to the form and the selection of material: the stone facade walls with wooden frames, the wooden roof structure and stone plates as the roof covering. The facility was turned into the guest house. This three-storey building consists of bedrooms and bathrooms.



Figure 2: Complex Senara: a. Senara - before the reconstruction, b. Senara after the reconstruction, c. interior of the Shtala after the reconstruction.

THE REVITALIZATION OF THE HEYBARN COMPLEX "SENARA"

The basic intervention principles carried out on the complex Senara were: preserving the authenticity of the structure and material, preserving the complete authentic ambient of both exterior and interior appearance whenever possible, depending on the function of the facility, and preserving all decorative elements that represent the historical construction phases. The reconstruction of the existing, partially demolished and dilapidated buildings, provided new accommodation



capacities meant for visitors. These new rooms meet all the comfort requirements: spatial, thermal, light and air comfort. The fulfillment of the mentioned comfort requirements means that all the health requirements regarding the accommodation are also met. The visitors are provided with the possibility to spend time in the reconstructed and hygienic rooms, without disturbing the monks and their living principles. In this way, the revitalization of the Heybarn Complex Senara was carried out and the buildings were given a new function and purpose. From the sociological point of view, the visitors of the monastery usually spend one or more nights, which means that their presence and curiosity might unintentionally disturb the quiet life of the monks living in this community. In this way, the visitors are enabled to stay at the monastery complex, visit the buildings and contact the monks during certain periods of a day, and then leave the monastery complex and return to their accommodation premises Senara, where they could spend the rest of the day and night without disturbing the daily routines and duties of the monks.

CONCLUSION

The unique case of the monastic state of the Holy Mount of Athos certainly brings to light the different concepts of healthy places, as a result of different lifestyles, beliefs and values. The increasing need for providing the accommodation for the growing number of visitors makes the complex Senara the unique example of reconstruction and revitalization of the abandoned and dilapidated heybarn, stable and Mulekeepers' House.

This paper presents different principles of reconstruction and revitalization of the abandoned and partially demolished facilities through the multidisciplinary approach, based on constructive and functional solutions, preservation principles, authenticity principles, comfort requirements and psychological and sociological aspects of mutual influence between two groups – monks and visitors. In this way, the reconstruction and revitalization of the Heybarn Complex Senara, in accordance with the modern requirements and application of contemporary technological and technical solutions, a new life was given to the old facilities. These buildings were provided with a new function that adapts to the modern trends and social changes. This is how the formation of the complex Senara contributed to the connection of cultural heritage and the past with contemporary needs and social changes in order to improve healthy places.

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