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The participation of the society in the conservation of the architectural heritage

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Synopsis

The architectural heritage is an evidence of past civilizations and shows our richness and cultural diversity, which gives it an important educational value for the whole society. Therefore, it must be preserved, protected and put into value. The 1966 New York Covenant establishes two essential rights in this area: the right of the citizenship to access the Culture and to participate in cultural life. The Granada Convention is the doctrinal core of the architectural heritage conservation and protection at international level and includes among its lines of action the awareness of the society in this regard.

In the XXI century, it is necessary to look for new strategies to draw maximum value of the educational and social character of the Architectural Heritage.

Key words: Architectural heritage, Architectural protection, New technologies, Education, Granada Convention.

1. Introduction

The architectural heritage is an evidence of past civilizations and is a proof of our richness and cultural diversity due to its historical, archaeological, artistic, scientific, social and technical importance. This means that these immovable objects not only have value for experts of different fields, but also has an important educational value for the whole society. Therefore, it must be conserved, protected and put into value.

In 1948 the UN approved the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, later expanded in the New York Covenant of 1966, which establishes a series of important social achievements, such as the right of the citizenship to access the Culture and the right of every person to participate in cultural life. The recognition of these rights leads to the Public Powers obligation to adopt effective actions to support and to encourage the social action of the Culture.

Nowadays, the Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage, commonly known as the Granada Convention is the doctrinal core of the architectural heritage conservation and protection at international level and includes among its lines of action the awareness of the society in this regard.

2. Granada Convention

In 1985, the Council of Europe promulgated the Granada Convention, which establishes the essential guidelines to be followed by national laws of protection of Historical and Cultural Heritage in order to incorporate the so-called principles of "integrated conservation".

The spirit of the Convention is to preserve the architectural heritage as a valuable asset in today's society. In this regard, the protection of the architectural heritage serves as the starting point to establish the guidelines for its integration into the current socioeconomic system through the development of policies that enhance its economic, social and cultural value, resulting in a key element of the development of regions and states.

Leaving aside the legal procedures for the protection of the architectural heritage, the Convention intends to put it into value with measures such as:

- To turn the heritage protection into one of the objectives of the urban planning and the territorial management of cities, so that old urban centers are revitalized, maintaining the traditional social environment of historic neighborhoods.
- To adapt it to contemporary life by assigning it a social function, always respecting its historical and architectural values.
- To allow access to the public and to promote information policies.
- To make it an element of study and research, a source of inspiration and creativity, and ultimately, an element of cultural identity.

The achievement of these objectives involves the training of qualified professionals and a strong economic investment with an expected high return rate. The specific objectives listed can be summarized in the idea that citizens feel the architectural heritage as their own. The internalization of heritage by the

society is its best defense and the best mechanism for its revaluation and usefulness in the present and the future

3. Results and discussion

Despite the current growing demand of tourism, it can be observed that there is a great distance between the concept of architectural heritage and the awareness of most of the society. This does not mean that citizens do not value this heritage, but they see it as something they have the right to enjoy, but in whose protection they are not necessary involved.

This aspect is more evident as we approach the present time: in general, society is less interested in the architecture that is not characterized by its historical value.

In this regard, architecture professionals must do self-criticism and learn to transmit the values and importance of the more modern architecture to their fellow citizens.

For this purpose, new technologies are fundamental in this process. An example of this is the research project carried out within the framework of the project: "Plaza de Valencia. Heritage and collective memory ", developed between the Provincial Council of Valencia and the University of Valencia in 2016 whose objective is the activation and revaluation of the Plaza de Valencia (Spain) via the use of new technologies. The project consists of the creation of an interactive and personalized application of augmented reality that the user can use to take a tour in which multimedia material (photography, audio, video and text) overlaps the physical space of the square and its surroundings through their screens.

This project, in which the interaction and participation of the user is fundamental in the visit of the architectural heritage, shows the right path to follow, where learning turns into a kind of video game completely accessible and in which all citizens can participate.

4. Conclusions

Among the guidelines set by the Granada Convention for the protection and enhancement of the architectural heritage, one of the fundamental pillars for its inclusion in contemporary life is the awareness of society.

In the XXI century, the digitization of heritage and the offer of interactive itineraries (such as the use of augmented reality) are presented as a strategy not only for patrimonial activation and a cultural and economic engine, but as a learning tool for citizens. Above all, it is necessary to be aware that the architectural heritage is a non-renewable good, and therefore the appropriate resources must be put in place to guarantee its conservation.

Only by highlighting the links between architecture and lifestyles, it will be understood that heritage not only serves to transmit a cultural reference system that helps to understand society, but also serves as a basis for the culture of the future.

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Biography

Luis Miguel Sanz Rodríguez. MSc. Architecture, Universidad Politécnica de Madrid. PhD student in Universidad Politécnica de Madrid, developing a thesis regarding the safeguarding of architectural heritage in Europe from a legislative point of view.

Participation in Congresses

– 2nd International Conference on Technological Innovation in Building. Madrid, Spain.

“La legislación española en materia de protección del patrimonio arquitectónico y la Convención de Granada: cumplimiento y medidas de mejora”. ISBN: 978-84-16397-56-3.

– Congresso Ibero-Americano “Património, suas matérias e imatérias”. Lisbon, Portugal.

“La evolución de la protección del patrimonio arquitectónico en la Unión Europea desde el punto de vista legislativo”. ISBN: 978-972-49-2288-1.

Both in collaboration with Antonio Humero Martín (Titular Professor in Universidad Politécnica de Madrid).

Projects

In 2014 I started to collaborate in a research project on the work of collective housing of Mies van der Rohe, as part of the research team ARKIT in Escuela Técnica Superior de Arquitectura de Madrid.

Antonio Eduardo Humero Martín. Architect since 1982. PhD Architect since 1997.

Titular Professor of the Universidad Politécnica de Madrid (UPM).

Deputy Director of the Department of Construction and Architectural Technology and Coordinator of the final project in "Fundamentals of Architecture" of the School of Architecture of the UPM.

Director of several masters and specialization courses and teacher of Legal Architecture since 1983 in the Department of Construction and Architectural Technology of the Architecture School of the UPM.

Author of more than 100 publications, in indexed journals, books of own and shared authorship, book chapters and contributions to congresses.

Researcher of several research groups in the Area of Knowledge of Architectural Constructions of the UPM.

Researcher of more than 100 projects belonging to the specialties of building pathology and responsibilities in construction, urban and land planning and expropriatory and urbanistic valuations.

Director of more than 10 doctoral theses.